

Training of Suraksha Saathi

Date: 4 – 6 November, 2025

Venue: Vakal Seva Kendra, Vadodara

Overview –

Bharuch, Vadodara and Anand form a contiguous industrial-urban cluster in central-south Gujarat: Vadodara sits on the Vishwamitri river and is a major inland city; Bharuch (including the Dahej–GIDC belt) lies downstream toward the Gulf of Khambhat and hosts petrochemical/chemical zones; Anand is an agricultural–industrial node known for dairy and food processing. The river network (Vishwamitri and tributaries) and proximity to reservoirs and coastal outflow channels shape flood pathways and disaster exposure across this cluster.

Rapid industrial growth has produced extensive GIDC estates, chemical and pharma units (notably in Bharuch/Dahej), heavy manufacturing around Vadodara, and large food-processing and dairy industries in Anand; at the same time urban expansion has accelerated around transport corridors and river floodplains. This mix of dense industry and fast urban growth has changed land use, increased impervious surface, and placed residential settlements, transport links and critical services in closer contact with high-hazard industrial sites.

Benefits: industrialization has brought jobs, infrastructure investment, and diversified local economies (manufacturing, chemicals, dairy/food processing). Challenges & risks: major accident hazards (chemical fires, toxic leaks, explosions) remain a persistent risk in the Bharuch–Dahej belt and nearby industrial areas; chronic traffic and infrastructure bottlenecks can slow emergency response; industrial effluents and site failures increase environmental and public-health vulnerability; and rapid urban encroachment on drainage corridors and waterbodies magnifies the impacts of heavy rainfall and dam releases

Vadodara experienced severe urban flooding in August 2024 when the Vishwamitri overflowed, causing widespread inundation and exposing large parts of the city to flood depths; follow-up studies and modelling show high exposure of population and wards to flood risk. Since then, the city has seen recurrent heavy-rain episodes through 2025, prompting local flood-control and reservoir management responses while also highlighting systemic issues such as encroachment, drainage capacity and the role of upstream reservoir/dam releases. Recent government and academic attention (modelling, proposed barrage works) underscores the scale and recurrence of the hazard.

This cluster was selected because the IAG meeting held last year in Vadodara identified it as high-priority for community safety work, and field evidence shows overlapping hazards — frequent urban floods, a dense concentration of Major Accident Hazard (MAH) industries, and transport/response constraints — that together raise community and responder risk. Past industrial accidents in the region (chemical plant explosions and fires in Bharuch/Dahej, and recent fatal toxic-gas/industrial incidents in Anand district) plus the documented exposure of

large urban populations to floods create a clear need for trained local volunteers (Suraksha Saathis) to support preparedness, early warning, evacuation, basic on-scene safety and coordination with municipal and industry responders. Deploying Suraksha Saathis in this cluster therefore addresses both hydrometeorological and industrial hazards, bridges gaps in community awareness and first response, and complements institutional mitigation measures.

Significance of a Suraksha Saathi

Communities are the first to face disasters, yet professional response teams often take time to arrive. To bridge this gap, Suraksha Saathis—trained community volunteers—act as local first responders, ensuring early evacuation, first aid, and support to vulnerable families until formal agencies reach affected areas. This initiative complements the NDMA’s Aapda Mitra program, strengthening grassroots preparedness and resilience.

Objectives

- Equip volunteers with life-saving skills including early warning dissemination, safe evacuation, search & rescue, CPR, first aid, and emergency relief.
- Build community capacity to respond to industrial hazards, floods, and other local risks.
- Strengthen coordination between Suraksha Saathis, District Disaster Management Authority (DDMA), and local governance structures.

Participant’s Profile

- Total No of Participants – 30
- No of Female Participants – 13
- No of NGOs involved in the training – 11
 - Sahaj
 - Kaira Social Seva Sangathan
 - Sahiyar Stree Sangathan
 - Swades
 - Arch
 - Aatapi
 - Pochabhai Foundation
 - Gramya Vikas Trust, Bharuch
 - ICRC Vadodara
 - Sarv manav Seva Charitable Trust
 - The Four Legs Charitable Trust
- Attendance Profile – Annex I

Training Methodology

The Training of Suraksha Saathis was designed to build the knowledge and practical skills of community-based volunteers from Vadodara, Bharuch, and Anand districts for disaster preparedness and response. The program followed a structured, participatory approach that combined theoretical inputs, practical demonstrations, and interactive discussions to enhance the overall learning experience.

Approach

The training adopted a participatory and experiential learning approach, encouraging active involvement from all participants. Sessions were structured to blend conceptual understanding with hands-on practice. Activities such as group discussions, scenario-based exercises, rescue demonstrations, and first-aid drills were used to ensure community volunteers could relate the content to real-life emergencies.

Duration and Venue

The training was conducted over three days, from 4 to 6 November, 2025, in Vadodara, Gujarat. The program was organized jointly by UNNATI, members of IAG Gujarat, and GujAid, with technical inputs from PI Industries and BAIF.

Facilitators and Resource Persons

Key facilitators included Mr. Kirit Parmar (UNNATI), Mr. Shailesh Rathod (IAG Gujarat), Mr. Suresh Gami (GujAid), Mr. Vidiyala Ravi (PI Industries, Vadodara), Ms. Khyati Panchal (TFLTC), Mr. Mobad Solanki (BAIF) and Abhik Chakraborty, UNNATI, along with officials from the District Emergency Operations Centre (DEOC), Vadodara.

Training Methods Used

A mix of teaching and engagement methods was employed:

- Presentations and discussions to introduce key concepts of disaster management and stakeholder roles.
- Group exercises and interactive sessions to capture participant expectations and local experiences.
- Demonstrations and drills on rescue operations, emergency first aid, and evacuation procedures.
- Field-based learning through hands-on sessions on CPR, management of burns, fractures, and handling chemical and industrial emergencies.
- Feedback sessions and reflections to assess learning outcomes at the end of each day.

Training Design and Flow

The three-day program was structured to progressively move from awareness to practical application and recovery-oriented discussions: (Annex - II)

- **Day 1:** Conceptual understanding of disaster management, local risk profile, stakeholder roles, and introduction to basic rescue and evacuation.
- **Day 2:** Intensive skill-building on emergency response, first aid, CPR, and industrial disaster risk management.
- **Day 3:** Focus on recovery, humanitarian coordination, animal safety, and volunteer management for sustained engagement.

Overview of the Sessions

1. Different Disasters and Their Impact

Disasters can be natural (like floods, cyclones, droughts, and earthquakes) or man-made (such as industrial accidents, fires, and chemical spills). Each disaster affects communities differently — floods can destroy homes and crops, earthquakes can damage infrastructure, cyclones can uproot livelihoods, and industrial accidents can cause long-term health and environmental damage. The impact is not only physical but also social and economic, often pushing vulnerable communities deeper into poverty.

2. Role of Different Stakeholders – Pre, During, and Post Disaster

- **Pre-Disaster:** Local government, NGOs, and community groups work on preparedness — awareness campaigns, mock drills, and identifying safe shelters.
- **During Disaster:** Police, fire services, health departments, and trained volunteers (like Suraksha Saathis) help in rescue, evacuation, and relief distribution.
- **Post-Disaster:** The district administration, NGOs, and community volunteers focus on rehabilitation, rebuilding homes, restoring livelihoods, and providing psychosocial support. Coordination among all stakeholders ensures a faster and more efficient recovery.

3. Early Warning and Evacuation

Early warning systems provide alerts before disasters occur — for example, weather forecasts for cyclones or rainfall alerts for floods. These warnings allow authorities and communities to take timely action, such as moving people and livestock to safe zones. Evacuation plans must be clear, practiced regularly, and inclusive — ensuring that the elderly, children, and differently-abled persons are not left behind. Communication through local radio, WhatsApp groups, and village volunteers can make warnings more effective.

4. Rescue and Emergency First Aid

Rescue involves saving lives from immediate danger using trained personnel and equipment. Volunteers should know basic search-and-rescue methods — like moving debris safely, carrying injured persons properly, and providing first aid. Emergency first aid includes stopping bleeding, treating burns, performing CPR, and managing fractures until professional medical help arrives. Quick response within the “golden hour” can save many lives.

5. Life-Saving Techniques

During the session, participants were introduced to various life-saving and rescue techniques used during emergencies such as floods, earthquakes, fires, and cyclones. The focus was on practical demonstrations that can be applied in real-life scenarios within their communities. Participants learned how to perform safe rescues in flood situations using ropes, bamboo poles, and improvised floating devices. They were taught different kinds of knots—such as the square knot, bowline knot, clove hitch, and figure-eight knot—which are essential for rescue operations, securing victims, and setting up temporary safety lines. The session also emphasized teamwork and communication during rescue efforts.



6. Importance of Personal, Household, community emergency response – preparedness for response

Effective emergency response begins with preparedness at the individual and household level.



Each person should know basic safety measures, evacuation routes, and how to use first aid or fire safety tools. Households must keep an emergency kit with essentials like water, dry food, medicines, torch, batteries, and important documents. Such small yet proactive steps ensure that when an emergency strike—whether it is a flood, fire, or earthquake—families can respond quickly and safely without panic.

At the community level, preparedness is equally crucial. When communities collectively identify risks, establish communication systems, and train volunteers, their response becomes more coordinated and effective. Initiatives like the Suraksha Saathi programme strengthen local capacity by creating trained first responders within

villages. A prepared community can save lives, reduce damage, and recover faster, showing that disaster resilience starts at the personal level but succeeds through collective action.

7. Understanding Industrial Disaster Risks & Role of Volunteers



This session focused on helping participants understand the various types of industrial risks such as chemical leaks, fires, explosions, mechanical failures, and environmental hazards. The discussion included a detailed explanation of hazard classification—physical, chemical, and biological—and how these relate to the kinds of risks found in nearby industries.

Participants were introduced to the meanings of hazard symbols and signs commonly seen on chemical containers and transport trucks, learning how these indicators help identify potential dangers.

The session also emphasized the importance of understanding a chemical’s data sheet, which provides critical information on safe handling, exposure risks, and emergency response measures. Initially, the technical nature of the session made it difficult for many participants to follow. To ensure better comprehension, the content was simplified and explained in an easy-to-understand manner by Abhik Chakraborty from UNNATI, using relatable examples and practical explanations that connected industrial hazards to real-life community safety concerns.



8. Identification, sensitization and management of animals in Vadodara

This session focused on the importance of including animals in disaster management and rescue efforts, as they are often among the most affected yet neglected during emergencies. Participants learned to identify various animals commonly encountered in the Vadodara region—such as snakes, dogs, and even crocodiles in flood-prone areas—and understand their natural behavior in stressful situations. Recognizing animal behavior patterns was emphasized as a key step in ensuring both human and animal safety during rescue operations.

Trainers highlighted the need for sensitivity and compassion while handling animals, especially during disasters when they are scared, injured, or displaced. Participants were sensitized to the ethical aspects of animal rescue—avoiding harm, using safe rescue tools, and coordinating with veterinary or animal welfare organizations for support. Demonstrations and discussions helped volunteers understand how to calmly approach and handle animals without provoking aggression or panic.

Research and global observations suggest that animals often display unusual behaviour before natural disasters such as earthquakes, tsunamis, or storms. While animals do not predict disasters scientifically, their highly sensitive instincts and sensory capabilities allow them to

react to subtle environmental changes much earlier than humans. These changes may include ground vibrations, air pressure shifts, humidity variations, and electromagnetic disturbances.

Common behaviour changes observed include:

- **Dogs:** restlessness, excessive barking, or attempting to flee
- **Snakes:** leaving underground burrows and moving to higher ground
- **Fish:** abnormal swimming patterns and moving towards the surface
- **Birds:** flying away from coasts and disturbed flight patterns
- **Cattle and horses:** signs of anxiety or attempts to escape
- **Ants:** forming floating rafts or unusual group behaviour

Historical events supporting this pattern include:

- **373 BC – Greece (Earthquake):** Rats, snakes, and weasels left the area before the quake.
- **1975 – Haicheng, China (Earthquake):** Warnings based on animal behaviour helped save thousands.
- **2004 – Indian Ocean Tsunami:** Elephants, dogs, and birds moved away from coastal regions to higher ground.

The session also covered practical management strategies for animals during floods, cyclones, or chemical accidents, such as providing temporary shelters, clean water, and food. The facilitators—Ms. Khyati Panchal from TFLTC and Mr. Mobad Solanki from BAIF—shared local experiences and simple techniques to safely manage animals in distress. The participants appreciated this hands-on and humane approach, recognizing the crucial role of animal care in building disaster-resilient communities.

9. Damage Assessment & Compensation

This session focused on explaining the process of damage assessment and the provision of financial assistance under the State Disaster Response Fund (SDRF) and National Disaster Response Fund (NDRF). Participants learned how the government evaluates the extent of losses caused by various disasters—such as floods, cyclones, earthquakes, and droughts—and how this assessment forms the basis for providing relief and compensation to affected individuals, households, and communities. The facilitators explained the categories under which compensation is provided, including loss of life, injury, damage to houses, crops, livestock, and public infrastructure.



An important discussion point was why some hazards like heatwaves are not covered under the current list of notified disasters eligible for SDRF or NDRF assistance. Although heatwaves cause significant suffering and even fatalities, they are often classified as climate or weather-

Way Forward

The training has laid the foundation for developing a cadre of skilled community volunteers across Vadodara and nearby districts who can serve as first responders during emergencies. Moving forward, the focus will be on strengthening the coordination between community volunteers and the District Disaster Management Authority (DDMA) to ensure a faster, more organized, and locally led disaster response mechanism.

Special emphasis will continue to be placed on safeguarding vulnerable groups—including children, women, the elderly, and persons with disabilities—by integrating their needs into all preparedness and response activities.

In the long term, the initiative aims to expand across other disaster-prone regions of Gujarat, with the sustained collaboration of UNICEF, IAG Gujarat, and UNNATI. Through continued capacity building, partnerships, and field-level engagement, the program envisions the creation of self-reliant and resilient communities capable of effectively managing and mitigating the impacts of future disasters.

Registration of Participants – Annex – I

Sr. No.	Name	Village	District	NGO	Mobile No.
1.	Hitesh Dumrariya	Dabhoi	Dabhoi	GVT Bharuch	9558080089
2.	Ranjenben Rajeshbhai Solanki	Gajra	Jambusar	AATAPI	8758667633
3.	Jhadav Archana U.	Gajra	Jambusar	AATAPI	9054979328
4.	Taraben Mehraman	Gotana	Khambhat	Pochabhai Foundation	6352651002
5.	Binaben Waghela	Gotana	Khambhat	Pochabhai Foundation	8140603424
6.	Gauriben Parmar	Gotana	Khambhat	Pochabhai Foundation	9574827883
7.	Sanjaybhai Gohail	Kasor	Anand	Kaira Social Seva Sangathan	7359433243
8.	Dilawarsinh Chauhan	Ajarpura	Anand	Kaira Social Seva Sangathan	8320951544
9.	Vishnubhai Solanki	Vansob	Umrel	Kaira Social Seva Sangathan	9106075769
10.	Hiteshbhai Babubhai Natubhai	Ajarpura	Anand	Kaira Social Seva Sangathan	9724389920
11.	Gohail Kantibhai	Kotna	Vadodara	Svades	7096610061
12.	Padhiyar Prabhatbbhai	Fajalpura	Vadodara	Svades	9512273681
13.	Nakub Tanjima	Ektanagar	Vadodara	Sahiyar Stree Sangathan	6355887261
14.	Shilpa Rameshbhai Solank	Ektanagar	Vadodara	Sahiyar Stree Sangathan	9104225439
15.	Vasava Naliniben Kamleshbhai	Kisanwadi	Vadodara	Sahiyar Stree Sangathan	9898032191
16.	Kalpna Anand	Sayajirao Vadodara	Vadodara	Sahiyar Stree Sangathan	9586876880
17.	Rajvir A. Vyas	Vadodara City	Vadodara	Indian Red Cross Society	9316922434
18.	Ishan A. Surani	Vadodara City	Vadodara	Indian Red Cross Society	9428529100
19.	Mahim Parmar	Vadodara City	Vadodara	Indian Red Cross Society	6354636982
20.	Dhwani D. Ghelani		Vadodara	The Four Legs Charitable Trust	9427475809
21.	Meghal Shah		Vadodara	The Four Legs Charitable Trust	

22.	Umang Rajput		Vadodara	The Four Legs Charitable Trust	9510600508
23.	Jarshesh Gai		Vadodara	The Four Legs Charitable Trust	9033709040
24.	Vishnu Vaghela		Vadodara	Sarvmanav Seva Charitable Trust	8511462786
25.	Nehal Marwadi		Vadodara	Sarvmanav Seva Charitable Trust	8511462786
26.	Chandrika Padiyar	Dharampura	Vadodara		8347937218
27.	Laxmansinh Rathod		Ahmedabad		9727160932
28.	Ratansinh Rathod		Ahmedabad		
29.	Dungrabhai Ajabhai	Dandalia	Naswadi	Svades	9638965308
30.	Rathwa Bansibhai Kapiyabhai	Runwadia	Kawat	Svades	8758378181
31.	Napnaben Praveenbhai	Malpura Gao	Jambusar	JMVM	9825673584
32.	Kaileahben Ramanbhai	Malpura Gao	Jambusar	JMVM	8735079582
33.	Solanki Pranaysinh Rameshbhai	Bhayeli	Vadodara	Sahaj	6352246961
34.	Khyatiben Panchal		Vadodara	The Four Legs Charitable Trust	8849432790
35.	Varshaben Hareshbhai Mali	Bujmawda			9327184099
36.	Mobatsondh Solanki	Vadodara City	Vadodara	BIAF	9998699480
37.	Elic Parmar	Vadodara City	Vadodara	GSDMA	8866640319
38.	Shailesh Rathoda		Ahmedabad	Unnati	
39.	Suresh Gami		Ahmedabad	Gujaid	
40.	Kirit Parmar		Ahmedabad	Unnati	
41.	Abhishek Fullonton		Gandhinagar	UNICEF	
42.	Abhik Chakraborty		Ahmedabad	Unnati	8329606491

Training Design (Annex - II)

Day 1:

Sl. No.	Session	Topics	Facilitator	Duration
ii)	Introductory Session	Introduction of Participants	Kirit Parmar, UNNATI	10:00 to 10:15
iii)		Objective and purpose of the training		10:15 to 10:30
iv)		Expectations and learning needs of the participants		10:30 to 11:00
vi)		Orientation on disaster risk profile & management in Vadodara district	DEOC Vadodara	11:00 – 12:00
Tea Break				12:00 to 12:30
1.	Technical Session 1: Concept of Disaster Management	Different Disasters and its impact	Kirit Parmar, UNNATI, Shailesh Rathod IAG Gujarat and Suresh Gami – Guj Aid	12:30 to 13:15
2.		Role of different stakeholders – Pre – During and post Disaster		
3.		Early warning and Evacuation		
Lunch Break				13:45 to 14:30
4.	Technical Session 2 Rescue and Emergency first aid	Rescue for flood, earthquake, Fire and cyclone – Life saving technics	Mr. Suresh Gami – Guj Aid	14:30 to 15:30
Tea Break				16:10 to 16:30
5.	Technical Session 3: Rescue	Rescue for flood, earthquake, Fire and cyclone- Continue ...	Mr. Suresh Gami – GujAid	16:30 to 17:30

Day 2:

Sl. No.	Session	Topics	Speaker	Duration
i)	Recap of the previous day			9:30 to 10:00
1.	Technical Session 4: Response in Emergency	Importance of Personal, Household, community emergency response – preparedness for response	Mr. Suresh Gami – GujAid and Shailesh Rathod , IAG Gujarat -	10:00 to 10:45
Tea Break				10:45 to 11:00
2.	Technical Session 5: First aid and medical assistance	Bleeding, Fracture, Burns, Poison and CPR	Mr. Suresh Gami – GujAid	11:00 to 13:00
Lunch Break				13:00 to 14:00
3.	Technical Session 6	Bleeding, Fracture, Burns, Poison and CPR	Mr. Suresh Gami – GujAid, Shailesh Rathod , IAG Gujarat	14:00 to 15:00
Tea Break				15:00 to 15:15

4.	Technical Session 7	Understanding Industrial Disaster Risks & role of volunteers offsite Types of industrial risks (chemical, fire, explosion, mechanical, environmental, etc.), Hazard classification (physical, chemical, biological)	Vidiyala Ravi –CoE Industrial and Risk Management, PI Industries Vadodara	15:15 to 16:30
5.	Technical Session 8	Management of mass casualties, respiratory emergency	Mr. Suresh Gami – GujAid, Shailesh Rathod , IAG Gujarat	16:30 to 17:30

Day 3:

Sl. No.	Session	Topics	Speaker	Duration
i)	Recap of the previous day			9:30 to 10:00
1.	Technical Session 9: Industrial Risk Management	Experience sharing by Apda Mitra	-	10:00 to 10:15
2.	Technical Session 10: Animal Safety	Identification, sensitization and management of animals in Vadodara	Ms. Khyati Panchal, TFLTC & Mr. Mobad Solanki - BAIF	10:15 to 10:45
3.	Technical Session 11: Post disaster humanitarian aid response	Rapid need assessment, relief coordination and distribution, Sectoral response (Shelter, WASH, Education, Health, Protection and facilitation for normalcy)	Mr. Suresh Gami – GujAid, Shailesh Rathod, IAG Gujarat	10:45 to 11.45
Tea Break				11.45 to 12:00
4.	Technical Session 12: Recovery Phase	Damage assessment and compensation under SDRF and NDRF	Shailesh Rathod UNANTI Ahmedabad Mr. Suresh Gami – GujAid, Shailesh Rathod, IAG Gujarat	12:00 to 13:30
5.	Technical Session 13: Recovery Phase	Volunteer management, IAG Coordination, media management and reporting	Shailesh Rathod, IAG Gujarat	13:30 to 14:30
6.		Valedictory of the training and feedback		14:30 to 15:30

Photographs –

