

UGC Sponsored National Conference on
Role of Youth in Community Based Disaster Management”

02-02-2012 to 03-02-2012

Venue –Carreno Hall, Sacred Heart College, Tirupattur, Vellore Dt

Organized By

P.G. & Research Department of Social Work, Sacred Heart College, Tirupattur

in collaboration with

Dept. of Psychiatric Social Work, NIMHANS, Deemed University, Bangalore

The UGC sponsored National Conference on “The Role of Youth in Community Based Disaster Management” was organised by the P.G. & Research Department of Social Work in collaboration with the Department of Psychiatric Social Work, National Institute of Mental Health and Neuro Sciences (NIMHANS), Deemed university Bangalore.

It was held on 2nd and 3rd February 2012, in Carreno Hall, Sacred Heart college,(Autonomous) Tirupattur. Shri. Michael Vetha Siromoni IAS, Director and Vice Chancellor of Rajiv Gandhi National Institute of Youth Development, Ministry of Youth Affairs & Sports, Govt of India delivered the inaugural address and stated that India is a theatre of disaster”. He highlighted the importance of responding to man made disasters like accidents caused by drinking and driving and drowning apart from Natural disasters. He urged the participants to learn swimming, first aid and CPR by which they will be able to save lives when disaster strikes. He also has stressed that disaster and deaths are the result of someone who has failed to do his duty. He said every victim of a disaster give a message that “I died because someone has failed to do his duty”. He insisted on the role of community and especially the youth in disaster preparedness and said if the community does not proactively respond to the disaster the Government and the Collectors will be there only to collect dead bodies of disaster victims.

Dr, J. Henry Rozario, Associate Professor in Dept. of Social Work, Sacred Heart College, Tirupattur & Convener of the conference and Dr. K. Sekar Professor in Dept. of Psychatric Social Work, NIMHANS & Co-Convener of the conference shared the overview of the

conference. Rev. Dr. Maria Soosai, the Principal, Sacred Heart College, Tirupattur presided over the inaugural function.

Dr. Sekar, the National expert on Psycho Social Care in Disaster Management from NIMHANS, emphasised in his key note address, that it is time for the social workers to work together at all levels for change, social justice and for the universal implementation of human rights if they want to improve the foundations of disaster management. He concluded by saying that psycho social care is neither an end in itself nor a separate entity. Its success is linked to accelerated community based psychosocial rehabilitation process.

During the two days of the conference 188 participants from 31 Universities, Colleges, Govt. organizations, NGOs and Companies participated and 31 among them presented papers and posters on different sub themes on role of youth in community based disaster management. Every paper presenter was given 10 minutes of time to present the paper and 5 minutes to answer the questions from the audience on their topic.

The second Key Note speech was given by Dr. M. Sam Roy, Head of the Dept, NGO Management, Madras School of Social Work, Chennai and he spoke on the theme of NGO's Response to Disaster Management.

Parallel Sessions were held in three places (Carreno hall, Oasis hall and Presentation hall) where 12 participants presented their papers on the sub theme of role of youth volunteers in disaster preparedness / management and building local capacities for disaster response and vulnerability reduction.

As per UGC directions the Conference proceedings consisting of 31 research papers will be published and also will be uploaded in the UGC website to make it accessible to all those interested in this field.

Mr. Jayakanthan Asst Programme officer, Regional Directorate of Municipal Administration, Vellore, Mr. Arul Rocalli, Programme Manager, CARE India, NIMHANS, Dr. Sam Roy, Head, NGO Management, Madras School of Social Work, Chennai were the Key Note Speakers.

The major objective of the conference was to inspire participants to take up to practical action in a disaster scenario and to facilitate this they were divided in to 12 groups and were asked to discuss about their role under the following themes: Role of youth in community based

disaster management’, ’Building local capacities for disaster response and vulnerability reduction’, ’Role of NGO s and industry in disaster management through capacity building and ‘ role of Government organisations in disaster preparedness and management. After the group discussion, the student representatives from each group presented their action plans.

Cultural programme was organised on 2nd evening where participants from various institutions and colleges participated and showcased their talents in dancing and singing.

Day 2

On the 2nd day of the conference the key note speaker, Mr. Arul Roncalli, Former programme Manager, Care India, Psychiatric Social Work, Bangalore spoke on “Community Response to Disaster Management through Capacity Building”. He stressed in his speech that India is vulnerable to various types of disasters- Geo-climatic and natural disaster. The man-made disaster is due to error or intentional. He also gave statistics of vulnerability to various disasters. He shared about NIMHANS experience in disaster management. He also gave some strategies for disaster management such as need assessment, capacity building activities, social support etc. He highlighted all the practical issues on disaster and the NGOs involvement in such disaster. He strongly quoted that the victims of disaster are in desperate need of psycho social support. They want people to listen to their grievances and the pain and agony that they undergo due to disaster.

Paper presentations were held under the sub-theme of enhancing the role of NGOs in disaster management through capacity building. It was held in carenohall, presentation hall and Oasis which was chaired by Dr. K. Parthasarathy, Dr. Ashok Antony D’souza, and Prof. Pochont Allan John respectively. Nine authors presented the paper.

The final key note speaker, Mr. Jayakanthan, Asst Programme Officer from Regional Directorate Municipal Administration, Vellore spoke on the theme ‘The Role of Governmental Organisation in Disaster Management. He explained about the different roles played by the governmental organisation at times of disaster. He shared about two case studies in rehabilitating the victims of disaster - Mud grab fattening in Cuddalore Municipality and Rehabilitation of Saltpan workers in Vedaranyam municipality.

Poster presentations were held in Oasis hall which was chaired by Mr. Arun roncalli. Five participants presented their posters. Four participants presented their papers in careno hall

and Presentation hall and the sessions were chaired by Fr. Joy Mathew and Dr. Henry respectively.

Evaluation forms were given to the participants to fill it and give back in order to get their feedback.

Dr .A.J. Christopher presented the summary of the conference in the valedictory function. Shri. R. Venkatesan IAS, Under Secretary, Chief Minister Cell- Grievance Handling, Govt of Tamil Nadu. in his valedictory address emphasised that as members of the society one has to be useful to others not only during disaster but before and after by our conviction and commitment. He shared the objectives the role of government organisations in disaster management. He also explained about the different roles played by the governmental organisation at times of disaster. The valediction programme was presided over by Rev. Fr. K. M. Jose, the Secretary of Sacred Heart College, Tirupattur. Dr. J. Henry Rozario., the Convener of the National Conference thanked all the participants who have come from Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala, Pondicherry and Karaikal other than from Tamil Nadu.

Finally a representative from every institution was called to give their feedback and suggestions regarding the conference. All the participants gave their positive feedback which was encouraging one. Then the certificates were distributed to all the paper presenters and participants.