

# REPORT ON TRAINING THE RESCUE TEAM AS PER THE SOP DEVELOPED AND MOBILIZE RESCUE TEAM FOR COMMUNITY AWARENESS



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## **Overview of the program**

A training program was successfully conducted to enhance the capacity of rescue team that are formed by Community Forest User Groups (CFUGs) in their respective Community Forests (CFs). The primary objective of the training was to create the group and mobilize them for community awareness in alignment with the Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) developed for disaster risk reduction (DRR). The event was attended by 50 participants including representatives each from Bungdal, Piple Pokhara, and Chuchhekhola CFUGs along with their rescue team and event organizing team. The program was led by Mr. Dipendra Pathak and moderated by Ms. Pratikshya Bhandari, a Forestry Associate of the Women Rights and Resource Network (WRRN). The program focused on developing practical skills, fostering a culture of disaster preparedness within the community and distributing essential equipment for disaster response.

## **Program outline**

The session commenced with Ms. Bhandari welcoming the participants and outlining the agenda of the day. The training transitioned commenced with the technical session, where Mr. Pathak emphasized the significance of preparedness and communication in mitigating the effects of disasters. He highlighted the necessity of equipping communities with first aid knowledge and response strategies, which are crucial in emergencies. To demonstrate this, Mr. Pathak shared an example of a 35-year-old man who suffered a spinal cord injury after falling from a tree while cutting fodder for livestock. Due to the lack of immediate first aid, his condition worsened, leaving him bedridden for life. This example illustrated the dire consequences of being unprepared for such emergencies.

Before delving into specific ecological examples, Mr. Pathak focused the importance of understanding the interconnectedness of natural systems and human interventions. He explained that disasters are not always caused by immediate events but can also result from long-term ecological imbalances. This perspective set the stage for the following illustration:

Expanding on the ecological aspect of disaster preparedness, Mr. Pathak shared an example from China. In an attempt to protect rice fields, an initiative was undertaken to eradicate rats, which inadvertently led to an ecological imbalance. With fewer rats, the population of snakes surged, disrupting the ecosystem's equilibrium. This example underscored the unintended consequences of poorly planned interventions and the necessity of considering ecological dynamics in disaster preparedness.

To further highlight the importance of preparedness, Mr. Pathak discussed the devastating 2019 forest fires in Australia, which resulted in the death of over 17,000 kangaroos and other animal species. These fires, exacerbated by climate conditions, showcased the catastrophic impact of inadequate early warning systems and communication strategies. Mr. Pathak emphasized that such disasters could be mitigated through effective community awareness, proactive planning, and ecosystem conservation.

The training covered several key topics, including risk assessment, evacuation planning, first aid procedures, and effective disaster communication. Participants were trained in practical response techniques and were encouraged to actively engage in discussions and group activities. The rescue

teams, formed as per the SOP, were prepared to handle emergencies such as forest fires, floods, and landslides. They were also tasked with educating their communities on disaster preparedness, focusing on early warning systems and ecosystem conservation.

The overall training was concluded with a summary of the technique for disaster preparedness where Mr. Pathak summarized the set of activities that are followed which can be divided into three categories i.e.,

### **1. Before disaster**

- Hazard Mapping and Risk Assessment by identifying and categorizing vulnerability of disaster based on its occurrence.
- Disaster Preparedness Plan
- Early Warning System (EWS)
- Training and Capacity Building

### **2. During disaster**

- Activation of the Disaster Risk Management Committee (DRMC) and Disaster Response Team (DRT).
- Evacuation Procedures
- Provision of Emergency Relief

### **3. Post disaster**

- Damage Assessment
- Restoration of Forest and Livelihoods
- Debrief and Evaluation

### **Way forward:**

- The advance level of training on the forest fire management to prepared DRR team of three CFUG regarding emergency relief fund, evacuation procedures, etc. for upgrading their scales.
- The DRR team should be given Training of Trainers (ToT) so that they can be mobilized in wider scale of community.

In this way, the training was concluded with the explanation of working procedures before, during and after the disaster. All the participants seemed very enthusiastic for protecting their forest from fire with a proper utilization of silviculture training and preventing their forest from bearing less damage from any sort of disasters with a proper and systematic working procedures.

