

United Nations Development Programme, Sri Lanka

with technical assistance from:

Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery

Disaster Reduction Unit (DRU)



Project title:

Preparatory assistance for the establishment of a Disaster Risk Management (DRM) Framework and Disaster Management Centre (DMC) in Sri Lanka

Project number:

XXXXX

Estimated start date: October 2005
Estimated end date: September 2006
Implementing agency: UNDP
Partners: Disaster Management Centre (DMC), government stakeholders, ministries, Department of External Resources in the Ministry of Finance and Planning.

Total budget: 847,210 US\$
Project site: Sri Lanka

General background:

Sri Lanka's vulnerability to natural disaster events is the result of a combination of factors: extreme weather conditions, a lack of institutional preparedness and mitigation planning, and the failure to implement disaster management strategies.

Although certain initiatives have been undertaken in terms of preventing landslides, controlling flooding and planning land use, there has been no legal provision to integrate these localized activities into a national plan. Also, natural disaster reduction has not been properly incorporated into development planning. A clear linkage needs to be established in Sri Lanka between sustainable development, social and environmental development, population growth, urban development, unsafe conditions and the increased vulnerability of the community to natural disasters.

The destruction witnessed in the aftermath of the recent tsunami has reaffirmed the urgent need for DRM legislation in Sri Lanka. The recent Sri Lanka Disaster Management Act provides a framework for disaster risk management and seeks to address disaster management holistically. The act provides legal provisions for the establishment of the National Council for Disaster Management (NCDM), the Disaster Management Centre (DMC), the appointment of

technical advisory committees, preparation of disaster management plans, the declaration of a state of disaster and award of compensations and other associated issues. In July 2005, the government established and authorized the DMC to become the lead agency on disaster risk management in the Sri Lanka to implement the directives of the NCDM.

Over the past two decades, the government, various national technical institutions and UN agencies have launched initiatives to strengthen DRM capacities at all levels in Sri Lanka. However, as highlighted by the recent tsunami, gaps are still evident in institutional mechanisms and capacities to manage disaster risks. In view of this, there is a clear need to develop and establish a DRM framework for the country. The tsunami disaster has resulted in development demands at all levels that far exceed the normal capacity of UNDP and the government. Building and sustaining these will be vital in maintaining the momentum into the recovery and reconstruction phase, and subsequently in establishing comprehensive DRM mechanisms. It is imperative, therefore, that the DMC is firmly established, institutionalized and supported to be able to develop, manage and implement DRM initiatives as part of a 5-10 year DRM road map, in partnership with the relevant stakeholders.

Project summary:

The project involves steps for supporting the establishment and institutionalization of the DMC to enable it to develop and implement the DRM framework/road map at all levels of administration. In addition, support will be provided to the DMC to implement its planned activities in accordance with the national disaster management plan and the road map; the Disaster Preparedness and Response Plans will be made at the intermediate levels. At the same time, the DRM and emergency response capacities of selected local government officials will be developed through training sessions.

Overall and specific objectives:

- To support the DMC in the development of a road map for risk reduction in Sri Lanka;
- To provide initial capacity building support to the DMC to support establishing and institutionalizing the centre;
- To support the implementation of a disaster management framework at intermediate and local levels (provincial, district and local levels).

Expected results:

- Sector-specific, national and/or regional expertise developed covering disaster preparedness, planning and/or mitigation of risks and vulnerabilities and establishing a disaster management framework at intermediate levels.

Activities:

- Provide technical support for the setting-up and running of the DMC;
- Provide support to the DMC to develop a 5-10 year DRM road map;
- Provide DMC staff with training and capacity-building support;
- Offer support for the development of communication material for the DMC;
- Assist stakeholder workshops, consultation meetings and the coordination of donors and international agencies;
- Provide intermediate-level staff (provincial, district, divisional and GN level) and volunteers with training in disaster risk management and mitigation, and GIS techniques;
- Provide technical assistance in the preparation of Disaster Preparedness and Response Plans (DPRP) at intermediate and GN levels;
- Provide physical and technical assistance to create operations centres and websites at intermediate level;
- Provide technical assistance on appropriate disaster-resistant construction technologies for masons and engineers.

Work in progress:

UNDP has been working towards establishing a national framework for DRM management and establishing the DMC. At the national level, hardware and technical support for the establishment of the organizational structure and functions of the DMC has been provided. A 'road map' for a safer Sri Lanka has been developed, outlining immediate and longer-term priorities and resource requirements for prevention, mitigation, preparedness and response actions, and a National Disaster Management Plan and Policy are also in the process of being developed with support from UNDP. Similarly, disaster preparedness and response plans are being developed in ten tsunami-affected districts at the district and division level. Disaster Management Committees are being formed at each administrative level, and disaster management teams will be formed and trained in

sector-specific interventions, such as early warning and communication, first aid and search-and-rescue. Mock drills and awareness programmes are also being carried out at the community level.

Project manager:

Ramraj Narasimhan
Disaster Reduction Specialist
United Nations Development Programme
12, Gower Street
Colombo 5 Sri Lanka
Ph: +94-11-5333704/ 06/ 08 (Extn:102)
Fax: +94-11-5333709
Mobile: +94-777772571
ramraj.narasimhan@undp.org

BCPR regional focal point:

Kamal Kishore
Regional Disaster Reduction Advisor
Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery
South and South West Asia
55, Lodhi Estate, New Delhi -110003 India
Tel: +91-11-2433 2388, 2433 1425 Extn. 107
Fax: +91-11-2433 1334 Cell: +91-9810095470
kamal.kishore@undp.org

BCPR Geneva Asia – Pacific focal point

Angelika Planitz
Disaster Programme Specialist
UNDP/BCPR
Tel.+41 (-022) -917.8703
Fax.+41 (022) -917.8060
angelika.planitz@undp.org
<http://www.undp.org/bcpr>