

**HFA Implementation Review – Simplified Version
for ACDR2010**

Country:	LAO PDR
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1 Priority for action 1:

Ensure that disaster risk reduction is a national and local priority with a strong institutional basis for implementation

1-1. National policy and legal framework for disaster risk reduction exists with decentralised responsibilities and capacities at all levels

	Name	Area (please select)	Year of Enforcement
National laws for disaster risk reduction	A landmark decree No. 158/PM signed by Prime Minister in August 1999 provides the legal basis for disaster management activities and structures in the country	Response/ Recovery/ Mitigation/ Preparedness	1999
National policy for disaster risk reduction		Response/ Recovery/ Mitigation/ Preparedness	

[Comments (if any)]

The decree calls for the establishment of an inter-ministerial National Disaster Management Committee (NDMC) which has the responsibilities for the development of disaster management policies, mobilization and coordination of national and international assistance, information management and public awareness, disaster preparedness, response and recovery and formation of local disaster management committees down to the district and village levels.

1-2. Dedicated and adequate resources are available to implement disaster risk reduction activities at all administrative levels

	Amount (currency, year)	Main Purpose (please select)
Funds allocation for disaster risk reduction		Response/ Recovery/ Mitigation/ Preparedness
	Name	Number of Staff
Department for disaster risk reduction at national Level (Please attach an organization chart)	National Disaster Management Office	8 staffs

[Comments (if any)]

There are no adequate resources allocated to implement disaster risk reduction plans and activities in the country except for those dedicated and mobilized for emergency response and relief activities. In times of emergencies, the Government allocates the following resources; (1) MLSW can propose to use the KR1 budget and about 456 tons of rice stocks; (2) The Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (MAF) makes 100 to 200 tons of seeds available

for immediate distribution while it allocates a budget of around USD 1.87 million to repair irrigation systems and rehabilitate production areas; (3) The Ministry of Public Work and Transportation allocates a budget of around USD6.68 million to repair roads and bridges affected by disasters; and (4) The Ministry of Defence mobilizes army forces, mobile houses, equipments, transportations, etc for emergency response.

1-3. Community participation and decentralization are ensured through the delegation of authority and resources to local levels

	System (Policy, Organization, Network, etc.)	Main Purpose (please select)
System to ensure community participation in disaster risk reduction	Local disaster management committee (provincial and district DM committees, as well as village disaster protection unit (pls see the DM organization chart in Lao PDR	Response/ Recovery/ Mitigation/ Preparedness

[Comments (if any)]

While these local DM committees are avenues that encourage stronger community participation and are semblance of a delegated authority in DM at local levels, one key stumbling block remains -- this delegated authority does not come with corresponding budgetary support. Limited resources available for disaster risk reduction are a major challenge. Thus the NDMC encourages the use of more basic, traditional and local disaster preparedness and response mechanisms especially for monitoring, early warning and actions before and during disasters in order to reduce disaster related loss of lives and livelihoods.

Having said that, the disaster risk reduction and mitigation activities are undertaken through various project cooperation and support by donors. Many of this cooperation involve the PDMC and DDMC as the main implementing partners of project activities. The communities at the project areas actively participate in assessing their conditions and needs and in data collection and analysis as a basis for project planning and implementation.

1-4. A national multi-sectoral platform for disaster risk reduction is functioning

	Name	Main Purpose (please select)	Year of Establishment
Multi-sectoral platform for disaster risk reduction (Please attach an organization chart)		Response/ Recovery/ Mitigation/ Preparedness	

[Comments (if any)]

There is no agreed plan or road map for the formation of a national multi sectoral platform. Overlapping of mandates and duplication of efforts are key challenges. NDMO's authority to initiate intersectoral actions is inadequate and the current strategic plan on disaster management is too broad to provide appropriate direction for intersectoral actions in disaster risk reduction

2 Priority for action 2:

Identify, assess and monitor disaster risks and enhance early warning

2-1. National and local risk assessments based on hazard data and vulnerability information are available and include risk assessments for key sectors

	Activities	Type of disasters	Year of Completion
Development of hazard maps			
Risk assessment			

[Comments (if any)]

through a UNDP supported project, Lao will be undertaking a risk profiling/assessment study which particularly aims to map out all hazard-prone areas and define hazard zones, identify and assess the exposure of people, property, critical facilities, infrastructure, and economic activities to these hazards, preliminarily assess the potential damage state of the identified elements at risks and create preliminary national multi-hazard risk profiles which are a basis for developing national disaster risk reduction strategies

2-2. Systems are in place to monitor, archive and disseminate data on key hazards and vulnerabilities

	Name	Type of disasters
Disaster monitoring system		
Disaster Information system (archive & dissemination of data)		

[Comments (if any)]

The NDMO has recorded disaster information, particularly flood impact data since 1966, while flood information has been standardized since 2000. Most information is of provincial and district level such as the number of affected provinces, district and villages, number of population affected disaggregated by gender, number of production areas and livestock affected, etc.

The NDMO developed disaster database (2000 to 2005) and is further improving the system. The NDMO is also planning to develop a standard disaster data collection format with line agencies concerned at the national level. The NDMO has not conducted any community based data survey at the village level, however, they cooperated with NGOs partners to implement a project called 'Disaster Risk Reduction and Community Based Disaster Management' in villages prone to flood and drought.

The Lao Red Cross (LRC) is an organization working in the field of disaster preparedness and relief for disaster victims, particularly the flood victims. Every year LRC coordinates and receives information on disaster damages from Red Cross Provincial Branches by using their own disaster damage and need assessment format. Currently, LRC is implementing a project

called 'Community Based Disaster Preparedness Program (2007 – 2011) in 5 flood and drought prone villages in Hinboun district of Khammoaune and Mahaxai district of Savannakhet province. Community based data survey were conducted in the 5 target villages in the form of Hazard, Vulnerability and Capacity Assessment. Participatory Rural Appraisal tools have been used for gathering and analyzing information. Village hazard map will show all hazards, particularly flood occurring in villages and element at risk such as housing, roads, production areas, community and other infrastructures, etc. Other tools such as livelihood analysis, problem trees, seasonal calendar, and history profile are also utilized

2-3. Early warning systems are in place for all major hazards, with outreach to communities

	Description	Type of disasters
Disaster warning system (information flow)		
Early warning and evacuation system		

[Comments (if any)]

The Department of Meteorology and Hydrology is the main agency that produces the early warning information and disseminates to disaster management organizations, mainly to the NDMO. The NDMO then sends this information to the local disaster management organizations to take appropriate actions and disseminate early warnings to communities at risk. The early warning information consists of weather forecast (rainfalls, storms, typhoons) and information on water level along the main river and its tributaries.

Under project cooperation with NGOs, community based early warning systems are developed which include setting up monitoring equipment (flood mark) along the river and assignment of responsible unit and person in charge of monitoring and reporting to the village disaster protection unit head, district authority and province. In addition, village disaster risk maps are produced and placed within the vicinity of the village head. The disaster risk maps consist of information on disaster types in different areas within the village, elements at risk, evacuation route, etc.

A communication system exists from national to the local (provincial) level by using the telephone, fax machines, etc. However, the communication system for issuing the EW information from province to district and villages are inadequate. Thus communities located in very remote areas often cannot receive early warning information due to difficult or total lack of access to road, mountain areas with deep slope and isolated villages.

2-4. National and local risk assessments take account of regional / trans-boundary risks, with a view to regional cooperation on risk reduction.

	Description	Type of disasters
Regional (trans-boundary) information sharing system for disaster monitoring and early warning		

[Comments (if any)]

The floods in 2000 caused significant damages to the countries in the Lower Mekong Basin, with 450 million USD for Viet Nam and Cambodia. Therefore, the MRC council instructed the MRC secretariat to prepare the flood management and mitigation strategy for Lower Mekong Basin, and the strategy was endorsed by the council in 2001. In order to implement the MRC flood management and mitigation strategy, the flood management and mitigation programme (FMMP) was formulated, which includes 5 components: (1) establishment of regional flood management and mitigation center, (2) structural measures and flood proofing , (3) transboundary flood management , (4) flood emergency management strengthening , and (5) land use. The objective of FMMP is to prevent, minimize or mitigate people’s suffering and economic losses caused by floods while preserving the environmental benefits of floods.

MRC needs quantifiable flood vulnerability indices in order to direct ongoing and future activities of each of five FMMP components into the most cost-effective and socially-effective areas. MRC recognizes that if the FMMP Program does not make significant improvements in reducing flood vulnerability at the community level, the program misses its mark. Therefore, the flood vulnerability assessment and mapping project (FVAMP) started under the FMMP component 1, the project phase I and fact findings and concept development were carried out during 18 June - 13 July 2007. Assessments were done in terms of the project needs and relevance to agencies operating at the community level and the potential contribution of these agencies to the project.

3 Priority for action 3:

Use knowledge, innovation and education to build a culture of safety and resilience at all levels

3-1. Relevant information on disasters is available and accessible at all levels, to all stakeholders (through networks, development of information sharing systems etc)

	System, Activities	Type of disasters
Public awareness on disasters and disaster risks		

[Comments (if any)]

As mentioned earlier, different stakeholders do possess relevant information on disasters, and they do share and exchange information willingly. However, there is no one comprehensive information management system where all the available information is gathered and maintained together with easy access by all interested parties.

3-2. School curricula, education material and relevant trainings include disaster risk reduction and recovery concepts and practices

Items	
School curricula include disaster risk reduction concepts	Yes/ No/ Other ()
Educational materials for learning/teaching disaster risk reduction	For formal education/ For informal education/ No
Training program for learning disaster risk reduction	Yes/ No/ Other ()

[Comments (if any)]

In 2007, a UNDP Regional Project funded by ECHO was initiated in order to mainstream disaster risk reduction into the education sector. The project was implemented by the NDMO with ADPC with an aim to integrate disaster risk reduction into the secondary school curriculum. The project should provide valuable national mainstreaming examples to build support for further mainstreaming of disaster risk reduction into development policy and planning.

The project has two complimentary objectives; i) Mainstreaming disaster risk reduction into Secondary school curriculum: through pilot projects, and ii) Research on the physical and socio-economic impact of disasters on the education sector for use in advocacy and consensus building on the benefits of disaster resilient schools

Another project started in cooperation with the NDMO and the Ministry of Education, the Sayaboury District Education Department and ADPC to reduce vulnerability of children, young people and communities in Xieng Hone District to natural hazards. The project which is scheduled to be implemented from July 2008-June 2009 supports 2 primary and 2 lower secondary schools in Xieng Hone to deliver disaster risk education and equip children with the knowledge and skills to contribute to building disaster resilient communities.

3-3. Research methods and tools for multi-risk assessments and cost benefit analysis are developed and strengthened

	Description
Development of research methods and tools for multi-risk assessment	

[Comments (if any)]

3-4. Country-wide public awareness strategy exists to stimulate a culture of disaster resilience, with outreach to urban and rural communities

	Name	Year
Country-wide public awareness strategy		

[Comments (if any)]

4 Priority for action 4:*Reduce the underlying risk factors*

4-1. Disaster risk reduction is an integral objective of environment related policies and plans, including for land use natural resource management and adaptation to climate change.

Environmental related policies include disaster risk reduction concepts	Yes/ No/ Other ()
National land use planning include disaster risk reduction concepts	Yes/ No/ Other ()

[Comments (if any)]

The Government of Lao PDR has recently established a National Steering Committee on Climate Change with 7 technical working groups such as agriculture & food security, forest and land management, energy management, hydrology and water resources, city infrastructure, economic management and financial instruments. These technical working groups will be chaired by different ministries and aim to formulate a national climate change strategy for 2020 and a first national action plan in alignment with the 7th national socio economic development plan.

4-2. Social development policies and plans are being implemented to reduce the vulnerability of populations most at risk

Social development policies include disaster risk reduction concepts	Yes/ No/ Other ()
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[Comments (if any)]

Recognizing the increasing importance of disaster risk reduction, the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (2007-2011) seeks to support the Government of Lao PDR's Sixth Five Year National Socio Economic Development Plan (2006-2010). Under this UNDAF, disaster risk management is listed as a key area for cooperation and one of the critical components of poverty reduction framework. UNDAF Outcome 1.4 indicate "enhanced ownership and capacity for pro poor planning and implementation and harmonized aid coordination and disaster management". This UNDAF framework when implemented may provide the resources to increase attention to disaster risk/vulnerability reduction. UNDP has further reaffirmed its support under this UNDAF through the Country Programme Action Plan (CPAP) from 2007-2011.

4-3. Economic and productive sectorial policies and plans have been implemented to reduce the vulnerability of economic activities

Economic and productive sectorial policies include disaster risk reduction concepts	Yes/ No/ Other ()
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[Comments (if any)]

4-4. Planning and management of human settlements incorporate disaster risk reduction elements, including enforcement of building codes

Planning and management of human settlements include disaster risk	Yes/ No/ Other ()
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reduction concepts	
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[Comments (if any)]

As mentioned earlier, the UNDP Regional Project implemented by the NDMO and ADPC conducted a research on the impact of disasters on the education sector. The findings and lessons learnt from the research will be used to advocate for the construction/retrofitting of disaster resilient schools. They should also provide valuable national mainstreaming examples to build support for further mainstreaming of disaster risk reduction into development policy and planning as well as for making other buildings disaster resilient.

4-5. Disaster risk reduction measures are integrated into post disaster recovery and rehabilitation processes

Disaster risk reduction measures are integrated into post disaster recovery processes	Yes/ No/ Other ()
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[Comments (if any)]

Disaster management is not new in Lao PDR, as the UNDAC capacity assessment pointed out, but it happens often on an ad-hoc basis when a disaster hits. Limited resources with competing demands to meet basic needs pose major challenges to enhancing post disaster recovery and rehabilitation processes with disaster risk reduction measures.

4-6. Procedures are in place to assess the disaster risk impacts of major development projects, especially infrastructure

Procedures to assess the disaster risk impacts of major development projects	Yes/ No/ Other ()
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[Comments (if any)]

5 Priority for action 5:

Strengthen disaster preparedness for effective response at all levels

5-1. Strong policy, technical and institutional capacities and mechanisms for disaster risk management, with a disaster risk reduction perspective are in place

	Policy/ Mechanisms
Policy and mechanisms for disaster risk management (ex. task force for disaster risk management)	

[Comments (if any)]

The NDMO has fairly strong internal capacities in several important areas. As an organization, it has developed positive relational capacities with some stakeholders. The NDMO leadership also has the requisite awareness of which ministries/agencies/international bodies need to be engaged with in given situations related to disaster management. Furthermore, NDMO has gained experience in training and mentoring provincial and district focal points in some provinces.

A number of key stakeholders and partners lauded NDMO's capacities in as much as they have the resources to effectively deploy those capacities. While this 'bounded' sense of capacity translates into an ability to effectively carry out a limited number of expected functions in a limited number of geographical areas, it does not add up to the complete range of capacities that it needs to function effectively. The two key areas where NDMO can be said to be functioning satisfactorily are clearly in the areas of a) information coordination and b) training/mentoring of sub-national focal points.

5-2. Disaster preparedness plans and contingency plans are in place at all administrative levels, and regular training drills and rehearsals are held to test and develop disaster response programmes

	Name	
Disaster preparedness plans		
Disaster contingency plans		
		remarks
National level disaster management drills	<input type="checkbox"/> Regularly conducted <input type="checkbox"/> Periodically conducted <input type="checkbox"/> not conducted	
Local level disaster management drills	<input type="checkbox"/> Regularly conducted <input type="checkbox"/> Periodically conducted <input type="checkbox"/> not conducted	

[Comments (if any)]

At present, no contingency plan for natural disaster events has been elaborated by the NDMC, neither at the national, nor provincial level. Several projects between NDMO and NGOs however at the province levels produced annual and multi year disaster management plans.

5-3. Financial reserves and contingency mechanisms are in place to support effective response and recovery when required

Items	
Financial reserve for disasters	Yes (US\$)/ No/ Other ()
Compensation for disasters	Yes (Name of system:) No Other ()
Insurance for disasters	Yes (Name of system:) No Other ()
Tax reduction or exemption	Yes (Name of system:) No Other ()

[Comments (if any)]

5-4. Procedures are in place to exchange relevant information during hazard events and disasters, and to undertake post-event reviews

Procedures for exchanging relevant information during disasters (Knowledge compilation of lessons learned from previous disasters)	Yes No Other ()

[Comments (if any)]