The Jeevika Project: Building Institutional Capacity for Disaster Preparedness of Women

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Women

• Equally and often more affected by disasters.
• Last to receive relief to recovery inputs.
• Most active and creative in their efforts to come out of loss.
Disaster Mitigation Institute (DMI)

- Established in 1989 after repeated droughts.
- Focus is on Action and Learning, both.
- Four sector programmes: Food, Water, Livelihood and Habitat.
- Eleven Activity Centres.
DMI Team
Disasters

• Each year India suffers disaster loss of upto US$ 1 billion. This does not fully include losses made by women.

• Upto two-third of victims are women in any major disaster, especially floods and droughts.
DMI, Women and Disasters

• More than half of DMI projects focus directly on women.

• Two-third of 11500 Livelihood Relief Fund (LRF) partners are women.

• After 2001 earthquake DMI reached out to 2730 women and after 2002 riots DMI reach out to 1660 women directly for long term recovery.
Jeevika

- Upto 60000 of Self Employed Women’s Association (SEWA) members lost shelter, livelihood and other items after 2001 earthquake.
- *Jeevika* is livelihood focused long-term recovery project for 7 years.
- It covers 400 villages and 40000 families in three districts.
- It is a partnership of SEWA, Government of India and International Fund for Agriculture Development (IFAD): including Government of Gujarat and Disaster Mitigation Institute.
DMI Role

• To institutionalise disaster risk reduction in SEWA.

• Converge three approaches: DMI’s mitigation; SEWA’s life cycle; and Government’s relief approach.

• Build capacity to bring out risk mitigation strength of women.
Where?

Making risk mitigation central:
• Directly in the villages.
• Across local and federative organisations of SEWA.
• In livelihoods of the women.
How?

• From curriculum development to training to follow up: women are the main (not equal) actors in deciding.

• DMI takes mitigation beyond rehabilitation to development: income-generation, asset building, business planning, health, insurance, education, trade and so on.
Why?

Because Jeevika gives a chance to build mitigation:
(a) across institutions;
(b) across sectors;
(c) across districts;
(d) with NGOs and GOs, both; and
(e) it is a credible scale (40000 families where women are leading).
Best Practices

• Move further from women’s equality to centrality of women;
• Move further from recovery to risk mitigation; and
• Work at a scale where it makes a difference.
Limitations

- Mitigation measures cost resources: they are not always available with women.
- Disasters visit women more frequently than their rate of building mitigation capacity (floods 2004).
- Scale is overwhelming.
Next Steps

• For DMI: document and disseminate the experience across regions.
• For women: practice risk mitigation measures.
• For IFAD: invest in risk mitigation measures.
• Government of Gujarat and Government of India: reach out to other districts and states.
• Donors: Invest in upscaling.
• Academics: Document what works and why.