

UP-SCALING COMMUNITY RESILIENCE THROUGH ECOSYSTEM-BASED DISASTER RISK REDUCTION KERALA, INDIA



OVERVIEW OF PROJECT ENGAGEMENT IN KERALA

Over the past decade, disasters linked to natural hazards have exacted a significant toll on human lives, livelihoods, assets and economies. Ecosystem-based Disaster Risk Reduction (Eco-DRR) is an approach where the regulatory functions of ecosystems (such as forests, wetlands and mangroves) are systematically harnessed to mitigate, prevent, or buffer against disasters. Eco-DRR recognizes that ecosystems can provide disaster risk reduction services as well as offer other ecosystem services of productive and cultural value, which also contribute to building local resilience to disasters and climate change.

The European Commission has awarded a three-year project (2019-2021) to UNEP to focus on scaling-up Eco-DRR interventions and promote large scale implementation of Eco-DRR in countries. The main aim of this project is to develop different models for demonstrating large-scale implementation of Eco-DRR, which advance implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction and the Sustainable Development Agenda.

In Kerala, India, the focus will be on developing capacity to undertake ecosystem restoration for DRR as part of the Mahatma Gandhi Rural Employment Guaranteed Scheme (MGNREGS). This is a nation-wide programme, which employs 2.6 million women in Kerala.

The project entails developing training modules, a handbook and undertake training on ecosystem restoration for disaster risk reduction (DRR) with local government technical staff, elected officials and technical staff of targeted Panchayats. The Kerala State Disaster Management Authority (KSDMA) will act as the main institutional counterpart for UNEP. The Kerala Institute of Local Administration (KILA) will lead the development of the training materials, handbook and training workshops drawing on expertise of national and international experts.



GLOBAL ECO-DRR UPSCALING PROJECT

1. Leveraging - public and private investment for scaling up Eco-DRR

Eco-DRR approaches will be integrated in large-scale public and private investments for poverty alleviation, development, risk reduction and climate change mitigation/adaptation in India and in the Philippines.

2. Demonstrating – models for scaling-up Eco-DRR with local actors

Projects that demonstrate community-based Eco-DRR will be implemented in 5 countries, including India. Building on existing initiatives, the approach will be implemented across broader landscapes to create models for scaling-up community-based Eco-DRR. To be implemented with Partners for Resilience, an alliance of 5 Netherlands-based NGOs.

3. Mainstreaming – to catalyze investments in Eco-DRR initiatives through capacity-building.

This component includes:

- Developing Eco-DRR capacities through universities, training institutions and on-line courses;
- Eco-DRR Opportunity Mapping Tool identifies areas for ecosystem protection and restoration to attract public and private sector investments;
- Developing guidelines and trainings to support implementation of Eco-DRR related components of key international framework agreements.
- Virtual Global Support Center which provides technical assistance on Eco-DRR globally through the PEDRR (Partnership for Environment and Disaster Risk Reduction) secretariat.

PROJECT COMPONENT 1. KEY ACTIVITIES TO BE UNDERTAKEN IN KERALA:

- Development of a model for integrating ecosystem restoration for DRR into the Mahatma Gandhi Rural Employment Guaranteed Scheme (MGNREGS) programme in Kerala, with the possibility of upscaling this work nationally;
- Integrating ecosystem restoration for DRR into the Ayyankali Urban Employment Guarantee Scheme, the urban counterpart to the MGNREGS implemented in the state of Kerala, to ensure continuous application of Eco-DRR interventions across urban-rural divisions;
- Development of guidelines and training packages for Eco-DRR interventions, which are mainstreamed into Government procedures, such as local development plans, or relevant academic programmes. This includes delivering the training packages through Training of Trainers workshops and Online courses;
- Identification of Eco-DRR opportunities through hazard and vulnerability assessments, including flood risk, landslide susceptibility and climate change modelling;
- Identification of suitable field locations and institutional partners to provide hands-on technical assistance in implementing Eco-DRR;
- Documentation of successful Eco-DRR case studies in Kerala and disseminating them at local, national and global levels.



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