

Kathmandu Valley Earthquake Risk Management Project (KVERMP)

NSET Information Kit | 001 | 2011



BACKGROUND

Seismic hazard evaluation of Nepal in the early 1990s made it clear that a large earthquake near Kathmandu Valley today would cause significantly greater human loss, physical damage, and economic crisis than caused by past earthquakes. The Kathmandu Valley Earthquake Risk Management Project was aimed to improve this situation, and start a process towards managing the earthquake risk in the Valley.

The Kathmandu Valley Earthquake Risk Management Project (KVERMP) was implemented from 1 September 1997 to 30 December 1999 by the National Society for Earthquake Technology – Nepal (NSET) in technical collaboration with GeoHazards International (GHI), as a part of the Asian Urban Disaster Mitigation Program (AUDMP) of the Asian Disaster Preparedness Center (ADPC), with core funding by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA).

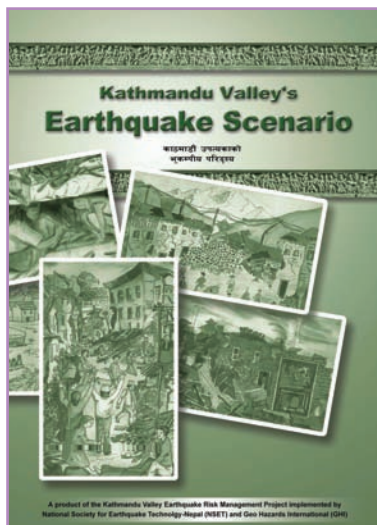
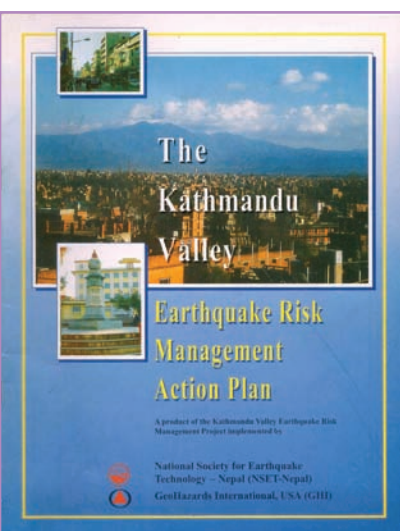
OBJECTIVES

- 1) To evaluate Kathmandu Valley's earthquake risk and prescribe an action plan for managing the risk;
- 2) To reduce earthquake vulnerability of public schools;
- 3) To raise awareness among the public, government officials, international community resident in Kathmandu, and international organizations about Kathmandu Valley's earthquake risk; and
- 4) To build local institutions that can sustain the work launched in this project

ACTIVITIES

KVERMP included a wide variety of activities aimed at beginning a self-sustaining earthquake risk management program for Kathmandu Valley. Project components included the following.

- 1) Development of an earthquake scenario and an action plan for earthquake risk management in the Kathmandu Valley.
 - Simple earthquake loss estimation was conducted and a scenario was written describing possible consequences of the valley's next major earthquake using layman's language, and distributed widely.
 - An action plan was created outlining procedures and projects to begin comprehensively managing the valley's earthquake risk.



2) School Earthquake Safety Program

- A survey of all of the public school buildings in Kathmandu Valley was conducted. Study was conducted to determine the most vulnerable types of school building construction prevalent in Kathmandu Valley and to determine methods for retrofitting these structures. Programs were initiated to motivate local communities and international agencies to strengthen vulnerable school buildings.

3) Awareness raising and institutional strengthening

- Many public awareness activities were conducted, including Earthquake Safety Day, earthquake orientation, earthquake drills, displays, and demonstrations.
- Existing local institutions related to disaster management were given training and managerial support. New organizations to manage disaster risk were created within local community groups and municipal governments during the course of this project.

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PROJECT OUTPUTS

Simplified Earthquake Scenario and Action Plan was developed

Community-based School Earthquake Safety Program (SESP) was identified as sustainable mitigation process with various methodologies for seismic retrofitting

Increased public awareness was gained - Earthquake Safety Day was identified as an attractive awareness raising strategy

Institution Building- With a well defined mission, vision and strategic objectives, NSET became strong enough to continue earthquake risk management activities in Nepal and provide technical assistance to other institutions.

KVERMP was a milestone in earthquake risk management in Nepal and the region. The project methodology was replicated in 9 cities in the world during RADIUS project implemented by UNIDNDR.

KEY LESSONS

- Earthquake damage scenario is a very effective awareness promotion tool.
- Awareness raising is key for promoting earthquake risk reduction
- Community involvement is a must to bring any change
- Simple and low-tech solutions work
- Technology Transfer should be accompanied with Institutional Development
- Building safer community requires sustained efforts and co-operation

