Information Session Minutes on

Integration of DRR into Development Programs: UNDP Certification Experience

Date and time: 23 October 2013, 14:00 – 15:00

Venue: UN DRMP Office

Participants: Marco Alfieri, Cooperazione e Sviluppo - CESVI

Sayfullo Nusayriev, OXFAM

Valijon Ranoev, Disaster Risk Management Programme. UNDP

Zohir Navjavonov, International Organization for Migration

Rustam Karimov, Danish Refugee Centre

Jamshed Kodirkulov, Energy and Environment Programme, UNDP

Ilhom Safarov, Disaster Risk Management Programme, UNDP

Islom Usmanov, Disaster Risk Management Programme, UNDP

Robert Britton, Good Heart

Ahmadjon Kadirov, Disaster Risk Management Programme, UNDP

Noor Kashani, Aga Khan Development Network (through Skype)

Introduction

The purpose of the session was to present UNDP Tajikistan's experience on the integration of disaster risk reduction (DRR) into development projects. The process was referred to as the UNDP "DRR Certification Process". This is a new and unique initiative. UNDP Tajikistan has reviewed all the stages of the process of DRR integration and developed guidance and forms to apply the process to UNDP projects.

Other international non-governmental and donor organizations are also working to integrate DRR into their projects. However, the session did not aim to present detailed information on DRR Certification (going through all the forms and etc.). Rather, it aimed to pass on the general idea of DRR integration and steps taken by UNDP Tajikistan to implement the process. The session was facilitated by Charles Kelly, Chief Technical Adviser, Disaster Risk Management Program, UNDP Tajikistan.

A 30 minutes presentation was covered in 5 slides plus title and the closing sides. The structure of the session was as follows:

- Opening and Introductions.
- The 30 minute presentation.
- Question and answers.
- Wrap up and closing.

The presentation can be found at the following site: http://untj.org/coordination-mechanisms/disaster-management/drr-and-development.

It should be noted that the information session was recorded and transmitted through Skype. This is the first time that DRMP used Skype to transmit a presentation and disseminate information to a wider audience who could not attend in person. Additional information can be found at http://www.undp.tj/site/index.php/en/our-programme/crisis-prevention-a-recovery/77-drmp.

Mr. Charles Kelly's presentation (based on the recorded presentation):

First Slide: Why DRR as part of Development?

The core of the development is to bring improvements to the lives and livelihoods of the people. However, if development is destroyed by the disasters, it can fail to achieve its goals. For instance, if disasters destroyed what have been built or washed away what have been planted development are not improve lives and livelihoods.

In addition, there is a lot of evidence that development is actually cause disasters. Building houses in the wrong place and building roads in a wrong way cause disasters. For example, putting an irrigation channel not realizing that it can cause underground waters to increase, which in its turn can affect houses (houses can collapse or crack because of the ground waters).

Concluding all above, it can be said that DRR is a part of development. If a development project is not reducing risks of the people (e.g. lack of food supply or poor access to education) it is not achieving its goals. Therefore, UNDP started to look at integration of DDR into development projects.

Second Slide: DRR Integration

The idea of integration of DRR into a development is has been around for over 20 years and has become a policy of many donors (e.g. EU, WB, and EBRD). A part of the reason is that donors recognize that DRR integration can improve the impact of the development, and reduces the cost that comes from the disasters. For instance, if a project built a bridge and it is damaged by disaster, it would probably need to be rebuilt. However, if the project considered DRR while building the bridge, it could have avoided the damage and a need to rebuild. The idea is that it is better to prevent or minimize disaster then to fund relief and recovery. This is also improving population sustainability and social resilience.

Third Slide: Learning by Doing

Having all this in mind, UNDP decided to first integrate DRR into its own projects, and then ask others to do that. As a part of this activity, UNDP looked through all its projects, identifying the links of the projects to the disasters and disaster risk reduction. It identified that some project should have been major DRR interventions, while others could be improved with minor interventions.

As a further step, UNDP choose two projects to begin the DRR integration process and started to ask simple questions like how disasters can affect your project, what happens if there is a mudflow, avalanches and are your facilities prepared for it.

During the process it was noted that some projects provide lots of training and that disasters could affect an operational part of the project, too. For instance, if there is a bad weather, project staff cannot go to the villages and conduct their trainings. If a disaster destroyed an infrastructure, project beneficiaries cannot be reached. A project needs to take those things into account.

Fourth Slide: The Process

UNDP streamlined whole process into a certain steps:

- Firstly, an organization needs to conduct training. A training model for 5 to 7 hours was developed.
- The next step is to identify hazards (high temperature, cold weather, mudflows, and landslides), risks and vulnerabilities (it terms of how vulnerable can be the beneficiaries in case of a disaster, to what extend) that project is prone to.
- Then each project needs to develop a Disaster Management Plan and Office Safety Checklist (see above for links). The idea of office safety is to assure the security of office and staff. This is done to ensure a project can operate event if disaster occurs. This is one of the hardest parts of the process.
- The risks that have been identified then need to be addressed.
- The fifth step is to fill a Field Level Risk Management Checklist. It is done by field workers, and just involves going and checking the project sites and answering a set of questions. This need to be done in a routine basis, every new site needs to be checked.
- If a project works with infrastructure construction, engineers should produce a Natural Hazard Assessment Report. The Report helps an engineer certify that a construction activity is safe from a mudflows, avalanches, etc.
- As the final step, all completed document are submitted to a senior manager for approval.
- Upon a successful approval, a project is given a Certificate of Integration of DRR into the project. This is a final step of DRR certification process.

Fifth Slide: Challenges

UNDP came across with following challenges in implementing the certification process:

(1) The Certification process put in more work on the project staff and an obvious question why staff should do this additional work. However, more work implies more benefit. For instance, your construction is secure from a disaster.

(2) it can also be argued that there have been no funds for DRR integration and DRR is not an institutional priority.

(3) Furthermore, people can ask to show them benefits. One of the benefits can be that while proposing a proposal to a donor an organization can indicate that this project is going to pass a DRR certification process, therefore you should give us money in preference to others.

It is better to do a Certification process at the beginning of the project than at the middle. This is because at the middle of the project, it is hard to change activities and allocate funds.

A project implementing DRR Certification would need to involve a specialist to help on the process. Now, there are many specialists in the area and would not be difficult to find one. Another issue is sustainability. The process should be sustain and done in an annual basis.

Questions and Answers

Mr. Marco Alfieri from CESVI, noted that the DRR Certification process use a term "disaster" in a wide meaning, so he asked to specify a term "disaster" in the context of DRR Certification process.

Answer: As a base to conduct the process of DRR Certification, UNDP focused on disasters resulting from natural hazards affecting people, animal and plants**.** There is a list of disasters common to Tajikistan which has been developed by the Committee of Emergency Situations and UNDP.

Mr. Alfieri then asked whether final result of DRR Certification can be included to the Security Plan of the organization.

Answer: Yes, it could be added into the Security Plan, but this is not specifically intended. The Certification process includes an Office Safety checklist to check whether a building is strong enough to survive in the earthquake, for instance. The checklist results can be used in a Security Plan.

Mr. Valijon Ranoev from UNDP emphasized that office safety was one of the important concepts in the Certification process. If an office running project was affected by the disasters, it cannot achieve project goals and would need to interrupt its activities.

Mr. Kelly reinforced the statement by giving the example of Haiti, where the USAID office needed to continue their projects along with providing relief for the population, while the half of staff was living in destroyed houses. Other points mentioned are: whether office staff can be kept in the office and can the office provide support and supplies to them and their families, such as water and place for cooking, so that the staff can keep working.

Mr. Zohir Navjavonov from IOM remarked that in order to get DRR Certification done by the implementing organizations, donors should have appropriate request or criterion in their call for proposals. He brought an issue that USAID has environmental standards and regulation that require contractors to comply with, and integrate, hazard management into project proposals.

Mr. Kelly replied that USAID's environmental standards and regulation cover about 70% of the DRR Certification requirements. USAID does not look at office safety and they don't look at sustainability of project operation and economic vulnerability. In terms of donors, SDS is already incorporated DRR into their resent call for proposals. GIZ has also started to talk about the issue. World Bank has been doing it for over a decade.