



World Conference on Disaster Reduction

18-22 January 2005, Kobe, Hyogo, Japan

ECHO/ISDR good practices for resilient communities

Asian Disaster Preparedness Center & Environmental Planning Collaboration (ADPC&EPC)

Beginning with the premise that best practices have to be sustained in the long term, our organization wishes to present five inter-linked initiatives which together constitute a best practice in integrating disaster mitigation measures into long-term physical, socio-cultural and economic development. Our rationale is to integrate measures to mitigate impact of disaster into mainstream planning.

- 1. Sub-Regional Plan for Kutch, 1998.** *Funder: Government of Gujarat, India*
The Government of Gujarat State divided the coastal areas and industrial thrust areas into ten sub-regions to conserve the coastal eco-system and to prepare focused development strategies for coastal areas. EPC was commissioned to prepare a plan for one such sub-region covering a total area of about 10,000 sq km with a population of 700,000. Highly detailed maps prepared in this exercise. The projects addressed a range of sectoral concerns, and included capital investment projects, policies and regulatory measures. Highly detailed maps developed during the project proved crucial to relief and long-term rehabilitation efforts in the weeks following the earthquake of 2001.
Mitigation activity: production of accurate, data-intensive maps
- 2. 'Initiative for Planned and Participatory Reconstruction', 2001-2004.** *Funder: USAID (FIRE-D) Project in India*
In response to the earthquake of 2001, EPC collaborated with a regional coalition of NGOs, Kutch Nav Nirman Abhiyan, to generate and distribute GIS based maps of the region. In addition, EPC began to more concretely structure reconstruction initiatives, seeing value in preparing a Planning Guide for Post-Disaster Recovery, which would meet the following objectives: showcasing regional, city and community level maps; demonstrating a process to establish a comprehensive information system in the earthquake-affected areas of the Kutch; experimenting with methods to assess community assets and build local institutional capacities.
Mitigation activity: A community-based approach to identifying projects and making decisions.
- 3. Statutory Town Planning for Earthquake-hit Bhuj, 2001-2004.** *Funder: Government of Gujarat with support from the Asian Development Bank*
EPC was commissioned by Bhuj's local development authority to prepare a statutory development plan framed by current state urban legislation. The Plan, covering an area of 56 sq.km, consisted of proposals for land use zoning, road network, infrastructure development and general development control regulations. The entire Development Plan, and the micro-level road network planning which followed it for the city's historic core, was computerized for the first time in India. The plan is unique in India for its post-disaster consultative methodology and attention to long-term socio-economic projections which fall outside the traditional purview of urban legislation.
Mitigation activity: Land use and road network design which respond to earthquake conditions.

4. **Kutch Ecology Fund, 2002-2004.** *Funder: UNDP and the Royal Netherlands Embassy, New Delhi*

The Kutch Ecology Fund, conceived after the 2001 earthquake, strives to develop mitigative solutions to potential disaster in the longer term. The Fund, which promotes partnership between several NGOs and institutions, has supported the preparation of detailed regional sectoral action plans for five critical sectors of disaster-prone Kutch, viz. water, agriculture, animal husbandry, grasslands and institutional strengthening. The action plans are oriented towards long-term drought proofing and regional development. *Mitigation activity:* Drought-proofing and institutional strengthening as a disaster mitigation strategy.

5. **Book on the History, Culture and Reconstruction of Bhuj, 2005.** *Funders: USAID (FIRE-D); The*

Royal Netherlands Embassy, New Delhi; International Secretariat for Disaster Reduction (ISDR), Geneva; Asian Disaster Preparedness Center (ADPC), Bangkok

The book presents a series of perspectives on the cultural evolution of 16th-century Bhuj in the District of Kutch, India, a city which witnessed considerable destruction in the earthquake of January, 2001. The research charts a two-year collaboration between citizens of Bhuj, members of the Kutchhi diaspora, town planners, and scholars. The book's purpose is to stimulate public interest and investment in rebuilding the city and its cultural institutions in the long term. About 100 complimentary copies will be sent to key decision-makers in local and state government, and to national and international NGOs. This book is an effort to document both a city destroyed by natural disaster and its subsequent redevelopment. It makes the case for governments and development authorities to sponsor detailed studies of the city as a measure to mitigate future disasters.

Mitigation activity: Using long-term ethnography as a strategy to gather information from residents.