Standard Operation Procedures for Earthquake

A. Search and Rescue:

Objectives:
To trace and locate people who are physically trapped and distressed, people who are living in low lying areas, salt works, port areas, coastal areas and on river banks, to rescue these persons, move them to the safe locations identified in advance and to organize further care.

Composition of the Village Task Force:
Three to seven young, physically and mentally strong men and women with following skills sets will constitute the search and rescue (S&R) task force: driver, swimmer, cutter and climber. All members will have a basic knowledge of first aid and who normally reside in the village during the expected disaster season.

Pre-Disaster Preparedness Activities for Earthquake:
1. The VTF will familiarize themselves with existing response mechanisms of the Government at all levels to ensure effective coordination and reduced response time during disasters.
2. The VTF may arrange for the necessary S&R equipment with the help of local self-government, industrial houses and NGO as and when required.
3. The VTF will keep the equipment in a safe place, use the equipment properly and maintain it well.
4. The VTF will have with it a detailed map of the village indication vulnerable areas, individuals and households, safe areas, safe shelter, evacuation routes and transport arrangements.
5. The VTF will devise search strategies and rescue plans, which are hazard specific.
6. The VTF will organize themselves into pairs (buddy system).
7. The VTF will have back up teams ready so that shifts and the rotation of personnel can be organized.
8. The VTF will prepare themselves mentally for what they expect to see and what they can expect in terms of emotional responses to themselves and others.

During Earthquake:
1. The VTF will if caught inside stand with their backs against a strong indoor wall.
2. The VTF if outside during the earthquake will run to an open space away form trees, buildings and electric lines.
3. The VTF if in a moving vehicle will stop and stay inside.

Standard Operating Procedures for Earthquake: Post Disaster
1. Before undertaking any search and rescue operation the VTF will make a preliminary assessment and plan their response based on the following criteria:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Degree of Damage and Risk</th>
<th>Should an Intervention be attempted</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Heavy/High</td>
<td>No. Too dangerous. Secure the perimeter</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2. The VTF will conduct a general hazard assessment to determine the possible hazards that they may encounter during the operation.

3. The VTF will make a quick head count and maintain a list of missing persons.

4. The VTF will conduct a physical search involving a systematic movement across the site whilst listening to calls for help.

5. The VTF will clear debris and fallen trees in order to reach trapped victim.

6. The VTF will activate hazard specific rescue plans for the following rescue scenarios resulting from a cyclone.
   a. Rescuing drowning victims.
   b. Rescuing victims trapped under a collapsed structure.
   c. Rescuing victims stuck up on trees of hanging from buildings.
   d. Rescuing victims trapped in a structure in which there is a raging fire.
   e. Rescuing victims who have fallen into a well.
   f. Rescuing victims involved in road and rail accidents and trapped in a vehicle in an awkward position for example behind a steering wheel.

7. The VTF will communicate with the Block and District levels on matters of additional assistance in terms of manpower and equipment.

8. The VTF will coordinate closely with the first aid team to administer primary health care to rescued victims.

9. The VTF will coordinate with the evacuation team to shift rescued persons to an open space/tents in case of after shocks.

10. The VTF will coordinate with evacuation team to shift rescued persons to safe shelters in case of recurring cyclone or heavy rains following the cyclone.

11. The VTF will coordinate closely with families and the sanitation team to ensure that dead bodies are identified and cremated.

12. The VTF will coordinate with relief team to direct rescued victims to available relief assistance: water, food, public information and temporary shelter.

13. The VTF will act as support persons to firemen, home guards, police and other external agencies during the search and rescue operation.

14. The VTF will communicate correct information of rescued persons to the Block/District Emergency Operation Centre and local community as well.
Development/Mitigation Activities.
The VTF can train other members of the village community to form search and rescue sub-groups/back up teams as well as assist the police and home guards at social events and mass rallies.

B. Relief Co-ordination

Overall Objective:
To co-ordinate the first stage response to the sister by establishing contact with the Block control room, civil society organizations and NGOs and organize the distribution of assistance in terms of food, water, medicines, temporary shelter materials, blankets, household kits, candles and so on in a fair and equitable manner.

Composition of the Village Task Force:
The VTF for relief coordination will be comprised of three to seven people including representatives of all the communities of the village, important figure heads and respected leaders of the village, women members of SHGs and the owner of the fair price shop.

During Earthquake:
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3. The VTF if in a moving vehicle will stop and stay inside.

Standard Operation Procedures for Earthquake: Post Disaster
1. The VTF will conduct a complete damage and needs assessment.
2. Based on a preliminary needs assessment in line with the following check list the VTF will communicate their preferences to the Block Emergency Operation Center and NGOs.
   - The size, scope and likely duration of the distribution of relief material.
   - The estimated number of people affected and demographic characteristics.
   - Local capacity and resources as well as what will be required externally.
   - The needs of the groups affected.
   - Access to the affected population and the best methods for making assistance available.
3. The VTF will communicate the assessment findings to other Task Force groups, local authorities, and civil society organizations.
4. The VTF will establish a distribution center or community kitchen and immediately begin distributing what is locally available within the village for emergencies until external assistance arrives.
5. The VTF will ensure that food and other materials are distributed in an equitable manner addressing the needs of the most vulnerable.
6. The VTF will prioritize the elderly persons, pregnant women, children and injured persons in relief distribution.
7. The VTF will maintain a list of the households receiving assistance.
8. The VTF will provide information on the quantity and type of ration to be distributed for each distribution cycle.
9. The VTF will communicate with individuals and institutions along the supply chain in order to highlight anticipated shortfalls or problems with the supply of food and other commodities.
10. The VTF will make a physical inventory of stocks when external assistance arrives.
11. The VTF will co-ordinate with the communications group to keep people informed about the government policies which entitle them to assistance in cash and kind.
12. The VTF will work closely with the communication group to stay in constant touch with Block level Officials and external aid agencies.
13. The VTF will organize a Gram Sabha to evaluate the experience, internalize learning and ensure accountability when the relief phase is over.
14. The VTF will keep the undistributed relief material in a safe place/godown and preserve the stock.

**Development/Mitigation Activities:**
The VTF will mobilize stocks of dry food, medicines and temporary shelter materials from the government, civil society organizations, donors within the villages or from a community disaster fund, maintain these stocks, replenish them and account for them. The VTF can also develop grain, fodder and seed banks where possible.

**C. Early Warning and Communication:**

**Overall Objectives:**
To ensure that: (a) the warning of the impending disaster reaches every single household, thereby allowing people to take timely action to protect their lives and property (b) accurate information is provided regularly as events unfold (c) information flows quickly and reliably upwards to Block level and downwards from Block level to village level.

**Composition of the Village Task Force:**
Three to seven members, who can communicate orally confidently and accurately, are literate, mobile and energetic, who have a land line phone, mobile phone, radio or television and or read the newspapers regularly and who have preferably been trained in the use of HAM radio.

**Development/Mitigation Activities:**
The group will be involved in raising awareness of hazard specific do’s and don’ts by distributing leaflets and putting up posters within the village. The group will also maintain the communications equipment stored in the communications room which will be open to the local community for accessing news and for HAM operators to practice their skills.
D. Water and Sanitation:

Water:

**Overall Objectives:**
To make available safe drinking water to humans and livestock.

**Composition of Village Task Force:**
The task force will be comprised of three to seven members including members of the existing Pani Samiti in the village and individuals with some knowledge of water specific public health and sanitation.

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**Standard Operation Procedures for Earthquake: Post Disaster**
1. The VTF will make immediate repairs to broken or burst pipes.
2. The VTF will coordinate with GWSSB/R&B Department for procurement of water tankers if required.
3. The VTF will contact GWSSB for assistance in acquiring diesel engines and generators.
4. The VTF will contact GEB for the restoration of power supply.
5. The VTF will raise awareness about and ensure that water is treated using: chlorine tablets, calcium hypochlorite or the sjana seed, boiled and strained.
6. The VTF will disinfect large water bodies with lime powder.
7. The VTF will ensure that sufficient water is stored for drinking in clean and covered containers at the relief camp.
8. The VTF will coordinate with the sanitary Inspector for taking drinking water samples.
9. The VTF will ensure that water is distributed in an equitable manner and that the needs of the vulnerable are addressed.
10. The VTF will coordinate with the sanitation group to ensure sufficient water is available at common bathing units and toilets at relief camps.
11. The VTF will co-ordinate with the sanitation group to constrict channels and soak away pits for drainage of wastewater at relief camps.

Sanitation:

**Overall Objectives:**
To ensure that the minimum basic facilities such as temporary toilets and common bathing units are constructed near the relief camp, that these facilities and the surroundings are kept clean, garbage disposed, dead bodies cremated and the normal drainage systems function smoothly.
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Standard Operation Procedures for Earthquake: Post Disaster
1. The VTF will demarcate areas for safe excreta disposal around the relief camp until temporary toilets are constructed.
2. The VTF will coordinate with local self-government to construct a sufficient number of toilets for males and females close to dwellings to allow for rapid, safe and acceptable access at all times.
3. The VTF will guide the local authorities to construct latrines away from groundwater sources; the bottom of the latrine will be at least 105 meters above the water table and on higher ground in flood prone areas.
4. The VTF will coordinate with the local authority to construct sufficient bathing cubicles with separate cubicles for males and females.
5. The VTF will spray bleaching powder and other disinfectants in the village to prevent the spread of infectious disease.
6. The VTF will ensure trenches of latrines are cleaned and disinfected regularly.
7. The VTF will make sure evacuees use the sanitation facilities properly.
8. The VTF will enhance existing facilities such as toilets in school buildings by for example providing water for washing.
9. The VTF will ensure that solid waste is put in refuse containers or buried in a refuse pit.
10. The VTF will ensure that there are no contaminated or dangerous medical wastes such as needles, dressings, drugs and so no lying around the relief camp or in public places.
11. The VTF will use both environmental and chemical vector control measures such as the proper disposal of human and animal excreta for fly control and the spraying of insecticides in temporary shelters.
12. The VTF will co-ordinate with the health and first aid team to inoculate against water borne and other diseases.
13. The VTF will construct temporary soak pits for onsite disposal of wastewater form water points and washing areas.
14. The VTF will co-ordinate with the search and rescue team for disposal of carcasses.
15. The VTF will ensure that dead bodies are identified, registered and then cremated after legal formalities.
16. The VTF will coordinate with relief co-ordination group to endure that the area surrounding the relief camps are kept clean and disinfected.

Development/Mitigation Activities:
The VTF will attempt to link relief with ongoing developmental activities already being undertaken by the government such as the sector Reform Program, the Minimum Needs
Program and other Programs of NGOs aimed at ensuring minimum quantity and quality parameters through the promotion of rain water harvesting techniques, ensuring the provision of drinking water free from bacteria and chemical contamination and raising awareness about conservation and reuse. The VTF will also involve itself in raising awareness about personal hygiene, cleanliness in the home and wider environmental protection.

E. First Aid and Health:

Objective
To provide primary health care to the ill or injured until more advanced care is provided and the patient is transported to a hospital.

Composition of Village Task Force:
The group will be comprised of three to seven people who are literate, have some health related knowledge or are working in medicine and are respected members of the community.

Pre-Disaster Preparedness Activities for Earthquake:
1. The VTF will maintain a list of pregnant women, infants, infants, the disabled, sick and old in the village to ensure that their medical needs are met.
2. The VTF will keep a First Aid kit ready and ensure that expired drugs are replaced with new ones.
3. The VTF will distribute basic medicines (chlorine tablets, ORS packets and so on) and demonstrate their use, to families in advance.
4. The VTF will keep stretchers/local alternative ready to carry injured people.

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Standard Operation Procedures for Earthquake: Post Disaster
1. The VTF will attend to the injuries and trauma of rescued people.
2. The VTF will help doctors and paramedics shift the ill and the injured to hospitals.
3. The VTF will isolate cases with infectious diseases and prevent them from spreading.
4. The VTF will provide preventive medication if there is a danger of epidemics like cholera, gastroenteritis, dysentery, and malaria spreading.
5. The VTF will inform the relief group about medical supplies that are running low.

Development/Mitigation Activities:
The group will work with the local PHC during normal times, assisting in government programs such as polio and leprosy cims and imparting training to other interested
volunteers in the village. The group will also launch an awareness campaign about HIV/AIDS.

**F. Evacuation and Shelter Management:**

**Objectives**
To construct/identify, maintain and make repairs to the cyclone or flood shelter, to evacuate people on receipt of a warning and to make all the necessary arrangements to accommodate evacuees during a flood.

**Composition of Village Task Force:**
The group will constitute between four and seven people with knowledge of construction and preferable including a civil engineer.

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**Standard Operation Procedures for Earthquake: Post Disaster**
1. The VTF will organize for tents and materials for the construction of temporary shelters to be provided to the local community.
2. The VTF will help the community to reconstruct their permanent shelters (providing and identifying local material which can be used for reconstruction)
3. The VTF will help NGOs and their engineers in conduction Gram Sabha and other rehabilitation and reconstruction related activity.
4. The VTF will monitor the rehabilitation and reconstruction process of the community.

**Development/Mitigation Activities:**
The VTF will contribute to government programs such as the Indira Vikas Yogna and the reconstruction programs of other NGOs and aid agencies operating in the village. The VTF will undertake a program to retrofit homes in the village and also raise awareness of seismic and earthquake safe construction techniques and technologies which build upon local knowledge and construction skills.

**Disaster Psychology:**
Since all the task force members will be in constant contact with survivors it is important that they understand the distinct emotional phases that survivors go through.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage</th>
<th>Characteristics</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Impact phase</td>
<td>Survivors do not panic; they may display no emotions and do what they must to keep themselves and their families alive.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Inventory phase (period which</td>
<td>Survivors assess damage and try to locate</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
immediately follows the Disaster) other survivors. During this phase routine social ties are disrupted in favour of the more functional relationships required for initial response activities such as search and rescue.

Rescue phase

Emergency rescue services and VTF members arrive on the scene and survivors are willing to take their directions without protest. They trust that the rescuers will help address their needs so that they can then get their lives together quickly. VTF members must be easily identifiable with helmets, armbands and so on.

Recovery phase

Survivors may feel that rescue and relief efforts are not proceeding quickly enough and this coupled with a sense of frustration with insurance and compensation claims aggravates stress levels. Frustration may be directed towards VTF members.

In the post-disaster scenario as people pick up the pieces of their lives shattered by calamity they may experience the following psychological and physiological conditions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Psychological</th>
<th>Physiological</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fear of recurrence</td>
<td>Loss of appetite</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frustration</td>
<td>Headaches</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-blame and blame towards others</td>
<td>Stomach cramps and diarrhea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feeling overwhelmed</td>
<td>Hyperactivity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sadness and grief</td>
<td>Increase in alcohol or drug consumption</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coordination and memory problems</td>
<td>Fatigue and low energy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denial</td>
<td>Nightmares and sleeplessness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mood swings</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

It is important for all VTF members to remember the following:

- Talk to the survivors and encourage them to express their feelings and physiological needs.
- Listen attentively to what the person has to say.
- Respond with empathy, understand the concerns of the individual and reassure them that such feelings are expected.

Keep information confidential and respect their confidence.