

# Nepal Risk Reduction Consortium: Urban DRR

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## Background

Urban DRR is a complex and dynamic issue that has only recently garnered attention in the field of disaster risk reduction. The DRR work required in order to effectively address the specific issues and complexity of the urban context cuts across various Flagships of the Nepal Risk Reduction Consortium. For example, work related to urban DRR includes community based initiatives (under Flagship 4), emergency preparedness work (under Flagship 2), and policy level interventions such as building codes and risk sensitive land use planning (under Flagship 5). The school and hospital safety work (Flagship 1) must also be strongly connected. Coherence at policy level as well as strong coordination at programme level are required to maximise the effectiveness of work to reduce the vulnerability of urban communities to natural disasters.

In August 2012, the Nepal Risk Reduction Consortium and Flagship 4 organised an urban DRR workshop to discuss efforts of partners to date, planned programming, and challenges. It was determined in this workshop that many partner organisations are working in the field of urban DRR and greater coordination of activities is required to maximize implementation at all levels as well as to ensure that we identify and implement learning in real time. This is particularly important as many partners are new to working in the urban environment. Given these identified needs, participating organisations agreed that a mechanism for coordination and information sharing is necessary. The Nepal Risk Reduction Consortium Secretariat was commissioned to identify a strategy that will facilitate coordination and information sharing.

Please send any comments or feedback on this concept note to Giovanni Congi, Public Information Coordinator, NRRC at [giovanni.congi@one.un.org](mailto:giovanni.congi@one.un.org)

## (Virtual) Working Group

Participating organisations agreed that more attention and coordination is required to effectively manage the complex issues surrounding urban DRR.

Therefore the Nepal Risk Reduction Consortium proposes establishing an online discussion forum that can facilitate discussion, information sharing and action points for effective implementation of urban DRR. This group would work across all 5 Flagship also work closely with the NRRC Communications Group and external actors such as researchers. Participating organisations and the organisers would make efforts to draw on experience and lessons from external urban contexts.

There would be a bi-annual workshop / face to face meeting to discuss topical issues and promote further collaboration and coordination.

A small but representative group of individuals (advisory committee to the working group) representing NRRC agencies would meet quarterly to discuss workplans, special events etc.

The following concept highlights the main concept of the Virtual Working Group. As this would be a new way for us to work collectively feedback and comments are strongly encouraged.

## Online Component

We have considered 2 possible separate forums for establishing/hosting a virtual working group

### LinkedIn

As many participants in the urban DRR workshop already have LinkedIn accounts, the Nepal Risk Reduction Consortium can open a group forum dedicated to urban DRR issues. An online forum on LinkedIn provides the following benefits and drawbacks:

Benefits	Drawbacks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ It can be done immediately</li> <li>➤ It requires little financial resource</li> <li>➤ It can utilise the strong network already established in LinkedIn (both national and international professionals can contribute to the forum).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Limited crosscutting and linkages to NRRC and flagship 4 information platform. There would need to be considerable manual input.</li> <li>➤ It requires that all participants register LinkedIn accounts</li> <li>➤ Lack of control over website functionality (layout, design, links, news, resource documents, etc.)</li> </ul>

### External Website

As an alternative, an external website dedicated to urban DRR can be established. This website, which would link to the NRRC platform and Flagship Information Platforms (currently only Flagship 4 has an information Platform), would contain the following benefits and drawbacks:

Benefits	Drawbacks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ An advanced interactive discussion forum (perhaps utilising video forums/discussions as well)</li> <li>➤ Full control over website content to include background information, reports, meeting minutes and presentations on urban DRR issues</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Will require time to establish and ensure functionality</li> <li>➤ Will require dedicated human and financial resources to ensure upkeep and regular updating</li> </ul>

### Content

The online component would include basic functions such as links to news, publications and research in Urban DRR. It would also incorporate links to NRRC, NRRC Communications Group, Flagship 4 Information Platform, along with other Urban DRR sites. This online component would also encourage linkages with other interested partners.

A main function of the online component would request different partner organisations, academics, and experts in Urban DRR to open a discussion forum with a short and theme-oriented video/interview/essay, which can then be debated. Once the discussion forum closes, a discussion/monthly report that summarises and identifies key action points will be completed and reviewed for partner support and follow-up. Debate could incorporate twitter feeds and other social media platforms.

### **Resources**

Both online components (LinkedIn or an external website) will require dedicated human resources to moderate discussions and ensure appropriate and relevant materials are shared. In addition, discussion forums will need to be structured and timed (participants will be given 2 weeks to contribute to a forum) to ensure effective and focussed interactions on the specified topic.

### **Real-world Component:**

While the online component to the Virtual Working Group will be central, there will still need to be a real-world component. In this component, partners will meet every 6 months for half a day / day (depending on the need) to discuss topical issues related to urban DRR and how partners can move forward and coordinate actions to maximize the effectiveness of implementation. These meetings will encourage linkages across all Flagships and the NRRC Communications Group. These meetings will also provide an opportunity to review whether the online component is meeting the needs required for urban DRR or if any changes are necessary.