



Non Governmental Organizations (NGOs) in disaster mitigation and preparedness education programs

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Integrating disaster preparedness programs and working locally with existing development projects (pre and post disaster) can reduce vulnerabilities to natural hazards, and subsequently the dependency on external assistance. Non Governmental Organizations (NGOs) play a strong communicative role in the field of education for disaster mitigation and preparedness (DMP). Strategies and initiatives pertaining to earthquake mitigation and preparedness carried out by the Peoples Science Institute (PSI), Dehra Doon, India are presented here. These programs directly influence the effectiveness of disaster mitigation, management of disaster planning, and reaction activities in response to such disasters through increased learning and participatory process. PSI's disaster mitigation and preparedness programs have had a positive impact by successfully increasing the number of earthquake safe constructions and increasing the overall level of disaster awareness among community members. NGOs are in a unique position to mobilize communities at the grassroots level to develop greater awareness strategies while at the same time can advise and advocate changes to policy. A summary of the strengths and weaknesses of PSI's initiatives and interactions with government agencies are used here to exemplify the role of NGOs in disaster mitigation and preparedness.