

Municipal Earthquake Risk Management Program (MERMP)

(From Kathmandu to municipalities outside Kathmandu Valley)

NSET Information Kit | 008 | 2011



BACKGROUND

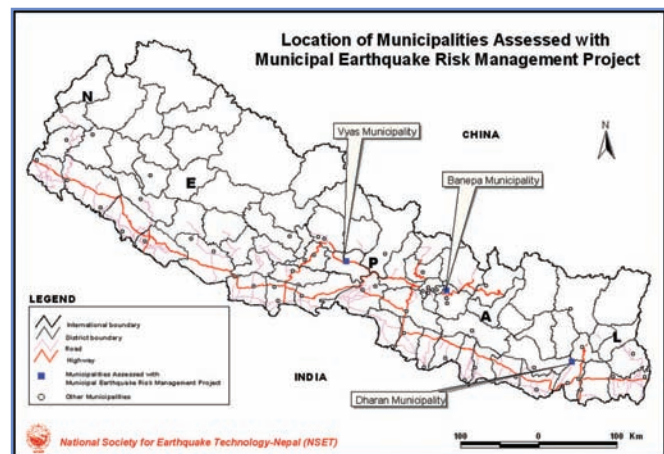
Learning lessons from the Kathmandu Valley Earthquake Risk Management Project (KVERMP) implemented during 1997-2000, NSET adopted and further improved the methodology for urban earthquake risk management into a comprehensive program called Municipal Earthquake Risk Management Program (MERMP). MERMP was subsequently tested successfully in three municipalities of Banepa, Dharan and Vyas in the year 2002-2003 as the replication process under the Asian Urban Disaster Mitigation Program (AUDMP) of the Asian Disaster Preparedness Center (ADPC).

THE NEED

In recent years, Nepal has seen a rapid urbanization throughout the country. This has led to construction of large number of buildings but without consideration of earthquake safety in most of the urbanizing settlements which amount to over 50. Further, earthquake awareness is very low at all levels. This has resulted in lack of consideration of earthquake risk into development activities and very low level of earthquake preparedness. There is an urgent need to stop the increasing earthquake risk in the urbanizing areas of Nepal.

OBJECTIVES

Broader objective of the program is to reduce earthquake vulnerability of the cities by evaluating the current earthquake risk, preparing action plan for earthquake risk management, and implementing feasible risk reduction activities.



The specific objectives are:

- Raise earthquake awareness of communities and authorities through a participatory earthquake risk assessment and action planning for managing the risk
- Implement School Earthquake Safety Program (SESP), as a demonstration project under a collaborative effort of the municipal authorities, education authorities and the communities; and
- Create disaster management communities under the local government to manage disaster risks in the Municipality in a sustained way

ACTIVITIES

1. Develop Earthquake Damage Scenario and Action Plan:

Earthquake scenario is developed by assessing the risk of the city using RADIUS tool, creating risk maps and discussing potential losses with the stakeholders in workshops. The earthquake scenario help to develop a consensus action plan for reducing the risk. The cities then focus on the implementation of the action plan that is finalized through the workshops.



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2. Public Awareness and Capacity building:

Awareness raising activity, which include observing the National Earthquake Safety Day (awareness march along with main function, earthquake safety exhibition, Shake Table demonstration, quiz competition for school children, folklore competition etc.). Public awareness programs also include wide discussion of earthquake and other disaster issues in community level workshops and orientation programs. Training programs for masons, technicians and engineers are conducted to enhance the capacity of local craftsman and professionals in earthquake risk reduction. All project activities are carried out in the leadership of municipal professionals under the technical guidance of NSET.

3. Implementation of Earthquake Vulnerability Reduction (EVR) measures:

The program also targets at implementing some of the most feasible earthquake vulnerability reduction measures such as seismic retrofitting or earthquake-resistant reconstruction of school buildings. Similarly, public awareness programs, establishment of municipal level disaster management committee, and organization of training programs for different target groups are also conducted as the implementation of the action plan.

PROJECT OUTPUTS

- Increased earthquake awareness leading to attitudinal change of stakeholders from passive observers to active participants
- Enhanced capacity of municipalities to implement earthquake risk reduction and preparedness programs
- Visible change in construction practices in the cities: many earthquake-resistant features have now become part of the construction process
- The need for mandatory implementation of seismic building code has been augmented
- Municipalities have started to put the disaster risk management activities into their regular plans and programs with nominal budgetary allocation
- The program activities are found successful also to positively affect the nearby urban centers and surrounding rural settlements
- The impacts are also forwarded to district-level authorities who are now interested for implementing earthquake risk management initiatives throughout the districts
- NSET aims to implement MERMP in all 58 municipalities of Nepal in the next 5-10 years

