

Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) Interventions in SHOUHARDO III

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) funded Strengthening Household Ability to Respond to Development Opportunities (SHOUHARDO) III, an integrated food and nutrition security and resilience building program. It has been working in some of the disaster-prone (eight) districts of Bangladesh to enhance the resilience capacities of households and communities by adopting a comprehensive understanding of disaster preparedness including access to early warning information and system strengthening.

To achieve this purpose, the program facilitated different capacity strengthening activities, including

- Facilitation of risk reduction and contingency plan with wider community people,
- Developing community-based Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) leader to carry the preparedness activities,
- Training School-Based Teen Brigade (SBTB) members on the school safety plan and first aid,
- Developing and building the capacity of Union Disaster Volunteers (UDVs), Union Disaster Management Committees (UDMC), and Upazila Disaster Management Committees (UzDMC),
- Facilitation of the development of Union Disaster Management Plan (UDMP) and sensitizing communities on accessing early warning information.

The program built the resilience capacity of the participants through increasing production and income, savings promotion, and linkage with an external network. In addition, it has been providing messages on shock preparedness to community groups with an emphasis on women, adolescents, children, elderly people, and people with disabilities. The program constructed infrastructure to protect the people from the flood risk. The Participants Base Survey (PaBS) and Fostering Learning and Adaptation in Resilience Building" (FLAIRB) found that program participants' capacity in mitigating, adapting, and using the positive coping mechanism for recovering from shocks significantly increased. Some of the high-level results of the program's interventions are given below:

- **A total of 69,552 people** used Number of people using climate information or implementing risk-reducing actions to improve resilience to climate change as supported by USG assistance.
- **25%** of the community members participating in collective actions.
- **93%** of the households reporting receiving risk and early warning information
- **47.5%** of the households reported that health, gender, and disaster preparedness by actors build on each other are well coordinated and focused on most critical needs.

Community Risk Assessment (CRA) exercise

The program conducted Community Risk Assessments (CRA) in all 947 working communities, and representatives from different groups (women, youth, old age, producers, etc.) of the village participated in the process such as adult men and women, young boys and girls, and, in some cases, people with disabilities. On average, 18-20 participants attended each session, approximately 17,993 participants participated in all CRA sessions.

The communities used different participatory tools like the historical timeline of hazard and its impacts and coping strategies during the assessment. CRA helped communities to identify risks and risk mitigation actions for women and girls, children, elderly and differently-abled people in the event of disasters. This approach equipped communities to be better prepared to respond to shocks.



Develop and review community level Risk Reduction (RR) and contingency plans



The community has developed risk reduction and contingency plans for their village with the assistance of the program staff. They also reviewed their plans in six-month intervals. A total of 947 villages reviewed and updated their risk reduction and contingency plans for mitigating, adapting to, and recovering from shocks. Initially, the program staff facilitated the process of developing contingency plan and later, the community leaders took the responsibility to organize and conduct the review session. The program staff gradually reduced their participation in the session considering the sustainability perspective. Currently, the DRR leaders facilitate the review and update session, the program staff only help the facilitators when it is necessary.

Develop DRR leader at the community level

The program developed Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) leaders who serve people to make them better prepared to respond to shocks. The program trained three leaders/per village including two females and one male. A total of 2,841 leaders received training on disaster preparedness and minimum rescue activities from the program.

The trained leaders are facilitating risk reduction and contingency plan, motivating people - to use early warning advisory, identify the safer place, store dry food & non-food, and save money. They are also mobilizing people to raise demand to Union Parishad (UP) and government service providers.

2,833 Leaders received training



Capacity building of Union Disaster Volunteer (UDV)

In 2016, the program provided a three-day-long training to Union Disaster Volunteers (UDVs) on DCRM. The UDVs got engaged in wide-ranging activities after the training, for example, in facilitating the Community Risk Assessment (CRA) process, disseminating early warning information, helping the community in rescuing people, and assisting UDMC, and developing Union Disaster Management Plan (UDMP). They also received refreshers training from the Government of Bangladesh (GoB) and other NGOs.

The trained Union Disaster Volunteers (UDV) engaged in other activities, such as helping UDMCs and other NGOs with preparedness and response programs during the floods in 2019 and 2020. Besides, since the beginning of the COVID pandemic, many UDVs engaged with GoB initiated public awareness programs. They also received training from the respective programs and departments.

4,767 UDVs trained



Younus Ahmed Hriodoy, a 21-year-old UDV from Dowarabazar, Sunamganj received training from the program in 2016. He has been proactive in his role since receiving the training. The Union Parishad immediately included him in the response efforts of the local government due to his expertise and dedication when the COVID-19 hit. He is proud because he can assist villagers, especially in times of need.

Capacity building of the Union Disaster Management Committee (UDMC)

2,477 committee members



SHOUHARDO III provided Disaster and Climate Risk Management (DCRM) training to the UDMC to increase the knowledge and skill of the committee members in implementing the DCRM activities. The key discussion topics were: a clear understanding of the role and responsibilities of UDMC, Develop Union Disaster Management Plan (UDMC), dissemination of early warning messages, coordination with relevant stakeholders for disaster preparedness and response activities. In many cases, the UDMC provided support to villagers for building infrastructure.

A USAID team visited Saghata union of Gaibandha district after the flood and learned how UDMC helped the disaster victims. The UP Chairman and president of UDMC described that they had a Union Disaster Management Plan where the actions were well-defined with specific responsibilities. They immediately called UDMC's emergency meeting and started to collect early warning from the digital center and disseminated among community people through milking by trained UDVs, evacuated victims and shifted to a safer place, communicated with the government and NGOs for joining the rescue and response program when they saw that the river water flow was rapidly increasing. They also collected emergency relief from the GoB and NGOs and distributed it among the flood-affected peoples. During the storytelling, the UP Chairman expressed his satisfaction regarding DCRM activities of the SHOUHARDO III program, particularly for training them and UDVs on DCRM activities which was helpful to face unwanted shocks.

Local Government Institution (Union Parishad) adopting Union Disaster Management Plan (UDMP)

The program facilitated the process of developing the Union Disaster Management Plan (UDMP) to assist the UDMC. A total of 115 Union Parishad (UP) in the working areas developed their UDPMs. Currently, they are reviewing and updating their plan with limited assistance from the program staff.



School cum Flood Shelters are constructed by program (implemented by Local Government Engineering Department-LGED)



The program constructed 14 School cum Flood Shelters (implemented by Local Government Engineering Department-LGED) in Sirajganj (6 nos.), Kurigram (3 nos.), Gaibandha (3 nos.) , and Jamalpur (2 nos.) districts. Around 6,483 HHs, of which 4,148 are Poor and Extreme Poor HHs, were able to protect human lives and cattle from the floodwater during the monsoon season. The total cost of building these 14 infrastructures was BDT 29,735,170.

Capacity building of Upazila Disaster Management Committee (UzDMC)

770 UzDMC committee members



SHOUHARDO III built the capacity of the UzDMC members to strengthen their preparedness and response activities during a disaster. The training module contained the following topics; Disasters in Bangladesh and preparedness measures, the institutional framework for disaster management in Bangladesh, early warning and agro-meteorological forecast, and emergency response and its coordination.

Formation of School-Based Teenage Brigades (SBTB)

The program formed the School-Based Teen Brigade (SBTB) in 46 schools from 23 Upazilas to build students' capacity on disaster preparedness and response, school safety, HHN (Health, Hygiene, and Nutrition), life skill, and girls' empowerment to comply with the GoB priority. SBTB comprised 40 students of which 50% were girls, and the rest were boys. The program provided training to students on the school safety plan, first aid, early warning, handwashing practice, and raising awareness to stop early marriages. The trained girls and boys inspired their parents and neighbors to practice learning from the training. A total of 3,503 students participated in the SBTB.



Early warning and advisory service (RIMES)

10,176 people



The program participants received location-specific early warning (e.g., raining probability, humidity, and temperature) and applied the information in crop production and livestock management under the SHOUHARDO- RIMES partnership.

The program applied a system strengthening approach by engaging FFWC and BMD. As a result of the program effort, BMD and FFWC introduced location-specific early warning and flood forecasts on their website. The program participants are continuously receiving event-based early warnings and advisory. Besides, the participants from all working communities are receiving an early warning from the government's hotline number (1090), entrepreneur of Union digital center, UDVs, UDMCs, and other sources.

Five program participants named Sufia, Analuddin, Mahfil Uddin, Bilkis and Kamala from Singpur union of Nikli upazila have been receiving voice messages since January. Initially, they ignored the voice call as they thought it was just another promotional call from their mobile operators. When the program staff explained to them what the voice call was about including its importance, (specifically from this number 09666777200), they listened to the voice messages attentively and took necessary actions according to the advice from the voice message. *"We understood and realized why the weather forecast and advisory messages are useful for us because through this, we were informed on relevant information. For instance, in mid-February, we were informed that there is a probability of rainfall on 25-26 February. We only waited and did not do anything, not even irrigating our paddy field. Then, when the day came, it rained for days! From that time whenever a call would come from this number, we made sure to pick up and take actions accordingly,"* they shared.

Program has constructed Brick Mound Protection Wall (implemented by LGED)

The program constructed eight Brick Mound Protection Walls (implemented by LGED) in Kishoreganj (4 nos.), Netrakona (2 nos.), and Habiganj districts (2 nos.). These walls protected around 1,646 HHs (of which 844 are Poor & Extreme Poor HHs) from wave erosion. The total cost of building these 8 infrastructures was BDT 42,609,309.



In FY21, LGED has been doing the maintenance of 12 schemes using the GoB fund (allocated to LGED) of the total cost of BDT 59,058,620. They are doing maintenance of six Mound Protection Walls in the Haor region amounting to BDT 22,060,031

Plinth raising

The program raised plinths for 681 households as CFW using the GoB fund. In addition to the plinth raising, the program raised grounds of four institutions and facilitated maintenance of nine earthen-road as part of the CFW. The CFW schemes created employment opportunities equivalent to 152,057 person-days whereas the target was 150,000 person-days. The total cost of CFW schemes was BDT 30,656,834. The program conducted the plinth raising activities in Kurigram (115 HHs), Gaibandha (178 HHs), Sirajganj (110 HHs), Jamalpur (85 HHs), Kishoreganj (80 HHs), Netrakona (43 HHs), Habiganj (9 HHs), and Sunamganj (61 HHs) districts.



In addition to that, the program raised plinths for 1,744 households in Kurigram (487 nos.), Gaibandha (552 nos.), Sirajganj (290 nos.) and Jamalpur (415 nos.) as part of the flood recovery activities with USAID's support against the target of 2000. Approximately, 33,206 participants received flood recovery support through these raised plinths.

The total estimated amount for 1,744 HHs plinth raising was BDT 66,189,200. The total budget for flood recovery activity was BDT 187,951,450 (USD 2,237,517) including HHs plinth raising, cash grant, life skill support to the HHs for business planning, volunteers' honorarium, and staff and volunteer training.

Case story

https://shouhardo.carebangladesh.org/en_US/Case%20Story/winning-over-flood-by-cultivating-bina-paddy/

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