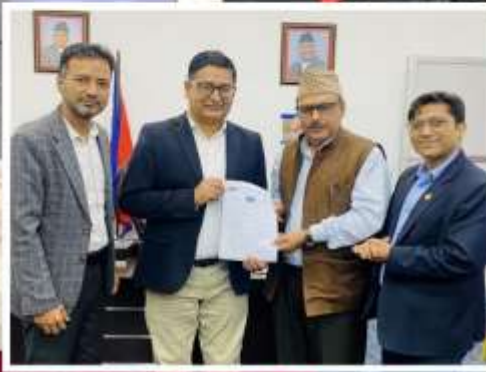


Featuring Knowledge on Disaster

DPNet Nepal eBulletin

SEP-OCT 2024



Summary

On September 17, 2024, DPNet Nepal organized an online preparatory meeting for Nepal's participation in the Asia-Pacific Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (APMCDRR) 2024. Attended by over 50 stakeholders, including leaders from NDRRMA and MoHA, the session outlined Nepal's strategies, including setting up an exhibition booth, drafting a position paper, and fostering collaboration. Key discussions addressed resource contributions, participation of disaster-affected communities, and streamlining preparations. The meeting highlighted collective efforts and stakeholder engagement to showcase Nepal's contributions to disaster risk reduction and align with the conference's goals by 2030.

On September 21, 2024, DPNet, DiMaNN, and ARSOW jointly held a discussion program in Janakpur on "Localizing DRR and Enhancing DRR Governance," chaired by Sanjaya Singh and attended by key stakeholders, including Ram Singh Yadava. The event emphasized empowering local communities, improving grassroots governance, and integrating DRR into broader development planning. Discussions highlighted the significance of NPDRR, policy advocacy, participatory planning, and social inclusion, with calls for increased budget allocation, capacity building, and stronger partnerships to foster disaster resilience. Participants found the program valuable and advocated for similar future initiatives involving government collaboration.

On September 22, 2024, ARWSO Nepal, DPNet, DiMaNN, and the NGO Federation held a DRR governance discussion in Biratnagar, chaired by Lakhan Lal Shah, with Hon. Ram Dev Yadav and Hon. Jaya Prakash Chaudhary as chief guests. Dr. Raju Thapa emphasized challenges in Nepal's disaster management, particularly in rural areas, highlighting issues like climate vulnerability, weak governance, and coordination gaps. Surya Bahadur Thapa discussed solutions, including national networks and early warning systems, and Jit Ram Lama stressed the need for localization and transparency in DRR efforts. Hon. Yadav advocated integrating disaster preparedness into all sectors, particularly tourism and industry, while urging a multidisciplinary approach to resilience-building.

On September 23, 2024, a discussion on DRR localization in Hetauda highlighted issues like empowering local communities, integrating DRR into development planning, enhancing local government capacity, and promoting social inclusion. Chaired by Ms. Ramila Sapkota and attended by key stakeholders, the event emphasized policy advocacy, budget allocation, early warning systems, and multi-stakeholder collaboration through platforms like NPDRR. Strengthening transparency, accountability, and grassroots engagement were identified as critical for building resilience in Bagmati Province.

On September 30, 2024, a National Dialogue on post-disaster challenges for landless people was held in Lalitpur, organized by ASF Nepal, Foundation Abbe Pierre, and DPNet Nepal, among others. Chaired by Dr. Raju Thapa and attended by diverse stakeholders, the event addressed the socio-economic struggles of landless individuals, policy gaps, and disaster impacts. Discussions emphasized collaboration, improved land management policies, and prioritizing vulnerable groups in disaster response. Recommendations included strengthening legal frameworks, leveraging technology, and ensuring better coordination across government levels to address landlessness post-disaster.

On October 6, 2024, DPNet Nepal held an advisor meeting at the Nepal Red Cross Society Hall to address the challenges posed by recent floods and landslides. Key speakers, including DPNet Chairperson Dr. Raju Thapa, emphasized the urgent need for disaster preparedness, improved communication, and accountability. Advisors highlighted systemic issues, including delayed alerts, inadequate response training, lack of coordination across government levels, and limited local-level preparedness. The meeting underscored the importance of collaboration, evidence-based planning, and

community engagement to enhance disaster resilience. Dr. Thapa concluded by proposing that actionable recommendations be submitted to the Prime Minister, aiming for systemic improvements in disaster risk management.

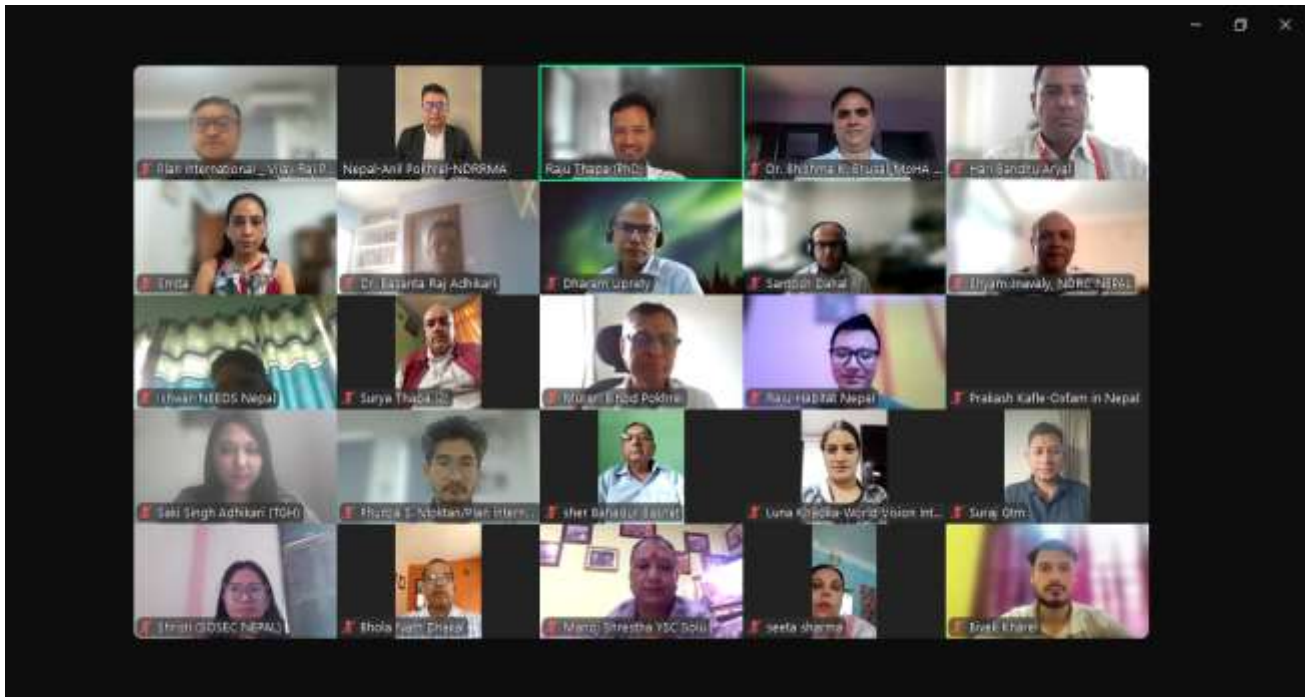
On October 6, 2024, DPNet and DiMaNN handed over disaster risk reduction recommendations to the Executive Chief of NDRRMA. Developed through nationwide consultations, the recommendations focus on community-driven, sustainable disaster management, stricter enforcement of building codes, and climate-resilient infrastructure planning. Key proposals include public awareness campaigns, disaster risk financing, and stronger governance with transparent budget allocation and social audits. Dr. Raju Thapa and Mr. Surya Bahadur Thapa emphasized integrating local knowledge and inclusive governance. The NDRRMA Chief welcomed the recommendations, pledging to incorporate them into national disaster strategies.

The Asia-Pacific Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (APMCDRR) is a key platform for advancing disaster risk management in the region. The 2024 conference in Manila, Philippines, focused on DRR financing, inclusive governance, and localization in resilience efforts, emphasizing private sector engagement and nature-based solutions. Nepal, represented by a 43-member delegation led by NDRRMA Executive Chief Anil Pokhrel and DPNet Chair Dr. Raju Thapa, showcased its progress in DRR, including accessible DRR documents and innovative tools like an earthquake shake table. Nepal highlighted its vulnerability to climate-induced disasters, calling for increased international cooperation, financing, and technology transfer. Structural engineer Liva Shrestha was recognized for her contributions to resilient housing. The event strengthened Nepal's regional partnerships and fostered valuable learnings for future DRR efforts.

The Nepal Geological Society, in partnership with NDRRMA and DPNet Nepal, hosted a symposium for IDDRR 2024, focusing on "Empowering the Next Generation for a Resilient Future." Held on October 29 in Kathmandu, the event gathered diverse stakeholders to discuss disaster risk reduction (DRR) strategies. Key topics included enhancing youth engagement, integrating DRR into infrastructure, and linking DRR with climate action. Sessions featured research on seismic safety, cascading hazards, and flood mitigation. The event concluded with reflections on APMCDRR 2024, stressing regional collaboration, indigenous knowledge, and climate finance reform for resilience-building in Nepal.

On October 29, 2024, a post-conference review session was held following the Asia-Pacific Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (APMCDRR). The session, led by NDRRMA Executive Chief Anil Pokhrel and coordinated by Dr. Raju Thapa, highlighted key takeaways from Nepal's delegation. Dr. Thapa shared insights from the conference, emphasizing the need for inclusive governance, integrating disaster risk reduction (DRR) into development plans, and fostering collaboration across sectors. The conference focused on enhancing disaster resilience in the Asia-Pacific region, addressing climate and disaster risks, and highlighting the importance of technology, community engagement, and private sector involvement. Nepal's participation showcased its commitment to DRR, with an emphasis on gender equality, social inclusion, and climate justice. The session concluded with a renewed commitment to implementing the Sendai Framework's goals and strengthening Nepal's disaster resilience.

Online APMCDRR Preparatory Meeting



On September 17, 2024, DPNet coordinated to organize an online preparatory meeting for the Asia-Pacific Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (APMCDRR), set to take place from October 14 to 18, 2024, in Manila, Philippines. The meeting, held on Zoom, was part of DPNet's ongoing efforts to coordinate Nepal's participation through the National Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction (NPDRR), where DPNet serves as the Secretariat. The meeting was attended by distinguished figures, including Mr. Anil Pokhrel, Executive Chief of the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Authority (NDRRMA), and Dr. Bhisma Kumar Bhusal, Chief of the Disaster Management Division at the Ministry of Home Affairs (MoHA). Approximately 50 participants, representing various stakeholder organizations of DPNet, attended the session.

Dr. Raju Thapa, Chairperson of DPNet Nepal, opened the meeting with an introduction to the importance of APMCDRR 2024. He outlined the objectives of the preparatory meeting, which included setting up an exhibition booth for the upcoming conference, identifying key areas of focus, and promoting stakeholder engagement and collaboration. The presentation provided a detailed overview of the agenda for APMCDRR 2024, the expected outcomes, and a roadmap to achieving the conference's goals by 2030. Dr. Thapa emphasized the need for collective efforts and innovative approaches to disaster risk reduction in the region. He shared that DPNet Nepal is actively coordinating with stakeholders to develop a common position paper and an official statement that will guide Nepal's delegation, which will participate in main sessions, sideline events, and manage an exhibitor booth to showcase Nepal's contributions in disaster risk reduction.

Dr. Thapa also reflected on past preparatory meetings, particularly those held on February 28, July 2, August 7, and September 7, 2024, that have laid the groundwork for Nepal's involvement in APMCDRR.

He further discussed the formation of two key committees to support the preparations: the APMCDRR Preparatory Committee and the Position Paper Drafting Committee, which includes representatives from NDRRMA, MoHA, UN agencies, DPNet, and other key stakeholders. Despite focusing on preparations, post-conference activities were also discussed, including finalizing the Basket Fund and the position paper, preparing materials for the exhibitor booth, and holding an in-person pre-departure meeting. Nepal's participation in APMCDRR will be followed by the celebration of DRR Day and a post-APMCDRR meeting on October 29, 2024, to maintain momentum in DRR efforts.

During the discussion session, participants raised several issues. Ms. Luna Khadka from World Vision International asked whether a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) could be finalized by the end of September, aligning with their fiscal year. She also mentioned World Vision's willingness to provide materials for display at the APMCDRR marketplace. Mr. Prakash Kafle from Oxfam suggested the need for a focal person to handle programmatic and financial matters to streamline the process. Mr. Phurba Moktan from Plan International inquired about the possibility of contributing funds for specific categories rather than the overall event. Dr. Bhisma Kumar Bhusal, from MoHA, emphasized the importance of including participants from disaster-affected areas of Nepal and media representatives in the conference. He also suggested that the position paper remain concise, as specific issues would be covered in Nepal Disaster Report (NDR), and recommended standardizing logo sizes in all materials to ensure contributors' visibility.

Mr. Anil Pokhrel, Executive Chief of NDRRMA, stressed the importance of broad stakeholder involvement for the success of APMCDRR, particularly highlighting the role of media, academia, and NGOs. He noted that their participation would not only raise awareness but also contribute diverse perspectives, research, and practical solutions to enhance DRR efforts in the region. Pokhrel emphasized that collaboration across these sectors is important for achieving the conference's goals and ensuring that the outcomes reflect a wide range of expertise and experiences. The official statement for the conference had been finalized, incorporating feedback from various stakeholders, marking an important milestone in Nepal's preparations for APMCDRR 2024.

Discussion program on "Localizing DRR and Enhancing DRR Governance"



On September 21, 2024, DPNet, DiMaNN, and ARSOW jointly organized a discussion program titled "Localizing DRR and Enhancing DRR Governance" in Janakpur. The event was participated by key stakeholders from various sectors, with the program being chaired by Sanjaya Singh, Chairperson of the NGO Federation Nepal, Dhanusha District. The chief guest for the event was Ram Singh Yadava, former State Health Minister, alongside distinguished attendees such as the Immediate Past President of DPNet and Chair of DiMaNN, IPP of NGO Federation Nepal Mr. Jit Ram Lama as well as other prominent representatives from the NGO Federation Nepal. Mr. Surya Bahadur Thapa has presented and facilitated on DRR Localization and Enhancing DRR Governance.

The primary focus of the discussion revolved around localizing Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) and enhancing governance in this critical area. Participants emphasized the importance of improving DRR governance at the grassroots level, aiming to empower local communities and social leaders to take a more active role in disaster preparedness and response. The meeting also provided an opportunity to introduce DPNet and DiMaNN, highlighting their roles in the field of DRRM in Nepal, especially in terms of coordination, policy advocacy, and fostering stronger partnerships.

One of the key areas discussed during the program was the National Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction (NPDRR), and its significance in promoting disaster resilience across Nepal. The NPDRR has been important in ensuring multi-stakeholder engagement and driving forward the national agenda on DRR, making it a focal point for policy dialogue at all levels of government.

Several major issues were raised during the discussion. First and foremost was the empowerment of local communities and social leaders. The program highlighted the necessity of building the capacity of these leaders, ensuring that they are equipped with the knowledge and skills to effectively manage disaster risks and contribute to governance. This was coupled with a call for increased budget allocations for DRR initiatives at the local level to ensure that communities have the resources needed to implement their disaster risk management plans effectively.

Policy advocacy and monitoring were also key points of concern, with participants stressing the need for continuous engagement with government bodies to ensure that DRR policies are both effective and properly implemented. The importance of transparency, accountability, and participatory planning in DRR governance was highlighted, emphasizing the role of social audits and public hearings as mechanisms for holding stakeholders accountable and ensuring that DRR efforts are inclusive.

The formulation of multi-stakeholder platforms for effective coordination, collaboration, and networking was seen as important for fostering partnerships and ensuring that efforts are not duplicated but instead harmonized for maximum impact. Integrating DRR into broader development planning was also discussed, ensuring that disaster resilience becomes an integral part of the overall development agenda in Nepal.

Other key points included the importance of social inclusion in DRR efforts, ensuring that marginalized and vulnerable groups are not left behind in disaster preparedness and response planning. There was also a strong emphasis on the need for feedback mechanisms to enhance communication between communities and local government, allowing for real-time feedback on disaster response and preparedness measures.

The program provided a comprehensive platform for discussion on strengthening local governance in DRR, with a strong focus on building capacity, enhancing coordination, and ensuring accountability at all levels of disaster management. Participants expressed their commitment to continuing to work towards these goals, with the hope of fostering more resilient communities across Nepal. Participants expressed that the program was quite interesting and useful, and suggested that similar programs should be continued in the future. Participants also suggested organizing similar programs with the involvement of the government.

Discussion Program on DRR Governance Held in Biratnagar



On 22 September 2024, a discussion program on Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) governance was organized jointly by ARWSO Nepal, DPNet, DiMaNN, and NGO Federation in Biratnagar. The event, held in the context of increasing disaster risks, brought together key stakeholders from various sectors, including representatives from NGOs, media, and the private sector. The program was chaired by Lakhan Lal Shah, representing the NGO Federation of Koshi Province. Hon. Ram Dev Yadav, the Chairperson of the Industry, Tourism, and Environment Committee of the Koshi Province, attended as the Chief Guest, while Koshi Province Assembly member Hon. Jaya Prakash Chaudhary was present as the Distinguished Guest.

The program featured notable speakers, including Jit Ram Lama, the Immediate Past President of the NGO Federation, Dr. Raju Thapa, the Chairperson of DPNet, and Mr. Surya Bahadur Thapa, the IPP of DPNet and Chairperson of DiMaNN. Dr. Thapa delivered an insightful presentation that provided an overview of Nepal's disaster management scenario, highlighting significant issues in DRR governance, particularly in rural areas.

In his presentation, Dr. Thapa emphasized various important issues affecting rural Nepal's disaster management framework. These issues included the increasing vulnerability to climate change, lack of preparedness at the local level, inadequate funding for DRR initiatives, and the need for community-level awareness programs. He also highlighted the poor integration of disaster management into local governance systems, insufficient early warning systems, and the absence of anticipatory action frameworks. Furthermore, Dr. Thapa pointed out the challenges of coordination between local governments, the private sector, and civil society organizations, emphasizing the urgent need for capacity building in rural areas.

He used visual aids including video and photo to portray the harsh realities of disaster management in Nepal, showing the widespread impact of disasters on rural communities. The presentation also covered the significant overlap between DRR and climate change adaptation, urging for a more holistic approach to tackle both issues simultaneously. Dr. Thapa stressed the importance of addressing structural weaknesses in governance, mainstreaming DRR into local and national planning processes, and integrating indigenous knowledge to ensure more effective disaster responses in rural Nepal.

Mr. Surya Bahadur Thapa, in his presentation, provided solutions to many of the problems raised by Dr. Thapa. He introduced various national-level networks such as DPNet and DiMaNN, which are instrumental in advancing disaster management initiatives in Nepal. He also discussed the need for anticipatory action and shock-responsive social protection systems to mitigate disaster risks. Emphasizing the importance of early warning systems, he urged stakeholders to adopt cost-effective measures that leverage indigenous knowledge and practices. He also highlighted the significance of effective DRR governance, stressing that better coordination, networking, collaboration, and partnerships among government agencies, civil society, and the private sector are crucial for building resilience in rural areas.

Risk mapping, a critical tool for DRR, was another area of focus in Mr. Thapa's presentation. He stressed that risk mapping should be localized and tailored to the specific needs of rural communities, many of which are situated in disaster-prone areas. By identifying vulnerable populations and high-risk zones, local authorities and organizations can prioritize interventions and allocate resources more effectively.

Jit Ram Lama, the IPP of the NGO Federation, shared his perspectives on the current state of disaster preparedness in Nepal. He pointed out that despite the increasing frequency and intensity of disasters, there remains a lack of adequate investment in preparedness efforts. Lama stressed the need to sensitize not only government bodies but also communities and households to the importance of disaster preparedness. He called for a renewed focus on localization, noting that DRR efforts must begin at the community level.

Mr. Lama also addressed the need to mainstream DRR into all spheres of work, particularly within the governance framework. He cautioned against the prevalence of corruption during disaster response efforts, highlighting the role of CSOs in ensuring transparency and accountability. He urged civil society to take the lead in advocating for better governance in disaster management and to integrate DRR considerations into their work across various sectors.

Hon. Jaya Prakash Chaudhary expressed concern about the current focus on disaster response, highlighting that preparedness, recovery, and rehabilitation are often neglected. He stressed that stakeholders, especially local governments and CSO, need to shift their focus toward these important areas to build resilience in communities. "We are focusing on response, but not enough on preparedness, recovery, and rehabilitation. Programs like this help sensitize stakeholders to the importance of a holistic approach to disaster management," Chaudhary said. He acknowledged the presence of local government representatives at the program and emphasized the role of CSOs in promoting preparedness initiatives,

particularly at the grassroots level. He urged these organizations to lead efforts in educating communities about disaster risks and preparedness, ensuring that they are equipped to face future challenges.

Hon. Ram Dev Yadav, in his remarks as Chief Guest, stressed the need to mainstream disaster management into every sector of development. He addressed a common misconception that industries and tourism may not need to concern themselves with disaster preparedness, explaining that disasters can have devastating effects on these sectors. "You might not think industries or tourism need to care about DRR, but imagine if a tourist dies in the mountains due to a disaster—it could significantly decrease tourism numbers," Yadav stated. He pointed out that the impact of disasters on the tourism industry could harm Nepal's economy, which heavily relies on tourism revenue. Similarly, he noted that industries failing to account for disaster risks could face economic ruin in the wake of a catastrophe. Yadav also spoke about the increasing costs of climate change in Nepal, particularly for the country's rural communities. He emphasized that climate change is not just a national problem, but an international one that demands global cooperation. "Climate change is an international problem, not just a national one. Its effects are being felt across Nepal, and they are becoming increasingly costly,". One of the critical impacts of climate change mentioned by Yadav was the growing threat of Glacial Lake Outburst Floods, which endanger downstream communities. He also highlighted the depletion of underground water as a consequence of rising temperatures and erratic weather patterns, which are affecting water resources in many parts of Koshi Province. Furthermore, Yadav suggested that future such DRR programs should involve geologists and experts in environmental sciences to provide technical insights into the geological challenges that contribute to disaster risks in Nepal. "We need to have a geologist in such programs. Their expertise is important in understanding the geological factors that contribute to disasters and can guide us in creating more effective mitigation strategies," Yadav added. His remarks highlighted the need for a multidisciplinary approach to disaster management, combining local knowledge with scientific expertise to address both natural and human-induced risks.

Program Chair Mr. Lakhan Lal Shah mentioned that NGO Federation Members are showing their readiness to work on disaster management. He requested all stakeholders to mainstream disaster management in their every sphere of work and thanked all participants for their active participation in the program.

Empowering Local Communities for Disaster Risk Reduction Discussed at Hetauda



On September 23, 2024 discussion program was held on Disaster Risk Reduction localization in Hetauda, drawing attention to important issues surrounding disaster preparedness and governance at the local level. The event was chaired by Ms. Ramila Sapkota, Chairperson of the NGO Federation of Nepal (NFN) in Makawanpur. The chief guest was the Honorable Minister for Transport, Labor, and Employment, Pream Bhakta Maharjan. Among the key figures present were Chief District Officer (CDO) of Makawanpur, Tirtharaj Chiluwal, Chief of the District Coordination Committee, Lalit Glan, and Suresh Khanal, a representative from the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Law. The welcome speech was delivered by Kamal BK, Chairperson of DPNep Bagmati Province, while notable contributions came from Jitram Lama, Immediate Past President (IPP) of the NGO Federation Nepal, and Surya Bahadur Thapa IPP of DPNep and DiMaNN Chair, whose presentation centered on the theme of localizing DRR and improving DRR governance.

In his address, Thapa highlighted the crucial role of DPNep and DiMaNN in advancing disaster risk reduction initiatives across Nepal, focusing particularly on policy advocacy and coordination. He highlighted the importance of the National Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction (NPDRR) and discussed how it serves as a vital mechanism for fostering collaboration between government agencies and other stakeholders. The discussion at the event revolved around pressing issues such as empowering local communities, ensuring adequate budget allocations for DRR, enhancing policy monitoring, and promoting transparency and accountability in disaster management. These concerns were echoed by various stakeholders who agreed that a more participatory planning and monitoring process is necessary to address the gaps in DRR efforts at the grassroots level.

The need for stronger involvement of local governments in disaster management was repeatedly emphasized during the discussion. Participants stressed the importance of DRR mainstreaming, meaning the integration of disaster risk reduction into broader development planning. This approach, they argued,

would help ensure that disaster preparedness is not treated as a standalone issue but is embedded into all aspects of governance and policy. Similarly, the formation of multi-stakeholder platforms like NPDRR was seen as essential to bringing together various actors from different sectors to collaborate on disaster resilience initiatives.

Another major point raised was the capacity enhancement of local leaders and governments. As disasters often disproportionately affect the most vulnerable populations, such as poor families, women, the elderly, and people with disabilities, the need for training and exposure programs for local leaders was deemed critical. Strengthening the capacity of local authorities, it was argued, would enable them to respond more effectively to disaster risks and improve overall resilience in their communities. This ties into the broader call for enhanced coordination and networking among all stakeholders, including government bodies, civil society organizations, and the private sector.

Social inclusion was another focal point of the discussions. Participants argued that disaster management efforts should be more inclusive, with particular attention given to marginalized groups. Social audits and public hearings were identified as important mechanisms for ensuring that DRR programs are transparent, accountable, and inclusive. It was also suggested that feedback mechanisms should be established to allow community members to voice their concerns and contribute to the planning and implementation of disaster risk reduction initiatives.

Budget allocation for disaster management was a recurring theme, with many participants calling for increased financial investment in DRR at both the local and national levels. It was noted that while there has been progress in developing DRR policies, the lack of funding continues to hinder effective implementation. This issue is closely related to the need for better policy advocacy and monitoring, as ensuring that allocated budgets are used efficiently and transparently remains a challenge.

Early warning systems were also discussed as a key area requiring improvement. Participants called for more efforts to develop and implement early warning mechanisms that could help communities prepare for impending disasters. Alongside this, there were calls for stronger coordination between different stakeholders to ensure that DRR efforts are aligned and complementary, rather than fragmented and inefficient.

The event concluded with a focus on the future of DRR in Nepal, with several participants urging the government and civil society to take immediate action to address the gaps identified during the discussion. Training and capacity-building initiatives, enhanced coordination among stakeholders, and a stronger focus on policy advocacy and monitoring were seen as critical steps toward building a more resilient Bagmati Province.

National Dialogue on Post-Disaster Issues and Challenges of Landless People



On 30th September 2024, National Dialogue was held at Moksha, Jhamsikhel, Lalitpur, on Post-Disaster Issues and Challenges of Landless People organized by ASF Nepal and Foundation Abbe Pierre in collaboration with DPNet Nepal, CSRC, N-CDMC, and DiMaNN. This program was conducted in a hybrid format. The event was chaired by Dr. Raju Thapa, DPNet Chairperson, and Chair of the Cooperative and Natural Resources Committee, Federal Parliament House of Representative Honorable Kusum Thapa Magar as a chief guest of a program. The program was attended by diverse stakeholders and was honored by the presence of officials from the government such as Mr. Loknath Bastola, Under Secretary at the National Human Rights Commission, Ms. Surya Maya Danuwar, Deputy Mayor at Panchkhal Municipality along with DRR experts, representatives from various organizations like NGO, INGOs, Academia, Networks and Media. The program began with the National Anthem.

The program was facilitated by Keshav Bhatta, Treasurer of DPNet Nepal who focused on addressing important issues related to land ownership and disaster resilience.

Mr. Surya Bahadur Thapa, Chairperson of DiMaNN and IPP of DPNet Nepal addressed the gathering by stating that due to the recent heavy rainfall, which caused floods and landslides, there was consideration to postpone the program. However, it became evident that such disasters further highlighted the urgent need to focus on landlessness, making the issue even more pressing. Only relevant stakeholders involved in addressing homelessness and landlessness were invited, including Members of Parliament, government representatives, INGOs, and NGOs, to ensure that today's discussions could be incorporated into future plans and policies. He mentioned that despite forecasts and warnings prior to the rainfall, the disaster still resulted in significant damage, revealing a lack of seriousness, preparedness, and practice in addressing such issues. The authorities who should have been aware and proactive in this context remained largely uninformed and lacked consciousness. Mr. Thapa urged the MPs to bring this matter to the attention of their committees to ensure it gains the focus and attention it deserves.

Ms. Salena Sangachhe, Program Coordinator, ASF Nepal, presented the event's objectives, which included understanding the impact of natural disasters on land ownership and property rights, identifying challenges in securing land ownership post-disaster, exploring innovative solutions and best practices to address these challenges, and promoting collaboration among key stakeholders such as government agencies, NGOs, community leaders, and affected populations. Ms. Sangachhe addressed that the event aimed to create a platform for dialogue and encourage shared solutions to the complex challenges posed by disasters on land ownership.

Session 1: Understanding the Present Context/Situation of the Landless Post-Disaster

Dr. Jagat Basnet from CSRC led a session discussing the socio-economic conditions and challenges faced by landless individuals across various regions, including the hills, plains (Terai), and both eastern and western parts of Nepal. The districts of Jajarkot and Dhangadhi were highlighted for their significant landlessness issues. Landless individuals were defined as those living on others' land, unable to invest, working as laborers, feeling insecure, and facing discrimination from their communities. The discussion also extended to those who own land but lack ownership documents, restricting their access to disaster-related grants. Field experiences from Jajarkot showed that Dalit communities face dire living conditions, with many lacking secure shelter. Providing an example, he emphasized that out of 29 families living along the riverbank, 17 are completely landless. Some families received compensation for land taken by hydro projects, but those whose land is flood-prone were left uncompensated. According to municipal data, approximately 3,700 individuals in Jajarkot are categorized as landless. In Dhangadhi, a Dalit community located in low-lying areas faces yearly flooding, forcing them to relocate for up to two months. Dr. Basnet expressed major challenges in these areas include the lack of safe electricity and drinking water, poor collaboration from local government, and the absence of employment opportunities.

Discussion for the first session:

1. **Mr. Bhoj Raj Shrestha, Chairperson, Independent Living Center:** Suggested providing jobs and housing for the landless and emphasized the need to include disabled people in discussions.

2. **Mr. Loknath Bastota, Under Secretary, National Human Right Commission:** Advocated for ensuring social security for vulnerable populations, even if they relocate to areas outside their original place of citizenship.
3. **Ms. Bhuwonshwori Parajuli, Vice President, Society of Nepalese Architects:** Recommended empowering women in decision-making related to land issues.

Session 2: Legal Practices/Policies/Guidelines to Address Landlessness Post-Disaster

The first presentation from session 2 was carried out by **Mr. Ganesh Bhatta, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Land Management Cooperatives and Poverty Alleviation for joint collaboration**. He focused on the historical causes of landlessness, including natural disasters, social discrimination, and ineffective policy implementation. He outlined several definitions of landlessness, such as absolute landlessness, where individuals have no land at all; functional landlessness, where there is no legal ownership; and tenant landlessness, where tenants lack ownership rights. Although the Constitution mandates the elimination of landlessness and guarantees housing rights, these provisions are not being effectively implemented due to poor collaboration among government entities. Additionally, there are no specific policies or legal provisions addressing post-disaster landlessness, and the Ministry of Land has been notably absent from national climate change adaptation programs.

Discussion for the Second session:

1. **Dr. Basanta Raj Adhikari, Director, Tribhuvan University,** inquired about the government's measures to address shifting river channels causing increased landlessness.
2. **Mr. Prabesh Bhattarai, President, Youth for Good Nepal:** Emphasized the need for awareness and action on climate change among youth. He also stressed the context that as mostly the youth are not in leadership positions and generally are working in voluntarily supporting roles.
3. **Ms. Pratigya Neupane, Program Coordinator, NARMIN:** Highlighted the need for improved coordination among stakeholders.

The Second presentation from session 2 was carried out by **Advocate Mr. Bishnu Prasad Timilsina, General Secretary, DiMaNN and Forum for Protection of Consumer Right Nepal**. Mr. Timilsina presented on the Gaps and lacking in the policies and prevalent legal issues of the landless post disaster. Mr. Timilsina emphasized the importance of understanding how victims feel during crises, stating that their emotional response plays a vital role in overcoming disaster situations. He highlighted the challenges faced by landless and marginalized communities in accessing basic needs—such as food, shelter, and clothing—when disasters strike. Mr. Timilsina pointed out that although the laws of Nepal guarantee the right to shelter and access to land, these provisions are not being adequately enforced. He called for immediate follow-up and monitoring of government actions to ensure that resources and rehabilitation support reach those in need. Citing the recent devastation caused by landslides, Mr. Timilsina argued that marginalized communities, particularly the landless, should receive priority in receiving shelter and rehabilitation. He stressed the need for hazard mapping, preparedness, and government support to ensure

that affected populations are relocated to safe areas and provided with the means to rebuild their homes. Mr. Timilsina concluded by reiterating that without the involvement of the central government, efforts by other entities to provide shelter and support would be insufficient. This presentation highlights ongoing concerns about disaster preparedness and shelter access in Nepal, particularly for vulnerable groups, and calls for stronger governmental action to address these issues.

Session 3: Exploring Solutions and Best Practices

Mr. Minar Thapa Magar, National Coordinator of Sindh Housing Recovery and Reconstruction Platform (SHRRP) presented lessons learned from Pakistan's severe flooding in 2022, which devastated large areas and displaced millions of people. He emphasized the importance of conducting detailed demographic assessments and leveraging technology in recovery processes. The Goth Abad Act was highlighted as a legal framework that provides land allocation to the landless, offering a model for addressing such issues. A case study of Lakho Village was presented to illustrate the challenges of ensuring equal land distribution in post-disaster scenarios. Proposed solutions included implementing community-led approaches supported by technology and developing a settlement improvement plan that utilizes technological advancements to enhance recovery and resilience efforts.

Session 4: Conclusion and Way Forward

Mr. Kedar Neupane, Former Secretary of the Nepal Government and DPNet Nepal Advisor, presented the conclusion and way forward of the overall dialogue. highlighted that despite comprehensive constitutional provisions, the lack of effective implementation continues to hinder disaster response and recovery efforts for the landless population. Areas such as Jajarkot and Rukum were mentioned as lacking evacuation or recovery centers, which worsens the situation for landless and impoverished communities. He emphasized the need for coordinated efforts among various organizations working to address landlessness, though the outcomes so far have been limited. Key recommendations included establishing effective land use planning to resolve land distribution challenges and fostering collaboration among government entities to address land disputes and poverty, which are often exacerbated by disasters.

Remarks by Chief Guest Honorable MP Kusum Thapa Magar

She thanked all the organizers for arranging such an important event and highlighted that the presentations effectively reflected the objectives of the dialogue. She pointed out that hundreds of people lose their lives each year due to various forms of disasters. She acknowledged the need to revisit the acts and policies related to DRR and landlessness and stressed the importance of timely evaluation and monitoring. She emphasized the need for coordination and collaboration among the three tiers of government to address the issues and challenges related to post-disaster landlessness. Additionally, she also showed her commitment to discussing these issues on local, provincial, and federal levels of the Cooperative and Natural Resources Committee.

Mr. Pawan K. Shrestha, Director of ASF presented the Momento to the presenters, Chief guest and Chair of the event.

Closing Remarks by event Chair Dr. Raju Thapa

Dr. Thapa emphasized that land and landless issues are rarely discussed, despite the formation of various institutional structures and committees. To address this gap, DPNet Nepal has been making efforts. Five years ago, in the presence of Honorable Minister Padma Aryal, DPNet organized a discussion on a Risk-Sensitive Land Use Plan. Dr. Thapa also pointed out the absence of land-related issues disaster assessment guideline, 2013 specially for IRA and MIRA He highlighted the ongoing challenge of amending the Disaster Assessment Guidelines to include post-disaster landless issues, emphasizing that this should be a priority. According to him, it seems that many rights exist only in documentation. Dr. Thapa further recalled the context of the Jajarkot earthquake and the situation during the civil war due to the land related certification issued by the the parallel government. He mentioned the case of Surkhet, where flood-affected areas highlight the struggles of landless and citizenship-less individuals. The issues related to landlessness and the difficulties in providing support by the development partners were also emphasized in his remarks. He urged all stakeholders to take action and continuously advocate for these issues at their respective levels. Lastly, he expressed his appreciation for the hard work behind organizing the National Dialogue, especially recognizing ASF and the overall organizing team.

DPNet Nepal Discussion Program with Advisor



On October 6, 2024, DPNet Nepal organized advisor meeting at Nepal Red Cross Society Hall. The objective of the discussion was to highlight the challenges faced by country in the wake of the devastating floods and landslides. The insights shared by the speakers reflect a recognition of the systemic failures that have exacerbated the impact of this disaster.

Dr. Raju Thapa, Chairperson of DPNet, emphasized the urgent need for proactive disaster preparedness and timely governmental action. Reflecting on the tragic loss of life and widespread devastation, it is clear that we must learn from these events to pave the way for effective risk management and disaster response. Dr. Thapa stressed the importance of improving communication, enhancing alert systems, and ensuring the accountability of authorities. He called for a collaborative approach, leveraging the expertise of all stakeholders—government bodies, civil society, and local communities—not only to address the immediate aftermath of disasters but also to implement sustainable strategies that prevent future calamities. Through knowledge sharing, strategic planning, and community engagement, we can build resilience in our societies and ensure that no lives are lost due to negligence. It is time for action, reflection, and a united front in the face of adversity.

Mr. Surya Bahadur Thapa, IPP, DPNet Nepal, expressed deep concern over the recent monsoon floods and landslides. He urged members to approach the situation calmly to make sound decisions for mitigating such disasters. Despite warnings about the monsoon rains, significant suffering occurred, and infrastructure was heavily damaged. Mr. Thapa highlighted the need for accountability from authorities who failed to protect citizens, emphasizing that the members present must play a key role in policy implementation, advocacy, and risk reduction efforts. He stressed the importance of collaboration between professionals, timely communication, and interlinking efforts with government bodies at all levels. Mr. Thapa also pointed out that municipal authorities knew of the risks to settlements near riverbanks and could have used simple measures, like microphones for warnings and schools or party venues as evacuation centers, to reduce harm. He called for evidence-based action and collective efforts to prevent

future disasters, urging the members to take responsibility and work together to implement necessary changes. Mr. Thapa emphasized that the challenges we face are pertinent to all citizens, highlighting the need for a proactive approach. He encouraged voluntary advocacy and collaboration with all advisory committees to address these issues. Additionally, he suggested that policy auditing should be prioritized to ensure effective implementation and accountability.

Dr. Dharam Uprety, Advisor, DPNet Nepal commented that DHM Nepa is a risk communicator; however, the department people are scared. Besides it, there were also positive interpretations made by DHM Nepal; similar is the case with NEOC, as it also goes under emergency with the emergence of any disasters. In accordance with the recent flood, he highlighted the gap in communication update on the flood alert systems and lack of timely law enforcement, uncommitted and frequent replacement of government official members, establishment of the required institutions, but the lack of working in the field as the reasons for the damage faced in higher intensity by the people. Further, he emphasized the need for collective voice, reducing fear of internal psychology, minimizing ego, and changes in the traditional working needs to be addressed for preparedness and risk reduction.

Mr. Ram Prasad Bhattarai, Advisor at DPNet Nepal, pointed out that there was insufficient time to alert people for evacuation. He mentioned that despite water level monitoring at the Kulekhani Dam, where the gates were opened, causing floods in many areas, better vigilance and communication with the relevant authorities could have reduced casualties. He also commented that the deaths from the Jhyalpe Khola landslide were due to negligence, which could have been prevented with a more effective traffic response system. Regarding the situation of people in the Nakhhu area, who were forced to stay on rooftops for several hours, he emphasized that evacuation should have occurred before the water level rise. Mr. Bhattarai praised the use of SMS alerts as a good practice but noted that the system lacked timely updates, with warnings being delayed due to information traffic. He concluded by stating that with long-term detailed planning, proactive advocacy, and timely action, the organization could grow stronger and better prepared.

Mr. Bamshi Acharya, Advisor DPNet Nepal has raised concerns regarding the lack of efforts by government officials at municipal levels in addressing disaster preparedness and recovery. He emphasized the urgent need for crisis zone assessments, the establishment of recovery laws, and increased pressure on officials to enforce these laws to ensure early preparedness. It has also been observed that those responsible for disaster response, especially local authorities like mayors, are neglecting their duties. They seem to focus on the needs of the community only during election times. This neglect is evident in the lack of timely rescue efforts, such as when people stranded on rooftops could have been saved if authorities had acted promptly. The overall response from officials remains inadequate, with outdated methods and repeated decisions that fail to address the current needs of disaster management. He emphasized that though there are high expectations for recovery, there is a lack of proper tools and resources to meet these demands, making it critical to assess what progress, if any, has been made in recovery efforts. As a key platform for DRR, DPNet Nepal plays an important role in tracking these issues and applying pressure on authorities to take necessary action. However, he provides

suggestions and recommendations to ensure the implementation of all the collected suggestions and learnings. It is essential for these suggestions to be acknowledged and acted upon by both local and higher authorities to ensure meaningful progress in disaster preparedness and response. He also advocated that the situation, provisions, and responses need to be accurately reflected in order to determine a clear way forward. This alignment is essential for effective planning and action.

Mr. Thule Rai, Advisor, DPNet Nepal, highlighted the lack of coordination between levels of government and the structures involved in disaster management. He emphasized the need for timely media handling and improved communication. In terms of preparedness, he noted that the budgets for responding agencies have not been consistently allocated. Regarding the training on response and rescue, it has significantly decreased compared to the past. Mr. Rai also pointed out that sensitive issues should be addressed by the responsible authorities. He mentioned that seasonal changes cannot be controlled, but if the right personnel are in place, continuity in services could be maintained. Furthermore, he stressed the importance of creating a generic checklist for government agencies to follow in disaster response, along with established protocols. Although the NDRRMA has a framework, it currently lacks detailed content and actionable items. Further, he highlights the importance of the mobilization of manpower, authorities, and volunteers in evacuation and relief programs. He shares his observation on the Bardaeu Lalitpur and Nakkhu rivers lacking a siren warning system, which needs to be worked on to prevent further calamities.

Mr. Dinanath Bhandari, Advisor, DPNet Nepal, highlighted several critical issues in disaster management that need urgent attention. He noted that major decisions are often made without thorough field assessments, emphasizing the necessity for CDOs to engage directly with communities in the field. Additionally, he pointed out that employees must effectively communicate decisions made by the Council of Ministers to ensure clarity and transparency. Mr. Bhandari also identified a conflict between the MoHA and the NDRRMA. He stressed the importance of NDRRMA developing its own work plan and annual budget rather than relying solely on certain companies and donors. Furthermore, NDRRMA should be able to address and discuss any shortcomings in its current operations. He advocated for the establishment of regulatory authorities under the law and emphasized the need for clear communication and coordination among the three tiers of government. Mr. Bhandari called for strong advocacy efforts to tackle these pressing issues. He also pointed out that the Sendai Framework should be aligned with both Local Disaster Risk Financing and National Disaster Risk Financing to enhance disaster resilience. He raised concerns about SMS systems often jamming, which complicates communication in critical moments. Additionally, he mentioned that the polygon system in Kathmandu is not functioning effectively due to the high number of towers, and urged efforts to better utilize ringtone alerts for effective communication during emergencies.

Mr. Tirtha Joshi, DPNet, Advisor, emphasized the importance of local governance in disaster response, stating that CDO must go to the affected areas to facilitate relief efforts. Mr. Joshi advocated for local bodies to take responsibility, suggesting that if the response comes from the ward level, it would be more effective. He stressed that the Constitution recognizes this need, although it may not explicitly outline the roles of local bodies in disaster management.

Mr. Shyam Sundar Jnavaly, DPNet Nepal Advisor, expressed concerns regarding the current state of disaster management. He noted that while there is a formal structure in place, it is primarily seen on paper and lacks effective implementation in a proactive manner. He emphasized the need for development initiatives to begin at the ward level to ensure a more responsive approach. He highlighted that meetings are essential for fostering collaboration and improving the overall effectiveness of disaster management strategies.

Mr. Ram Chandra Neupane pointed out that many municipalities are experiencing ineffective communication between the DEOC and local levels, which has led to insufficient information collection and dissemination. He noted the lack of an online system to streamline this process. The initial plan involved the DEOC entering data while the NDRRMA would verify it; however, this plan has not been effectively implemented.

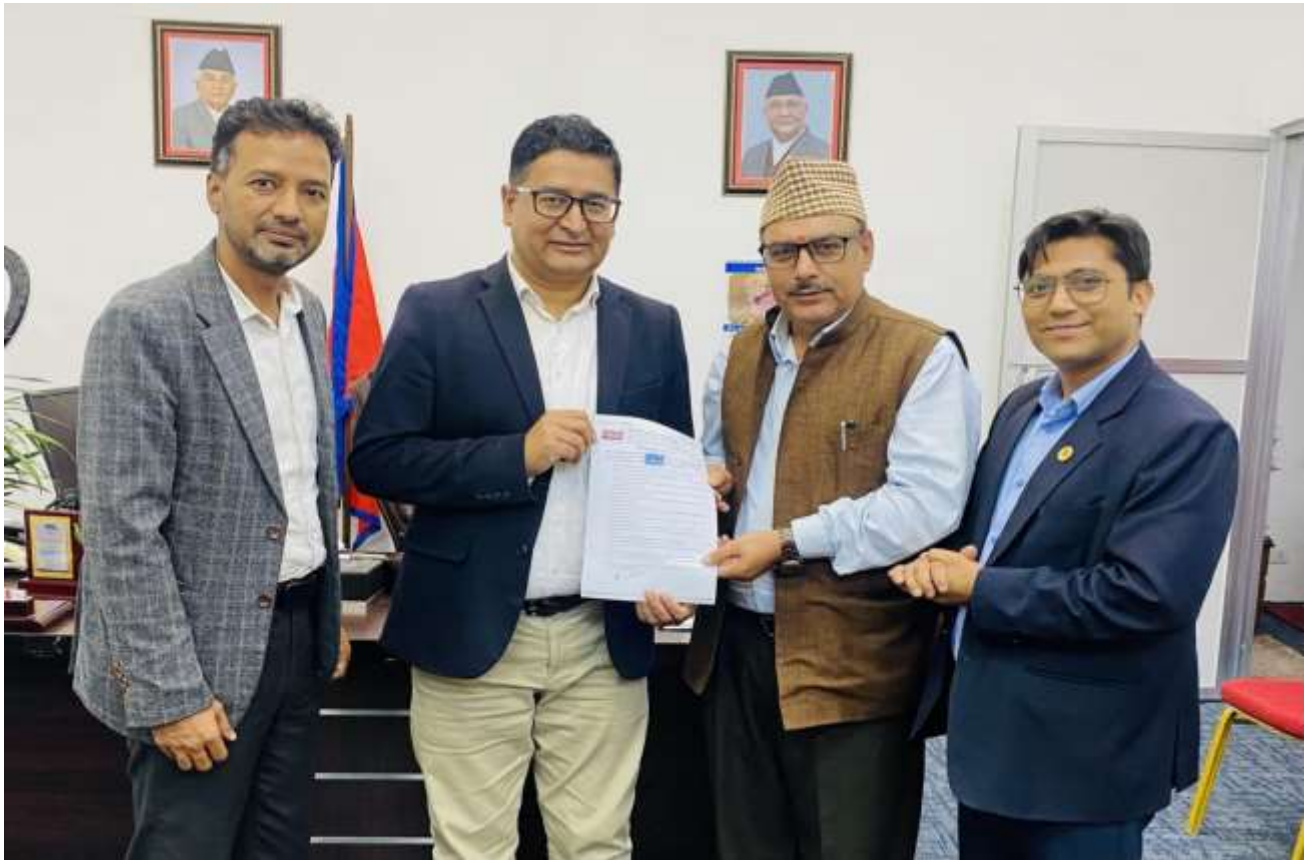
Mr. Amod Mani Dixit, Advisor, DPNet Nepal, emphasized the importance of understanding events in general terms, particularly regarding the return period of disaster events. While a lot of knowledge has been gained, there are still gaps. Many discussions have focused on hazards and risks, but there are issues when it comes to resilience. The observations reveal that it's not just about the equipment, but also about human resources. The NDRRMA has not been able to take any action on the six identified issues of them.

Mr. Jagannath Kurmi, Board member, DPNet Nepal, emphasized that despite investing millions in the formulation of Local Adaptations Plan of Actions, there has been a lack of focus on its implementation. He highlighted that if we approach or authorize local leaders, such as ward chairpersons, they are likely to prioritize those who voted for them in the past. Additionally, he pointed out a significant lack of preparedness and planning at the local level, which hampers effective progress.

Mr. Rupendra Basnet, Advisor, DPNet Nepal, mentioned the importance of understanding the flow of water in rivers and highlighted the issues of information dissemination and communication gaps. He stated that when it comes to the Bagmati region, effective risk mapping would be beneficial.

In his concluding remarks, Dr. Thapa emphasized the importance of translating the rich discussions and insights shared during the meeting into actionable recommendations. He proposed that a consolidated set of recommendations be prepared and submitted to the Prime Minister, addressing the critical gaps in disaster management, communication, preparedness, and accountability. Dr. Thapa stressed that these recommendations should highlight the urgent need for systemic improvements in disaster risk reduction and response. He expressed his heartfelt thanks to all the advisors and participants for their valuable contributions to the discussion. As the program came to an end, Dr. Thapa extended his warm wishes for the upcoming festive season of Dashain, Tihar, and Chhath, wishing everyone happiness, health, and safety. With these words, Dr. Thapa formally closed the program.

DPNet and DiMaNN Present DRR Recommendations to NDRRMA



On October 6, 2024, DPNet and DiMaNN jointly handed over a set of comprehensive disaster risk reduction recommendations to the Executive Chief of the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Authority (NDRRMA). This event, led by DPNet Chair Dr. Raju Thapa and DiMaNN Chair Mr. Surya Bahadur Thapa, marks a step in improving disaster preparedness and resilience across Nepal's seven provinces. These recommendations are the result of extensive discussions held across all provinces, organized by DPNet, DiMaNN, the NGO Federation Nepal, and ARSOW Nepal. The programs engaged local stakeholders, including government representatives, civil society, and community leaders, to identify pressing disaster management challenges and propose effective solutions.

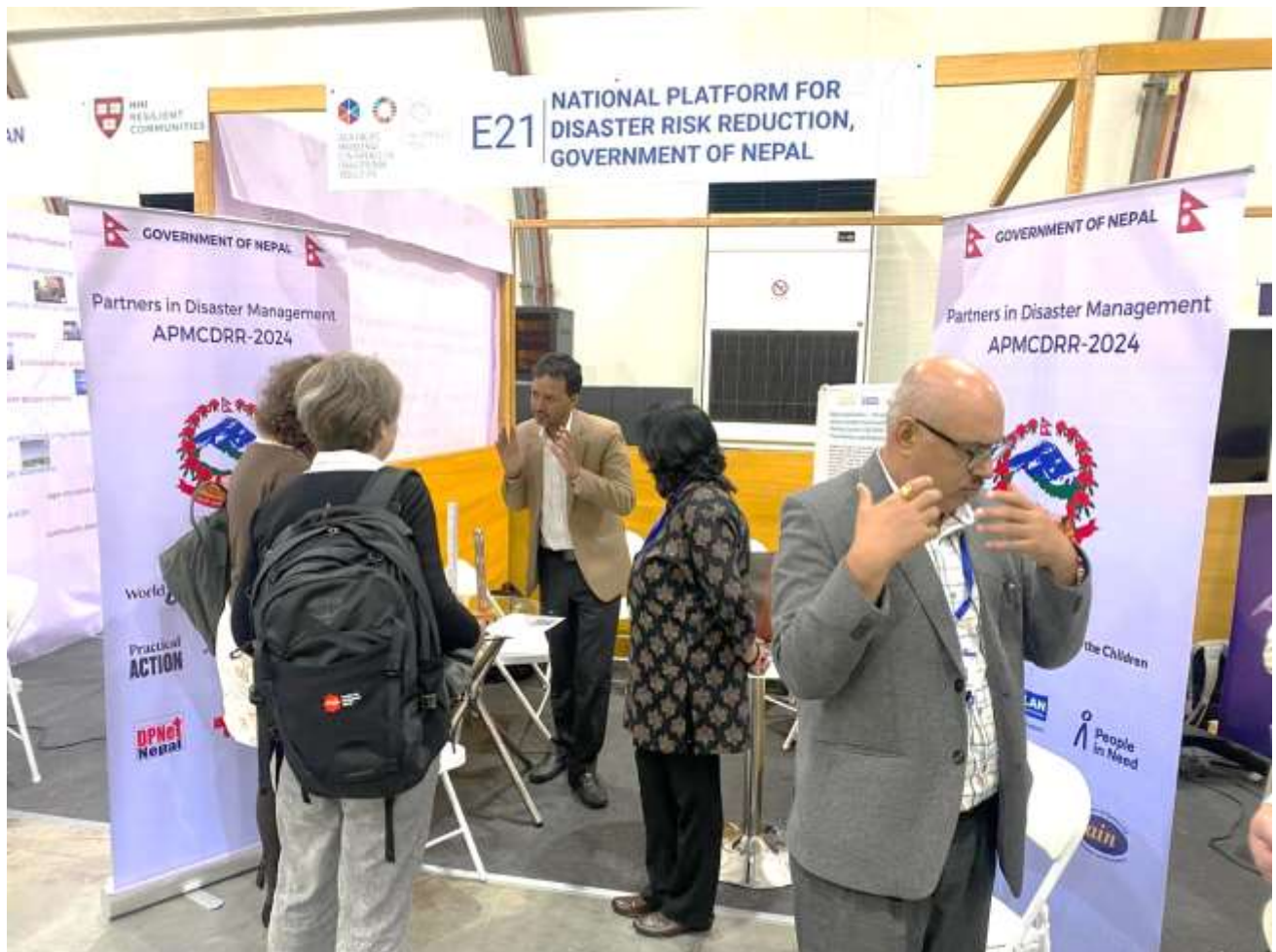
During these discussions, several issues were highlighted, including environmental concerns such as unchecked extraction of river materials and the need for stricter enforcement of building codes, especially in seismically active areas. The recommendations aim to promote localized, sustainable approaches to disaster management by encouraging the use of indigenous knowledge and locally available resources for disaster preparedness and recovery. The focus on community involvement is particularly strong, as the recommendations call for the active participation of local communities in identifying risks, formulating disaster management plans, and monitoring and evaluating DRR initiatives.

One of the key areas emphasized in the recommendations is the promotion of year-round disaster communication campaigns. These campaigns, supported by government-sponsored media advertisements, are seen as crucial in raising public awareness about disaster risks and preparedness strategies. Additionally, the recommendations stress the importance of adapting local infrastructure planning to address the impacts of climate change, particularly with regard to managing river encroachment caused by increasingly erratic monsoon patterns. They also advocate for the promotion of disaster risk financing and risk transfer mechanisms to mitigate the financial impacts of disasters on communities. Another significant aspect of the recommendations is the call for stronger governance and transparency in disaster management efforts. This includes advocating for increased budget allocation for DRR at both local and national levels, conducting social audits, and holding public hearings to ensure accountability. The recommendations also highlight the need to strengthen partnerships between government agencies, civil society organizations, and the private sector to improve coordination and collaboration in disaster management.

During the handover event, Dr. Raju Thapa emphasized the importance of integrating local knowledge into disaster risk reduction strategies. He noted that local communities are at the heart of building resilience and that their knowledge and practices should be incorporated into formal disaster management frameworks. Similarly, Mr. Surya Bahadur Thapa highlighted the need for inclusive governance and strong partnerships, stating that disaster management requires the active involvement of all sectors, not just the government. The recommendations also call for the integration of anticipatory action and shock-responsive social protection frameworks into local DRR strategies, aiming to prepare communities for potential disasters before they occur. This proactive approach is seen as vital in reducing the impact of disasters on vulnerable populations, including women, children, the elderly, and people with disabilities.

The Executive Chief of NDRRMA expressed his appreciation for the recommendations, acknowledging their importance in shaping Nepal's disaster management policies. He committed to reviewing the recommendations for integration into national DRR strategies, emphasizing that they will play a crucial role in enhancing the country's resilience to disasters.

Nepal Highlights DRR Initiatives at the 2024 Asia-Pacific Ministerial Conference



The Asia-Pacific Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (APMCDRR) is an intergovernmental conference that plays a crucial role in shaping the disaster risk management strategies of the Asia-Pacific region, the most disaster-prone area in the world. Established to facilitate the implementation of the global frameworks like the Hyogo Framework for Action (2005-2015) and, subsequently, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (2015-2030), the APMCDRR has evolved into one of the most important platforms for enhancing regional cooperation in disaster risk reduction (DRR). The first conference, then known as the Asian Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (AMCDRR), was held in Beijing in 2005. It marked the beginning of a series of conferences that have since been hosted in countries such as India, Malaysia, the Republic of Korea, Indonesia, Thailand, and Mongolia, showcasing the region's commitment to DRR.

The Indian Ocean tsunami of 2004, which devastated large parts of coastal Asia, particularly India, marked a turning point for many governments in the region, pushing them to adopt more robust DRR policies. These conferences, in partnership with the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR),

have since provided a platform for countries to share lessons learned, coordinate their approaches to disaster risk governance, and work collectively toward preventing and mitigating disaster risks.

In 2022, the APMCDRR was hosted in Australia, reflecting the region's growing sense of urgency in addressing the rising frequency and intensity of natural disasters, particularly those exacerbated by climate change. The recent APMCDRR was held in Manila, Philippines, from 14-18 October 2024, with over 5,000 participants from government, civil society, academia, the private sector etc. As the host, the Philippines is a fitting choice, given its geographic vulnerability to natural disasters, including typhoons, earthquakes, and volcanic eruptions.

Thematic Focus of APMCDRR 2024

The APMCDRR 2024 is centered around three thematic pillars: enhancing disaster risk reduction financing, fostering gender-responsive and inclusive disaster risk governance, and strengthening localization in both urban and rural resilience efforts. These pillars are underpinned by four cross-cutting themes: science, technology, and knowledge; multi-stakeholder coordination and collaboration; convergence and coherence of disaster risk strategies; and full private sector engagement.

During the conference's opening ceremony, President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. of the Philippines emphasized the need for international cooperation and increased investments in DRR, pointing out that climate change is intensifying the impacts of disasters, particularly in vulnerable regions like the Philippines. He called on both developed and developing nations to increase access to DRR financing mechanisms, especially for countries that are least developed and highly vulnerable.

Kamal Kishore, Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General for Disaster Risk Reduction, reinforced the urgency of deepening regional cooperation and aligning national DRR policies with the global frameworks like the Sendai Framework. He acknowledged that while the Asia-Pacific region is a pioneer in many DRR strategies, countries are falling behind on meeting the Sendai Framework's targets. The complexity and unpredictability of disasters are increasing, requiring not just local and national solutions but also regional cooperation and convergence of efforts.

The APMCDRR 2024 also features an exhibition booth and the Philippine Pavilion, showcasing the country's best practices in DRR. The closing ceremony wrapped up with key insights gathered from plenary sessions, panel discussions, ignite stage presentations, exhibition booths, and the Philippine pavilion with following key takeaways:

- Governments must establish inclusive disaster risk governance frameworks and invest in both structural and non-structural measures to prevent new risks and reduce existing ones, ensuring shared responsibility among all stakeholders.
- Local action is essential for building resilience, with at-risk communities participating in risk assessments and local governments allocating dedicated DRR budgets and policies, supported by improved access to finance.

- Strengthening ecological systems and protecting biodiversity through nature-based solutions are important for integrating climate change adaptation with DRR, highlighting the importance of ecosystem health.
- Private sector involvement in DRR should extend beyond corporate social responsibility, embedding resilience into business models and fostering alliances for mutual benefit.
- The Gender Action Plan calls for capacity building to ensure women's inclusion in DRR decision-making, promoting gender-responsive strategies at all levels of governance.

Nepal's Participation in APMCDRR 2024

Nepal's involvement in the APMCDRR 2024 highlights the country's significant role and ongoing commitment to disaster risk management in a region where natural disasters are common and often devastating. Nepal's participation in the conference, led by the Executive Chief of the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Authority (NDRRMA) Mr. Anil Pokhrel and overall delegation was coordinated by the DPNet Chair and Member Secretary of NDPRR Dr. Raju Thapa. The team comprises a diverse delegation of 43 representatives from both government and non-government sectors. The delegation highlights Nepal's multi-stakeholder approach to DRR, involving not only government officials but also experts from academia, disaster-affected communities, and civil society organizations such as DPNet, which coordinated Nepal's entire participation in the event as the secretariat of the National Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction.

Before attending the APMCDRR 2024, Nepal conducted extensive preparatory work for over six months, which involved drafting a position paper and official statements. These documents were shared with more than 5,000 stakeholders for feedback, ensuring a broad representation of perspectives. After incorporating relevant feedback, Nepal finalized its position paper, which was printed in accessible formats such as Braille to ensure inclusivity, particularly for people with disabilities.

Nepal's position at APMCDRR 2024 highlights the country's vulnerability to natural disasters, particularly in the context of climate change. As a landlocked and least-developed country, Nepal faces significant challenges in managing disasters, which have become more frequent and severe in recent years. The country is particularly susceptible to extreme weather events like floods, landslides, and Glacial Lake Outburst Floods (GLOFs), all of which are exacerbated by climate change. Despite these challenges, Nepal has made progress in DRR, adopting comprehensive frameworks and policies such as the Bipad Portal and establishing localized DRRM governance structures.

However, financial constraints and capacity bottlenecks continue to hinder the full implementation of these strategies. Nepal is therefore calling for greater international cooperation and enhanced access to climate financing mechanisms like the Green Climate Fund to support its resilience-building efforts. Additionally, Nepal emphasizes the importance of technology transfer, capacity building, and partnerships to strengthen

its disaster preparedness and response capabilities, particularly in vulnerable and marginalized communities.

During the APMCDRR 2024, various participants from Nepal actively engaged in plenary sessions, panel discussions, and ignite stages, sharing their experiences and best practices in DRR. Nepal's exhibition booth attracted hundreds of visitors who were particularly impressed by the country's efforts to publish DRR documents in accessible formats like braille and demonstrate innovative tools like the earthquake shake table. The shake table, which simulates the effects of earthquakes in relation to soil structure on buildings of different heights, was praised for its ability to simplify complex engineering and geological concepts, making them accessible to the general public.

Liva Shrestha, a structural engineer from Nepal, was also recognized as a 2024 WIN DRR finalist for her pioneering work in resilient housing across the Asia-Pacific region. With over 18 years of experience, Shrestha played a leading role in post-earthquake recovery efforts after the 2015 Gorkha earthquake, helping to reconstruct and retrofit over 32,000 homes. Her work in advocating for accessible finance for low-income households has made home strengthening more feasible, improving long-term resilience for providing training for more than 4000 Nepali engineers and supporting vulnerable communities not only in Nepal but also in the Philippines and Indonesia.

Nepal's participation in the APMCDRR was successful in showcasing its disaster risk reduction initiatives and fostering valuable regional partnerships. The country plans to organize a post-APMCDRR meeting to share the learnings and explore their implications for Nepal, making the event a great learning opportunity for all Nepali participants.

DPNet Coordinates National Symposium for IDDRR Celebration

The Nepal Geological Society (NGS), in partnership with the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Authority (NDRRMA) as the co-organizer and DPNet Nepal as the coordinator, hosted a symposium for the International Day for Disaster Risk Reduction (IDDRR) 2024. Held under the theme “Empowering the Next Generation for a Resilient Future,” the event took place on October 29, 2024, at the Nepal Tourism Board in Kathmandu. A broad spectrum of stakeholders participated, including government officials, geologists, disaster experts, youth representatives, and partner organizations. This gathering aimed to foster meaningful dialogue, share research, and discuss actionable strategies to mitigate disaster risks across Nepal.



Inaugural Session

The event began with an inaugural session chaired by NGS President Mr. Churna Bahadur Wali. Dr. Subodh Dhakal, the convener of the IDDRR Organizing Committee, welcomed the attendees and outlined the symposium’s objectives, emphasizing its importance in Nepal’s ongoing disaster risk reduction (DRR) efforts. Following the national anthem, Hon. Minister Devendra Dahal inaugurated the symposium.

In his opening remarks, Minister Dahal highlighted the need to re-evaluate Nepal’s development model in light of recent monsoon floods, which revealed critical vulnerabilities in infrastructure and planning. “Disaster risks must be integrated into every development initiative,” he stressed. “Organizations like the Nepal Geological Society must prioritize studies on river corridors and highway, assessing soil conditions, and advising on flood and landslide prevention during rainy seasons.” Minister Dahal also emphasized the need to empower young people in disaster preparedness, highlighting that equipping future generations with DRR knowledge not only protects them but strengthens community resilience as a whole.

Anil Pokhrel, Executive Chief of NDRRMA, has informed the postponement of this year’s International Day for Disaster Risk Reduction (IDDRR) observance from October 13 to October 29. This adjustment takes into account the Dashain festival and the Asia-Pacific Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction

(APMCDRR), which follows immediately after Dashain. In line with Nepal's tradition of celebrating IDDR throughout October, the new date supports the practice of month-long observances. Reflecting on insights from APMCDRR 2024, Pokhrel highlighted Nepal's commitment to integrating indigenous knowledge with digital tools, countering misinformation, and advancing gender-sensitive DRR policies. "Nepal's active participation reaffirmed our commitment to regional DRR efforts," he remarked. "We aim to incorporate these learnings into national strategies, with a priority on climate finance reforms and collaborative resilience-building." Pokhrel also stressed the importance of volunteer mobilization, mentioning NDRRMA's growing network of over 100,000 volunteers ready to support preparedness and recovery initiatives.

DPNet's Chair, Dr. Raju Thapa, spoke on the relevance of this year's IDDR theme, emphasizing future generations in the context of climate change. He highlighted the urgency of linking disaster risk reduction with climate action to safeguard upcoming generations. Dr. Thapa cited this year's July 22 global temperature records, stressing, "We are like frogs in boiling water—if we don't act urgently, irreversible impacts will befall us." He called on all stakeholders to bridge DRR and climate action, emphasizing the need to empower youth to build a resilient society.

Technical Sessions

Following the inaugural session, the symposium transitioned into technical sessions featuring research presentations and an expert panel discussion.

Technical Session 1: Paper Presentations

The first technical session, chaired by Prof. Dr. Danda Pani Adhikari with rapporteurs Sarmila Paudyal and Dr. Basant Bhandari, showcased recent DRR research in Nepal. Dr. Basanta Raj Adhikari from the Institute of Engineering opened with a presentation on "Empowering Youth in Disaster Risk Reduction and Data Challenges Amid Cascading Hazards in the Nepal Himalaya." He addressed the unique challenges posed by cascading hazards in the Himalayan region and emphasized equipping young people with data skills to analyze and respond effectively to disaster risks.

The next presentation, "Seismic Safety and Resilience of Schools in Nepal," was delivered by Er. Vibek Manandhar from NSET. Manandhar discussed the vulnerabilities of school infrastructure in Nepal to seismic activities, calling for retrofitting existing buildings and enforcing seismic-resilient construction standards to enhance the safety of educational institutions. He emphasized that such efforts require collaboration between the government and private sectors.

The final paper, presented by Mr. Shiva Baskota and Dr. Gautam Prashad Khanal from the Department of Mines and Geology, examined the recent flood and landslide disasters in central Nepal. They shared preliminary findings, identifying critical areas affected by these disasters and proposing mitigation

measures for vulnerable zones. The presentations received strong interest and prompted discussions on innovative approaches to community resilience.

Technical Session 2: Expert Panel Discussion

The second technical session was a panel discussion moderated by Dr. Subodh Dhakal, focusing on DRR challenges and mitigation strategies in Nepal. Panelists included Er. Arjun Kumar Bam, Joint Secretary of NDRRMA; Shuva Raj Neupane, Joint Secretary of the Ministry of Physical Planning and Works; Prof. Dr. Tara Nidhi Bhattarai, a respected geologist; Subash Chandra Baral, President of the Nepal Engineers' Association (NEA); and Ms. Smita Paudel, a GEDSI Specialist.

The panel discussed various complexities of implementing DRR measures from policy to practice. Er. Bam highlighted NDRRMA's dedication to improving early warning systems and disaster preparedness. Joint Secretary Neupane highlighted the necessity of embedding DRR considerations in all infrastructure projects. Prof. Dr. Bhattarai called for geological assessments before major constructions, particularly in river corridors, while Ms. Paudel highlighted the need for gender-sensitive and inclusive DRR practices to protect vulnerable groups adequately.

This discussion generated several actionable recommendations, including forming DRR-focused youth councils, mobilizing local volunteers for awareness programs, and increasing government funding for disaster risk assessment projects.

Final Session: Review and Reflections on APMCDRR 2024

In the concluding session, moderated by Dr. Raju Thapa DPNet Chair, participants reflected on Nepal's involvement in APMCDRR 2024. Dr. Raju Thapa led the discussion, focusing on key insights from the conference, including the integration of indigenous knowledge with advanced digital tools, countering misinformation, and strengthening community resilience. Panelists highlighted Nepal's commitment to incorporating APMCDRR insights into national DRR strategies, particularly around climate finance reforms and regional partnerships. Executive Chief Anil Pokhrel expressed gratitude to DPNet for its outstanding coordination, highlighting the success of APMCDRR and the new directions it offers Nepal's DRR efforts.

Closing Remarks

In his closing remarks, NGS President Mr. Churna Bahadur Wali extended his gratitude to all participants, sponsors, and partners for their contributions to a successful symposium. He highlighted the need for sustained collaboration to build a resilient Nepal and encouraged all attendees to translate the day's discussions into concrete actions.

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The final paper, presented by Mr. Shiva Baskota and Dr. Gautam Prashad Khanal from the Department of Mines and Geology, examined the recent flood and landslide disasters in central Nepal. They shared preliminary findings, identifying critical areas affected by these disasters and proposing mitigation measures for vulnerable zones. The presentations received strong interest and prompted discussions on innovative approaches to community resilience.

Technical Session 2: Expert Panel Discussion

The second technical session was a panel discussion moderated by Dr. Subodh Dhakal, focusing on DRR challenges and mitigation strategies in Nepal. Panelists included Er. Arjun Kumar Bam, Joint Secretary of NDRRMA; Shuva Raj Neupane, Joint Secretary of the Ministry of Physical Planning and Works; Prof. Dr. Tara Nidhi Bhattarai, a respected geologist; Subash Chandra Baral, President of the Nepal Engineers' Association (NEA); and Ms. Smita Paudel, a GEDSI Specialist.

The panel discussed various complexities of implementing DRR measures from policy to practice. Er. Bam highlighted NDRRMA's dedication to improving early warning systems and disaster preparedness. Joint Secretary Neupane highlighted the necessity of embedding DRR considerations in all infrastructure projects. Prof. Dr. Bhattarai called for geological assessments before major constructions, particularly in river corridors, while Ms. Paudel highlighted the need for gender-sensitive and inclusive DRR practices to protect vulnerable groups adequately.

This discussion generated several actionable recommendations, including forming DRR-focused youth councils, mobilizing local volunteers for awareness programs, and increasing government funding for disaster risk assessment projects.

Final Session: Review and Reflections on APMCDRR 2024

In the concluding session, moderated by Dr. Raju Thapa DPNet Chair, participants reflected on Nepal's involvement in APMCDRR 2024. Dr. Raju Thapa led the discussion, focusing on key insights from the conference, including the integration of indigenous knowledge with advanced digital tools, countering misinformation, and strengthening community resilience. Panelists highlighted Nepal's commitment to incorporating APMCDRR insights into national DRR strategies, particularly around climate finance reforms and regional partnerships. Executive Chief Anil Pokhrel expressed gratitude to DPNet for its outstanding coordination, highlighting the success of APMCDRR and the new directions it offers Nepal's DRR efforts.

Closing Remarks

In his closing remarks, NGS President Mr. Churna Bahadur Wali extended his gratitude to all participants, sponsors, and partners for their contributions to a successful symposium. He highlighted the need for sustained collaboration to build a resilient Nepal and encouraged all attendees to translate the day's discussions into concrete actions.

Nepal Delegation Reviews APMCDRR 2024 Outcomes and Key Takeaways



On October 29, 2024, post-conference review session following the Asia-Pacific Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (APMCDRR) organized. The program was led by NDRRMA Executive Chief Anil Pokhrel and featured a detailed presentation by Dr. Raju Thapa, who also coordinated Nepal Team Delegation for APMCDRR 2024. Representing Nepal's delegation at APMCDRR, Dr. Thapa shared key insights, observations, and takeaways collected from the Nepali delegation members, emphasizing the importance of disaster resilience as the region prepares for 2030 in line with the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction.

The APMCDRR 2024 conference in Manila was the first of its kind to be held following the Midterm Review of the Sendai Framework. With the theme "Eyes on 2030: Enhancing Ambition in Asia-Pacific," the conference aimed to strengthen the region's disaster risk reduction efforts through a focused and action-oriented agenda. This year's theme highlighted the urgency of accelerating DRR initiatives across Asia-Pacific to address the pressing climate and disaster risks confronting the region. The thematic pillars included practical solutions to enhance disaster risk financing, gender-responsive and inclusive disaster risk governance, and localization for resilience across both urban and rural communities. Alongside these pillars, the conference also emphasized critical focus areas such as the need for sustainable and predictable investments in disaster risk reduction, leveraging technology and knowledge-sharing, and fostering collaboration across multiple stakeholders and governance levels.

The APMCDRR conference recognized several cross-cutting themes, including the importance of convergence between disaster risk reduction, climate change, and broader development efforts, as well as the essential role of the private sector in disaster risk management. The discussions revolved around current challenges and potential opportunities for enhancing resilience in Asia-Pacific, such as the need for coherent and coordinated DRR approaches that engage both public and private sectors. The sessions highlighted that one of the primary challenges is the integration of DRR measures into broader development initiatives to ensure that preparedness and resilience are addressed across various socio-economic and environmental spheres. Furthermore, the conference underscored the importance of community engagement and the need for inclusive governance to foster collective responsibility and accountability in building resilient communities.

Nepal's delegation to APMCDRR was led by the Chairperson of National Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction (NPDRR) and Executive Chief of NDRRMA and it was coordinated under the banner of NPDRR. The Nepali team entered the conference well-prepared, having developed a common position paper and official statement through a consensus-driven process involving multiple stakeholders, coordinated by DPNet. This collaborative approach ensured that the delegation's presence was unified and strategically focused, presenting Nepal as a committed and cohesive participant across various sessions. Throughout the conference, Nepal's representatives actively participated in main sessions, parallel sessions, sideline events, and the ignite stage, showcasing Nepal's progress and commitment to disaster risk management. A dedicated marketplace was also managed by the delegation to highlight Nepal's ongoing initiatives and DRR efforts. Additionally, the delegation held daily review and reflection meetings, allowing members to discuss the evolving discourse, refine their positions, and adapt to the dynamic environment of the conference.

In his presentation, Dr. Thapa shared a series of insights gathered from the APMCDRR, highlighting the Nepali delegation's reflections on current disaster resilience strategies and future focus areas. One of the primary takeaways was the necessity for inclusive governance frameworks in DRR, stressing the importance of prioritizing marginalized communities to build equitable and resilient disaster management systems. The delegation highlighted that involving vulnerable groups including women, children, the elderly, and people with disabilities ensures that DRR efforts are comprehensive and address the unique needs of different segments of society. Another significant insight was the importance of integrating DRR measures into development plans and finance mechanisms, known as disaster risk financing (DRF). This approach secures sustained preparedness by ensuring that DRR is embedded within broader socio-economic frameworks, thus maintaining resilience at all governance levels.

Strong collaboration across sectors was highlighted as a key component of effective disaster risk management, with the conference emphasizing that successful DRR relies on partnerships among government agencies, the private sector, and civil society. Such collaboration maximizes the use of resources and enables the exchange of knowledge, enhancing the collective response to disaster risks. The Nepali delegation also emphasized the value of community engagement, noting that resilience efforts

are strengthened when communities are engaged in DRR processes and share responsibility for their own preparedness and safety.

Additionally, the integration of indigenous knowledge with digital tools for early warning systems emerged as a key area of focus. The conference participants noted that combining traditional knowledge with modern technology enhances the relevance and effectiveness of early warning systems, particularly for remote and vulnerable communities. Another crucial insight was the role of trusted media partnerships in combating misinformation and strengthening risk communication. Ensuring that reliable information reaches communities is essential for effective disaster response, and media plays a vital role in delivering accurate and timely guidance to the public during emergencies. The conference also highlighted the transformative potential of artificial intelligence and robust data systems, particularly disaggregated data, in disaster management. Disaggregated data enables more precise risk assessment and tailored response strategies, making it a valuable asset across all phases of disaster management. The use of AI, alongside advanced data systems, allows for more dynamic and responsive disaster preparedness and mitigation. The conference highlighted the role of public-private partnerships in fostering innovation within DRR. Engaging small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and startups in disaster risk management drives technological innovation and expands funding options for DRR initiatives. The private sector, particularly SMEs and startups, was recognized as an essential partner in advancing disaster resilience through investment and the development of new technologies. The conference also focused on youth education in DRR, noting that fostering a culture of resilience from a young age prepares future leaders to address evolving disaster challenges. Finally, the principle of “building back better” emerged as a foundational approach to post-disaster recovery. By focusing on resilience and preparedness in reconstruction efforts, communities can be made stronger and better-equipped for future hazards, ensuring that each recovery effort leads to enhanced community resilience.

Following Dr. Thapa’s presentation, Executive Chief Anil Pokhrel acknowledged the major achievements of Nepal’s delegation at APMCDRR 2024. Mr. Pokhrel praised the delegation for aligning approach with the DRRM Act to lead the delegation by NDRRMA this year and for presenting a strong Nepali presence across all conference segments, including main sessions, side events, parallel sessions, ignite stage presentations, and the marketplace. The active engagement of Nepali representatives was widely recognized and appreciated by international stakeholders, further establishing Nepal’s leadership and commitment to disaster risk management. Mr. Pokhrel also highlighted the importance of Nepal’s DRR GEDSI (Gender Equality, Disability, and Social Inclusion) Strategic Action Plan, which was showcased as a model for other countries in promoting inclusive disaster management practices. The collaborative efforts of the delegation, along with DPNet’s effective coordination among DRR stakeholders in Nepal, received commendation for exemplifying cohesive disaster response planning and execution. A notable component of Nepal’s participation was its advocacy for climate justice. Nepal’s delegation highlighted the country’s vulnerability to climate-induced disasters, emphasizing the need for compensation and support to address the losses and damages caused by climate change. As a nation with minimal contributions to global

emissions, Nepal remains disproportionately affected by the impacts of climate change, and its call for compensation underscored the importance of international support for climate-vulnerable countries.

Executive Chief Pokhrel concluded the session by thanking all participants for their dedication to advancing disaster resilience and for their active contributions to the discussions at APMCDRR 2024. He expressed confidence that the knowledge and experiences gained at the conference would strengthen Nepal's disaster risk reduction framework, guiding the country toward a safer and more resilient future. The Kathmandu session closed with a renewed commitment to implementing the Sendai Framework's goals, fostering inclusive and collaborative DRR practices, and enhancing Nepal's resilience to future disaster risks.

The report on the Nepal Delegation's participation in APMCDRR is available at:

<https://www.dpnet.org.np/resource-detail/2067>