



Education on Risk Management with Gender Equity: Experiences in United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) courses using on-site education and synchronous technologies for distance education

J. Cepeda (1,2), W. Marroquín (3), and Y. Villar (4)

(1) International Centre for Geohazards (ICG), Norway (jose.cepeda@geohazards.no), (2) University of Oslo, Norway, (3) Universidad Centroamericana "José Simeón Cañas" (UCA), El Salvador (wmarroqu@ing.uca.edu.sv), (4) United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), El Salvador (yolanda.villar@undp.org)

The experiences in two Risk Management courses organised by the Universidad Centroamericana "José Simeón Cañas" (UCA) and the "América Latina Genera" project of the BCPR-UNDP (Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery of the United Nations Development Programme) are presented focusing on the design of teaching material and the selection and use of information-communication technologies (ICT) during the learning process. The organisation of these courses has posed three main challenges: the integration of a gender-equity approach in a subject that has traditionally lacked of it, the preparation of specialised teaching material for an audience with varied backgrounds and experience, and a widespread distribution of students and lecturers in different countries and with significant differences in ICT resources. These courses have combined tutorials, video-conferences, forums, chats, a media centre with video and podcast, and other resources to allow a close follow-up of the students' progress and strengthen the learning process. A specialised database of information within the "América Latina Genera" project has also been used intensively. Even though the building of capacity has been important, the emphasis of the courses has been on the practical application of projects in the students' work environment and in other real situations.

The first course took place between June and December 2008 and consisted of a combination of on-site and distance education. The 15 students that registered the course included officials of local and central government institutions, private consultants, university staff and members of non-governmental organisations. Lecturers from the United States Geological Survey and the International Centre for Geohazards broadcasted videoconferences from the United States and Norway, respectively.

The second course started in November 2008 and is scheduled to finish in February 2009. This course has been fully developed using distance education. The synchronous technology that has been used is web conferencing. The total registration for this course was 35 students who have participated in lectures from their locations in Argentina, Cuba, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, Panama, Peru and Uruguay. The lectures for this course have been broadcasted from locations in El Salvador and Norway.