

### 3.2.2 Integration of Disaster Reduction Concepts into Development Planning

#### China

#### Case Study: Policies and Measures on Flood Disaster Reduction in China since 1998

China is a country that suffers from frequent floods. In 1998 flooding along the Yangtze River and Songhua River caused severe loss of life and property and caused billions of dollars-worth of economic loss to the country. In 2002, there was heavy rainfall in Hunan Province. Unlike other years, however, there was no disaster other than flood. A study financed by UNDP has reviewed government practices including policies and measures for flood control in China after the 1998 floods, as well as those supported by the international donor community.



In response to the floods, the State Council made timely proposals for several strategies for flood prevention and control. These include the following series of policies and measures: enclosing mountains to plant trees, transforming land back into forests, demolishing polder fields to channel flood water, transforming farmland back into lake, supplying laid-off laborers for reconstruction, relocating people to form new townships, reinforcing key dykes and dredging river beds.

This case study discovered that enhancement of the basic infrastructure and the improvement of flood-defense capability have not only offered a reliable flood prevention system and safety for the riparian people, but also significantly improved the entire social-economic development of the areas formerly threatened by flood disasters.

The report concludes that five changes have resulted for people in flood-prone areas due to these flood control measures. (1) The flood defense capability of the lower and middle parts of the rivers has increased. (2) The benefits are far greater than the investment. (3) Local socio-economic development is effectively booming. (4) The income of local people has increased. (5) These flood control measures promoted harmonious coexistence between human beings and nature.



#### - Background

China is a country that suffers from frequent floods. In 1998 flooding along the Yangtze River and Songhua River caused severe loss of life and property and caused billions of dollars-worth of economic loss to the country. In 2002, there was heavy rainfall in Hunan Province. Unlike other years, however, there was no disaster other than flood.

#### - Objective

To review government practices including policies and flood control measures in China after the 1998 floods.

#### - Term/Time Frame

After the 1998 floods.

#### - Activities Undertaken

In response to the floods, the State Council made timely proposals for several strategies for flood prevention and control. These include the following series of policies and measures: enclosing mountains to plant trees, transforming land back into forests, demolishing polder fields to channel flood water, transforming farmland back into lake, supplying laid-off laborers for reconstruction, relocating people to form new townships, reinforcing key dykes and dredging river beds.

#### - Major Achievements

The report concludes that five changes have resulted. (1) The flood defense capability of the lower and middle parts of the rivers has increased. (2) The benefits are far greater than the investment. (3) Local socio-economic development is effectively booming. (4) The income of local people has increased. (5) These flood control measures promoted harmonious coexistence between human beings and nature.

#### - Total Budget

In the last five years, US\$18.73 billion for disaster relief, disaster rehabilitation and management. US\$440 million used to strengthen the Yangtze River Dyke.

#### - Contact Details

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