



Training Workshop

‘Enhancing capacity of community and CSO practitioners to improve resilience to disaster and climate risk in the Brahmaputra River Basin, Assam’

Assam is highly vulnerable to water and climate induced disasters such as flooding, riverbank erosion, land degradation due to sand deposition, and cyclonic storms. The increasing erratic nature of these disasters, which are ascribed to climate change effects, has made their prediction and mitigation difficult. Increasing air temperature, irregularity in historically observed rainfall patterns, reducing winter rainfall, frequent appearance of drought like situations and changes in microclimate, which are indications of climate change, have caused loss of agricultural productivity, reduction in fish production and prospects of fishery as a livelihood, drying of streams and springs, drinking water crisis and occurrence of new types of disease. Lives, livelihoods, development and human security as a whole are affected because of the dual impact of water related disasters and climate change. The state suffers from colossal economic loss and damage every year from these natural calamities that have now become more intense, frequent and difficult to manage. For obvious geo-environmental reasons, the Brahmaputra River Basin in the state (which is essentially the Brahmaputra Valley region) is the worst victim of such catastrophes.

While national policies and programmes for mitigating these disasters have met with limited success over the six decades, communities have survived on the strength of their traditional knowledge and innovative practices in the area of Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) and Climate change Adaptation (CCA). But the overall adverse impact of these hazards is on the rise since the traditional coping and adaptation strategies are no longer adequate in dealing with the changed nature of these catastrophes. Existing disaster management measures and climate change adaptation strategies have failed to provide desirable results so far. As a result vulnerability and risk of communities living in the Valley have increased substantially.

An effective way of managing such risks generated by water induced disasters and climate change is to build up the capacity of communities so that they can cope and adapt better with these risks and enhance their resilience. For this purpose it is essential to sensitize communities from different livelihood sectors and practices and workers of Civil Society Organisations (CSO) about how they can strengthen their knowledge, skill and actions for attaining resilience to risk to disaster and climate change.

This training workshop is being formulated keeping in mind the requirements of rural practitioners who are engaged with various activities for surviving and flourishing in disaster prone areas in the Brahmaputra Valley. The overall goal of this programme is to enhance the capacity of the community

participants for gaining resilience to disaster and climate risk. The objectives of this programme is to (i) sensitize participants about the basic concepts, science, societal significance and policy context of disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation (ii) make participants aware about the importance of Gender Equity and Social Inclusion (GESI) in DRR and CCA practices (iii) Provide them with information and knowledge on improving the effectiveness of their actions and practices to enhance resilience to risk caused by disaster and climate change (iv) to help them develop personality traits and improve their communication skill for enabling them to interact effectively with policy makers, scientists, experts and their peer groups in national and transboundary discussion forums.

A training manual has been prepared to cater to the specific pedagogical requirements of the rural practitioners of the state. A compendium of case studies on about 15 different DRR and CCA practices from all over the Valley has been developed as a resource book to help the trainees understand the present scenario of DRR and CCA practices in the Valley. The participants will also be introduced to the governance and policy regime relevant to their practices and needs. They will get opportunities to interact and learn from reputed senior practitioners and experts in the field of DRR and CCA.

About 30 people, both men and women, from about 12 districts of Assam will attend the training course. They are mainly independent practitioners (farmers, fish farmers, livelihood entrepreneurs), social workers, CSO representatives, women leaders and community organisers. Participation is by invitation only. Cost of travel, accommodation and food will be borne by the Aaranyak. Invited participants are requested to contact Nayan Das (9678763120) and Juri Barua (9864413861) for more information about the event, logistics and programme details.

The Asia Foundation, New Delhi has kindly supported Aaranyak in holding this training as part of a project 'Developing capacity of community to improve resilience to disaster risk by promoting best practices, appropriate policies and regional cooperation in the Lower Brahmaputra River Basin in India and Bangladesh'.

Soliciting your cooperation and support for the success of the event,



(Training Programme Convener)

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