International Perspectives:

Mainstreaming Disaster Risk Reduction into Development Policy, Planning and Implementation

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Mainstreaming Disaster Risk Reduction into Development Policy, Planning and Implementation

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Rationale for Mainstreaming Disaster Risk Reduction into Development

Disasters have an enormous impact on development. With every disaster, there is a significant impact on various sectors of development like agriculture, housing, health, education and infrastructure. This results in a serious social and economic setback to the development and particularly the poverty reduction priorities of the developing countries, and poses a threat for achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). To meet with this crisis, the scarce resources that are programmed for development are often diverted for relief and rehabilitation efforts.

On the other hand, the process of development, and the kind of development choices made in many countries, sometimes creates disaster risks. A close analysis of the development process with its six aspects namely policy, strategy, programming, project/program cycle management, external relations and institutional capacity; clearly argues for the need of systematic and more conscious ways of integrating disaster risk reduction (DRR) into development process.

Thus development activity and DRR representing two sides of the same coin needs to be dealt with in unison, with mainstreaming DRR into development planning, policy and implementation. This is analogous with the initiatives to integrate concerns such as environment and gender into the development process. These initiatives with primarily focusing on developing specific tools and guidelines have been successful to a great extent given their concerted effort to raise awareness on the usefulness of the tools amongst the decision makers as well as the personnel at the operational level and also due to the enhanced institutional and human resource capacity to apply the same. The need therefore does exist to take a similar path for DRR.

DRR being operative at all levels and across sector, the concerted effort of integrating it into development activities requires consensus and active participation of decision makers and planners at the national level and all related Ministries, with equal support from the donor and development community. It is through the consolidated and concerted efforts of all stakeholders that safer and sustainable communities are to be attained and thus mainstreaming of DRR has been rightly prioritized in the

To act on this understanding, the development agencies have initiated the process of changing their policies and institutional practices to support the countries. Similarly their corresponding partners of the same development equation namely the Governments are aligning themselves in the same line to ensure a ‘win win’ situation. This commitment of the governments is reflected in the Regional Consultative Committee program on Mainstreaming Disaster Risk Reduction into Development Policy, Planning and Implementation in Asia (RCC MDRD).

Background of RCC MDRD Program

A key direction by RCC has been the need for the integration of disaster risk considerations into development planning. The RCC 1 identified as one of its priorities, “Integration of disaster risk reduction into National development processes”. The RCC 2 adopted the Bangkok Declaration which emphasized on adopting “Comprehensive Disaster Risk Management (CDRM) Approach” by all member countries and “Creating awareness, political will and support for disaster management”. In the RCC 3 meeting, the members endorsed action by RCC to develop a program to promote CDRM approach building on work done in Bangladesh, China, India, Viet Nam and the Philippines. At the 4th RCC meeting the RCC Program on Mainstreaming of Disaster Risk Reduction into Development Policy, Planning and Implementation in Asia (RCC MDRD) was launched. The RCC 5 adopted the ‘Hanoi RCC 5 statement on Mainstreaming Disaster Risk Reduction in Development in Asian Countries’ (refer to Box 3). The RCC 6, developed the Kunming RCC 6 Road Map to operationalise the Hanoi RCC 5 Statement, divided the implementation of the RCC MDRD Program in phase I, II and III and set clear directions for activities during 2007 and 2008.

RCC MDRD Phase I (2004 – 2007)

The RCC MDRD Program in its first phase (2004-2007) adopted two separate approaches to initiate mainstreaming of DRR, namely, into overall national development planning and into specific priority sectors. With an overall objective to
increase awareness, political support and enhance capacity, the program is implemented by the RCC member countries with ADPC acting as a secretariat to it.

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**Hanoi RCC 5 Statement on “Mainstreaming Disaster Risk Reduction in Development (MDRD) and Enhancing Regional Cooperation” (2005)**

Adopted by 26 RCC member countries, the statement “calls upon every RCC member country to Mainstream Disaster Risk Management into Development over the coming decade, and to undertake Priority Implementation Projects in following thematic areas:

**Education**
- Introducing DRM modules into the school curriculum;
- Promoting hazard resilient construction of new schools;
- Introducing features into schools for their use as emergency shelters;

**Health**
- Vulnerability assessment of hospitals in hazard-prone areas;
- Promoting hazard resilient construction of new hospitals;
- Implementing of disaster preparedness plans for hospitals;

**Infrastructure**
- Introducing Disaster Risk Impact Assessments into the construction of new roads and bridges;
- Promoting the use of hazard risk information in land use planning

**Agriculture**
- Promoting programs of contingency crop planning; crop diversification;
- Supplementary income generation from off-farm and non-farm activities;
- Effective insurance and credit schemes to compensate for crop damage and loss to livelihood;

**Housing**
- Promoting the increased use of hazard-resilient designs in rural housing in hazard prone areas;
- Utilization of national building codes; and the compliance and enforcement of local building laws in urban hazard prone areas”.

“Requests ADPC in its capacity as secretariat of the RCC mechanism to continue to be the support agency of the RCC MDRD program through following actions:
- Developing a set of Guidelines documents for mainstreaming DRM, and
- Supporting implementation of PIPs in member countries and developing a set of milestones to track the progress of the program.

“Calls on other agencies and donors and countries to partner with the RCC and its member countries in the implementation of its MDRD program.”

“Calls upon further enhancing of regional networking on disaster risk, preparedness and relief, emergency response and risk reduction in close cooperation with donors, regional and international organizations.”

The first approach emphasizes on integration of DRR into National Development Planning processes like the poverty reduction strategies, socio economic development plan, environmental assessments, which are taken up by the Government to plan for long term development. All these processes are essentially aimed to reduce poverty and increase the socio economic resilience of the nation. But since exposure to risk, including those emanating from natural hazards, has been widely acknowledged as one of the fundamental dimensions of poverty, it makes it essential that disaster risk reduction is incorporated into these long term
development processes. The program accordingly realizes that in order to have such integrated national strategies addressing DRR, it is essential that a wide range of collaboration be established with all the stakeholders; government, civil society, private sector, research, academics, media etc.

While the National Development strategies are commitments of the nation as a whole, these strategies are themselves built upon the strategies adopted by each of the sectors. A look into any of the National Development Plans reveal that it comprises of each of the sectoral plans aligned with the national goals and objectives. For e.g. the National Strategic Development Plan (2006-2010) of Cambodia identifies Agriculture, Rural Development, Health, Education, Environment, Gender equity as the key sectors to focus. These sectoral plans are developed by the concerned sectoral agencies in close collaboration with the partner agencies of planning and finance. And accordingly each of these sectoral plans should reflect the risk and vulnerability associated and hence integrate DRR concerns. This forms the second approach of the RCC MDRD program which looks at integrating DRR into sectoral planning.

It is realized that DRR should be integrated across and in all sectors, however the RCC has identified, agriculture, infrastructure, housing, education, health and financial services as priority areas to initiate the mainstreaming of DRR.

The program in its Phase I have 5 components as follows; Developing **Guidelines and Tools** for MDRD, Undertaking **Priority Implementation Project** (PIP), Showcasing good practices, Advocacy for Building awareness and political support and Mobilizing partnerships for ongoing and sustainable implementation. Over the last three years significant progress has been made under the RCC MDRD program in each of the 5 components. With support from donors like AusAID, EU, GTZ, SIDA, USAID/OFDA and UN Agencies like UNDP and US/ISDR, specific sectoral guidelines have been developed and priority implementation projects being implemented (refer to Box 4 for details on ongoing PIP in Philippines on Mainstreaming DRR into Road Sector).

**Box 4**

*PIP on Mainstreaming DRR into Road sector*

This PIP implemented by Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) and National Disaster Coordinating Council (NDCC) in Philippines, carried out the following activities in its Phase I (June 2006-July 2007)

- Analysis on the existing procedure (various phases of the project cycle) for development of new roads and bridge projects at national and local level in Philippines and how disaster risk reduction aspects are included in the various phases of the project cycle
- Analysis of the contents of Pre feasibility and Feasibility Reports prepared for the construction of Roads and Bridges in Philippines and how disaster risk assessment is included in these reports
- Analysis on past damages suffered by the Road and Bridge infrastructure in Philippines in the last 10-15 years due to different hazards like Landslides, Earthquake, Volcanoes and Typhoons/Cyclones
- Identification of specific steps for incorporation in the present project cycle for construction of Roads and Bridges to address the use of disaster risk assessment
- Proposing areas of revision in the existing national structural codes and DPWH specifications for design standards of hazard resilient construction and provide comments on how to improve compliance and enforcement with these specifications
- Compiling a list of projects (National and Local) for the next five years (2007 to 2011) for construction of Roads and Bridges and which can make use of the revision proposed under this project
RCC MDRD Phase II (2008-2012); Partnerships for Safe Development and Good Governance

To achieve the wider goals of the program namely a regional consensus on mainstreaming, national programs on MDRD and a critical mass of MDRD champions and practitioners, it is realized that the programs needs to be implemented over a long period of time and in Phases. Accordingly the program has been divided into Phase I (2004-2007), Phase II (2007-2012) and Phase III (2013-2015). The Phase II of the RCC MDRD program entitled ‘Partnerships for Safe Development and Good Governance’, has an overarching goal to promote Safer development and good governance in RCC member countries with increased community resilience to natural disasters; thus contribute to realizing the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) by 2015 and advancing priorities of the HFA. It aims to contribute the elements of ‘Safety’ to Sustainable Development with the necessary ingredient of Good Governance. This strategy is consistent with HFA.

With the multi stakeholder involvement in planning processes, it is realized that in order to achieve the objective, partnerships need to be encouraged between the National Disaster Management Offices and the key agencies involved in Planning like the finance, national planning agencies, sectoral ministries, development banks, development partners, provincial and local government agencies and local development financing agencies etc.

Accordingly the program in its Phase II would highlight on establishing such Partnerships and the program components would be as follows:

Component 1: Partnerships for Mainstreaming of DRR into National Development planning processes;
Component 2: Priority Implementation Partnerships (PIP) on Mainstreaming DRR into sectoral development;
Component 3: Advocacy of Building awareness and political support for Mainstreaming of DRR into Development Policy and Planning;
Component 4: Knowledge management platform for MDRD: Showcasing good practice and lessons learned and
Component 5: Capacity development of sectoral ministries; technical institutes; private sectors and NGOs in RCC member countries for Mainstreaming of DRR into Development

Box 5
RCC MDRD Phase II; Program Strategy

- The increased utilization of tools and guidelines (developed where necessary or adapted from those existing) by development planners that facilitate the designing of policies and interventions which substantially reduce the impacts of natural disasters on communities and their properties including economic and social infrastructure.
- Implementation of prioritized interventions; for SAFER DEVELOPMENT through active partnerships with sectoral ministries and funding support of national and international agencies both bilateral and multilateral agencies including corporate sector.
- Fully harnessed support of the national leaders, decision makers, corporate sector, technical experts, scientists, media and all development partners in accepting disaster risk reduction as an integral element of their decision making process.
- Proactive documentation of experience, lessons learned and hurdles/ constraints overcome and its sharing and exchange at national, sub-regional and regional forums and through other media.
- Consolidating technical expertise, enhancing multi-disciplinary outlook and building respectful appreciation of contribution of ‘Others’ to maintain momentum of result producing multi stakeholder partnerships.
These components would be the pillars on which the entire initiative of MDRD will be built as agreed and declared at the Hanoi RCC 5 statement. The implementation would include development of tools and process guidelines on how to mainstream DRR in the concerned planning processes and carry out Priority Implementation Partnerships (PIP) in countries to implement such initiatives.

The component 1 of the program would focus on establishing such partnerships for mainstreaming of DRR in National Development Planning processes. The component would implement individual projects in RCC member countries on specific themes like mainstreaming DRR into National Development Plans and National Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs) (refer to box 6); In-Country Assessments and the Multi-year Program Framework of International Development Agencies (refer to box 7); Developing and Implementing the National Disaster Risk Reduction Plan with inputs from all Relevant Ministries and Agencies; Institutionalizing of Community-Based Disaster Risk Management in Government Policy and programs at National, Provincial and District levels; into Environment and Local Governance.

(Box 6)

Mainstreaming DRR into Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSP)

The fundamental goal of a poverty reduction strategy is to increase the opportunities available to poor households, reduce their vulnerability to unfavorable external events and empower them to address their own specific problems. In this context the poverty reduction strategy paper should highlight the relation between natural disasters and its impact on poverty. With passage of time, more and more PRSP’s are recognizing that natural hazards and related vulnerability play a role in determining forms and levels of poverty and in influencing broader macroeconomic performance. But very few (like Bangladesh) have attempted to integrate disaster risk reduction concerns into broader development strategies and programs. Thus PRSP is identified as an important window for initiating mainstreaming of DRR into National development planning process in the RCC member countries.

(Box 7)

Mainstreaming DRR into Country Programming

In order to identify thematic focus areas that require assistance, Programming framework are developed and applied by all international development organisations. For e.g. the Country Strategy and Program (CSP) which is prepared by the Asian Development Bank (ADB) in active consultation with developing member country stakeholders: the government, NGOs, civil society groups, the private sector and other development agencies provides an important window to address disaster risk concerns in a strategic fashion.

The Component 2 of the program will undertake Priority Implementation Partnerships (PIP) for Safe Development by mainstreaming of DRR in sectoral development. This approach is consistent with the HFA, which under its Priorities for Action, outlines, ‘Reduce underlying Risk Factors from all sectoral development planning and programs’. This component would focus on implementing programs on Safe Development in 6 priority sectors namely; Education, Health, Infrastructure (Roads), Livelihoods (Agriculture) Shelter (Housing) and Water and Sanitation; implemented through a series of separate but interrelated sub components.
The programs will be implemented by the sectoral ministries of the RCC member countries, in close partnership with other concerned agencies like National agencies for Planning, Finance and Disaster Management. It is realized that though sectoral ministries/agencies are responsible for the concerned sectoral development, they often work in close synergy with other ministries/agencies. For e.g. the Ministry of Education though responsible for building schools, often the schools are actually built by the Department of Public Works. Similarly, Ministry of Agriculture works in close association with Department of Irrigation and Hydrology for ensuring better agricultural produce. Hence it is an absolute necessity to develop partnerships between these ministries for implementation of these programs. To achieve the objectives, the activities under these sub components would include development of tools and process guidelines on how to mainstream DRR in the respective sectoral development processes as well as carry out specific demonstrable activities in RCC countries on mainstreaming of DRR in the specific sector.

The Component 3; Advocacy for Building Awareness and Political Support for Mainstreaming of DRR into Development, is aimed to strengthen the commitment of national leaders and decision makers, mobilize enlightened support of the corporate sector, enhance capacity for responsive reporting by media, encourage research by scientists and increase/continue support by international funding and technical agencies.

The Component 4; Knowledge Management Platform for Mainstreaming of DRR, would encourage continued exchange of experience, lessons learned and constraints overcame during the implementation of prioritized interventions amongst RCC members and its partners thus enriching their collective skills and competencies.

The Component 5 of program would include developing capacity of the sectoral ministries; technical institutions; private sector; NGOs and development practitioners in the RCC member countries on mainstreaming of DRR.

Considering the scale of the program, it is envisaged that the program would continue to be implemented through multi donor funding with contribution from the RCC member countries. The program would engage into active partnership with UN agencies, International Financial Institutions and other development partners and promote synergistic lessons learning partnerships between the RCC program and other national and regional DRR programs running on different scales, timelines and funding. Being implemented at a regional level, by the member countries and in close collaboration with various development partners and regional organizations like Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and South Asian Association for
Regional Cooperation (SAARC), the program would continue to benefit from learning’s from similar ongoing initiatives in each of the countries and would play a significant role as a regional mechanism to share experiences and information within various countries and also in the process contribute to the implementation of each of the regional and national programs.