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EARTHQUAKE PREPAREDNESS



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PREFACE

Bangladesh is reckoned to be at high risk for earthquake due to its geographical location. Especially, the urban communities of the country are highly exposed to heavy loss if there is an earthquake due to the unplanned urban setup. Though we largely fail to recognize the surrounding risk due to our lack of experience, knowledge, skill and will be at risk of heavy losses if we do not become aware and stay prepared.

Oxfam in Bangladesh developed this pocket book on earthquake preparedness under the project titled 'Urban Resilience Bangladesh' with an aim to raise awareness amongst the urban communities, especially the youth, on earthquake preparedness. It is expected that the pocket book will help the users learn about the basic preparatory and response measures before, during and after an earthquake and will prepare and will be able to reduce losses during an earthquake through adopting necessary preparedness measures.

WHAT WE WILL DO BEFORE AN EARTHQUAKE

- Follow Bangladesh National Building Code for all construction.
- Consult an engineer before any construction.
- Check the structural safety of a building before buying an apartment or taking for rent.
- In case of living in an old and risky apartment, consult an engineer and take necessary initiative.



- Identify the safe places at home and school, such as beam, pillar, strong furniture, etc and inform others about these places.
- Latch heavy furniture with wall through clumps so that they do not fall over during an earthquake to hurt anyone.
- Bring down different things (which might fall over and hurt people during an earthquake) from heavy shelves and keep them at safer places.



- Note down the contact numbers of different emergency service providing agencies such as Fire Service, hospitals, police stations, ambulance, Red Crescent, blood bank etc and put the list at a visible place.
- Keep contact with local emergency service providing agencies and volunteer groups.



- Maintain a first aid box at home and school.
- Store fire extinguisher and sand-bucket at home and school.
- Save some dry food, water and money.



- Practice Drop-Cover-Hold drill with everyone at home and school.
- Learn about first aid and the use of fire extinguisher.
- Select an assembling place after an earthquake.



WHAT WE WILL DO DURING AN EARTHQUAKE

- Take shelter beside a pillar, below a beam or a strong furniture, or at the corner of the walls.
- Cover the head with both hands or a pillow till the shake stops.



- Stay away from glass windows and unsafe furniture which might fall over and hurt.
- Ensure necessary support for children, elderly and person with disability.



- Shut down the gas valve if there is an earthquake to reduce the risk of a fire outbreak.
- Stay calm instead of panicking.



- Quickly move out of the house and move to an open space.
- Shut of the electric main switch on the way out to avoid fire outbreak.



- Use stairs instead of lift while coming down from a multi-storied building.
- Take position away from high buildings, large trees, hills, billboard, electric poles to stay safe.
- Stop the vehicle in an open space and stay inside until the shake stops.



WHAT WE WILL DO AFTER AN EARTHQUAKE

- Come out with everyone at home or school in a queue instead of hurrying.
- Help the children, elderly, person with disability and patients while coming out.
- Maintain safe distance from high buildings, trees, billboards, hills and electric poles while staying outside.
- If stuck inside, then ask for support from outside using mobile phone (if available).
- If there is no phone, then hit the walls with something hard or blow whistle to attract the attention of rescuers.



- Do not go back home or school immediately after the shake stops as there is risk of aftershocks.
- Provide first aid to the injured.
- Stay careful of the broken glass, wire and other debris while moving.
- Try to get the updated news and safety instructions from radio or mobile phone.
- Support the post-emergency service providing agencies and local volunteer groups.

