

Project Proposal to Support the Development of Strategic National Action Plan for Countries in the Asia and Pacific Regions

Advancing Disaster Risk Reduction through the Hyogo Framework for Action

PART I: PROJECT DESCRIPTION

1. Preamble

1.1. The Asia and Pacific Regions regularly experience a wide variety of natural disasters. The high incidence of disaster events in the region raises the vulnerability of socially and economically marginalized people, accelerating the existing cycle of poverty and posing an even greater challenge to development.

1.2. Strong political commitment is a necessary prerequisite to building nations and communities that are more resilient to disasters. Through political commitment, disaster risk management mechanisms and legal frameworks can be established, and the necessary resources mobilised to implement activities that will reduce disaster risks. National level commitment to disaster risk reduction (DRR) is essential for strengthening institutional capacity and enhancing the coping ability of communities. As sharply reminded by the December 2004 tsunami, disasters are major threats to peoples' livelihoods, dignity, and the survival of their communities. Therefore greater attention by governments, bilateral and multi-lateral donor communities and other stakeholders should be focused on identifying and reducing disaster risks within local communities, where peoples are exposed to them.

1.3. Guiding principles and priority activities for disaster risk reduction are comprehensively prescribed by the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005 – 2015 (HFA). At the WCDR in Kobe, governments expressed their endorsement and commitment to the five priority areas for implementation, namely:

- (a) Ensure that disaster risk reduction is a national and a local priority with a strong institutional basis for implementation
- (b) Identify, assess and monitor disaster risks and enhance early warning
- (c) Use knowledge, innovation and education to build a culture of safety and resilience at all level
- (d) Reduce underlying risk factors
- (e) Strengthen disaster preparedness for effective response at all levels

It is essential now to translate these intentions into practice through the development and implementation of relevant, affordable and viable action plans in each country. This is both urgent and crucial if the disaster reduction objectives of the HFA are to be realised. Much has been done in disaster risk reduction in the Asia and Pacific Regions. This can be attributed to the need to address the high incidence of disaster occurrences by governments and the affected community. Although a reasonably high level of knowledge, skills, alertness and awareness of disasters already exists, governments and civil society organisations are encouraged to take advantage of the emphasis and

direction provided by the HFA by adopting disaster reduction measures to achieve the listed priority areas.

2. Rationale for Strategic National Action Plan (SNAP)

2.1. A large number of Asian countries that are prone to natural disasters do not have an effective programme for medium or long-term comprehensive disaster risk management that incorporates a multi-sector, multi-level and interdisciplinary approach, or a long-term vision. Numerous one-off, short-term (i.e. less than one year) or separate events such as awareness campaigns, workshops, or individual training courses are common in the region. Many are not linked to established or more comprehensive national or community programmes that involve multiple stakeholders drawn from various parts of society. These are in themselves relevant and worthwhile programmes and should be part of an overall coordinated approach to the overall action plan of a country.

2.2. The rationale behind developing a comprehensive DRR programme for countries is to consolidate and to map out the various projects and activities being implemented or planned into one cohesive programme. This can bring together key government departments, civil society organisations, private sector interests and other stakeholders to associate disaster reduction issues directly with socio-economic development planning and policies, increasing opportunities for more evident political commitment and sustained action.

2.3. Such a strategic approach with harmonised policies has a number of advantages for all stakeholders, but in particular for governments. It:

- Enables better coordination and management,
- Improve the efficiency of resource allocation and utilisation through clearly defined objectives, activities and outputs in one integrated programme,
- Builds monitoring and evaluation for a large number of projects and related activities into one disaster risk management programme with a single executing organisation within government being accountable,
- Enables multi-donor, multi-year funding, with several implementing partners placed under single management control within relevant ministries, and
- Contributes to common understanding, knowledge, awareness and appreciation of disaster risk reduction for all involved actors within and amongst countries in the region.

3. Goal

To contribute to building resilient nations and communities through local, national and regional commitments to reducing disaster risks in the context of HFA.

4. Objectives

The main objectives of the project are to:

4.1. Ensure that disaster risk reduction is a national and local priority by building national capacity through the development and implementation of Strategic National Action Plan (SNAP) for disaster risk reduction, in the context of the HFA, for Governments to implement, with strong national, regional and global support.

4.2. Establish the mechanism at the country and regional levels to support the development and implementation of SNAP.

4.3. To strengthen the cooperation and coordination of existing national and regional partnership through its involvement in design and implementation of SNAP.

5. Strategic National Action Plan for DRR

5.1. Countries are at many different levels in terms of their current capacities to manage and reduce disaster risks therefore there is no “one-size fits all” for ensuring that disaster risk reduction is a national and local priority with a strong institutional basis for implementation. Hence efforts to produce a strategic national action plan to reduce disaster risks must start with the existing governance arrangements in each participating disaster-prone country and must be integrated into on-going efforts to improve governance and built capacities. A SNAP should contain, among others:

- an assessment of the disaster risks, vulnerability and capacity.
- gap analysis that identifies and maps out significant ongoing initiatives, (by whom, where and what).
- DRR activities from the HFA that are considered by stakeholders as priority for the country, are achievable, with adequate relevant resources and capacity for implementation over at least the next 3 years, preferably longer.
- a “road map” indicating objectives and visions for the next 5yrs or so.

A SNAP should enable governments to mainstream disaster reduction into development plans, policies and projects, establishes the National Platforms to guide and monitor its implementation, and provides capacity building and public awareness and education activities for the population through the media.

5.2. The process of developing the SNAP for a country is as important as the final project document itself. It brings stakeholders together in an exercise of consensus and commitments to reduce disaster risks through a cohesive action plan for the country. A process of extensive fact-finding consultations and series of workshops and meetings will provide the basis for all relevant stakeholders in each country to participate, develop, agree/approve, resource and proceed to support and implement the SNAP. It is during this phase to develop SNAP that all stakeholders can commits needed resources and make relevant changes (if necessary) to the structure and functions of government, to accommodate disaster risk reductions as an integral part of the business of governments, civil society organisations, and the private sector. Supporting this process through technical and financial assistance are the multi-lateral and bilateral donors, including the UN Country Team (UNCT), regional and inter-governmental organisations, and civil society actors. Therefore, SNAP is the final product of the extensive consultations, workshops and planning by all stakeholders.

6.0 National Workshops

6.1. An important part of SNAP is to provide clearly assigned roles and responsibilities to ministries and other implementing partners, a clear organisational structure for implementing, managing, and coordination and monitoring of the action plan. The final draft of SNAP should be endorsed by participating governments. Ideally the endorsed SNAP should already have donor support. The SNAP document belongs to the government and the community and they are responsible for its implementation.

The purpose of the national workshops is to:

- Enable governments and their implementing partners to work together to identify priority activities for SNAP.
- Give development (donor) partners opportunities to participate and contribute to the design and approval of the SNAP, in concurrence with their mandates.
- Allow partners with disaster-related activities/projects in-country to share their experience and to establish an inventory and a map of DRR activities for the country.
- Give the national authority an opportunity to take the lead, to prioritise affordable resources by key sectors and to involve the authorities at the sub-national levels.
- Identify priority disaster reduction activities to be included in the SNAP that are relevant, practicable and affordable and which have a high degree of success.
- Promote disaster risk reduction as identified by the HFA and other initiatives among the participating countries.
- Agree on a national organisational structure for the implementation of the SNAP.
- Select outstanding and willing individuals from the country (politically and professionally endorsed) for a 3-4 month fellowship¹. Part of this activity is to agree on the terms of reference and modus operandi for the fellowship.
- Endorse the SNAP in a participatory and transparent manner that has full concurrence of participating stakeholders.

6.2. Each workshop will be preceded by one-on-one meetings with government ministries/departments, members of the UNCT, NGOs, donors, key stakeholders and individuals to ensure their participation, and gather relevant information and data for developing SNAP. Their participation at national workshops is essential to provide support, consensus and legitimacy to the SNAP. This process should be driven, owned and implemented by the countries with technical assistance provided where needed. Through this process, Governments will identify their own priorities to implement disaster risk reduction at the national and local levels, based on their known requirements, existing capacities, and available resources. To enable this to be accomplished comprehensively, mapping out ongoing activities and identifying gaps are essential elements of each action planning exercise.

¹ Fellowship programme includes study of the HFA, Mainstreaming and National Platforms, training in DRR at ADPC and with IAP partners, assist the expert team in developing and designing the NAP and to coordinate/manage the disaster reduction projects and programmes at the national and local levels.

7.0 Disaster Risk Reduction Planning Team

7.1. A small team of disaster reduction specialists, to be provided by each of the ISDR Asia Partnership (IAP)*, drawn either from within their own organisation or engaged as consultants, as the need warrants, to work closely with the UN Country Team through the Resident Coordinator, NGOs and other partners to assist government to carry out the following tasks:

- Prepare and distribute workshop documents in advance of the workshop
- With the participating government, plan and conduct national workshops and country consultations (the national organisation responsible for disaster risk management would be suggested as the focal point and local organising counterpart)
- Be fully conversant with the HFA and have some knowledge of the participating country's disaster risk management status
- Serve as a "strategic steering group" to provide technical support, to guide and to monitor the implementation of the SNAP
- Provide criteria for the selection of the initial countries that will participate
- Inform and involve the UN Resident Coordinator and the UN Country Team in the preparatory work for the workshop and in the production of the SNAP
- Liaise with the national disaster management office, or other authority designated by the Government for the organisation of the workshop

8.0 Fellowship programme

8.1. The fellowship programme will be specifically aimed at personnel who are directly involved in implementing the SNAP. The holder of the first fellowship will help design and finalise the SNAP by assisting to organise and conduct comprehensive in-country consultations. As a senior government employee, s/he will have a responsible and important role in the management and coordination of the SNAP. Subsequent fellowship awards will be to those that are working within the SNAP and can be from any of the participating ministries and/or NGOs. It is envisaged that the South – South Cooperation programme of UNDP-RCB could be involved in the implementation of this as the fellowship programme evolves further to include mutual cooperation among South and South East Asian countries that have their own strategic national action plans in disaster reduction. There are programmes and organisations in the region that are available to implement the fellowship scheme. Support for this will be needed as an integral part of SNAP. The success of this scheme depends on selecting the right committed people for the intended purpose, involvement from the outset in the development and implementation of SNAP and undergoing appropriate learning experience.

* Annex 1 provides a brief description and history of the IAP.

PART II: PROJECT ACTIVITIES, OUTPUTS AND BUDGET

1.0 Introduction

Part I provides the project description and the justification for the development and support for a “Strategic National Action Plan” to implement components of the HFA as it befits the needs and priority of the countries. As mentioned in Part I, the HFA provides the basic foundation from which countries should draw their disaster risk reduction initiatives. The development and production of SNAP therefore will use the HFA as the source to identify activities, collaborating partners and tools that are relevant.

This Part II of the project proposal discusses the main activities, outputs, a work plan and a tentative budget to begin the process to develop SNAP for the selected countries. The goals and objectives do not change and as stated in Part 1 above.

2.0. Main Outputs and Activities:

The main project output is the production of SNAP to which relevant stakeholders in participating countries are committed to its development and implementation. The other outputs listed below are essential for the development and commitments towards the successful implementation of SNAP. The following are the expected outputs:

- 4.1. Strategic National Action Plans with disaster risk reduction measures that are specifically designed for each participating country. Components of SNAP that are critical for sustainability and should therefore be included are:
 - Mainstreaming: Disaster reduction measures are integrated into policy and socio-economic development of governments and into key sectors at all levels.
 - National Platforms for Disaster Risk Reduction: Necessary for close cooperation among stakeholders and needed for mainstreaming of national and sector plans and policies.
- 4.2. An effective and functional ISDR Asia Partnership (IAP) with strong mandate, with additional partners and enhanced capacity.
- 4.3. Capacity Development for Institutional Strengthening. Develop a fellowship scheme that transfers knowledge, skills, and experience through community and national level learning and training.

4.1. Output 1: Strategic National Action Plan for Disaster Risk Reduction

Countries are at many different levels in terms of their current capacities to manage and reduce disaster risks therefore there is no “one-size fits all” for ensuring that disaster risk reduction is a national and local priority with a strong institutional basis for implementation. Hence efforts to produce a strategic national action plan to reduce disaster risks must start with the existing governance arrangements in each participating

disaster-prone country and must be integrated into on-going efforts to improve governance and built capacities.

4.1.1. Activities for Output 1: Project management arrangements and implementation

The first activity will be to identify contributing partners at the national and regional levels and to establish operational and management teams. At the country level the government (with key ministries involvement) is the principle partner with support from the UN Country Team (led by the UN Resident Coordinator), bilateral and multi-lateral donors, civil society organisations and the private sector. Regional support will be provided through the IAP.

The main activities:

- (a) Produce a work plan for the development of SNAP.
- (b) Provide terms of reference for team leader, the country team and the regional support group.
- (c) Select and establish a core working group and a management team at the county level and produce a management structure.
- (d) Conduct initial consultations with countries to analyse the feasibility and applicability of developing SNAP and to gauge the commitment and willingness to participate.
- (e) Develop and introduce tools and guidelines that will assist in the assessment of priority disaster reduction needs and which will guide the development and implementation of SNAP.
- (f) Establish a network of collaborating partners.

4.1.2. Activities for Output 1: Conduct National Workshops to Promote HFA and Develop SNAP

The purpose of the national workshops is to bring together all stakeholders to assist and to enable government, UNCT, civil society organisations, and donors to work together to identify, agree and support priority disaster risk reduction activities as outlined in the HFA to produce SNAP. The series of workshops also provides the means to disseminate the HFA and to provide the tools that will assist and support local and national efforts to implement and monitor the HFA. The main activities of the workshops therefore are:

- Before the workshops to initiate a series of short consensus building meetings to discuss and develop a detailed terms of reference for an approach to the study and assessment of the country's current disaster reduction status.
- Conduct fact-finding exercise to identify ongoing disaster-related activities in-country to establish an inventory and a map of who is doing what, where and how.
- Identify priority disaster reduction activities to be included in the SNAP that are relevant, practicable and affordable and which have a high degree of success.
- Promote disaster risk reduction as identified by the HFA and other initiatives among the participating countries.
- Give the national authority an opportunity to take the lead, to prioritise affordable resources by key sectors and to involve the authorities at the sub-national levels.
- Agree on a national organisational structure and management for the implementation of the SNAP.

- Select outstanding and willing individuals from the country (politically and professionally endorsed) for a 3-4 month fellowship. Part of this activity is to agree on the terms of reference and modus operandi for the fellowship.
- Involve donors with disaster risk reduction mandate from the outset as one of the main participants in the design of the SNAP
- Introduce the development of a matrix of commitment and initiatives in support of the country's SNAP
- Introduce and inform workshop participants and involved stakeholders on the:
 - priority actions for DRR in the context of HFA
 - importance of mainstreaming DRR as part of development of key sectors of the economy and as an activity of the SNAP
 - National Platform as a mechanism to manage and coordinate government's DRR initiatives

Endorse and adopt SNAP in a participatory and transparent manner that has full support of participating stakeholders.

4.2. Output 2: National Platform (NP) for Disaster Risk Reduction

Because disaster risk reduction is a cross-cutting issue requiring cooperation among stakeholders representing different skills and knowledge, the role of a National Platform is an essential part in the implementation of the SNAP because of its multi-sector and multi-level contents. The development of SNAP uses a participatory and transparent process that includes partners from different sectors and disciplines. Therefore, the group that will provide relevant inputs and guidance in the development of SNAP during in-country consultations, meetings and workshops could be the core of a NP if it does not already exist. It is also needed to guide, monitor and make changes if necessary to the contents and implementation of SNAP, that is, the NP to be the custodian for its implementation.

4.2.1. Activities for Output 2:

One of the activities in the development of SNAP is to begin the establishment of the NPs. The roles and responsibilities of NPs will be strengthened during the implementation of SNAP. Some of the activities to develop the NPs are as follows:

- Provide technical assistance, relevant tools and advice to support the Governments to establish the NP
- Develop terms of reference (roles and responsibilities) for the NP and for each of its member
- Involve the members and clearly define the role of the NP in the decision making and formulation, implementation and monitoring of the SNAP
- Identify information gaps and capacity needs, and facilitate information exchange and capacity development
- Notify all stakeholders and partners of the formation of the NP and of its composition, membership, focal point and contact information

4.3. Output 3: Mainstreaming of Disaster Risk Reduction for SNAP

The disaster risk reduction activities of the SNAP should ideally be derived from the key sectors such as health, education, infrastructure and housing development, urban planning

and development, community development, finance, national planning, agriculture, local government among others. The development and implementation of SNAP provides an opportunity to mainstream disaster reduction into the normal development process and policy planning of governments. Mainstreaming disaster risk reduction can effectively be incorporated into country development activities through the CCA and UNDAF process of the UNCT in close collaboration with Governments, NGO and civil society and the private sector. By doing so, disaster risk reduction is incorporated into national development plans at the initial planning stage.

4.3.1 Activities for Output 3:

Specific activities include:

- Using the planning and programming tools developed by ISDR-Geneva, include disaster risk reduction into the CCA/UNDAF and Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSP), and into national development plans of governments
- Through the UNCT and key government ministries, include disaster risk reduction measures in the CCA/UNDAF guidelines
- Involve the UNCT directly as a key partner in the development and implementation of the SNAP by providing appropriate support
- Identify institution, NGOs, regional organisations to assist countries mainstream prioritised actions of HFA into key sectors such as environment, health, education, agriculture, etc as a component of SNAP

4.4. Output 4: Capacity Development for Institutional Strengthening

Develop a fellowship programme that will be specifically aimed at groups of three to four people from collaborating ministries who are and will be, directly involved in implementing the SNAP. The holders of the fellowship will help design and finalise the SNAP by assisting to organise and conduct comprehensive in-country consultations. The person must be a national of the participating country and can be from government, NGOs, UN agencies or donors. S/he will have a responsible and important role in the management and coordination of the SNAP. Subsequent fellowship awards will be to those that are directly involved in the implementation of SNAP. Part of this training will include the training of a cadre of people in the country and regions to develop, produce, monitor and implement action plans at all levels. This is critical for sustainability within the region and in-countries. The fellowship duration should be for a maximum of four months and includes attending selected training at ADPC.

4.4.1: Activities for output 4:

There are programmes and organisations in the region that are available to provide relevant capacity building activities to support the fellowship scheme. For example, the Asian Disaster Preparedness Center (ADPC) for disaster-related training and the Community-Based Disaster Risk Management (CBDRM) Programme, the Asian Disaster Reduction Centre (ADRC) for facilitating technical support, workshops and specific DRR assistance, the UNDP/RCB South-South Cooperation programme for direct attachments and technical exchange, and UN Disaster Management Training Programme (UNDMTP) for capacity development, and Sustainable Environment and Ecological Development

Society (SEEDS) of India with their Global Open Learning Forum on Risk Education (GOLFRE) that brings professional knowledge to field practitioners, and the Disaster Management Unit of the South Pacific Applied Geo-science Commission (SOPAC) approved DRR programme for Pacific island countries, namely: just to mention a few. Support for the fellowship will be needed for the successful implementation of SNAP. The success of this scheme depends on selecting the right committed people for the intended purpose, their direct involvement from the outset in the development and implementation of SNAP, and undergoing appropriate learning experience. Activities include:

- Negotiate with relevant institutions to provide appropriate training/attachment
- Produce selection criteria and guiding principles
- Mobilise resources to support the fellowship scheme
- Set-up a small selection team for the scheme
- Develop the curriculum to meet specific needs
- Produce terms of reference for types of training and learning institutions needed to participate in the capacity development activity and engage them

4.5. Output 5: Strengthening the ISDR Asia Partnership (IAP)

With the development and implementation of the ‘strategic national action plan’ for countries, it is necessary that the role of IAP be expanded and strengthened to meet the new demands for support and assistance to the countries. The current membership of six key partners (see Annex 1 for details) will need to be increased given the volume of the task and the size of the region to be covered. The demand for support to the countries will increase when SNAP is introduced and therefore the function of the IAP (see Part I for details) will need to be redefined to meet the challenge.

4.5.1 Activities for Output 5:

The IAP is a small but effective “task force” that supports and promotes the implementation of DRR in the region. With the expansion of tasks, the following activities need to be considered:

- Redefine the role of IAP in the broader context of the implementation of disaster risk reduction measures through SNAP and other regional and national initiatives that are ongoing
- Provide membership criteria and introduce new members
- Agree on a work plan for the IAP and mobilise resources to support its activities
- Facilitate an assessment of the disaster risk reduction roles of the many regional and intergovernmental organisations, training and technical institutions, etc (such as ADPC, ADRC, ASEAN, SAARC, ADRRN, IFRC among others) on how they can best cooperate and share information and resources to benefit the countries and community.

5. Implementation strategy

5.1. The success of this activity depends on the participation and commitment of key partners in-country and regionally with strong and political backing with real

commitments of resources. Taking the lead in this partnership is the IAP with the initial responsibility to seek funds and put a team together that will organise and carry out this action plan to develop and produce SNAP. One of its first tasks is to introduce the plan to the countries and gauge their willingness and commitment to participate. Governments are the main clients and partners with the UN Country Team (UNCT), donor community, NGOs, and community group as key contributing partners.

5.2. The selection of the countries for the region is determined by their level of vulnerability to, and their capacity to deal with, disaster risks, the political commitment of will and resources to support, develop, and implement SNAP. It is important at the initial phase to work with countries that already have a functional organisational structure for DRR, has strong political commitment to make the process work and willing to establish needed mechanisms such as NPs and mainstreaming to support development and implementation of the SNAP. It is important to have a number of good successfully designed SNAP initially as examples to countries yet to adopt the process. Consideration must also be to those countries that are disaster prone, with highly vulnerable communities and have low capacity to manage and cope with the risk. The process to develop SNAP for a country should not take more than 4-5 months or the momentum will be lost and priorities can quickly change and resources utilised. It is proposed that implementation will be done in two phases.

Phase 1 (2006): This will be for one year with a number of selected countries (perhaps 4) to have a fully developed SNAP with resources committed and implementation started. The selection of the countries depends on a number of criteria, in particular the willingness and commitment of the Government to develop, provide resources (from internal and external sources) and implement SNAP. Parallel activities of promoting, advocating and introducing SNAP will also start during the first phase with 10 or more countries depending on available resources. The outcome of this activity will be a prioritised list of countries that will develop SNAP during Phase 2 and beyond.

Phase 2 (2007/08): The priority countries that were prepared from Phase 1 will continue to produce their SNAP. The process to develop SNAP will be an ongoing process depending on the demand for it and available resources.

6. Beneficiaries

The ultimate beneficiaries will be the people and communities that are at risk in the Asia and the Pacific Islands Regions through the successful implementation of their own action plans that are targeted at all levels with large number of implementing partners and extensive coverage. Also those that are involved in providing assistance and those being assisted such as governments, NGOs, UN agencies, donor countries, educational and vocational institutions, national, regional global partner organisation will benefit from this long-term programme.

7. Next Step

The next steps in this process are:

- To meet and consult with the UN Country Teams in the region through the UN Resident Coordinator for their information, comments, inputs and consensus; and to follow-up at the country level with meetings, discussions and implementation arrangements if requested.
- Produce country-specific work plan for implementation.
- Finalise the implementation arrangements at the country and regional levels, and start implementation of the project.

8. Work plan

This work plan is for 12 months to start in January 2006. Preparatory work by ISDR-BKK has started and with country visits for initial discussions to start in September. An immediate task for the IAP members is to immediately set criteria for selection and select the first 4 countries and the other ten for preliminary exploratory consultations and preparations. The strategy is to start with two countries initially and get the process tested and followed closely by the other two.

Table 1: Work Plan for 2006: Development and Implementation of the SNAP

Country/Activities	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	2007
1. Initial country consultation ² , team selection ³ and hire, prepare SNAP and workshop materials														
2. Countries 1&2 fact-finding consultations, workshops, reports, 1 st draft of SNAP														
3. Countries 3&4 fact-finding consultations, workshops, 1 st Draft of SNAP														
4. Finalise/implementation-ready Countries 1&2														
5. Finalise/implementation-ready Countries 3&4														
6. SNAP Implementation start for four countries														
7. Preparation, fact-finding, initial workshop for selected remaining countries														
8. Monitoring and evaluation														
9. Training, capacity building/fellowship prog														
10. Evaluation of the Asia Partnership														

9. Budget: The detail for the budget is to be worked out. The estimated total for 1 year (2006) is approximately \$500,000

² Involves visits of 2-3 days per selected country by a team of IAP members to introduce and discuss the SNAP process and get consensus.

³ IAP members to set selection criteria for a team leader and team members for consultations, conduct workshops and produce SNAP for each country.

Annex 1: The ISDR Asia Partnership for Disaster Reduction (IAP)

Background:

The IAP was formed in 2003 as an informal group by Asian Disaster Preparedness Center (ADPC), Asian Disaster Reduction Center (ADRC), and ISDR Secretariat with other partners recently included, namely: UNDP Regional Centre in Bangkok (UNDP-RCB), United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and Pacific Region (UNESCAP), United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA), Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific (ROAP). The members of IAP met at the Asian Disaster Preparedness Centre in Bangkok on 3 August 2005 to review and redefine the role of the partnership and importantly to identify the priority areas for action as outlined in the HFA. The issue of additional partners was discussed. It was acknowledged that there are many potential partners that can contribute significantly. It was decided that it was not timely to include others at this time and to stay with the present members until the partnership is strengthened and recognised in the region as a viable group with clear mandate and activities. The strength of this open-ended partnership is the synergy between the comparative advantages of each partner. By working together as partners and in partnership with other key stakeholders, to assist the Governments and the vulnerable communities in the countries of the Asia and Pacific Regions in disaster reduction, the IAP can contribute favourably to sustainable development in each country.

Role of the IAP

The Asia and Pacific Regions are too diverse and too vast for one all-encompassing strategic regional programme. Many disaster risk reduction activities already exist at the national and regional level. Producing a matrix and mapping out who is doing what, where and with whom is a priority national and regional level task if coordination and project planning is to be effective. The role of the partnership is to:

- i. Promote disaster risk reduction throughout the region by organising or provide support where feasible, strategic initiatives in target countries and sub-regions in partnership with other stakeholders as required for each specific case.
- ii. Create a forum for discussion, to share experiences and exchange information so that the resulting dialogue can strengthen the individual characteristics of the partners and their work as a group.
- iii. Ensure that the recommendations in the Hyogo Framework are adapted to meet the priority requirements of each country in the region.
- iv. Work with key governments sectors and other stakeholders in-country to identify priority disaster reduction activities for national and community level implementation.

To carry out its roles, several priority activities were identified for implementation and a operational mechanisms under which the IAP would function. To further assist and guide its work, IAP will work with governments and in-country partners to consider the DRR initiatives outlined in the HFA but not limited to it only. The IAP works to assist the government to build communities that are resilient to disaster risks.