

TAPPING 'ICT' FOR AWARENESS CAMPAIGN TO EQUIP THE COASTAL COMMUNITIES WITH SCIENTIFIC KNOWLEDGE OF DISASTER THREATS

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Abstract:

Introduction: The recent disasters in the Indian subcontinent in particular and all over south and south east Asia in general have shown the increasing vulnerability of the coastal communities. The risk is relatively higher among the coastal communities because of the socio-economic changes that had taken place at a faster rate in the past few decades. The climatic change is also another contributor of the risk environment in the coastal areas. The need to hedge the risk and provide capacity building support to increase the resilience of the communities is of, therefore, paramount importance.

Objectives: This paper tries to explore the possibilities of meeting the demands of the coastal communities on the knowledge of risk and vulnerability of disasters. A knowledge enterprise, which is cost effective, as scientific as possible and accessible in all means is the basic need of the community. The paper explores the use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) to educate the coastal communities and make them aware of the scientific aspects of the disaster threats. The PRA techniques and psycho-social tools can be used for their training and retraining.

Methodology: The ICT, PRA and psycho-social tools can leverage the power of information media to enable the community to critically evaluate and creatively adopt the situation in handling the risks. The paper explores to showcase the use of the open source ICT resources in communicating the knowledge base. The programme can be organized in such a way that it is both communication, edutainment and training. The use of GIS and GeoSpatial methods are also demonstrated by summarizing with the maps.

Results and conclusion: The paper outlines the method of building knowledge base on risk and vulnerability of disaster threats to the coastal communities. It established the use of open source materials for building viable ICT deliveries. It also cite examples where the ICT has helped the communities as well as suggest the probable enhancements that could be achieved with the use of new techniques. The paper strongly advocates the use of the spatial information technology initiatives like GIS and GeoSpatial Methods. The maps are visual and therefore provide dramatic effects in understanding the risks and the possible geospatial solutions. The spatial focus in handling the risk and development will contribute to sustainable management of the resources and minimizing the ricks from the disasters.