

Workshop on

Disasters, Law and Governance at Village Panchayat Level

Venue: Panchayati Raj Training Centre, Samoda-Ganvada, Dist. Patan

Executive Summary

Gujarat Institute of Disaster Management (GIDM) has organised the workshop on Disasters, Law and Governance at Village Panchayat Level for newly recruited Village Secretary i.e. *Talati cum Mantri* of Panchayat, Rural Housing and Rural Development Department. It will involve training on concepts and frameworks on mainstreaming Disaster Risk Reduction and Climate Change Adaptation in VDMPs, Fire Safety, Basic Life Saving Skills, etc.

This workshop will provide a platform for the participants to motivate the newly recruited TCM to undertake development activities with due care of the natural hazards in that village and potential risks involved. GIDM had invited experts from government, NGOs and academics to deliver the session and enhance the teaching pedagogy and have a blend of theory supported by practical demonstrations. For the said program, the Panchayati Raj Training Centre, Sadara, Dist. Gandhinagar and Panchayati Raj Training Centre, Indira Bhavan, Gandhinagar, had extended their support.

Background

As per the 2011 Census, Gujarat has around 18225 villages with 4.37 crore population in rural areas. Gujarat is prone to natural hazards like cyclones, earthquakes, floods, extreme events, etc. In India, Gram Panchayat authorities are entrusted with the responsibility to constitute a Village Disaster Management Committee (VDMC) and develop a Village Disaster Management Plan (VDMP) for better coordination, as mentioned in the Disaster Management Act 2005. Similarly, under the Panchayati Raj Act (1992) of the Government of India, committees have been designated to shoulder the responsibility of preparing disaster management plans similar to the Gram Panchayat Development Planning process. As per the Village Panchayat Secretary (Pre-Service Training and Post-Training Examination) Rules, 2018, components of disaster management governance (The Gujarat Disaster Management Act 2003) is an integral part of their training, which increases the importance of the DRR subject.

There is a dire need for the new generation officers of the Panchayat Raj Department to be oriented on the governance aspect of disaster management to prepare and mitigate the losses. The formation of VDMP and VDMC is a critical instrument for leading Community-Based Disaster Risk Reduction (CBDRR) activities at the local level. Basic features of VDMC include:

- There must be VDMC for very large, large and medium-sized villages. For small villages and hamlets, there may be Cluster/Federation level Disaster Management Committees for 4-5 small

villages/hamlets, subject to geographical locations and distance between them. VDMC must represent men and women from a cross-section of the village/local area and must include 9 to 11 members.

- VDMC must work on the issues/problems of disaster management and risk reduction without any bias of caste, creed, gender, etc. VDMC members must be selected by the villagers in the open village/cluster/federation level meeting.
- VDMC should act as an extended arm of the PRI structure by including specialized functionaries as its members. Provision should also be made for forming teams/task forces to support VDMC for performing various functions required in different phases of the DM cycle. VDMC members must also conduct village-level community's capacity-building programme.

In this backdrop, Disaster Management (DM) practice in India has evolved from one that was largely top-down, relief-oriented to a risk management-based approach that has different sectoral roles to be played by different stakeholders. The stakeholders, including the government and non-governmental actors, must aim at the realization of the appropriate institutional mechanisms in the preparatory stage of an identified calamity (risk understanding), during the calamity (risk or disaster management), and post-calamity (disaster recovery) and develop VDMPs accordingly.

These days, heat waves are one of the major extreme weather events faced by Gujarat. Heatwaves are periods of unusually hot days and nights that can lead to health problems, economic losses, and environmental damage, and are becoming more frequent and intense due to climate change. Heatwaves have increased the likelihood of developing heat-related diseases and heat strokes across all age groups in the state. Some of the districts like Bhuj, Ahmedabad, Surendranagar, Banaskantha, Rajkot, Junagadh, Porbandar and other parts of North Gujarat have been alerted.

Considering the present scenario, a training program has been arranged on 'Village Disaster Management Plan' in two batches. This program is in line with the Gujarat State Disaster Management Act 2003; Disaster Management (DM) Act, 2005; National Policy on Disaster Management (NPDM), 2009; Prime Minister's Ten Point Agenda on DRR, 2016; as well as National Disaster Management Plan (NDMP), 2019.

Session Objectives

This workshop aims to:

1. Increase awareness about disaster risks and climate change impacts
2. Orient on the formation of Village Disaster Management Committees
3. Share the experiences, good practices, and local challenges related to VDMP
4. Acquaint with the role of PRI and especially Talati cum Mantri in DRM and implement DRR measures

Date & Time

- 3-4 July 2025

Venue

- Classroom, Panchayati Raj Training Centre, Samoda-Ganvada, Dist. Patan

Organisers

- Gujarat Institute of Disaster Management (GIDM)

Format

- Outreach Program

Expected Participants:

- Newly recruited Talati cum Mantri (Both Batches - around 50)
- These TCMs belong to the Panchayat, Rural Housing and Rural Development Department.

Expected Outcomes

At the end of the training program, the participants would be able to,

- Learn about the basic science behind the hazards - heat waves and other extreme weather events
- Understand the development of Village Disaster Management Plan (VDMP)
- Have hands-on practical sessions on life-saving techniques during disasters.
