

A PARTICIPATORY AND APPRECIATIVE RISK ASSESSMENT FOR DISASTER RISK REDUCTION IN THE COASTAL CITY OF JAFFNA, SRI LANKA

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Abstract: Having risk at a community level leads to negative effects on people, systems, functions, livelihood, and elements at risk. Understanding risk at the local level is an essential component for risk communication in disaster risk reduction and risk management of the last mile. A lack of understanding of the risk at a community level can lead to a waste of resources, ineffective preparedness, and response as well as unsustainable development. Reducing existing risks and avoiding creating new risks would make the coastal cities resilient. Understanding potential risks is a prime requirement to strengthen local Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) and reduce the extreme vulnerability of the coast of Jaffna City. Triple-Risk-Associations (TRA) of solid waste, flood inundation, and the epidemic (dengue) are the climax to studying the coast of Jaffna City. This study aims to enhance the Local DRR practices toward coastal city community resilience. The mixed approach was used to reveal the results as the geographical, social, economic, and environmental conditions were complex in this coastal area. Forty-five participants including community leaders, Small Scale Fishermen (SSF) community, village officials, and local vendors were in-depth interviewed and discussed with focus groups, and data were gathered. Also, the community rating system was utilized to generate the risk map based on the specified criteria. According to TRA, Navanthurai North, South and Koddadi, Pommaiveli, Vasanthapuram, Samminakar, Sooriyaveli, and Gurunakar have been identified as risky areas as per the outcome of community rating in the coastal city. The risk assessment facilitates proactive risk communication which reduces the potential and new risks, too, and enhances local DRR of the coastal cities and climate resilience. The participatory and appreciative community practice of this study could be implemented by the local authorities to ensure the local DRR and build city resilience in developing countries.

Keywords: Coastal city resilience; Participatory approach; Local disaster risk reduction; Risk communication; Triple-Risk-Association