



Incorporating environmental safeguards into disaster risk management: a training module



Ecosystems and Livelihoods Group, Asia

Why are environmental concerns important?

Environmental concerns are essential components of human well-being and contributes positively to human security, providing basic materials for good life, good health and good social relations. Yet, these are being damaged and overexploited, ultimately to the detriment of humans. In addition, increasing incidence and intensity of natural disasters and climate change are having overarching impacts on the environment. Sustainable development, often of the most vulnerable sectors of society, is thus being undermined.

One of the key reasons why this damage continues is that an integrated approach is adopted rarely in disaster risk management. For example, relief organisations may focus on damage to life and property while others examine impacts on livelihoods. Very often, ecological services and their indirect economic values are omitted completely from assessments. Adaptation to climate change is ignored.

Mainstreaming ecosystem concerns – both ecological and economical – into the development agenda and integrating them into disaster management, therefore, becomes essential.

This training programme is structured to present background information and guidance for integrating environmental concerns into disaster management and providing assistance for carrying out integrated assessments.

For whom is this training important?

All relief workers, coastal managers, local administrators.

By whom will this training be conducted?

Three experienced trainers, Ali Rizvi Raza, Dr. Sriyanie Miththapala and Dr. Devaka Weerakoon - along with their team - will conduct this programme. Detailed CVs can be obtained on request.

How will this training be conducted?

A three day, residential programme will be conducted on site, with multimedia presentations, hands-on assessments in the field and interactive discussions.

When will this training be conducted?

On request, a programme will be tailored to suit the needs of the relevant organisation.



Course objectives

- To learn about the links between environmental concerns and human well-being;
- To learn about climate change and its over-arching effects;
- To understand the importance of integrating environmental safeguards into the disaster management cycle and for climate-proofing projects;
- To learn about integrated assessments (that include linkages among biodiversity, ecosystem services, livelihoods and valuation); and
- To use integrated assessments in a case study to gain hands on experience.

Expected outcomes

- Enhanced awareness about the long term need to integrate environmental safeguards into disaster risk management in order to make development sustainable and climate proof.
- Hands on experience in carrying out integrated assessments.

Material given

- A worksheet on integrated assessments that can be used in future projects.
- A manual on '*Integrating environmental safeguards into disaster risk management*' in three parts. The first volume is a reference, with background information on natural hazards, disasters and coastal ecosystems. The second volume provides step by step guidelines on incorporating environmental safeguards at each stage of the DRM cycle and the third provides worksheets and detailed methodology.



The proof of the pudding

This training was carried out for CARE Sri Lanka staff in southern Sri Lanka. A total of 30 staff members participated in a three-day residential workshop.

After presentations on the need to integrate environmental safeguards into disaster management programmes, the status of ecosystem services and human well-being in the area (the Hambantota district) and of integrated assessment techniques to gather relevant baseline data, the participants focussed on planning integrated assessments that they would carry out in three villages where CARE had ongoing projects. They identified recurring natural disasters in these three villages.

The following day, three survey teams visited these sites and conducted rapid integrated assessments, returning in the afternoon to analyse their data.

On the last day of the workshop, each of the three groups made presentations on their survey results, including conclusions and recommendations for follow up. Their reports incorporating environmental safeguards into specific disaster management issues in these three villages will be used as addenda to CARE's village development plans.

Photocredits
Front page: Aftermath of typhoon Reming, Albay, Philippines © Efen E. Mariano
Page 1: Presentations for CARE Hambantota staff © Sanjeewa Lelwala
Page 2: CARE staff carrying out rapid integrated assessments, © Sanjeewa Lelwala
This page: Drawing maps of assessed areas © Sanjeewa Lelwala





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IUCN's seven regional thematic programmes, known collectively as the Ecosystems and Livelihoods Group (ELG), are based in two clusters: one in Colombo, Sri Lanka (environmental economics, marine and coastal, species conservation), and one in Bangkok, Thailand (environmental law, forests, protected areas, wetlands and water resources).

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