

Bridging the Gap Social Workers in Planning Local Disaster Risk Management (DRM)

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Overview

Social work is recognised as a practice-based profession that promotes the principles of social and economic justice.

Although social workers have important roles to play in all phases of the DRM, the least amount of social work involvement is in the prevention and mitigation phase.

DRM planning, as an emerging field is the best arena to showcase social workers' competency in engaging in policy practice – an area in the social work profession which is taken for granted by most workers.

Policy practice generally refers to the use of social work skills to propose and change policies in order to achieve the goal of social and economic justice.

The Four Phases of DRM



The Prevention and Mitigation Phase is where:

- The national, regional and local DRM plans are formulated
- The understanding of roles and recognising the experiences of social workers and other DRM professionals should be defined and established
- The social work profession should ensure that social justice is promoted in the DRM plans, and translated into actual policies and/or practices.

Conclusion

By examining the participation of social workers in the formulation of a local DRM Plan would help establish their roles in the prevention and mitigation phase of DRM.

Likewise, social workers participation in the DRM planning would secure that the social work values of service to humanity, social justice, human dignity and worth, integrity and competence would be incorporated in the plans

Conceptual Framework

The Roof

Shows the interplay between the promotion of social justice as a core value of social work and one of its top competency--engagement in policy practice. At the base of the roof is DRM, a new area of concern that social workers can use as a platform to harness its skills in policy practice.

The Five Pillars

Capacities and Trainings – social work skills learned in the course of their study and practice in the profession that enables them to become a good advocate of social equity and social justice.

Experiences and Roles – everyday functions of social workers. It also includes those functions during and after a disaster or calamity wherein they usually bridge the needs of the community and the services available.

Participation – in examining the participation of social workers in DRM planning, we can learn and understand their roles and experiences which can provide a picture of their contribution in the prevention and mitigation phase of DRM.

The Base

Using the strength-base perspective as the foundation – it will focus social workers skills, abilities, experiences and professional support when participating in DRM planning.

