



Post Event Report

“International Day for Disaster Reduction”

(October, 13 2015)

CBDRM Tahafuz-II Cost Modification Phase

(AID-OFDA-A-14-00002-01)

“Building Resilience through Community Based Disaster Risk Management in the Sindh Province of Pakistan”



Rural Support Programmes Network (RSPN)

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Table of Contents

Table of Contents	2
Acronyms	3
Background	4
1) Initiatives taken by RSPN	4
2) International Day for Disaster Reduction	4
3) District Thatta/Sujawal	4
A) Mujahid Malyo, a member from UDMC Gul Muhammad Baran.....	5
B) Stage Play Focused On Indigenous Knowledge	5
C) Zahid Meerani, District Coordinator (ACT)	5
D) Liaqat Ali Sahito Deputy Director Social Welfare.....	5
E) Shah Faisal, Documentation and Reporting Officer, RSPN	5
F) Quiz Competition	6
4) District Badin.....	6
5) Closing Remark	6
6) Picture Gallery.....	7

Acronyms

- CBDRM Community Based Disaster Risk Management
- CO Community Organization
- CRP Community Resource Person
- DIU District Implementation Unit
- DPO District Project Officer
- DRR Disaster Risk Reduction
- IDDR International Day for Disaster Reduction
- LSO Local Support Organization
- NDMA National Disaster Management Authority
- NRSP National Rural Support Programme
- PDMA Provincial Disaster Management Authority
- PDRA Participatory Disaster Risk Assessment
- PMU Project Management Unit
- PSU Project Support Unit
- RSPN Rural Support Programmes Network
- RSP Rural Support Programmes
- SWD Social Welfare Department
- TRDP Thardeep Rural Development Programme
- UDMC Union Disaster Management Committees
- UN United Nations
- VDMC Village Disaster Management Committees
- VO Village Organization

Background

Over the last few decades, the world has faced recurrence of natural disasters involving floods, cyclones, earthquakes and droughts. It is anticipated that more countries around the world are likely to face more natural disasters in the future. Climate change may, with increasingly melting of mountain glaciers and combined with heavy rains, increase the risks of heavy floods. Some regions of the world may also face drought conditions. In all these situations poor and marginalized people living in remote parts are worst hit. As these communities are rather less resilient and face difficulties in recovery from impact of disasters, the recurrence of these events also leads to compounding losses to such communities.

1) Initiatives taken by RSPN

In Sindh province of Pakistan, Rural Support Programmes Network under USAID CBDRM Tahafuz Project has taken initiatives of working with vulnerable communities. This is a Community Based Disaster Risk Management Project which is currently in implementation phase in four most disaster prone districts namely Thatta/Sujawal, Badin, Tharparkar and Umerkot. The objective of CBDRM Tahafuz is to enhance community's pre and post disaster preparedness to significantly reduce losses incurred as a result of disasters.

2) International Day for Disaster Reduction

October 13 is celebrated as International Day for Disaster Reduction to raise awareness among communities to cope with any disaster and to promote a global culture of disaster reduction, including disaster prevention, mitigation and preparedness. The International Day for Disaster Reduction was initiated in 1989 with the approval by the United Nations General Assembly. Originally celebrated on the second Wednesday of October 22 December 1989, the UN General Assembly decided to designate October 13th as the date to celebrate the IDDR. The theme of this year's IDDR was "Knowledge for life" focused to identify and honour communities which represent the use of traditional, indigenous and local knowledge and practices, to complement scientific knowledge in disaster risk management.

Community members under USAID CBDRM Tahafuz celebrated International Day for Disaster Reduction with Rural Support Programmes Network and partner RSPs i.e. National Rural Support Programme and Thardeep Rural Development Programme, in all target districts. These events were organized by District implementation Units in which different stakeholders including V/UDMC & LSO representatives, NGOs, media representatives and government officials took part. This report covers the proceedings of IDDR held at District Thatta/Sujawal and Badin

3) District Thatta/Sujawal

RSPN, through its implementing partner NRSP, celebrated the day at Jati, a union council located some 30 KMs from the district headquarters. Community members including men, women and children from nearby settlements, revenue villages and other union councils actively participated in the event. Stakeholders including Liaqat Ali Sahito, Deputy Director Social Welfare, Sughra Shiekh, INC Social welfare, Ashraf Khwaja, Focus Coordinator DRR, Zahid Meerani, District Coordinator ACT, Mashooq Rind, Islamic Relief, and Asia from, Islamic Relief, also participated and shared their views.

After registration the event was formally started with recitation of verses from the Holy Quran. District Project Officer Noreen Hassan Memon briefly explained project's components and then explained theme of the day to participants. After her welcome note, the floor was opened for community members to share their views about the use of local and traditional knowledge which could help in preventing and disasters as well as losses.

A) Mujahid Malyo, a member from UDMC Gul Muhammad Baran

Mujahid Malyo, during his speech said, "We are very thankful to UNISDR for choosing this theme for current year's IDDR". The area we are living in is near to sea shore and we have faced severe cyclones and floods in the past. Observing such events is very useful in providing us information and precautionary measures to deal with any unforeseen situations. He stressed on the use of local and traditional knowledge to be incorporated in policy making for implementation of any DRR project. At the end, he also applauded USAID RSPN approach of making community resilient through implementing Tahafuz project in their districts.

B) Stage Play Focused On Indigenous Knowledge

The members of UDMC Keenjhar presented a stage play. The play highlighted as to how observations and local knowledge can help in minimizing losses during disasters. The story was about two friends who were insisting to go for fishing in deep sea on a cloudy day. Another friend was asking them to avoid fishing as the clouds seemed to him were identical to those which caused heavy rains some time back. Later on warning about heavy rains from metrological department made the two guys realize the importance of local wisdom and knowledge in reducing losses.

C) Zahid Meerani, District Coordinator (ACT)

Zahid Meerani, District Coordinator (ACT) appreciated RSPN for organizing the event at the union council level instead of celebrating in major cities. He stressed that line agencies should provide community awareness about disaster risk reduction. At the end he praised RSPN initiatives and community involvement for disaster risk reduction.

D) Liaqat Ali Sahito Deputy Director Social Welfare

Liaqat Ali Sahito, Deputy Director Social Welfare, Government of Sindh, appreciated the mechanism of organizing communities into Village/Union Disaster Management Committees and Local Support Organizations. He added that the time has come that the concerned government departments should develop effective policies for disaster risk reduction. He said that the doors of social welfare department are always open as we are on the same page like other stakeholders working on DRR.

E) Shah Faisal, Documentation and Reporting Officer, RSPN

Shah Faisal, Documentation and Reporting Officer, RSPN appreciated NRSP for highlighting major outcomes of IDDR with the participants. He told the audience that the government and leading agencies should encourage participation of indigenous people and they should also be included in the design and implementation of policies, plans and standards. He also focused on the importance of local and traditional wisdom and knowledge that can help in reducing loss to lives and other entities.

F) Quiz Competition

Following the sessions, a quiz competition was conducted for community members to assess their level of awareness about disasters. Some of questions asked are given below:

- What is the importance of celebrating IDDR?
- On which date of a year the IDDR is observed?
- What is meant by disaster and what are its types?
- What is meant by indigenous knowledge, share a story that helped you by using local wisdom?
- What is CBDRM approach?
- What does USAID stand for?

Prizes were also distributed among winners.

4) District Badin

International Day for Disaster Reduction was also celebrated in Badin Gymkhana which was participated by Additional Deputy Commissioner-I, District Health Officer, Deputy Director Social Welfare and community members from different revenue villages, union councils, and local support organizations. Community members shared their views about indigenous knowledge through speeches, presentations and performing stage plays. Participants from different government and non-government organizations highlighted the need of awareness of vulnerable communities about disaster risk reduction. They also appreciated RSP's approach of working with communities residing in remote areas and mostly considered as less resilient to face disasters. At the end of the event the participants took out a rally through different locations of the city.

5) Closing Remark

Noreen Hassan Memom and Naeem Junejo District Project Officers Thatta/Sujawal and District Badin concluded the sessions by thanking guests for their participation especially community members who made these events successful.

6) Picture Gallery



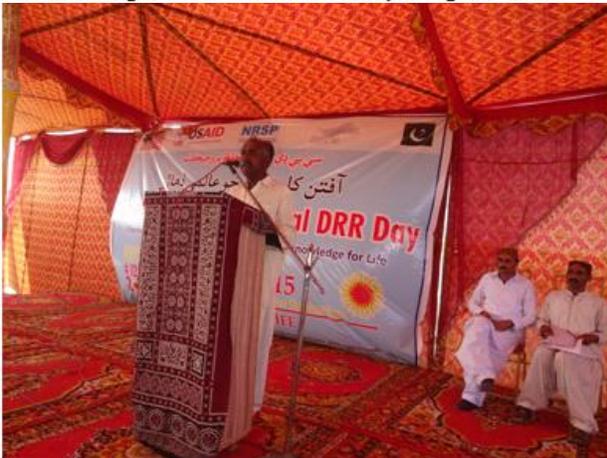
Community members of UDMC Keenjhar from district Sujawal performing a stage play focused on "Knowledge for Life", the theme of International Day for Disaster Risk Reduction.



Community members participating in International DRR Day at Union Council Jati District Sujawal.



Deputy Director Social Welfare, Documentation and Reporting Officer RSPN, Provincial Coordinator ACT and District Project Officer sharing their views about DRR Day during the event.



President and Member from Local Support Organization-LSO Jati expressing the importance of local wisdom during their speeches.



Members from different union councils conducting walk on International Day for Disaster Risk Reduction at District Sujawal.