

Nepal-Gujarat Masons Exchange And Training Program (NGMET)

A community based Sub-regional Initiative

NSET Information Kit | 007 | 2011



NSET



BACKGROUND

In response to the earthquake that destroyed large parts of Gujarat State in India in 2001, Sustainable Environment and Ecological Development Society (SEEDS) India, was among those who initiated to reduce hardships of the victims by supplying them with relief materials. Patanka Navajeevan Yojana (PNY) was formulated after a series of interaction with the victim community and other agencies involved in the rescue and relief including Gujarat State Disaster Management Authority (GSDMA), SEEDS, and UNCRD. PNY intended to facilitate the earthquake victims to rebuild their homes, plan and implement various activities pertaining to sustainable rehabilitation with active community participation in Patanka.

In this series, the “Nepal Gujarat Masons Exchange and Training Program” (NGMETP) was formulated as a joint program by NSET and SEEDS in August 2001 and

continued till the completion of PNY to replicate the past experience of NSET in identifying and implementing simple earthquake resistant construction technology transfer at the grassroots level through awareness and training. Also the post-earthquake reconstruction program at Patanka under the PNY was considered as an opportunity for NSET to learn from the Gujarat experience of rebuilding.

THE NEED

Masons are the key actors in translating the building designs into reality. Optimum, efficient and effective use of building materials is not possible if the masons are unaware about the technology they are working with. There are many ways to train new as well as practicing masons. Masons Exchange Program is one of the new approaches in technology transfer. NGMETP was conceived to share the experiences of trained and experienced masons from NSET to fellow masons from Gujarat and vice versa. Exchange visits of Gujarat masons to Nepal and Nepali masons to Gujarat helped to fortify the learning process as well as acquire new techniques in safer building construction.

OBJECTIVES

In general, objective of the program was to start mitigation and preparedness through training and awareness at community level, in specific the objectives were:

- To train at least 20 local masons from Patanka in earthquake resistant construction technology while rehabilitating and or reconstructing the houses demolished by the earthquake
- To organize at least three exposure visits of masons from NSET-Nepal and Patanka
- To document and disseminate the outstanding achievements and explore its replication in the needy communities elsewhere



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- To allow Nepalese masons and engineers to be in earthquake devastation scene and learn lessons especially those on seismic reconstruction

ACTIVITIES

- Analysis of existing situation - Assess the existing rehabilitation process, planning appropriate interventions and initiating them
- Upgrading construction quality in Patanka Navajeevan Yojana with focus on workmanship, quality control, bar-bending
- Seismic strengthening of existing buildings

- Conduction of training programs for skill upgrading of practicing masons and shake table to demonstrate the effectiveness of earthquake resistant components in a building
- Organize and facilitate exchange visits of Nepali and Gujrati masons to Patanka and Kathmandu to interact and learn from the experience of various seismic retrofitting works being implemented in Kathmandu by NSET and in Patanka by SEEDS/ GSDMA

LESSONS LEARNED

- The mass construction activity in such a community is not merely a technical issue. It is interlinked with the social, economic and above all human behavior and attitude
- Effective implementation of such a community participatory project should be dealt with a holistic approach and not confined to technical aspects alone. In other words, it is a process-oriented endeavor rather than product oriented project
- An effective technical intervention is possible with the technological exchange approach at the grassroots level
- Language is not a barrier to the technology exchange among masons of different countries

