

Disaster Risk Reduction

The number and frequency of disasters is growing and with the increasing effect of climate change it is projected that there will be more severe weather-related events over the coming decades. The impact of disaster events is also increasing. The 1990s saw economic losses from disasters total over US\$608 billion, greater than the combined losses over the previous four decades.

For Bangladesh, disasters have not only caused massive losses, in terms of lives and damage, but also affected economic development which in turn has prevented people from breaking the poverty cycle.

Disasters have two key causes:

- The degree of exposure of people, infrastructure and economic activities to an event; and

- The vulnerability of those exposed to the event.

The Centre for Research of the Epidemiology on Disasters (CRED) has projected that the world is facing an unprecedented scale of disasters with 25% of the world's landmass and nearly 75% of its population at risk. The need for effective and dynamic disaster risk reduction is therefore great.

A recent DFID report highlighted the following key elements for effective disaster risk reduction:

- 1) Sustainable institutional structures and good governance
- 2) Risk identification, monitoring, early warning and public awareness
- 3) Technical and physical mitigation
- 4) Building resilience, promotion of innovation, knowledge and education
- 5) Risk sharing and risk transfer
- 6) Preparedness, effective response and sustainable recovery

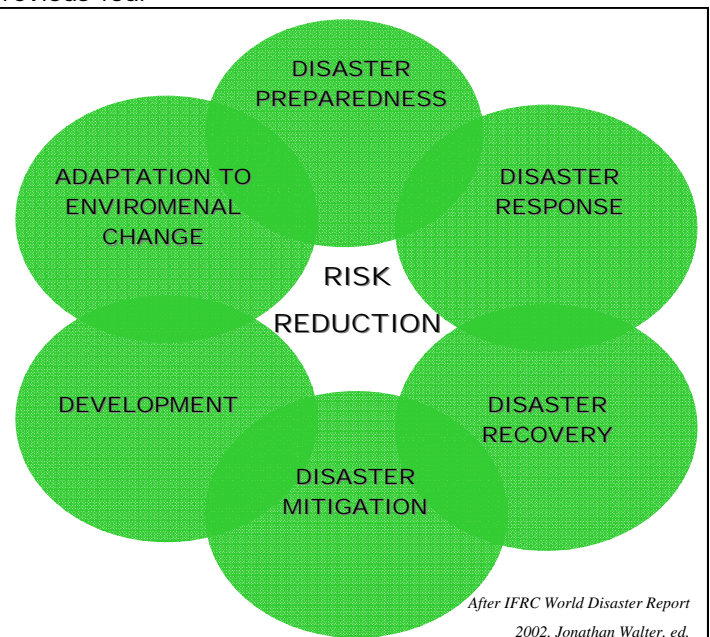
- The report went on to state that the Comprehensive Disaster Management

Upcoming Events:

- The global lunch of the Community Based Adaptation will take place in Bangkok from 17-19 October

Links to Media / Academic Articles

- EcoEquity's paper on 'The Right to Development in a Climate Constrained World': <http://www.ecoequity.org/>
- Tsunami Warning System, by Prof. Dr. Aftab Alam Khan, University of Dhaka, printed in The Daily Star: <http://www.thedailystar.net/story.php?nid=5925>
- BBC animated guide to tsunami: <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/asia-pacific/5194316.stm>



Programme (CDMP), under the Disaster Management Cluster, provides an excellent example "of a strong platform for leadership by government into which bilateral donor support can be linked and thus provides a good vehicle for donor harmonisation. Its intended outputs include better co-ordination between key line-ministries, improved livelihoods in risk prone areas, strengthened response capacity at district and central levels and better understanding of the longer term implications of climate change on disaster risk for Bangladesh".

What is Disaster Risk Reduction?

The systematic development and application of policies, strategies and practices to minimize vulnerabilities, hazards and the unfolding of disaster impacts throughout a society, in the broad context of sustainable development.



Tsunami Alert Provides Real-Time Test

Following an 8.2 magnitude earthquake in southern Sumatra, Indonesia on the evening of 12 September 2007 an Indian Ocean-wide Tsunami watch was made by the Pacific Tsunami Warning Centre, Hawaii.

Shortly after receiving the alert, the Disaster Management Cluster activated the Disaster Management network which saw immediate communication with key Government officials, UN agencies and pre-qualified partner NGOs. The Disaster Management Information Centre (DMIC), part of CDMP, notified their networks, which included district

administration and Disaster Management Committees.

Following the tsunami warning, Patuakhali district administration imposed a red alert at Kuakata sea beach as well as coastal Kalapara and Galachipa districts. The water level at Cox's Bazar rose an estimated 2.5 feet. Many resident and tourists sought higher ground following the warning.

While the tsunami did not materialise, the warning provided a real-time demonstration of the disaster management mechanism for communicating with those at a district level and mobilising staff and officials.

Key Websites

Disaster Management Cluster

<http://www.undp.org.bd/cluster.php?d=10>

CDMP

<http://www.cdmp.org.bd>

Latest Situation Reports

http://www.cdmp.org.bd/Situation_report.html

Local Consultative Groups

<http://www.lcgbangladesh.org/>

Relief Web

<http://www.reliefweb.int>

Feedback

Your feedback is welcomed, please email any comments, suggestions or thoughts to:

dmc.bd@undp.org

Disclaimer:

The views and opinions expressed in this newsletter do not necessarily represent the view and opinion of the UNDP, Bangladesh.

Disaster Management Cluster



UNDP (Level 7), IDB Bhaban
Phone: (880-2) 811-8600
Fax: (880-2) 811-3196
E-mail: dmc.bd@undp.org

Development in a Climate Constrained World

EcoEquity recently released a paper on '[The Right to Development in a Climate Constrained World](#)'. The paper argues for an emergency climate programme based on the protection of "development equity" for poor people.

The conflict between the right of under-developed and developing countries to reach an appropriate standard of living while the developed world is now seeking global concessions, based on significant environmental concerns, has created an impasse.

The issues are particularly relevant for

Bangladesh as the effects of climate change are projected to be devastating if action globally is not taken. In saying that, it is widely accepted that if Bangladesh is to reach a dignified level of sustainable human development there is an environmental cost to this development.

This paper explores these issues and maps out some creative solutions. The debate is complex and emotive however the need for environmental policies to be mainstreamed into development strategies remains fundamental if the future effects of climate change are to be minimised.

Climate Change Challenge for the Poor

Chandrashekhar Dasgupta, India's representative at the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, stated his views on the discourse between the need for global reductions in carbon emissions and the right for low-income countries to develop in a recent article.

Dasgupta argues that "each inhabitant of our planet has an equal right to the atmosphere, but the industrialised countries have grossly exceeded their fair share. Annual per capita carbon-dioxide emissions are around 20 tons in the United States, 8.5 tons in the European Union and only 1 ton in India. If all countries had the same per capita emissions as India, climate change would not have occurred". He goes on to state that the current call by industrialised countries for "developing countries to strike a balance between development and climate-change mitigation" fails to

meet the tests of efficiency and equity.

His central argument is that each person has an equal right to the atmosphere, but that industrialised countries have grossly exceeded their fair share, historically and currently. He supports a proposal whereby industrialised countries meet the costs of incremental mitigation in the developing world and the integration of environmentally friendly technologies. Developing countries would therefore continue to develop, with the associated benefits, in a sustainable and more equitable way.

Chandrashekhar Dasgupta's article can be accessed at [Yale Global Online](#).

(Source: The Daily Star, 3 October 2007)