

# Disaster Risk Reduction

## South Asia Regional Framework

### **Building Safer Communities Logo**

This logo was created for the Red Cross Red Crescent's Building Safer Communities initiative in South Asia. It is representative of the eight countries in the region, namely Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka, which are covered by the programme. The logo shows that amidst diversity, communities in South Asia region work hand-in-hand, with one common objective – disaster risk reduction.



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# Foreword

## (Awaited)

# Table of Contents

Purpose and scope	1
Links to global DRR conventions	1
<b>Background</b>	3
Regional context	3
What is Disaster Risk Reduction?	6
<b>Disaster Risk Reduction Framework</b>	9
Strategic Priorities	10
Enabling Priorities	11
Approach	12
Expected Results	15
Framework Implementation	15
IFRC Role	15
<b>Annex 1:</b> Glossary	17
<b>Annex 2:</b> National Society step-by-step considerations before undertaking Community Based DRR	19

## Purpose and scope

The National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies in South Asia, supported by the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), have been working towards ‘Building Safer Communities’ since 2007. The interventions under this approach aim to support communities increase their resilience and reduce their vulnerability to disaster risk through the promotion of methodologies, materials and tools for disaster risk reduction (DRR). The purpose of this document is to set a framework for disaster risk reduction in the region that will guide and support National Societies in their ongoing efforts to improve the lives of vulnerable communities.

This framework will articulate a systematic and consistent overarching approach to disaster risk reduction that builds upon the investment made to date by the National Societies in South Asia but that importantly allows country-specific flexibility when it comes to implementing activities in the local context. It also reinforces the agreed strategic priorities in disaster risk reduction. It is intended that the framework will provide space for the many Partner National Societies working in disaster risk reduction in support of South Asian National Societies to continue with their work in a coherent manner.

A regional framework has been developed in recognition of the multiple shared characteristics, and interconnectedness, of disaster risk across South Asia. Individual National Societies may themselves choose to develop a country-specific framework that focuses on implementing selected components of the regional one, but in an aligned manner. The regional framework will promote consistency in approach and understanding while maximising the resources of the IFRC to support National Societies, both at an individual as well as regional level.

## Links to Global DRR Conventions

This framework is firmly in line with the IFRC’s Framework for Community Safety and Resilience (as developed by the Global Alliance for Disaster Risk Reduction) which seeks to “establish a foundation on which all Red Cross Red Crescent programmes and projects in disaster risk reduction and all actions which contribute to the building of safe and resilient communities can be built, developed and sustained”.

It is also an expression of the commitment of the National Societies in South Asia to deliver on ‘Strategy 2020’ aim 2 - “to enable healthy and safe living” by strengthening community resilience by supporting communities to enjoy better health; reduce disaster risk and tackle climate change. In particular, it will reduce exposure and vulnerability to natural and human-made disasters and fits well with the resolve “to do more, do it better and reach further”.

Finally, it further extends the IFRC support for the Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA) that provides a global blueprint for disaster risk reduction efforts through seeking the “substantial reduction of disaster losses; in lives and in the social, economic and environmental assets of communities and countries”.





# 1. Background

Every year, thousands of staff and volunteers from the Red Cross Red Crescent National Societies in South Asia reach people and communities affected by disasters, to assist them. Every year, the Red Cross Red Crescent National Societies of South Asia, train their staff and volunteers to raise their capacities so that they can respond yet better and more efficiently. The same National Societies have recognised that responding to an increasing number of disasters is not on its own the solution to the problems caused by disasters. While, given the Red Cross Red Crescent strengths and experience in responding to disasters, it is important that the opportunity to integrate DRR into humanitarian response and disaster recovery is taken, more than that effective disaster preparedness and disaster risk reduction is needed to reduce the impact of the disasters that come and should equally be seen as part of the solution.

The National Societies in South Asia have an important role to play in disaster risk reduction in the region. The National Societies in South Asia combine a presence and reach across the remotest and the most vulnerable areas in the region through their branches and volunteer base with decades of experience in responding to disasters at a local, national and regional level. Many of the National Societies in the region have lead the way in incorporating DRR initiatives into their programming across the last decade.

A Disaster Management review was conducted in 2008 to outline DRR approaches; map disaster preparedness and DRR interventions in national societies and NGOs /INGOs; and identify potential opportunities in the South Asia Region. The review also provided recommendations for the development of a DRR framework. During 2010 another DRR mapping exercise was taken up by the RCRC national societies in the region to help them recognise their capacities and status on the journey towards DRR. This framework is the culmination of these activities, conducted in support of the global initiatives described above, and finalised through a process of comment sharing by the NS and PNS active in DRR in the region and the work of the DMWG 8<sup>th</sup> meeting in Sri Lanka (November, 2010).

## Regional Context

South Asia is a disaster-ravished region. It has experienced its share of devastating earthquakes and it also accounts for the largest non-polar glacial deposits melting due to effects of global warming. Heavy rainfall and high silt load on water bodies are the bane of South Asia, causing recurrent flooding over large areas, while, on the other hand, an increasing mass of area faces droughts as ground

### Layers of Vulnerabilities in South Asia (SA)

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

Box 1: (source: SAARC DMC)



water levels deplete and rainfall gets either scanty or erratic. Picture imperfect gets further grim in view of the region's 12,000 kilometres-long coastline and hundreds of islands – all exposed to the threat of tsunamis, cyclones, storm surge and sea level rise.

The South Asian region has always had an exceptional level of burden caused by tuberculosis, HIV/AIDS, diarrhoeal diseases, malaria, dengue and chikungunya. The population in this region are further rendered vulnerable because of a tendency for poor health infrastructure, which translates into poor immunization coverage, high maternal mortality and infant mortality rates. In addition, the issues like social inclusion and other underlying factors make the communities more vulnerable.

Unplanned urbanization, galloping population growth and coastal submergence due to glacial melting and desertification in South Asia arising from climate change are common to all the countries of the region – a commonality matched by the presence of the Red Cross Red Crescent National Societies in all these countries. These factors make the need for regional cooperation even more relevant.

The region has more than its share of population discords, antagonisms and intolerance evidenced by violence and unrest. In many cases, the prevailing tensions have meant reduced humanitarian space and development agencies struggle to implement programmes. Large parts of the region are experiencing some form of armed conflicts and military spending tops the budgets of most of the governments in the region.





South Asia has the highest density of poverty in the world. With an estimated 600 million people living below the poverty line, even small climate shocks can cause irreversible losses and add to the large number of destitute. Projections in temperature rise for the 21<sup>st</sup> century range from 2 to 4 degrees celsius, which would have catastrophic consequences. According to an Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report, island states such as the Maldives will suffer major storm surges and rising sea level could cause many of the islands to disappear. Ecosystems will change. Growing numbers of people in the poorest countries will suffer from malnutrition and from diarrhoeal, cardio-respiratory and infectious diseases. Globally, up to 30 per cent of species will be at increasing risk of extinction<sup>1</sup>.

The IPCC 4<sup>th</sup> Assessment Report details some of the expected impacts of CC on SA, summarised below:

- Warming above the global mean, with fewer cold days
- Increase in frequency of intense precipitation (leading to more floods, landslides, and mud flows)
- Decrease in number of rainy days

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<sup>1</sup> Facts and figures for Cancún Climate Change Conference; Advocacy toolkit; International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

- Regional variation in precipitation trends (e.g. increasing in Bangladesh, decreasing in coastal Pakistan)
- Increasing intensity of tropical cyclones and other extreme weather events
- Extended duration of heat-waves
- Increased water scarcity
- Melting mountain glaciers (affecting river flows, leading to more wet-season flooding and dry-season scarcity, affecting agricultural, energy and industrial sectors).

Climate-related risks are likely to intensify in the years to come. Building resilience through prevention and preparedness will be essential in facing future climate-change related risks and disasters.

## What is Disaster Risk Reduction?

Disaster Risk Reduction is not one action or one project but an approach. It includes a whole range of actions that aim to build a safer world. These actions are prioritised in the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015: Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities (Hyogo Framework) and are collectively known as Disaster Risk Reduction. Disaster risk reduction is about local civil society, communities, households and individuals reducing their vulnerability and strengthening their capacity to anticipate, cope with, resist and recover from natural hazards.

UNISDR defines disaster risk reduction as “the conceptual framework of elements considered with the possibilities to minimise vulnerabilities and disaster risks throughout a society, to avoid (prevention) or to limit (mitigation and preparedness) the adverse impacts of hazards, within the broad context of sustainable development”.

To understand that DRR is an approach rather than one action or programme, it is useful to compare it to the aim of raising a child. To raise a child many key activities are involved, such as feeding, education, love, shelter, play, health care, attention, environment and culture, etc. All these activities and more are required to achieve the aim of raising a happy, healthy child – we call these entire activities child rising. Disaster risk reduction is also an approach-to build a safer world. To do this many different activities are required, such as those aiming at preparedness, prevention and mitigation. All these activities and more are required to achieve the aim of reducing disaster risk and building a safer world – we call this combination of activities disaster risk reduction.

A disaster risk reduction focus means that we actively look for opportunities to address risks and reduce vulnerability. In recovery activities we must do more than go back to the situation that existed before a disaster. Reducing disaster risk is not a separate sector but requires looking at all activities – house reconstruction, water



and sanitation and livelihood support with possible hazards in mind. For example, site planning and construction of houses must be done so that they can withstand flooding, earthquakes and other recurring hazards. Public education and advocacy about hazards should be carried out simultaneously while livelihood support helps diversify incomes and reduce risk.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, Responding to the Asia earthquake and tsunamis Regional strategy 2, 2006-2010,pg14





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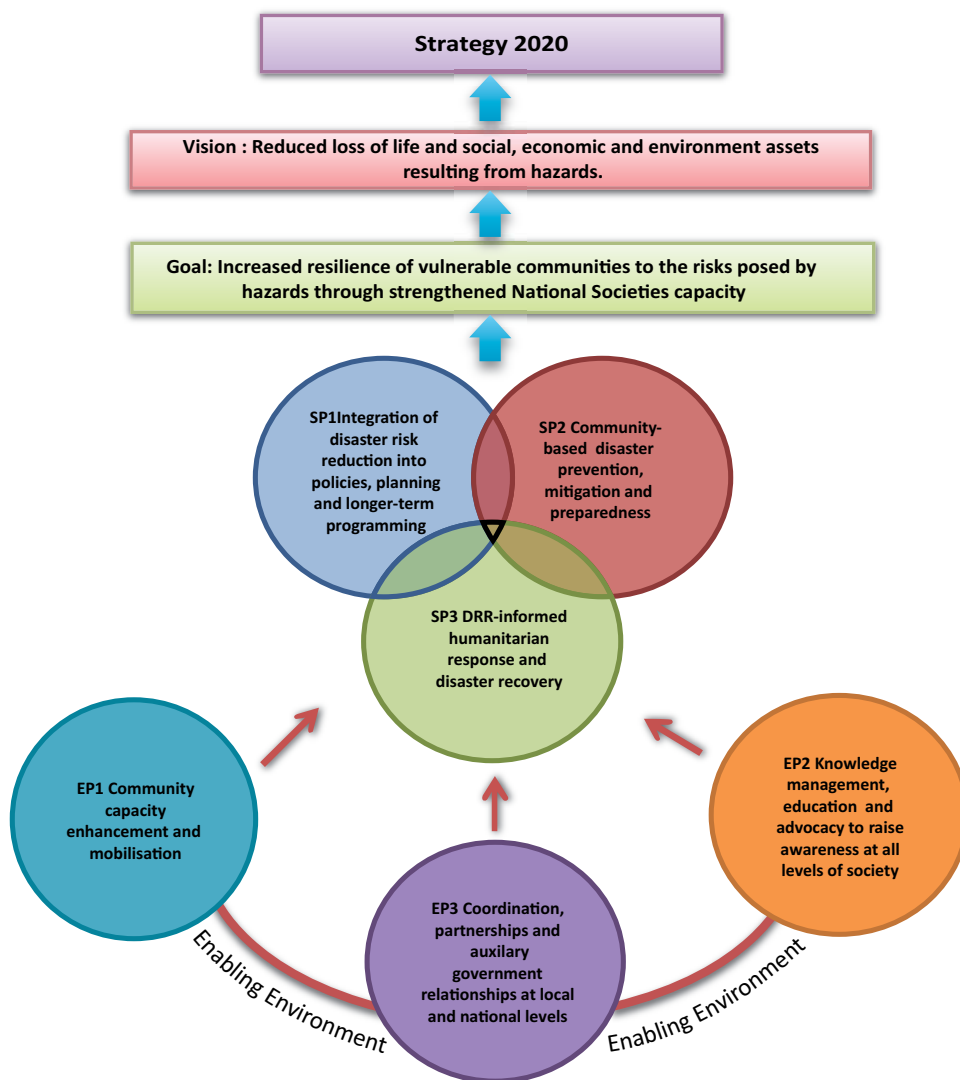
## 2. Disaster Risk Reduction Framework

The DRR Framework directly contributes to the achievement of ‘Strategy 2020’ aim 2 - “to enable healthy and safe living” with the following vision and goal:

**Vision:** Reduced loss of life and social, economic and environmental assets resulting from hazards.

**Goal:** Increased resilience of vulnerable communities to the risks posed by hazards through strengthened National Societies capacity.

The framework identifies key strategic priorities (SPs) and key enabling priorities (EPs) and underpins all of these with defined critical characteristics. Strategic priorities define what we seek to do. Enabling priorities outline what we need to put in place to achieve the strategic priorities.







## Strategic Priorities

The following are in line with the strategic priorities laid out in the International Federation's global framework for community safety and resilience. Also indicated is how they contribute to the Hyogo Framework for action.

### 1. Integration of disaster risk reduction into policies, planning and longer-term programming (HFA 1)

National Societies may have ongoing sector-based programmes in, for example, health and care, water and sanitation and shelter. These sectors are important elements of effective community-based DRR programmes. With good coordination these sector-based policies, planning and programming contributions and guidance should work towards DRR objectives and the building of community safety and resilience.

### 2. Community-based disaster prevention, mitigation and preparedness (HFA 2 and 4)

Support to community safety and resilience will include mitigation, prevention and adaptation projects targeted towards the reduction of risks from specific hazards shaped by the national and local socio-economic, environmental and political contexts. Activities will grow from a vulnerability and capacity assessment (VCA) or from other assessment processes that may help communities to identify the risks that they have to face. Early warning will be built for the short-term and predictive capacity in the medium to long-term particularly in the context of climate change.

### **3. DRR-informed humanitarian response and disaster recovery (HFA 1 and 5)**

The provision of relief and the satisfaction of immediate needs following a disaster, as well as follow-on recovery activities aimed at getting communities back on their feet, are undertaken in a way that works towards meeting longer-term risk reduction objectives. It is understood that humanitarian response to disaster and recovery following a disaster is the absolute imperative of National Societies. However, this is not an end in itself but a means to an end, with increased safety and resilience and decreased vulnerability as a consequence, implying a diminishing need to respond to disasters in the future.

## **Enabling Priorities**

Taken together the enabling priorities will contribute towards the delivery of all three of the strategic priorities.

### **1. Community capacity enhancement and mobilisation (HFA 1)**

A community-focused approach requires engaging with communities to support their own development of capacity. These activities will enable them to organize and address specific disaster risks.

### **2. Knowledge management, education and advocacy to raise awareness at all levels of society, national society and government (HFA 3)**

Activities across the spectrum of Red Cross Red Crescent work that aim to build a greater consciousness of the risk factors faced by communities and the ways in which these can be addressed within a range of different programmes. Advocacy, education and awareness-raising that is based on the gaining and sharing of experience-based knowledge can be aimed at communities, local and national governments, other organizations at different levels, the private sector and, of course, the staff and volunteers of the National Societies themselves.

### **3. Coordination, partnerships and auxiliary government relationships at local and national levels (HFA 1)**

It is important to recognize that the Red Cross Red Crescent alone cannot achieve the building of community safety and resilience in the face of disaster risk. We can certainly make our contribution but the systematic and ongoing building of safety and resilience can only be built upon strong working partnerships between all stakeholders – from the communities themselves, to local and national governments, governmental and nongovernmental organizations and the private sector. One of the unique positions of the Red Cross Red Crescent is its auxiliary relationship with governments. This relationship is important in the context of ensuring increasingly that government at all levels is focused on strengthening community safety and resilience in the face of disaster risk and that this is reflected within national laws, policies, strategies and programmes.

## Approach

The following characteristics of the framework approach are intended to guide how the strategic priorities are delivered on:

**Community engaged and focussed:** The disaster risk reduction approach to ‘building safer communities’ that is outlined in this framework is one that seeks to place the vulnerable community at the heart of National Society programming in this area. All of the activities within the framework must contribute to building resilient communities (see box 2 for characteristics of a disaster resilient community) and therefore community engagement by NS staff and volunteers is critical for success. Supporting the building of capacity and ownership at the community

### Safer and Resilient Communities

can be identified as having the following three main characteristics:

- They are aware of and understand the risks to their safety – both those resulting from everyday accidents and emergencies and those from disasters, they can assess and monitor these risks and know what needs to be done to minimize losses and damage when emergencies/ disasters occur.
- They are organized and trained to exercise clearly defined disaster preparedness and risk reduction functions. These community-based structures enable them to cope with both everyday accidents/ emergencies and disasters, act on their own as “first responders” and to recover more swiftly and sustainably.
- They are able to use their own capacities and skills to protect themselves and reduce vulnerability but they also have links with other stakeholders that can be called upon when community-based experience, action and resources alone are not sufficient.

Safe and resilient communities do not exist in a vacuum. Much of the long-term success depends on an environment that is supportive of community-based risk reduction in terms of institutions, policies, regulations, as well as development planning and disaster response that are in line with risk reduction objectives.

Box 2 - IFRC: A framework for community safety and resilience

level requires an organisational development mindset to achieve sustainability. A focus on community resilience means putting greater emphasis on what communities can do for themselves and how to strengthen their capacities, rather than only concentrating on their vulnerability to disasters or on their needs during an emergency.

The approach signals an intention to work with communities to change the perception of the Red Cross Red Crescent from being purely a service provider to incorporate an enabling role supporting communities to reduce their disaster risk. Vulnerability and Capacity Analysis (VCA) tools will be utilised as part of the process of community engagement, though National Societies will need to carefully manage communities’ expectations while being prepared to engage on the issues identified by communities as important to them. Therefore, the DRR approach includes a consideration of everyday hazards alongside major disasters, an approach that by implication incorporates health-related issues. Any mitigation or prevention projects will need to be firmly integrated within the approach and should be easily replicable across the areas of NS engagement with communities in order to achieve a wider impact of DRR support.

**Sustainable:** By engaging with communities from a development perspective sustainability is improved. To achieve the desired impact all DRR interventions must be able, after a certain period of time, to sustain themselves with minimal or no ongoing National Society support. By mobilizing community resources and strengthening community organization preparations for exit are made from the beginning and limit the creation of dependency. Resilience is nurtured by helping communities to identify and link up with other sources of support including first

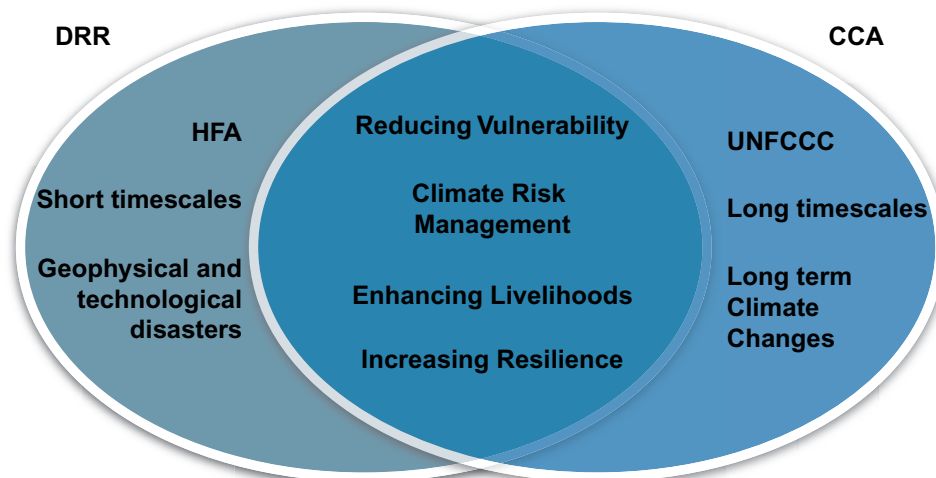
and foremost local authorities. However, building this type of capacity needs time. An exit is made from a community when it is clear that they can manage their risk reduction processes.

**Integrated Programming:** With this focus by National Society branches, staff and volunteers on community engagement to increase resilience, an integrated programming approach naturally emerges regardless of whether programmes are labelled disaster management, health, food security or disaster risk reduction. All programming and interventions that the National Societies undertake should have community risk reduction built in.

**Targeting vulnerable communities:** Individual National Societies will decide who the vulnerable communities they work alongside should be. For some NS these will be defined by types of community rather than by geographical areas (e.g. around vulnerable livelihood groupings or socially excluded minorities). Consistent with the cross cutting commitments of the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement a **social and gender inclusion** focus should be promoted in addressing vulnerabilities and promoting overall community resilience, recognising that often the most vulnerable groupings coincides with issues of implicit and explicit exclusion. Increasingly urban communities will be included, necessitating the adaptation of DRR methodologies to interconnect with complex urban challenges. Regardless of vulnerable community choice, these will be linked to disaster hotspots in order to demonstrate the value of impact.

**Climate change adaptation:** In the face of increasing climate change challenges DRR programming will need to integrate with this cross cutting issue. The diagram (Fig.1) shows how climate change adaptation and DRR have strong linkages and overlap, though the timescales differ and DRR considers distinct and specific hazards. The results of climate change are most keenly felt at the community level which only serves to reinforce the need for community-based

Fig.1- Draft DRR and Climate Change Adaptation Linkage - RCRC CCA-CBDR framework



disaster risk reduction. Adaptation will take place through the consideration of the potential for climate change to alter or increase the risks faced by a community; the facilitating of external predictive knowledge being made accessible to communities where applicable; enhancing early warning systems through climate prediction and tracking technology; and integrating climate change into training, plans and strategies. Indeed disaster risk reduction, disaster preparedness and increased disaster response should be confirmed and embedded as key elements of national climate change adaptation strategies. See DRR And Climate Change Adaptation - A Global View from the Climate Change Conference (Advocacy Toolkit) for more information.

**Indigenous Knowledge:** Red Cross Red Crescent programming in disaster risk reduction will seek to build on, where possible, local indigenous knowledge and promote the sharing of such knowledge.

**Flexibility:** It is recognised that National Societies have moved at different speeds in addressing different aspects of the DRR agenda and therefore they need to map their own individual priorities, strengths and capacity for community-based disaster risk reduction in order to guide where in the range of DRR oriented action they are at and where they are moving to. See Annex 2 for a set of questions that can help guide a National Society in determining where they are at and what they are ready for.

The box below highlights some of the practical differences between disaster preparedness, community-based disaster preparedness and community-based disaster risk reduction. The 'DRR continuum' is important to consider so that it is understood what full community-based disaster risk reduction looks like.

Organisational Preparedness for disaster response	Community-based Disaster Preparedness (for natural disasters)	Community-based DRR - an integrated approach to reduce vulnerabilities and empower communities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Stock Piling</li> <li>■ Training of disaster response teams.</li> <li>■ Training of volunteers on First Aid / Search and Rescue</li> <li>■ Training on health risk assessment</li> <li>■ Contingency Plans</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Awareness Generation activities in communities on natural disasters</li> <li>■ Training of communities on Dos and Don'ts and preparedness for disasters</li> <li>■ Hazard focused assessments for planning interventions</li> <li>■ Construction of raised platforms/ raised tube wells, cyclone shelters in the communities by organisation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Integrated and participatory assessments (VCA) for issues and vulnerabilities in communities and community developed plans for sustainable development.</li> <li>■ Community trained on First Aid / Search and Rescue and has kits and plan for its maintenance.</li> <li>■ Community plans to establish a system of local fund raising and stock piling facilitated by organisation.</li> <li>■ Formation of Community organisations</li> </ul>

Box 3 – DRR Continuum



## Expected Results

While specific results and outcomes will depend on the design of implementation activities under this framework, it is expected that the DRR framework will facilitate the delivery of the following results:

- Documented evidence of increased resilience in target communities
- Disaster risk reduction is widely and commonly understood at all levels, both staff and volunteers, in NS; high-risk branches and core programme areas are clear about their role in DRR and increasingly exercise this role
- Response and recovery operations contribute to community resilience

## Framework Implementation

It is recognised that many National Societies have already made significant strides to implementation. Where not already done it is up to the individual National Society to work through a process to develop a specific implementation plan for their country context. Where assistance is needed the IFRC regional and country delegations, together with interested PNS, stand ready to support this process so that there is a consistent quality in the DRR initiatives being taken up. At a minimum country level plans need to be aimed at NS staff and volunteers so that they are clear about what DRR is and how to include this approach in their work.

## IFRC Role

The IFRC Secretariat in regards to disaster risk reduction in the region has a coordination role at regional and national levels, to bring NS partners (both HNSs and PNSs) together to define realistic approaches to DRR and to maintain shared dialogue as progress is made in achieving the goals of the framework. In so doing it seeks to facilitate consensus. It will also seek to coordinate the participation of National Societies in regional and national DRR with like-minded organisations and to share with all stakeholders the learning that emerges. Where, and if needed, it will provide technical support to individual NS and their branches, preferably in partnerships with others. It will additionally seek to represent the NS at a global and regional level while strengthening linkages with other regional bodies – e.g. the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC).

नेपाल रेडक्रस सोसाइटी

Danish Red Cross

HUMANITARIAN AID



काभ्रे जिल्ला शाखा

# सपनेश्वर प्रक्षेप जोखिम न्यूनीकरण अभियान

श्यामपाटी-६, काभ्रे

कृति आर्ट वर्कशاپ



# Annex 1

## Glossary<sup>3</sup>

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**Adaptation:** This includes initiatives and measures to reduce the vulnerability of natural and human systems against actual or expected climate change effects. Various types of adaptation exist, e.g. anticipatory and reactive, private and public, and autonomous and planned. Examples are raising river or coastal dikes, the substitution of more temperature-shock resistant plants for sensitive crops.

**Advocacy:** This is persuading other people or groups to act differently, to change in some way their policy or approach to a particular humanitarian issue. It can be a form of communication aimed at influencing decision-making for the resolution of a problem; a set of strategies that aim to influence, persuade, lobby, defend, inform, motivate, move to action and attract attention to an issue; a way of taking communities' voices to a different level of decision making. The meaning of the word advocacy is not always clear. Different organizations have different definitions and styles of advocacy. Some consider advocacy to be strictly about changing and influencing government policy while others use the term more broadly to include awareness raising activities. Common themes in different definitions of advocacy conclude that it is:

- A form of communication aimed at influencing decision-making for the resolution of a problem
- A set of strategies that aim to influence, persuade, lobby, defend, inform, motivate, move to action and attract attention to an issue
- A way of taking communities' voices to a different level of decision making

**Community Based Disaster Preparedness:** An approach involving vulnerability and capacity assessments resulting in community disaster preparedness plans, setting of early warning systems, awareness generation, education, training programmes on First Aid, Search and Rescue and carrying mock drills. It is focused on disasters and does not include other hazards like health hazards. The concept of sustainable development is not included.

**Disaster management:** The organization and management of resources and responsibilities to deal with humanitarian aspects of emergencies to lessen their impact.

**Disaster preparedness:** The readiness of communities and institutions to predict, and where possible, prevent disasters, reduce their impact as well as respond to and cope with their consequences.

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<sup>3</sup> Many definitions draw on a glossary of terminology at [www.unisdr.org/eng/terminology/terminology-2009-eng.html](http://www.unisdr.org/eng/terminology/terminology-2009-eng.html)



**Disaster prevention:** Activities taken to avoid the impact of natural and man-made hazards.

**Disaster relief:** The provision of assistance during or immediately after a disaster to preserve life and provide basic subsistence needs.

**Disaster risk reduction:** the conceptual framework of elements considered with the possibilities to minimise vulnerabilities and disaster risks throughout a society, to avoid (prevention) or to limit (mitigation and preparedness) the adverse impacts of hazards, within the broad context of sustainable development.

**Disaster recovery:** Recovery activities are the decisions and actions taken after a disaster with a view to restoring or improving the pre-disaster living conditions of the stricken community, while encouraging and facilitating necessary adjustments to reduce disaster risk. Recovery (rehabilitation and reconstruction) affords an opportunity to develop and apply disaster risk reduction measures.

**Disaster response:** Provision of relief and recovery assistance to meet the needs of those people affected.

**Disaster risk reduction practitioner:** Anyone who works to reduce the risks of disasters.

**Early warning:** Timely information enabling people to take steps to reduce impact of hazards.

**Risk:** The probability of harmful consequences, or expected losses (deaths, injuries, property, livelihoods, economic activity disrupted or environment damaged) resulting from interactions between natural or human-induced hazards and vulnerable conditions.

**Vulnerability:** The conditions determined by physical, social, economic and environmental factors or processes that increase the susceptibility of a community to the impact of hazards.

**Vulnerability and capacity assessment:** Collecting, analysing and systematizing information on a given community's vulnerability to hazards in a structured and meaningful way. This information is then used to diagnose the key risks and existing capacities of the community, ultimately leading to activities aimed at reducing people's vulnerability to potential disasters and increasing their capacity to survive them and resume their lives.

## Annex 2

### National Society step-by-step considerations before undertaking Community Based DRR<sup>4</sup>:

National Society consideration	Comment
Does the NS have a clearly defined, and publicly known, community level (Disaster) Risk Reduction role in-country, or is there one which can be developed over time?	This must be a starting point for identifying where an NS can best add value, but it is a role which must be validated over time by evidence that NS support has built sustainable resilience at community level
Is it appropriate, and realistic for the NS to move beyond a core, mandated role in preparedness for response?	We should ensure that any community level DRR work does not undermine the core, mandated role expected of us.
How does the NS ensure its core mandate around preparedness for response is maintained (and strengthened) through community level risk reduction work?	There are ways of strengthening organisational preparedness work by supporting and empowering vulnerable communities. These links need to be defined in NS plans/policies/practice
Does the NS have transparent, realistic criteria to decide where it will work and what type of community it will work with?	Without this, community selection becomes problematic, and can lead the NS open to allegations of bias and inconsistency. How it defines community is also important, in both urban and rural contexts
Will the NS target communities based on single risks, or multi-hazards, and will it look only at natural disasters, or will it also look at broader risks, e.g. health, food insecurity, livelihoods etc?	This may vary from branch to branch, depending on capacity, but the narrower the range of sectors/interventions, the lighter the assessment process needs to be and the tighter the targeting to avoid raising expectations of community. Opportunities to link in with others should also be explored.
Does the NS's DRR approach draw only on DM expertise in the NS, or are there clear, realistic ways by which other sectoral capacities, e.g. health, food security, are accessed for community level DRR work?	This can mean the difference between a CBDRP, single hazard risk reduction approach or a broader Risk Reduction approach based on a multi-hazard assessment.
What is a realistic number of communities for the NS to target on an annual basis, and does it adopt an approach of undertaking a lot of sectoral activities in a few communities, or only a few (e.g. basic CBDRP) in a large number of communities?	This is a central question for NS to ask and again will influence the type of assessment undertaken, the nature of community engagement, and the type of support provided.
How long is the NS willing and able to work with the community?	If it is significantly less than 3 years, again, the type of assessment, community engagement approach and support to be provided will likely be narrower than a longer-term engagement.
Will the NS be providing a set package of support to communities, or is there flexibility within its parameters to be responsive to community needs?	If it is a set package, the type of assessment should not be overly intensive as support is largely pre-determined, and the level of community empowerment and mobilisation will be limited and likely shaped more by a standard, RC unit type approach.

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<sup>4</sup> Annexure of the Final report – BRCS, DRR Workshop, Darjeeling, held from 1<sup>st</sup> to 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2010.



National Society consideration	Comment
Has the NS established operational parameters—establishing the support it can/cannot provide to communities (these will vary from NS to NS, and branch to branch, but must be based on existing (or buildable) capacity)?	This should pull together NS consideration of all the above parameters and should form the basis of the DRR strategy. It can start as quite a limited approach, but we should encourage efforts to grow and develop a more community centred/led approach over time.
Will the NS target the community only as a whole group, or will it also work to reach the most at risk, and potentially excluded, groups within the community?	Is there capacity and skill to move beyond the DRR group/unit within a programme timeframe to meaningfully reach out to and support the most vulnerable households/groups in the community. It should not be assumed that this will happen as a result of an initial VCA, and setting up a community group. Again, it is important that if a lot of information is to be gathered on socio-economic inclusion/exclusion, then it is acted upon.
Is the NS confident that what it can offer, in terms of support, will reach those most vulnerable within the community to the identified risk(s) and address their basic needs?	Again, another important question to be answered. The process of empowerment, and how far the NS is able to do this needs to be answered before communities are engaged and expectations raised. The NS also needs to be sure that, on balance, its support is of value to the community, and might not distract precious community time and capacity away from more urgent development priorities. This is one reason why it is better to build on and enhance existing community capacity, as long as it is impartial and independent.
Does the NS have the skills and capacities to identify what the most vulnerable in the targeted communities need and can it respond to these needs?	This relates to the skills/experience of its own staff, and possible reliance on volunteers who may/may not have the skills to understand social inclusion/exclusion and adopt a facilitative, non-power, gender sensitive role when engaging with community. An honest assessment of the skills to do this is needed before communities are engaged.
Does the NS respond to community identified risks by doing the work itself (through RC services and RC units) and can it sustain this support after programme funding ends?	Even if the NS is clear of the activities to be undertaken at community level, has it planned for what happens after the project funding ceases and how this will be maintained. Is the planned outcome mainly RC structure or sustainable community resilience?
Or does the NS build on existing community CBO capacity, or develop new community led capacity from day one of the programme, and does it have the skills and experience to do this properly?	Equally, this may seem the right path to follow, but in the local context, will it work?
Does the NS have the necessary community organisation and mobilisation skills needed to work with and through the community?	Even with the aspiration of establishing self sustaining CBOs, does the NS know how to do this? It is not a skill commonly found in the RCM. Does it have experience in community mobilisation and organisation.
Will the NS be able to maintain all these criteria in the face of donor/political pressures?	More to the point, 'have they been able to, or do they have a history of being donor/partner-led'.
Are community engagement and assessment processes mainstreamed as standard across all NS community-level programming?	We need to be careful not to contribute to further fragmentation of DRR. Some basic principles of how they approach this need to be captured in a policy/strategy document.

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National Society consideration	Comment
Does the NS have the organisational skills and capacity to analyse assessment information at community and household level to identify suitable interventions on the basis of value for money, relevance, cost benefit, impact etc?	Again, a major determinant of the type of assessment process adopted. Too much information is gathered and not analysed. Good to encourage organisational learning and good practice around analysis of info as the step before assessment parameter are defined.
Does the NS see assessment as a short, one-off process or as part of an on-going process of dialogue with community?	If the former, should be short and sharp to recognize the limit of really understanding community, attitudes to risk etc in short timeframe. If latter, needs to be resourced and have the skills to use it constructively and not fall in to checklist mentality.
Does the NS have the capacity in place to maintain minimum levels of quality in the community level work undertaken, particularly mitigation activities?	This links to the parameters. Whatever the range of interventions the NS plans to undertake, each must be supported by some form of quality assurance, particularly mitigation activities which need to be preceded by a specific technical-social assessment to establish relevance.
Does the NS know how to measure impact and does it have the capacity to develop community centred monitoring systems?	Without good baselines (from assessments) and the ability of communities to monitor hazards and risks themselves, likelihood of building sustainable resilience is limited.
Does the NS have a clear approach to how it works with other agencies, NGOs and government at community and regional levels?	Partly, this is the skill to undertake and analyse good stakeholder analysis within programmes, and partly it is about building potential partnerships with other actors to support vulnerable communities. These need to be carefully thought through before communities are engaged with, not least to ensure common aims.
Where, realistically, is the National Society on the DRR continuum detailed in this document, and where realistically does it believe it can be in the next 5 years?	Based upon all the above answers, the NS should be supported to realistically place themselves on the continuum now, and in terms of where they want to be. Partner support should aim to support them in achieving short term goals, and to build the capacity to develop more community centred approaches.
Does the NS have a clear policy/strategy in place, and applied which answers all the above questions?	Doesn't need to be 'all singing, all dancing', in fact, it just needs to be practical guidance of how the NS approaches this.
Is the NSs approach to DRR fully linked in with wider NS initiatives on organisational development, e.g. on Human Resources, Project Management, Fundraising etc?	Again, these links need to be clear to demonstrate how DRR is mainstreamed in to the wider work of the NS, rather than remaining a PNS/IFRC project. There will be inevitable OD limitations.
Do senior management/NS executive and operational managers have the same view and understanding of the NS's DRR work?	This needs to be checked, and again the test is whether there are existing examples of divergent opinions and approaches.
Is this policy paper respected and followed by all Movement and other partners?	This is the flipside, and if the NS can identify answers to 75% of the above, then are we as a Movement supporting them to deliver?





