

Sub-regional programme proposal for
**Provision of Technical Assistance to strengthen the national and local level
risk management capacities for sustainable urban development
in South Asian and South East Asian region**

Concept Note

Submitted by: **Asian Disaster Preparedness Centre**

I. Background

In the aftermath of recent natural disasters around the globe, there has been a renewed commitment on behalf of various Government, UN agencies, regional institutions/agencies/platforms, national and local organizations to intensify efforts toward securing from future risks. Disaster databases from various sources clearly establish the pattern of rising incidence as well as growing magnitude of disasters impacting billions, heavy death toll of human lives, impact on livelihood and public infrastructure, material and production losses, environment damage and setting back the clock of development gains which are built from scarce resources.

South Asia region and South-East Asia in particular is exposed to various kinds of natural hazards including earthquakes, landslides, cyclones, floods, tsunamis, droughts and other devastating events. During the period 1996-2000, South Asia region accounted for 9.2 deaths per hundred thousand people, and 10.1% of the region's total population was affected by natural disasters. Furthermore, during the same period, direct losses to public and private infrastructure in the South Asia Region were estimated to be about 3.5% of the region's GDP and 13.2% of the region's federal government revenues. However, this estimate of losses is grossly understated as only about 7.7% of registered loss events provide any loss estimates vis-à-vis official loss assessment. The high vulnerability is mirrored in the Bank's lending portfolio. SAR is one of the top three regions with a disaster related lending portfolio of more than US\$10 billion since 1980¹. These natural catastrophes pose a serious and growing challenge to the regions development and undermine the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in the countries of the South Asia and South East Asia region. The development choices made so far by various national /local agencies and the communities has so far failed to mainstream the threat posed by the natural hazards and extreme variations in the earth-climate system. Urbanization structures in today's world are one of the extreme concerns in the global as well as in the local scenario of risk reduction. In view of high exposure and vulnerability in megacities and secondary cities, the natural phenomena of a range of geological and hydro-meteorological hazards exert an enormous toll on development and impact on the society. Urban areas in Asia particularly have not paid adequate attention to incorporate drr concerns into planning and development of the city and the surrounding metropolitan region.

II. Megacities and Secondary cities – Complex Development

Cities in Asia and in other parts of the world are in various stage of development. These cities are like organisms with thousands and millions of living cells gradually getting suffocated by the problems that have been self created. The trend towards urbanization accelerated in the last century at is gaining all time high figures. In 1950 only about 30% of the worlds population lived in cities and it is expected that by the year 2030 more than 60% of people will be living in cities. The ongoing trends of population growth, environmental damage, increasing crime rate, exploitation of natural resources, globalization and more importantly ignorance will have a long lasting impact on the future of the society. The risks that grow hand in hand in the process of city expansion are also large. As the growth is too rapid and inorganic in nature, these problems pose a special challenge for administrators, planners, professionals and citizens.

Rapid expansion of the cities also means high concentration of people, infrastructure and economic value in a confined limits and therefore the damage and loss potential is usually very high

¹ SAR Regional Strategy Update, January 2007, The World Bank 2007

than the surrounding or rural areas. Many cities have been expanded over zones of severe hazard and with inadequate planning considerations to mitigate the impact of the hazard, cities are destined to affect from major natural disasters. Spatial problems in towns and cities pose a special challenge for city planners. Recent geological and hydro-meteorological events in the urban areas have time and again demonstrated calamitous effect on human lives, existing housing and infrastructure are often highly prone to losses.

The engines of economic growth now harbour for major risks. A single loss event in one of the major cities can have far reaching negative consequences for various sectors. One of the example of this is an earthquake in Tokyo which according to experts can trigger a world wide recession. As disasters stem and sharpen from a complex interplay of root causes it is essential to position safety concerns in every urban activity. With the expanding understanding of *problems to solutions*, new tools and paradigm shift there is need for developing a new comprehensive and holistic approach/framework for achieving urban safety. Holistic solutions and risk prevention strategies should be developed in time and the risk management framework should be dovetailed with the development framework of the urban area so as to ensure that the risks can be controlled today and in future too. Identified strategies need to be transformed through appropriate actions in a given time frame. It is necessary to translate and demonstrate national policies into intermediate/local/sectoral practices aimed towards sustained risk reduction in urban areas.

III. Rationale for an integrated approach for DRR

The accumulation of risk in the urban areas is a dynamic system and is an outcome of interplay of various socio-economic factors, institution set up and poor governance. The factors contributing to this dynamic system over a period of time and spatial variations contribute to the accumulation of future risk pattern which is simply more complex than any given time in history. The high population density and related death toll as a result of collapse of poorly built structures is just an example of the compromise made so far by adopting wrong planning principles/practices.

Risk inheritance varies in concentration from location to location in case of a metropolis or megapolis and the solutions lie in tailor-made methods. Globally, efforts are underway to address drr into development planning/programming and this has been expressed through several global/national/regional and local frameworks. There has been a call for multi-stakeholder approach to facilitate the process and international/national/local agencies as well as civil society/community based organizations and NGOs/NPOs are corresponding commitment to risk reduction. Efforts to tackle urban risk have been initiated in South Asia/South East Asia regions during the last decade and the recent disasters have increased momentum.

With a large percentage of urban settlement and other development assets falling in the vulnerable category, cities are destined for risks. Be it natural, weather, health or technological, cities are no doubt more vulnerable than the rural areas. With new urban forms and assets getting added to the cities, these urban centers also hold a greater opportunity for risk reduction. For instance, in India approximately eighty percent of the building stock is susceptible to damage from earthquake hazard. About sixty percent of the geographical area of the country falls in the category of medium of very high risk of seismic damage. One of the thought provoking articles on the earthquake problem in India² highlights "Let us assume that the average life of buildings is 50 years and that the building stock is growing at 2% per annum. If no new unsafe building is built in future, in 20 years about 60% of

² S.K.Jain, 'The India Earthquake Problem' CURRENT SCIENCE, VOL. 89, NO. 9, 10 NOVEMBER 2005

buildings will be earthquake-resistant even without any retrofitting. It is therefore obvious that our priority should be to develop robust systems for ensuring safe construction of new buildings. Simultaneously, we need to develop systems, policies and methodologies for seismic retrofitting of existing structures to prepare for sensible retrofitting programmes". The Government agencies and the stakeholders should regard risks as an opportunity, make risk management more transparent, participatory and come up with suitable solutions for implementation planning.

Existing arrangements often fail to integrate and engage all stakeholders and general public within the process of risk management as well as in the broader governance framework, i.e. the processes by which risk information is collected, analyzed and communicated and management decisions are taken. It has been observed that risk related decision making and risk reduction information has often failed to successfully integrate scientific knowledge with consideration of the socio-economic aspects of risk. The outcome has so far been inefficient to treat risk and make best use of knowledge. There is a need to invest in better **knowledge management** to capture and share the DRR experiences from the local and international level, findings and effective replicable methods from research and implementation planning steps, so that it can be developed and owned by risk communities in the urban areas.

Collective decisions about risks are the outcome of a 'mosaic' of interactions between governmental or administrative actors, science communities, corporate actors and actors from civil society at large, many of the interactions taking place and relevant to only individual parts of the overall process. The interplay of these actors has various dimensions, including public participation, stakeholder involvement and the formal (horizontal and vertical) structures within which it occurs³. Wider **governance** issues, organizational capacity and regulatory styles play a pertinent role in the context of risk reduction process. Many complex thoughts arise when one looks at the how a diverse society and its stakeholders/actors can actually handle risk. In addition to the knowledge gained through technical and participatory risk assessment, decision making by the society has been complicated and less satisfactory. The urban local bodies, departments/agencies/organizations and the people need to share the responsibility for assessing and managing the risk and therefore it is vital to consider the need for sufficient organizational capacity, human resource capacity through **training and capacity building programmes** so that necessary knowledge is created to implement drr actions. In order to place risk in the context of the urban environment closely interwoven within the stakeholders, decision making structures is of a critical concern for success. The stakeholders need to understand and keep a constant watch on the natural hazards, growing concentrations of vulnerabilities and values if the urban cell has to meet the special challenge.

All the associated factors demand for an appropriate and sound governance approach, greater collaboration between the stakeholders, especially the government agencies responsible for land-use planning, development planning, infrastructure development, urban environment management, education and training etc. Recognizing the multi-disciplinary nature of disaster management and the need to harmonize drr in the urban development, it is practical to adopt a multi-stakeholder approach so as to actively involve the key players from various agencies/sectors. Since the problems and the solutions are known, the cities in the country and the region can work together, build on a common regional level programme and practice to implement sustainable risk reduction actions in the urban areas.

ADPC Regional Consultative Committee (RCC) on Disaster Management recognizes the linkage of development and disaster risk, the integration of disaster risk considerations into

³ "White paper on Risk Governance - Towards an Integrated approach" by a private foundation named - International Risk Governance Council

development planning as a key priority for action. The RCC program on mainstreaming Disaster Risk Reduction into Development Policy, Planning and Implementation in Asia, focuses on two separate approaches relating to mainstreaming of DRR, namely into overall national development goals/planning and into specific priority sectors⁴.

The fourth meeting of the ADPC RCC was held in Dhaka, March 2004⁵. The meeting consisted of seven substantive sessions including one on “Session IV: Urban Risk Reduction and Sustainable Development – Experiences of RCC Member Countries, Regional and National Initiatives”. In the context of Urban Risk Reduction, the RCC participants directed ADPC to:

- enhance and continue the CBDRM initiatives in cities;
- facilitate the effective sharing of information,
- experiences and lessons learnt between RCC Member and South-South countries and the application of the experience in different contexts;
- identify the probability of urban risk for each Member Country and inform them of this probability;
- work with national governments particularly urban development ministries and city governments on issues of urban disaster management,
- advocate amongst community members, implementers and policy makers as this allows for the development of a legal framework and the enforcement of legislation;
- provide technical assistance and transfer was needed for the development of a framework for urban projects; to provide support for the enforcement of legislation, regulation and codes
- monitoring and evaluation to ensure that programmes are implemented effectively; and
- set-up and ensure that there are effective follow up mechanisms for programmes implemented to ensure project sustainability and replication.

The meeting also listed the needs of city governments were as:

- strengthening of linkages and improved coordination amongst different agencies concerned;
- efficient support from national government, the consideration of all urban risk factors in all development projects;
- technical assistance for the implementation of activities;
- the ability to govern better though the delegation of authority and the empowerment of local government through the provision of resource allocation, tools and prerogative;
- the articulation of requirements for the development of action plans and the integration of mitigation into the city development planning process;
- tools for risk assessment and the creation of awareness scenarios to test ideas;
- the allocation of resource to provide finances as a part of the development of sustainable, domestic capital markets and local financial systems that can support reconstruction and negate donor dependency;
- the promotion of participatory approach and the involvement and development of role of the community; and the identification of a legitimate role for the partnership with private sector.

In terms of Capacity Building, the needs identified were:

- raising the awareness of problems to seek the involvement of all relevant sectors and to build capacity of the wider audience through the development of additional teaching materials for schools programmes and curricula;
- focusing on specific hazards using a holistic and multi-sectoral approach;

⁴ ADPC RCC program on Mainstreaming Disaster Risk Reduction into Development Policy, Planning and implementation in Asia, “Towards a Tool Kit on Mainstreaming Disaster Risk Reduction – A compilation of Key Program Documents (2005-2006)”.

⁵ Fourth Meeting of the ADPC RCC on Disaster management, Preparatory event in Asia for the UNWCDR 2005, 29-31 March 2004, Dhaka Bangladesh (RCC 4 Report, Page vi, 46-54)

- the provision of technical information and institutional functions such as human resources development as part of long-term, targeted and effective training of specialized interest groups such as architects, engineers, health professionals and social workers;
- enhancement of technical expertise particularly in the area of risk assessment and realistic, holistic, participatory planning; the exchange of skill and capacity especially through the use of electronic medium;
- monitoring and evaluation; to assist in the effective delegation of authority; to enhance sensitivities to gender issues and equity;
- training of NGOs to enable them to carry out functions that they are comfortable with;
- training of disadvantaged groups to accommodate their requirement; and
- standardization of terminology and methods to facilitate communication between different countries for comparison and sharing if experiences.

One of the key activities of the program is to undertake Priority Implementation Projects (PIPs). ADPC is seeking submissions from the RCC member countries with indications of the themes in which they are interested in pursuing PIPs. The indicative sectors are – National Planning Processes, agriculture, Urban planning and Infrastructure, Housing, Finance, Education and Health. The themes for PIPs in priority sector 3. Urban Planning and Infrastructure *includes*, 3.1 To incorporate disaster risk assessments as part of the planning process before construction of new roads and bridges, 3.2 To promote use of hazard risk information in land-use planning and zoning programs, whereas in priority sector 4. Housing *includes*, 4.1 To promote hazard-resilient designs (e.g. flood proofing, or seismic safety) in rural housing in hazard-prone areas, 4.2 To promote utilization of national building codes that have special provisions for enhanced design standards for buildings in areas affected by natural disasters, 4.3 To promote compliance and enforcement of local building laws that requires standards prescribed in building codes in urban hazard-prone areas. The other sector which is directly linked to this proposal is 5. Finance Services. The themes *includes* 5.1 Incorporating micro-financing scheme to have flexible repayment schedules that can be activated in the event of recipients being affected by natural disasters and 5.2 Encourage financial services sectors and local capital markets to develop schemes for financing disaster risk-reduction measures⁶. The Outline Plan, Implementation Plan has been prepared for the themes and is included in the toolkit. Document 32 of the Toolkit is the concept note on Mainstreaming Risk Management in Urban Local Government Sector⁷. This document was developed in October 2006 and is implemented as a component to the Program for Hydro-Meteorological Disaster Mitigation in Secondary Cities in Asia (PROMISE) project⁸ supported by USAID.

ADPC with the support of USAID/OFDA has done pioneering work in the field of Urban Risk Management. The Urban Risk Management work was initiated under Asian Urban Disaster Mitigation Program (AUDMP) since 1995 and is being continued by implementing Programs such as the PROMISE and others in order to build upon the successful elements introduced under the AUDMP. PROMISE program is implemented in five secondary cities in Bangladesh, Pakistan, Philippines, Sri Lanka and Vietnam. Advocacy for Mainstreaming Disaster Risk reduction in local government sector is one of the components of the PROMISE program implemented by ADPC and pilot projects are in pipeline for implementation. The UDRM team of ADPC also places an emphasis on good governance⁹ in urban areas as an approach to reducing disaster risk.

⁶ View the document "Towards a Tool Kit on Mainstreaming Disaster Risk Reduction – A compilation of Key Program Documents (2005-2006)" at <http://www.adpc.net/v2007/Programs/DMS/PROGRAMS/Mainstreaming%20DRR/Downloads/Final%20MDRD%20TOOL%20KIT.pdf>

⁷ *Ibid* on Page 184.

⁸ View the PROMISE programme details on the ADPC website: <http://www.adpc.net/v2007/Programs/UDRM/PROMISE/Default.asp>

⁹ View details on Urban Governance activities on the ADPC website: <http://www.adpc.net/v2007/Programs/UDRM/PROGRAMS%20&%20PROJECTS/URBAN%20GOVERNANCE/Default-URBAN%20GOVERNANCE.asp>

IV. Regional Programme for urban risk reduction with focus on strengthening national and local risk management capacities – A proposal

The UN Report 'Living with Risk' proposes a strategic shift from disaster management practices towards an integrated disaster risk reduction approach. It stems from a growing recognition that modern societies cannot afford to value their social and material assets only after they have been lost in a disaster. It also reflects a further recognition that whilst natural phenomena causing disasters are in most cases beyond human control, vulnerability is generally a result of human activity. It notes disaster risk management must be the responsibility of governments. However its success also depends on widespread decision making and the participation of many others. Policy direction and legal foundation assure legitimacy but it is the professional and human resources available, on the ground, that are a true measure of success¹⁰.

Given the urban centers in South Asia and South East Asia region's are facing high exposure to natural hazards, the Urban Disaster Risk Management Team (UDRM) at ADPC clearly recognizes the need to promote a more proactive and planned approach for urban risk reduction. ADPC therefore proposes to initiate a regional programme for urban risk reduction aimed at building the capacities of the national/local government and increase the resilience of the cities to disasters while decreasing underlying risk factors and vulnerabilities. The programme will centre on developing a governance framework for urban disaster risk management, knowledge management for DRR in urban context, knowledge sharing and dissemination activities, organization building, with inbuilt training and capacity building modules for stakeholders, and enhancement of preparedness and mitigation activities through sample demonstration programmes in pilot urban centres and communities. The programme will identify and implement few high priority activities for preparedness, mitigation and enhancement of the emergency response capabilities at the national, local and community level. One of the key areas in the programme is to aim to integrate governance considerations in the drr mainstreaming process. The programme will comprise of following three basic blocks:

1. Strategic institutional strengthening for urban risk reduction

- Development of risk management strategy in the urban context - *risk should be firmly embedded in government's policy making, planning, budgeting and delivery*
- Development of country specific Governance framework for risk reduction – *adequate governance considerations understood and strategy laid down for adoption, stakeholders capacity to handle risks identified and programme development for improving risk handling.*
- Enhancement of Organizational Capability of NDMOs and Local Government to confirm to the risk management strategy and risk governance framework- *key application will involve staff training, recruitment/engagement of specific expertise professionals, possible organizational restructuring/change, financial restructuring/municipal budgeting for risk reduction*
- Formulation of urban policy framework for drr and country level action plan for urban risk reduction - *quality of government risk management should be improved during the three year programme period*
- Identification and implementation planning for high priority mitigation activities in select urban areas in a participatory process by involving and working with '*at risk communities*'
- Build capacities to analyze, identify and mobilize financial resources/systems for mainstreaming drr activities – *introduction of techno-legal and techno-financial regime for the Urban Local bodies, government institutions plays the role of the regulator*

¹⁰ View this report at http://www.unisdr.org/eng/about_isdr/bd-lwr-2004-eng.htm

2. Knowledge Management and Information & Networking activities

- Develop knowledge management base for handling and reducing risk - *develop systematic process focusing on capturing, organizing and facilitating knowledge to various stakeholders*
- Develop KM environment and illustrate knowledge process convert into action – *taking all risks and sources into account and establishing of the KM platform*
- Create KM platform for drr and establishment of mechanism for sharing knowledge
- Facilitate regional, national and local exchange of lessons learned from the implementation of ongoing programmes – *intercity exchanges*

3. Organization building including Training and Capacity Building for staff in National and Local Government on DRR

- Institutional strengthening on disaster management in the national and sub-regional training institutions
- Development of national and local human resource development plan
- Capacity building of sector-specific professionals on sector-wise integration of drr components

Proposal Objectives

The broad objective of the proposed initiative is to support and strengthen national and local government capacities in urban disaster risk management across the identified countries namely, Bangladesh, Indonesia, Pakistan, Philippines and Sri Lanka by providing high-quality technical assistance in strengthening Institutional and Legislative Systems (ILS), Knowledge Management services and skill/capacity building. The programme design and implementation will aim to raise the capacity for implementation of specific activities, build upon existing work in the urban risk management programmes, enhance the skills and capacities of the stakeholders and build networks for cooperation, promotion, replication and adaptations on preparedness and mitigation in the urban environment. The programme proposal objectives are:

- To strengthen the capacity of the national and the local authorities in vulnerability reduction of disasters in the most vulnerable and poorest human settlements of the urban built environment.
- To support the processes related to the promotion of policies and strategies to strengthen risk management in urban development.
- To strengthen the capacity by introducing full scale capacity development programmes for select Urban Local Bodies /Local Government Units/Communities in local level risk management (LLRM) and safer urban development.
- To strengthen regional cooperation in South Asia and South East Asia region and facilitate exchange of information and national mechanisms to ensure sustainability and replication.

Participating organizations

The programme will be developed through a strategic alliance among the UNDP Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery (BCPR), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) disaster risk management team of participating countries and Asian Disaster Preparedness Centre (ADPC), working in partnership with the national and the local institutions of the participating countries, National Disaster Management Organizations, National and Local Disaster Management Centres, Ministry/Department of Urban Development and Housing, Regional and Town/City Planning boards/authorities, Urban Infrastructure Development, Urban Development and Finance, Training

Institutions, Local Government and related structures, academic institutions, sector professional experts, NGOs/NPOs, donors etc .

ADPC will provide technical assistance through a multiple agency alliance for enhancement of the capacity at the country and the local level for sustainable urban risk management. It is proposed that the project will be coordinated from the respective UNDP Country office. ADPC will provide direct Technical Assistance to the NDMO and the national sectoral agency/Ministry of Urban Development. ADPC will count on the existing institutional linkages and the support from national technical agencies/national experts who can be quickly mobilized to respond to programme/sector requests. The proposed programme period shall be for a minimum of three years (2008-2011) so as to establish greater synergy at all levels, development of tested tools, increased capacities, implementation of strategies along with up scaling of good practices at local government unit level and national level. The regional programme will target 30 cities, allowing a maximum of five cities each from the participating countries namely, Bangladesh, Indonesia, Pakistan, Philippines and Sri Lanka.

Way Forward

ADPC has been engaged actively with the UNDP country offices/NDMOs in the region to set up urban risk reduction programmes and mainstreaming drr concerns in the local level risk management. It is proposed to develop country specific programmes in support of UNDP, NDMOs and priority sector Ministries/Departments. The response from the tentative list of participating countries has been encouraging. One of the notable discussions is the pilot project proposal for Mainstreaming Disaster Risk Management in Urban Local Government Sector. This pipeline project is under discussion with Sri Lanka Disaster Management Centre (DMC) under the Guidance of Ministry of Disaster Management and Human Rights (M/DM&HR, Govt of SriLanka).

UNDP Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery (BCPR) has shown keen interest and expressed willingness to support Country Offices of UNDP to develop the proposal with technical assistance for programming and implementation by ADPC. In line to the discussions and based on suggestions, ADPC-UDRM team puts forward the concept note for your kind perusal. It is hereby proposed to take this discussion forward and prepare a detailed strategy in consultation with UNDP BCPR, Country Offices of UNDP, NDMO and ADPC.

For more information

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