

Strengthening Recovery Capacity in SAARC Region

Side Event of

International Recovery Platform

Global Platform for DRR

Geneva, 6th June 2007

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South Asia

Hazards of nature

- Largest, youngest and most seismic active mountain system
- Largest non-polar glacial deposits melting due to effects of global warming
- Heavy rainfall and high silt load on water bodies causing recurrent flood over large areas
- Larger area facing droughts due to scanty rainfall and depleting ground water level
- 12000 km coastline and many islands threatened by cyclones, storm surge and sea level rise



Layers of vulnerabilities

- With 23% of world population, South Asia produces only 1.3% of world income
- 40% of world poor (500 million) live in South Asia
- Half of malnourished children belong to South Asia
- 46% of world illiterates also belong to South Asia
- South Asia has the lowest sex ratio reflecting deeply rooted gender discrimination in society
- 1.4 billion people of South Asia is still growing at more than 2% per annum
- Unplanned urban areas growing at faster rate of 4.5% per annum creating further layer of urban vulnerabilities

Fatalism

- Disasters integral part of living in South Asia
- Rapid disasters like earthquake, cyclone, flood, landslide, avalanche take heavy toll of life
- Slow onset disasters like drought, epidemics, infant and maternal mortality take heavier toll
- Communities have learnt to cope with disasters, but more often they are resigned to their fate -
- Typically disasters are perceived as '*Angers of God*' or '*Wrath of Nature*'

Recent mega disasters in South Asia

Country	Disaster	Deaths	People affected
Bangladesh	Cyclone 1970	300,000	20 million
Bangladesh	Cyclone 1991	138,000	15 million
India	Earthquake 1993	9475	1 million
India	Cyclone 1999	10086	15 million
India	Earthquake 2001	13805	1.8 million
India	Tsunami 2004	12405	3.5 million
Pakistan	Earthquake 2005	83,000	5 million
Afghanistan	Drought 2000	712	2.5 million
Sri Lanka	Tsunami 2004	35,399	1 million

Impact of disasters

- Estimated GDP loss range between 2 to 20% and revenue loss between 12 to 66%
- Erodes hard earned gains of development
- Divert scarce resources to relief and rehabilitation
- Aggravates poverty and causes distress to more vulnerable groups - women, children, aged and disabled
- Affects fragile eco-system of the region

System exposed....

- No scientific hazard- risk-vulnerability mapping
- Inadequate early warning system
- Absence of techno-legal regime for safe building
- Poor community awareness and preparedness
- Environmental degradation precipitating disasters
- Development projects creating new disasters
- Primitive search and rescue system for disasters
- Poor disaster communication system
- Inadequate relief management
- In short, entire disaster management system was unprofessional and amateurish

Improving systems.....

- Disasters provided opportunities to learn and improve
- **Bangladesh** developed community based early warning, evacuation and shelter
- **India** has developed a holistic system of disaster management covering pre and post disaster phases
- **Pakistan** enacted its law creating National Disaster Management Commission
- **Sri Lanka** developed national policy and legislation
- **Afghanistan, Nepal, Bhutan and Maldives** are in the process of developing their legal and institutional framework for disaster management

Five Lessons Learnt in Recovery

1. It is possible to reduce loss of life and property through preparedness
2. Preparedness is necessary at every level – national, provincial, local and community
3. Preparedness is necessary in every sector
4. Pre-Disaster Recovery Planning to ensure better coordination among various sectors in different levels
5. Such planning needs to be formalized in the shape of manuals and Standard Operating Procedures so that there is no confusion during and after disasters

Five principles of recovery

1. **Holistic** - cover housing, infrastructure, education, livelihood, health, psycho-social care etc.
2. **Long term** - provide livelihood support including development of skill, provisioning of credit and marketing support etc
3. **'Build back better'** - ensure that the houses and infrastructure constructed after disasters withstand the hazards and risks of nature and the hazards do not become disasters again
4. **Sustainable** - integrate environmental issues, such regeneration of mangroves, conservation of water,
5. **Inclusive** - care for poor and vulnerable - women, children, aged, physically and mentally challenged people

Recovery framework



Capacity building

- Capacity building is most critical for disaster preparedness and pre-disaster planning
- Huge gaps in capacity in South Asia
- Sustained efforts required for capacity development
- Increased regional cooperation necessary
- A few significant steps have been taken in the recent past to enhance regional cooperation in South Asia

SAARC Meteorological Research Centre, Dhaka

- Undertaking research on weather predication, monsoon and other weather phenomena;
- Compiling climatological information required for weather forecasting and agricultural activities;
- Monitoring special weather conditions;
- Developing a networking system with the member countries to obtain data and to provide processed information to the members

SAARC Coastal Zone Management Centre, Male

- Collect, compile and disseminate information through networking among the Member States;
- Assess and standardize planning methodologies for Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM);
- Provide support for the promotion and development of ICZM concepts, methodologies and planning tools;
- Assist in institutional strengthening and human resources development for capacity building in ICZM; and
- Conduct and coordinate research in the field of coastal zone management and facilitate technology transfer

SAARC Comprehensive Framework on Disaster Management

- Establish and strengthen regional disaster management system to reduce risks and to improve response and recovery
- Share best practices and lessons learnt from disaster risk reduction efforts at national levels
- Establish a regional system to develop and implement regional programs and projects for early warning
- Establish a regional system of exchanging information on prevention, preparedness and management of disasters
- Create a regional response mechanism dedicated to disaster preparedness, emergency relief and rehabilitation and
- Create a regional mechanism to facilitate monitoring and evaluation of achievements towards goals and strategies

SAARC Disaster Management Centre

Vision: “ to be a vibrant centre of excellence for knowledge, research and capacity development on disaster management”

Mission: “ to serve the Member Countries by providing policy advice and facilitating capacity development services including strategic learning, research, training, system development and exchange of information for effective disaster risk reduction.”

Functions

- collect, compile, document and disseminate data, information, case studies and good practices on every aspect of disaster management in the Member Countries;
- analyze information and undertake research on different aspects of disaster management;
- develop educational materials and conduct academic and professional courses on disaster management;
- organize training programmes for various stakeholders on disaster management in the Member Countries;

- Develop training modules and conduct ToT programmes and simulation exercises;
- Provide assistance in the formulation of policies, strategies and framework by the Member Countries
- Organize workshops, conferences, seminars, lectures etc on various aspects of disaster management in the Member Countries;
- Undertake publication of journals, research papers and books and maintain online resource centers in furtherance of the aforesaid objects.

Strategies

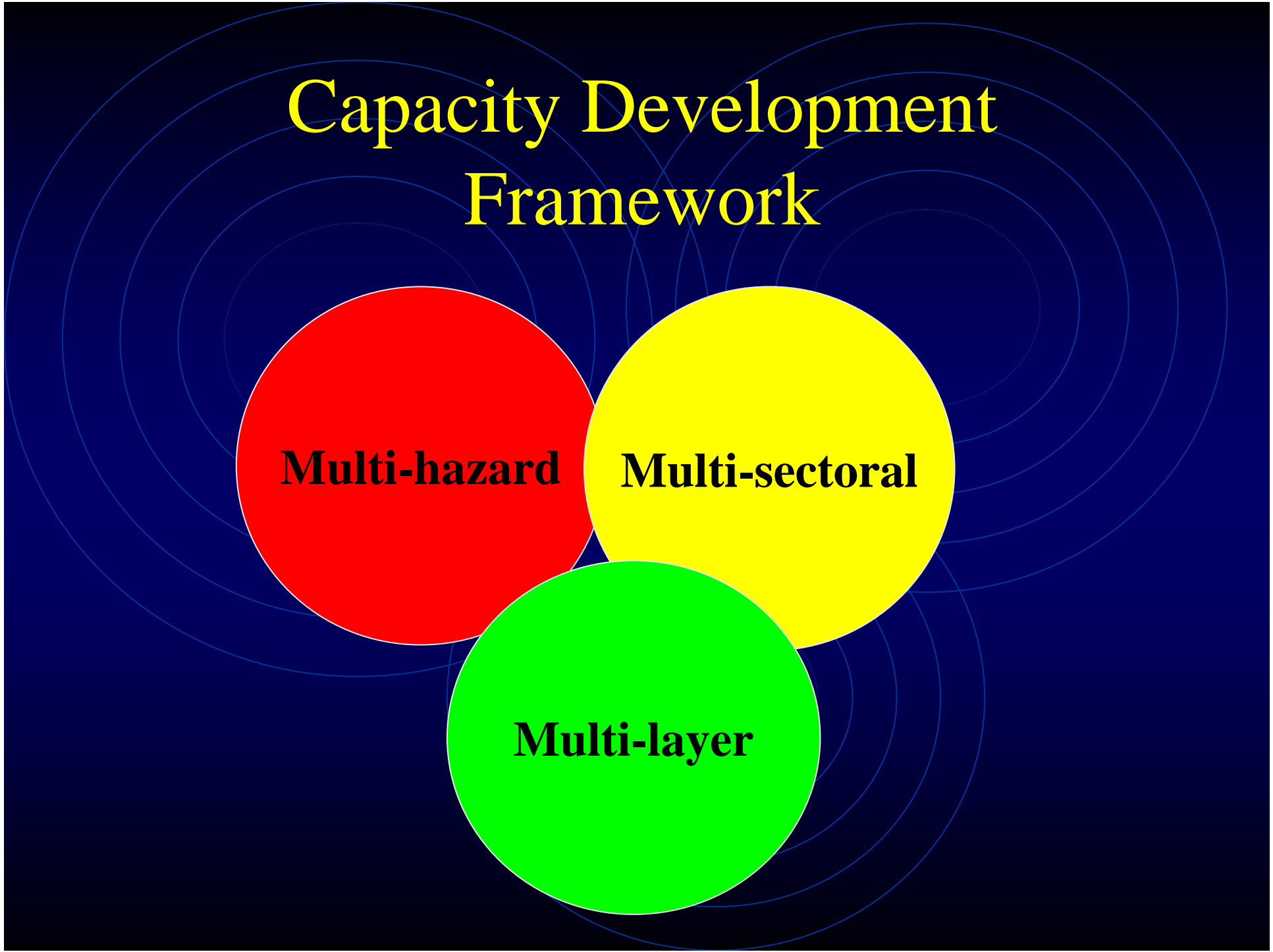
- Network with national focal points and with the concerned regional and international bodies;
- Assist national focal points to develop appropriate models for networking with their research, training and other institutions ;
- Develop a network of networking institutions to facilitate quick acquisition, storage, retrieval and dissemination of information, data and knowledge on disaster management including linkages with approved real-time data providers ;
- Use information and communication technologies to develop a virtual resource centre for disaster management in South Asia.

Capacity Development Framework

Multi-hazard

Multi-sectoral

Multi-layer



Steps taken so far

- All the national governments have taken significant steps for training and capacity building on disaster management
- A template for conducting Training Need Analysis in South Asia has been developed
- A programme and budget for regional training programmes and workshops have been approved

Synergy with IRP

- SAARC Disaster Management Centre to be closely associated with implementation of regional capacity building for Earthquake Risk Reduction Project in South Asia
- The project would be implemented in collaboration with IRP-UNDP
- Separately a JICA funded project on South Asia Disaster Risk Reduction has recently been approved. The details are under consideration.



Thank you