Certificate Course in Disaster Management

An IFRC-TISS Collaboration Programme
INTRODUCTION

The International Federation of Red Cross and Crescent Societies (IFRC) and the Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS) offers an on-line Certificate Course in Disaster Management. This initiative is in line with Strategic Aim 1 of IFRC’s Strategy 2020 to “save lives, protect livelihoods, and strengthen recovery from disasters and crises” and commitment of TISS to excellence in Disaster Management education.

Through this course, IFRC and TISS have partnered to evolve, and present through this course new areas of study in the field of Disaster Management. While leveraging the decades of experience, inherent strength and uniqueness of the IFRC in disaster response, the course will enhance the knowledge and capacities of Red Cross and Red Crescent staff and volunteers and new professionals in the field of humanitarian response. This will result in more professional support for building sustainable and resilient communities and nations worldwide.

This online Certificate Course in Disaster Management is designed to address existing practice-knowledge gaps by equipping humanitarian professionals with the right blend of academic knowledge and practical expertise, to enable them to reduce vulnerabilities and risks from hazards, while building the resilience of nations and communities to disasters.

The one-year certificate course is an introductory level foundational course of 22 credits covering:

- Introduction to Development
- Humanitarian Principles, Laws and Standards in Disaster Management
- Introduction to Hazards, Vulnerabilities and Disasters
- Information Communication and Geo-Informatics Technologies in Disaster Management
- Disaster Risk Reduction and Development Planning
- Disaster Response and Recovery

There is also a Term Paper writing component and a month-long Field Practicum.

The course also includes two non-credit components – ‘Learning to Learn’ and ‘World of Red Cross/Red Crescent’ – which must be completed before the commencement of credit modules.

WHY STUDY DISASTER MANAGEMENT?

Globally, disasters are on the increase, impacting communities and nations with grave social and economic consequences and threatening the survival, dignity and livelihoods of the vulnerable sections of their populations. Shifting socio-economic situations, unplanned urbanisation, environmental degradation, climate variability and change, geological hazards, competition for scarce natural resources and the threat of epidemics are factors that compound the impact of disasters.
The global economy and the sustainable development of developing countries have felt the impact of this trend. In 2011, 332 natural disasters were registered, less than the average annual disaster frequency observed from 2001 to 2010 (384). However, the human and economic impacts of the disasters in 2011 were massive. Natural disasters killed a total of 30,773 people and caused 244.7 million victims worldwide. Economic damages from natural disasters, estimated at US$ 366.1 billion, were the highest ever registered.

Organisations like The International Federation of Red Cross and Crescent Societies (IFRC) and other humanitarian actors are tremendously proficient at mounting immediate response interventions. There is a growing need to bring together the wealth of practical disaster response experience and knowledge of the IFRC and other humanitarian actors and the academic centres like the Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS) to address humanitarian response in a holistic and integrated manner.

**COURSE OUTLINE**

Disaster Management studies is recognized as a trans-disciplinary field that combines decades of ground-level experience of the IFRC, the Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement and other humanitarian actors with the core principles of humanitarian action, drawing on theoretical perspectives and conceptual understanding from a variety of academic principles. The scope of the study of disasters has grown tremendously from the initial focus on natural hazards to now including the impact of economic globalization and competition for resources and the resulting displacement, forced migration, conflict, creation of refugees and others. These have added considerable complexity to the realm of disaster management.

The integrated programme defines humanitarian response within the framework of an understanding of development, with vulnerability and disaster risk reduction as an integral part of development.

In this programme, the study of disaster risk reduction, disaster response and post-disaster recovery will be grounded in the values of justice, equity and social inclusion.

This programme recognizes the vulnerabilities faced by the poor and marginalized and the disproportionate impact of disasters endured by them in the developing world. This course addresses all stages of disaster management in a comprehensive and holistic manner; including:

(i) Pre-disaster preparedness and mitigation
(ii) Rescue and relief in the context of disaster and
(iii) Post-disaster rehabilitation, reconstruction and recovery.
COURSE OBJECTIVES

This Certificate Course in Disaster Management is designed to impart domain knowledge, values, capacities and skills to:

• Demonstrate a critical understanding of key concepts in disaster risk reduction and humanitarian response.

• Understand and appreciate the specific contributions of the Red Cross/Red Crescent movement to the practice and conceptual understanding of disaster management and humanitarian response and their significance in the current context.

• Recognize issues, debates and challenges arising from the nexus between the paradigm of development and disasters.

• Critically evaluate disaster risk reduction and humanitarian response policy and practice from multiple perspectives.

• Develop an understanding of standards of humanitarian response and practical relevance in specific types of disasters and conflict situations.

• Critically understand the strengths and weaknesses of disaster management approaches, planning and programming in different countries, particularly their home country or the countries they work in.

• Respond to disaster risk reduction initiatives and disasters in an effective, humane and sustainable manner.

On the completion of the course students should be able to show critical understanding of:

• The range of vulnerabilities faced by, and impact of disasters on, the poorest and most marginalized communities in the developing world.

• Key issues and debates related to disaster risk reduction, disaster response, and post-disaster recovery.

• All stages of disaster management such as pre-disaster preparedness and mitigation, rescue and relief in the context of disaster, and post-disaster.

COURSE STRUCTURE

The course is of 22 credits. A participant can complete the certificate course within 12 months from the start of the programme. This is an online distance learning programme where the participants study, complete their internship and write their term paper in the country where they are based.
MODULES

• Learning to Learn (Non-credit)

The participants will be oriented and introduced to the methodology of online classrooms and the tools for communication and interactions. They will also be guided through practical exercises and will have the chance to clarify their concerns about the entire learning process. They will understand that each session in a course will include compulsory reading, and the course will be further explicated with case studies and other audio-visual material from diverse contexts. The assessment method for each course will be communicated at the start of the course by the tutor and students will have to maintain the minimum grade for passing.

• World of Red Cross and Red Crescent (Non-credit)

This module introduces the participants to the world of the Red Cross and the roles of its three main components, namely the:

(i) International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)

(ii) International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) and

(iii) 187 members of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies.

The role of IFRC and its work in the field of disaster management and humanitarian response will be traced in detail historically. IFRC’s Strategy 2020 will be elaborately discussed, in particular its core strategies such as:

i). Save lives, protect livelihoods, and strengthen recovery from disasters and crises

ii) Enable healthy and safe living, and

iii) Promote social inclusion and a culture of nonviolence and peace.

• Module 1: Introduction to Development (2 Credits)

To understand the entire cycle of disaster management, from disaster risk assessment and disaster risk reduction to disaster response and post-disaster recovery, it is essential to understand the broader developmental context in which disasters and disaster management are situated. This requires a wider perspective and a working knowledge of underlying key theoretical and empirical issues relating to growth, development, poverty, inequality and human development. Significantly, the conceptualisation of development is itself changing with an increasing emphasis on sustainable development and human well-being, going beyond a simplistic growth- and infrastructure-based perspective. The key objective of the course is to equip students to examine basic concepts related to development, including human development and sustainability, in order to understand disasters and meaningful sustainable responses to them.
• Module 2: Humanitarian Principles, Laws and Standards in Disaster Management
(2 Credits)
This module provides a clear understanding of humanitarianism and humanitarian principles underlying the response to natural disasters and conflicts. It highlights the need for accountability and transparency during disaster responses through various practical examples and illustrations. It covers the basic understanding of the following themes/key areas: Fundamental Humanitarian Principles; International Disaster Response Law (IDRL); International Humanitarian Law (IHL); Humanitarian Charter; Code of Conduct; Articulating the History and Evolution of Humanitarianism. It also looks at various facets of applying humanitarian standards in disaster context e.g., Sphere Standards. A foundation is provided by analysing these key issues and concepts and examining their interrelationship/validity in practice.

• Module 3: Introduction to Hazards, Vulnerabilities and Disasters (4 Credits)
This module aims to develop a conceptual understanding of hazard, exposure, risk, vulnerability and disaster. The module explains how vulnerability (internal susceptibility or defenselessness) and hazard (an external event) interact to create disasters. The contents include: Introduction to Risk and Vulnerability; Political, Social and Economic Perspectives of Risk and Vulnerability; Disasters -- Introduction, Definition and Characteristics; Contributing Factors; Differentiating between Disasters; Potential Impacts of Disasters; Approaches to Disaster Risk and Vulnerability Assessment.

• Module 4: Disaster Risk Reduction and Development Planning (2 Credits)
The objective of the module is to develop knowledge and a critical outlook on the different frameworks, approaches and methods for disaster prevention, preparedness and vulnerability reduction which include: Conceptual Framework of Disaster Risk Reduction -- the Hyogo Framework for Action; DRR Measures (Assessment, Early Warning, Natural Resource Management, Social and Economic Developmental Practices); DRR Planning; Hazard and Risk Reduction Strategies: Objectives of Disaster Risk Reduction; Understanding Resilience; Linking Vulnerability Reduction and Disaster Recovery.

• Module 5: Geo informatics and Information Communication Technology in Disasters (2 Credits)
Information Communication Technology (ICT) and Geo-Informatics Technology (GIT) have been widely used in planning, mitigation, and response in disaster situations. Besides alerting us to the crisis, ICT can help us in diverse ways including disaster preparedness through computer, television, radio, HAM radio and community radio, internet, email, mobile, social media, blogging; emergency response applications like distress communication and deploying bio-surveillance for critical diseases either in short or long term etc. ICT systems are also used for modeling and predicting outcomes based on real data. Remote sensing provides synoptic as well
as repetitive coverage in a particular area. GIS helps us to use the physical, demographic, social, and other information from a real world system for decision-making in disaster situations. Geo-informatics techniques help us in mapping the hazard zonation, vulnerability and risk using remote sensing, GIS, GPS and other secondary information.

• **Module 6: Disaster Response and Recovery (4 Credits)**

Disaster response is an important component in disaster management and has emerged as an important field of study in recent years. With the increasing incidence and intensity of disaster events, there is a constant demand from the field for people trained in the basics of disaster response. There is need to have a broad understanding of the multiple stakeholders involved in disaster response and the standards to be upheld in humanitarian aid, relief and rehabilitation and development. This module tries to address these concerns modestly by orienting the participants about various concepts relating to: Organized Response; Nature and Type of Immediate Response Disaster Management Plans; Key Response Functions, including Public Health, Logistics and Governance; Recovery, Rehabilitation and Reconstruction; Economics and Financial Aspects of Recovery and Reconstruction.

• **Module 7: Term Paper Research and Analysis (2 Credits)**

A term paper is a written assignment that allows participants to explore and/or apply ideas, theories, concepts or principles learned or studied in the course, to a new situation. The term paper is a self-study paper which intends to substantively describe an event or concept or argue a point. The participant is encouraged to explore the intricacies of a specific topic far beyond what is possible to cover within the units in each module. The process of writing the term paper will enable participants to find and analyse relevant information and convey conclusions and recommendations to others – whether peers or the disaster management community.

• **Module 8: Internship / Field Practicum (4 Credits)**

The Internship or Field Practicum in the certificate programme shall enable the participants to develop a broader national and international perspective on disaster management. The overall thrust will be to focus on issue-based work and complex emergencies for a period of 4 weeks. This could be linked to their term paper to enable the deepening of their specialization thrust. It may be based with organizations engaged with high quality research or practical work in the field of disaster risk reduction. It may also be based with any of the UN systems or government structures. Professionals already working in Disaster Management-related organisations (such as IFRC/RCRC) may choose a significant component of their on-going work to convert into a Field Practicum. The participants would need to engage in on-going DRR/Response programmes in respective locations.
FACULTY

Prof. S. Parasuraman  
M.A. (University of Pune)  
Ph. D (University of Mumbai)

Prof. T. Jayaraman  
M.Sc (Madras University)  
Ph.D (Madras University)

- Prof. Janaki Andharia | M.A. (TISS), Ph. D (East Anglia, U.K)
- Dr. Guru Balamurugan | M.Tech. Remote Sensing (Bharatidasan), Ph. D (IIT, Bombay)
- Ms. Parama Bhattacharya | M. Sc. (BHU), P.G.D (IIRS)
- Dr. Biswanath Dash | M.A. (Utkal University), M. Phil., Ph. D. (JNU, New Delhi)
- Dr. Abhijeet Jadhav | M.B.B.S., Master of Public Health
- Dr. Jacquleen Joseph | M.S.W. (Bharatidasan), M. Phil., Ph. D. (NIMHANS)
- Dr. K. M. Parivelan | M.A., M. Phil., Ph. D. (JNU, New Delhi)
- Mr. Mahesh Kamble | M.A. Social Work (TISS)
- Dr. Shibu K Mani | M. Tech (IIT, Roorkee), Ph. D (Northumbria University, U.K)
- Dr. Mohammed Irshad | M.A, M. Phil, Ph. D. (Kerala University)
- Dr. Sohini Sengupta | M.A Social Work (TISS), Ph. D (S O A S, University of London)
- Dr. P. K. Shajahan | M.A. (Mahatma Gandhi), Ph. D. (Delhi).

Other Guest Faculty by Invitation:
- IFRC and other Disaster Management Practitioners
METHODOLOGY & ASSESSMENT

- This online course in Disaster Management is conducted entirely by the Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS) through MOODLE (Modular Object-Oriented Learning Environment), an online platform.
- The course consists of 22 credits with 8 modules where the participants study, complete the internship and term paper in their country.
- The duration of the course is 12 months.
- The programme has been designed to recreate a classroom learning environment in an online platform where participants will be able to engage fully with the programme content and with their peers, via lectures, discussion boards, group work, online chat, question and answer sessions.
- The programme includes online course work together with supervised and graded field internship.
- The assessment will cover long and short term assignments, participation in the discussion forums and weekly tasks.
- For successful completion of the course, it is mandatory to participate in all the course activities which would be assessed by the concerned course faculty.
- The course will however require strong commitment from the participants and they are expected to devote approximately 8 to 10 hours online per week for their study.
PRACTICAL INFORMATION

Who Can Apply?
The programme is meant for a wide variety of learners-practitioners in disaster management globally, IFRC and National Society volunteers and staff at all levels and others interested in disaster management and humanitarian response.

Entry Requirements
• Applicants should have at least a Second Class Bachelor’s Degree or the overseas equivalent, although each application is judged on its own merits and exceptions to this entry requirement may be made. Applicants who do not have a Bachelor’s Degree or the overseas equivalent may apply if they demonstrate (via a personal statement) that they can communicate clearly, are highly motivated, and have experience of prior learning.
• Candidates from developing countries and those working in the humanitarian field will receive priority. Up to 50 qualified participants will be selected to participate in each course.
• Ability to work on a computer with a reasonable level of access to the Internet.

Language of Instruction
The medium of instruction will be English. Applicants must demonstrate adequate knowledge of English to undertake Post-Graduate level studies. This includes reading of academic texts, discussing complex concepts with other course participants and writing essays.

Annual timetable and Duration
The course starts in April and September each year. It concludes 12 months from the start of the programme.

Selection Process
TISS and IFRC will select up to 50 qualified participants from those who apply, inclusive of bursaries, to attend this course in Cohort VI. The selected candidates will be informed through email.

Application Timeline
• Application Process closes on 23rd August 2015.
• The last date for bursary application is 20th July 2015.
• Cohort VI will start on 21st September 2015.

Fees

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<tr>
<th>Participant Type</th>
<th>Fees*</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>IFRC and National Societies’ Participants</td>
<td>USD 990</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TISS Alumni</td>
<td>USD 990</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standard Program Fee</td>
<td>USD 1,980</td>
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*Fees once paid are non-refundable although admissions can be transferred to the next cohort in exceptional cases.

Bursary/ Scholarship
A limited number of bursaries are on offer to the most in need. Applicants for the bursary should complete the bursary section in the application process and ensure that they demonstrate the need for this support in their application. The selection process will be completely on merit and means basis. The last date for bursary application is 20th July 2015, 23: 59 hrs IST (GMT+5.30 hrs)

Qualification Received
Successful completion of the course will result in a Certificate in Disaster Management issued by Tata Institute for Social Sciences, India.

How to Apply
Applications must be submitted online through http://ifrc.tiss.edu/
Additional inquiries can be addressed by email to onlinedm@tiss.edu