



United Nations
International Strategy for Disaster Reduction



PROGRESS REVIEW OF NATIONAL PLATFORMS FOR DRR IN THE ASIA AND PACIFIC REGION



Please send your feedback and suggestions to isdr-bkk@un.org

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Progress Review of National Platforms for DRR in the Asia and Pacific Region



United Nations
International Strategy for Disaster Reduction
Secretariat, Asia and the Pacific, Bangkok

ABBREVIATIONS

3W	Who does What Where
BNPB	Badan Nasional Penanggulangan Bencana (National Disaster Management Agency)
CADRI	Capacity for Disaster Reduction Initiative
CBO	Community Based Organisation
CCFSC	Central Committee for Flood and Storm Control
CDRN	Corporate Disaster Response Network
CII	Confederation of Indian Industries
DDPM	Department for Disaster Prevention and Mitigation
DES	Domestic and External Security Coordination
DMWG	Disaster Management Working Group
DRM	Disaster Risk Management
DRR	Disaster Risk Reduction
DRR NetPhils	Disaster Risk Reduction Network Philippines
EC	European Commission
ESCAP	Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
FP	Focal Point
HFA	Hyogo Framework for Action
IAWG	Inter-Agency Working Group
IDNDR	International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction 1990-99
IFRC	International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
IM	Incident Manager
INGO	International Non Government Organisation
IR/DRNP	Iranian National Platform on Disaster Risk Reduction
MARD	Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development
MoP	Ministry of Planning

NADRR	National Alliance for Disaster Risk Reduction
NCDM	National Committee on Disaster Management
NCDR	National Committee for Disaster Reduction
NDCC	National Disaster Coordinating Council
NDMC	National Disaster Management Committee
NDMP	Natural Disaster Management Partnership
NDMCC	National Disaster Management Coordinating Committee
NDMO	National Disaster Management Office
NGO	Non Government Organisation
NP	National Platform
OCD	Office of Civil Defence
ODESC	Officials' Committee for Domestic and External Security Coordination
Ops CE	Operations Civil Emergency Plan
PLANAS	Platform Nasional (National Platform)
PNRC	Philippine National Red Cross
PSNDM	Private Sector Network for Disaster Management
RGC	Royal Government of Cambodia
SCDF	Singapore Civil Defence Force
SNAP	Strategic National Action Plan
SP-CBDRM	Strategic Plan on Community Based Disaster Risk Management
UN	United Nations
UN	United Nations
UNISDR	United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNOCHA	United Nations Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
WCDR	World Conference on Disaster Reduction

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. NATIONAL PLATFORMS FOR DRR

A National Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction is a nationally owned and nationally led forum or committee for advocacy, coordination, analysis and advice on disaster risk reduction (DRR). Ideally, a National Platform is built on existing mechanisms, and is comprised of the full range of stakeholders concerned with disaster risk reduction, harnessing their combined potential to build resilience to disasters. Stakeholders include government (relevant line ministries and disaster management authorities), non-governmental organizations, academic and scientific institutions, professional associations, Red Cross / Red Crescent Societies, the private sector, and the media. National Platforms have also invited bilateral development agencies, United Nations organizations and the World Bank to participate.

The concept of National Platforms took shape at the 2005 World Conference of Disaster Reduction, where 168 Governments adopted the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015: Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters (HFA). The overarching goal of a National Platform for DRR is to contribute to the building of its country's resilience to disasters for the sake of sustainable development. The main principles for National Platforms are:

- National Platforms for DRR should view DRR as a national responsibility and a cross-cutting issue within sustainable development processes;
- National Platforms for DRR should utilize a participatory process to facilitate various sectors engagement, with their diverse perspectives and actions, and build on existing systems and mechanisms;
- National Platforms for DRR should influence positive changes through concerted and coordinated efforts particularly in policies, planning, administration and decision-making processes;
- National Platforms for DRR should encourage national and local implementation, adaptation and ownership of the HFA.

The Asia region has fewer National Platforms for Disaster Risk Reduction than any other region, yet has demonstrated strong leadership in its commitment to disaster risk reduction. This study attempts to review the progress and challenges in the process of establishment and functioning of National Platforms in the Asia Pacific region, and draws conclusions and recommendations for future action.

2. NATIONAL PLATFORMS IN THE ASIA AND PACIFIC REGION

Asia and the Pacific form the world's most disaster prone region. Due to its long history of frequent disasters, and highly vulnerable and poor communities, disaster management in the region has had a response orientation rather than a preparedness and mitigation one. As a result, traditional disaster management systems have been centered on relief and its management.

The process of National Platform formation has been the slowest in the Asia and Pacific region as compared to other parts of the world. There are many reasons for this, such as the continued focus on response, presence of existing institutions that play part of the intended role, resistance in managing change and resource constraints.

A number of initiatives have been taken up in the past years by UNISDR in partnership with CADRI, UNDP, ESCAP, ADPC and EC towards creating tools, establishing processes, bringing in technical expertise, setting up pilot projects and assisting policy development at a number of specifically vulnerable countries in the region, and these efforts have directly and indirectly supported the process of establishment of National Platforms. These initiatives fall under the following categories:

1. Capacity development tools
2. Regional strategy
3. Integration of Climate Change experts as part of National Platforms
4. Strong support in Maldives, India, Indonesia and Sri Lanka
5. Building Resilience to Tsunamis in the Indian Ocean
6. SNAP project

Seven countries from the region have so far identified focal points and have officially launched National Platforms so far. The contexts and levels of achievements vary across countries. These may be looked at from the point of view of policy, plans, legislative framework, institutional framework and financial commitments. The seven countries that have formally established National Platforms for DRR are China, Japan, Iran, the Philippines, Sri Lanka, Kazakhstan and Indonesia.

On the whole, it is seen that the established National Platforms are facing some serious challenges, such as:

- Finding the legal mandate to operate as per the National Platform approach
- Ensuring representation of all sections and stakeholders, particularly NGOs
- Translation of intent into activity implementation on the ground
- Sustainable funding sources

A number of other countries have also started taking steps towards the establishment of National Platforms, and are in different stages of progress therein. The prominent ones with progress on this are India, Maldives, Vietnam, Nepal, East Timor, Bangladesh and Mongolia. The countries that have so far demonstrated very limited progress on the establishment of National Platforms are Republic of Korea, Lao People's Democratic Republic, New Zealand, Singapore, Tajikistan, Cambodia and Thailand.

3. FINDINGS

This section draws upon the appraisal of the National Platforms operational and being established in the region, as arrived at based on review of country reports, questionnaire responses and interviews with key informants. It identifies the areas that require specific attention while promoting National Platforms.

Achievements In Promoting Multi-Stakeholder DRR

Multi-stakeholder DRR thinking and action has grown significantly over the past few years, in particular since the conclusion of the IDNDR. Most of the countries covered in the study have, in some way or the other, demonstrated some degree of influence of the paradigm shift that global efforts have sought to bring about in terms of moving from a totally response oriented approach to one of risk reduction. Some of the evidences that can be highlighted in this regard are as follows:

1. High political commitment for DRR
2. Integration of DRR into national policy, legislation and development plans
3. Establishment of Disaster Risk Management institutions and programmes
4. Involvement of Academia, Media and Private Sector

While the role of UNISDR may not be the only or primary reason behind all of these developments, there is a range of activities carried out by the UNISDR that has definitely brought together the regional stakeholders, and has created a policy environment that has supported many of the abovementioned developments. The evidences of commonality in approach, cross-learning and programming that is distinctly carrying the message of the HFA, all point to the significance of the work on promotion of the HFA and its principles in the overall change of approach in the region. The key actions of UNISDR that were referred to during information gathering for this study are:

- Facilitation of multi-stakeholder meetings and engagement
- Preparation and dissemination of guidance documents and tools
- Organise thematic meetings, such as the Asian Ministerial Conferences
- Facilitation of experience sharing and progress monitoring
- Capacity assessment and support through initiatives such as CADRI
- Providing access to expertise and technical support, as reported from the Maldives, Sri Lanka, and Indonesia
- PreventionWeb platform for sharing, dissemination and monitoring

Challenges in Establishing National Platforms

Wherever the National Platform establishment process has been attempted, a range of challenges has been encountered. The prominent ones identified are:

1. Continuing legacy of disaster response approaches and institutions
2. Initial reluctance of power structures to transform and devolve
3. Weak legal mandate and financial commitments
4. Government centric structures with weak multi stakeholder character in many cases
5. Weak institutional support mechanisms
6. Line ministries unaware and not linked
7. Continuing dependence on external / UNISDR support
8. Lack of knowledge and capacity building facilities
9. Gender imbalance, and lack of community based representation

Multi-Stakeholder Partnerships: NPs by Another Name

In most countries national coordination mechanisms, such as evolved National Disaster Management Organisations and civil society networks other than formal National Platforms, exist and are playing part of the intended role of the National Platform.

Many cases show that building on existing institutional frameworks is an effective way to facilitate quick establishment of National Platforms, as it bypasses many hurdles such as the initial reluctance of power structures to transform and devolve, and the legal and bureaucratic delays involved in establishing new systems and empowering them, particularly wherein non state stakeholders are to be involved.

This will still require substantial amount of commitment and investment from the national government, and support from regional agencies, but may be more viable and acceptable than institutionalizing entirely new entities as National Platforms. It will, however, gain from the rich experience that may already exist with respect to the context, needs, local understanding and protocols for operating.

Way Forward

The achievements, challenges and alternatives that emerge from this study point to the viability of National Platforms, either as new institutions or strengthened and transformed existing ones, and also help identify ways of promoting them and helping achieve HFA Priority 1 targets. Some of the key aspects of moving ahead are as follows.

1. Official recognition of existing appropriate multi-stakeholder coordination mechanisms as National Platforms
2. Enhancement of organizational, technical and financial capacities within National Platforms
3. Inclusive approach, with specific focus on special vulnerable groups such as socially excluded groups and persons with disabilities
4. Ensuring a gender balance and enhancing the representation of community based organizations
5. Including representatives who will facilitate a transfer of national priorities and actions down to local governments and other local stakeholders
6. Engagement of line ministries and allocation of relevant risk reduction roles to them, and development of ministerial action plans
7. Coordination between climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction policies and actions
8. Strengthening national systems for information sharing and dissemination
9. Enhancement of information experience sharing across countries on their DRR work and multi stakeholder platforms
10. Establish, where needed, sub-regional mechanisms for coordination of activities towards reducing trans-national risks

1. NATIONAL PLATFORMS FOR DRR

A National Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction is a nationally owned and nationally led forum or committee for advocacy, coordination, analysis and advice on disaster risk reduction (DRR). Ideally, a National Platform is built on existing mechanisms, and is comprised of the full range of stakeholders concerned with disaster risk reduction, harnessing their combined potential to build resilience to disasters. Stakeholders include government (relevant line ministries and disaster management authorities), non-governmental organizations, academic and scientific institutions, professional associations, Red Cross / Red Crescent Societies, the private sector, and the media. National Platforms have also invited bilateral development agencies, United Nations organizations and the World Bank to participate.

NATIONAL PLATFORMS FOR DRR: DEFINITION

A National Platform for DRR can be defined as a nationally owned and led forum or committee of multi-stakeholders. It serves as an advocate of DRR at different levels and provides coordination, analysis and advice on areas of priority requiring concerted action through a coordinated and participatory process. A National Platform for DRR should be the coordination mechanism for mainstreaming DRR into development policies, planning and programmes in line with the implementation of the HFA. It should aim to contribute to the establishment and the development of a comprehensive national DRR system, as appropriate to each country.

The concept of National Platforms took shape at the 2005 World Conference of Disaster Reduction, where 168 Governments adopted the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015: Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters (HFA)¹. One of the HFA's strategic goals is "the development and strengthening of institutions, mechanisms and capacities to build resilience to hazards". It calls on all nations to "support the creation and strengthening of national integrated mechanisms such as multi-sectoral National Platforms" to ensure that DRR is a national and a local priority. The HFA also encourages all States to designate a national mechanism for the coordination of and follow-up to the HFA, to communicate DRR information and progress to the UNISDR secretariat.

Between 2000 and 2009, 50 countries informed the UNISDR secretariat of their National Platforms for DRR². Some of the National Platforms for DRR were built on former IDNDR National Committees for Disaster Management by broadening the scope of their work and that of the participation of development stakeholders in order to better embrace the DRR concept rather than that of disaster management alone. Others, which started from scratch, were, with few exceptions, established and developed through a nationally led participatory process involving main stakeholders under the guidance of the "Guiding Principles for National Platforms for Disaster Reduction"³ developed jointly by the UNISDR secretariat and the Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery of the United Nations Development Programme.

1 www.unisdr.org/eng/hfa/hfa.htm

2 <http://www.preventionweb.net/globalplatform/2009/programme/pre-sessions/v.php?id=92>

3 www.unisdr.org/eng/country-inform/ci-guiding-princip.htm

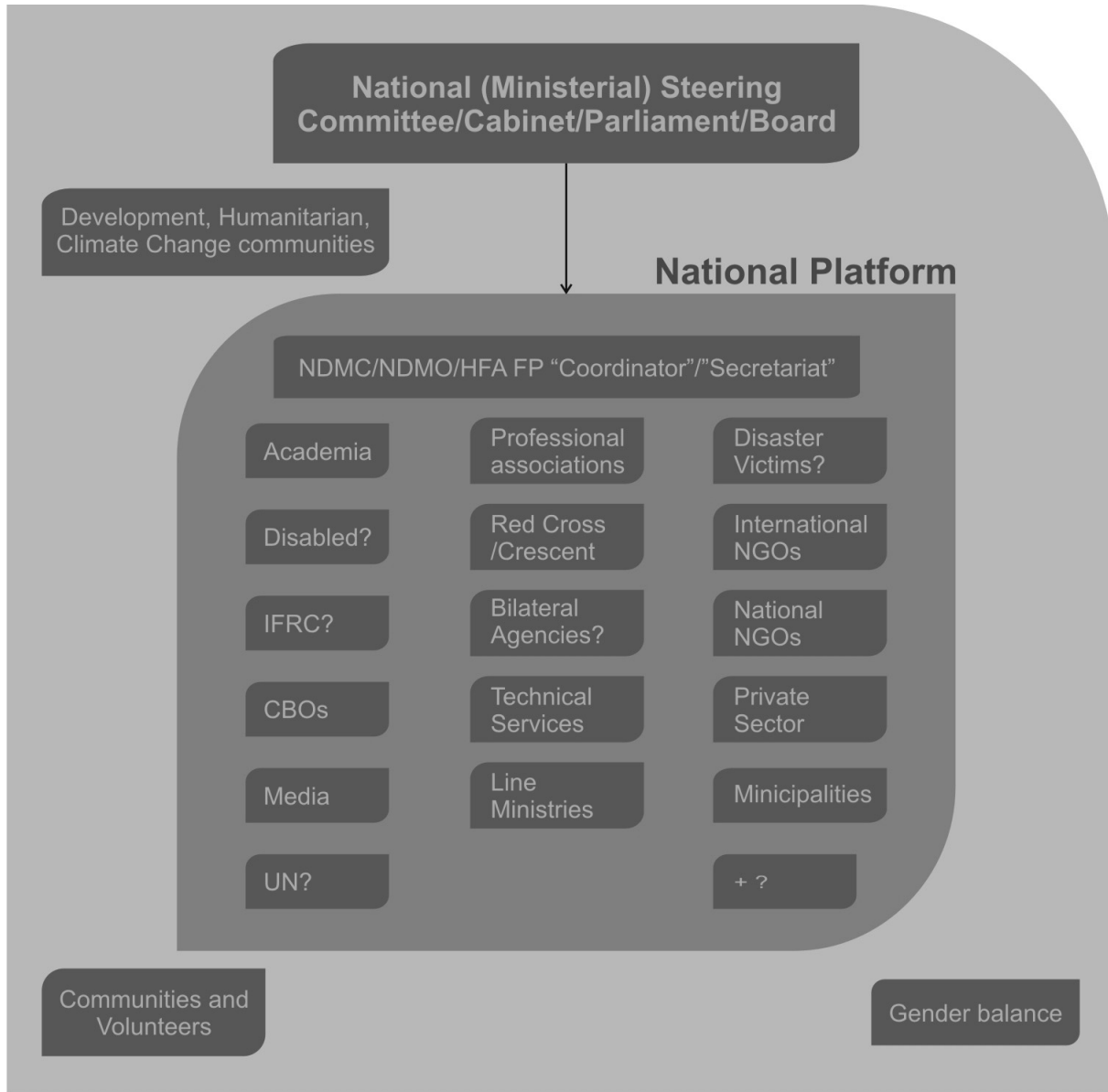


Fig.: Composition of National Platforms
 (Source: Overview of National Platforms for DRR: UNISDR, 2008)

OBJECTIVES OF NATIONAL PLATFORMS

The overarching goal of a National Platform for DRR is to contribute to the building of its country's resilience to disasters for the sake of sustainable development, by achieving the following key objectives:

- To serve as a coordination mechanism to enhance multi-stakeholder collaboration and coordination for the sustainability of DRR activities through a consultative and participatory process in line with the implementation of the HFA;
- To foster an enabling environment for developing a culture of prevention, through advocacy of and awareness-raising on DRR and the necessity and importance of integrating DRR into development policies, planning and programmes; and
- To facilitate the integration of DRR into national policies, planning and programmes in various development sectors as well as into international or bilateral development aid policies and programmes.

NATIONAL OWNERSHIP AND LEADERSHIP

Available information shows that dynamic National Platforms for DRR usually demonstrate strong national ownership and leadership of the DRR process, based on a shared understanding of DRR with its multi-sectoral and multi-disciplinary nature. They are active in promoting DRR, policy development, capacity development, raising public awareness and advocating the integration of DRR into development activities such as poverty reduction, education, health, environment, disaster management, and etc.

Good practices emphasize that dynamic National Platforms for DRR should help develop broader national systems for DRR and sustainable development. Their influence on national development and resource mobilization will depend on their capabilities to provide inputs and advices to policy and decision makers in developing institutional frameworks for the integration of disaster risk reduction in various development sectors that either create or reduce vulnerability to natural hazards.

MAIN PRINCIPLES FOR NATIONAL PLATFORMS

- National Platforms for DRR should view DRR as a national responsibility and a cross-cutting issue within sustainable development processes;
- National Platforms for DRR should utilize a participatory process to facilitate various sectors engagement, with their diverse perspectives and actions, and build on existing systems and mechanisms;
- National Platforms for DRR should influence positive changes through concerted and coordinated efforts particularly in policies, planning, administration and decision-making processes;
- National Platforms for DRR should encourage national and local implementation, adaptation and ownership of the HFA.

To apply these main principles, National Platforms for DRR need to focus on the following political, technical, participatory and resource mobilization components:

- The political component ensures strong political commitment from the top leadership.
- The technical component involves various activities such as developing knowledge bases on DRR, a methodological framework for the National Platform for DRR, and a set of disaster reduction indicators.

- The participatory component involves relevant groups, including various government bodies, the private sector, NGOs and academic institutions.

The resource mobilization component obtains resources required for developing National Platforms for DRR and carrying out their planned tasks.

PRIMARY ACTIVITIES OF NATIONAL PLATFORMS

The Hyogo Framework for Action provides a reference for assessing and monitoring achievements on DRR, thus facilitating the work of National Platforms for DRR when undertaking activities such as:

- Establishing baseline information for DRR, including disaster and risk profiles, national policies, strategies, capacities, resources and programmes;
- Identifying trends, gaps, concerns and challenges and setting forth accepted priority areas in DRR;
- Advocating the urgent need for developing or adopting policies and legislations for DRR;
- Benchmarking progress made in promoting DRR and its mainstreaming into development policies, planning and programmes;
- Developing result-oriented work plans of National Platforms for DRR to coordinate the DRR activities in line with the HFA;
- Coordinating joint efforts among members of National Platforms for DRR to reduce the vulnerability of people at relatively high risk;
- Monitoring, recording and reporting of disaster risk reduction actions at national and community levels in line with the HFA;
- Documenting lessons learned and good practices, and share the findings (including promoting twinning of National Platforms for DRR) at national, regional and international levels; and

Working towards better integration of DRR into national planning, policies and programmes in development and humanitarian assistance.

UN OFFICIAL RECOGNITION OF NATIONAL PLATFORMS

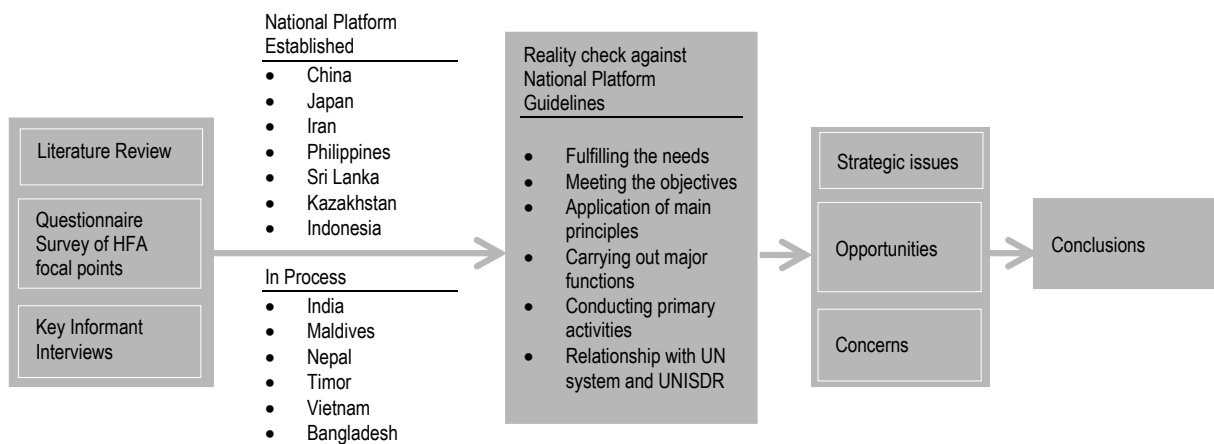
National Platforms for DRR, officially designated, express the interests of various national and local stakeholders in DRR. Through the legitimacy conferred upon them by their respective Governments, National Platforms for DRR can serve as effective mechanism for promoting DRR at the international level, accessing and exchanging knowledge and resources based on their individual experience and in cooperation with the ISDR System.

The establishment or strengthening of a National Platform for DRR can be formally announced directly to the head office or regional outreach units of the UNISDR secretariat in writing, through an official letter from official and diplomatic channels like the Office/Ministry responsible for DRR, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs or a Permanent Mission to the UN in Geneva or New York, with a copy to the UN Resident Coordinator.

REVIEWING THE PROGRESS OF NATIONAL PLATFORMS

Four years on from the endorsement of the HFA and one year away from its mid-term review, it is timely to review the progress of National Platforms in the Asia Pacific region as a mechanism for supporting the implementation of the HFA. The Asia region has fewer National Platforms for Disaster Risk Reduction than any other region, yet has demonstrated strong leadership in its commitment to disaster risk reduction. This report attempts to review the progress and challenges in the process of establishment and functioning of National Platforms in the Asia Pacific region, and draws conclusions and recommendations for future action.

The review process is based on desktop research, validated with a questionnaire survey and interviews with key informants, mainly the HFA focal points in countries in the Asia Pacific region that have either established National Platforms, or are in the process of doing so. The information thus gathered is further analysed on the basis of the principles laid down by the National Platform Guidelines, to assess progress, identify opportunities and concerns, and finally arrive at specific recommendations. The methodology is outlined as below:

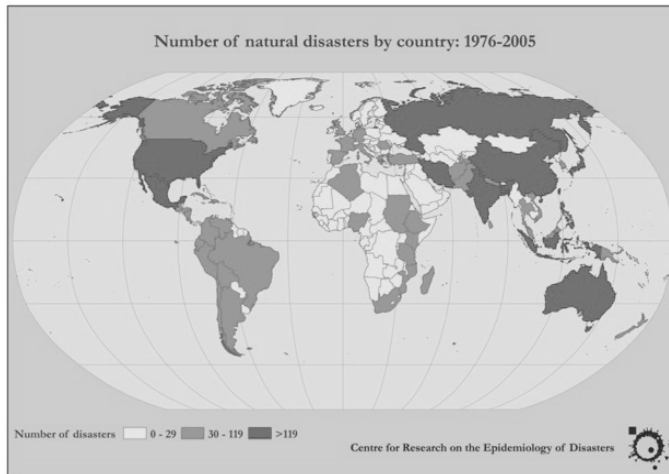


The National Platform Progress Review Process

2. NATIONAL PLATFORMS IN THE ASIA AND PACIFIC REGION

NATIONAL MULTI-STAKEHOLDER DRR MECHANISMS IN THE ASIA PACIFIC CONTEXT

Asia and the Pacific form the world's most disaster prone region. Due to its long history of frequent disasters, and highly vulnerable and poor communities, disaster management in the region has had a response orientation rather than a preparedness and mitigation one. As a result, traditional disaster management systems have been centered on relief and its management. This is also why many countries in the region have long established National Disaster Management Organisations or equivalent agencies that are based on civil defense backgrounds and on response orientation. The task of establishing national platforms on DRR has not taken roots for a number of reasons, one of which is this long rooted institutional strength that focuses on post disaster response. At the same time, the institutional arrangements in place for response are multi-sectoral, and to some extent multi-stakeholder, and have the potential to perform the functions of a National Platform with some modifications.



The Asia Pacific region is hit by more disasters than any other region. In terms of number of victims, its position is even higher, by huge margins. This has led to a trend of post disaster response mechanisms in most countries.



The process of National Platform formation has been the slowest in the Asia and Pacific region as compared to other parts of the world. There are many reasons for this, such as the continued focus on response, presence of existing institutions that play part of the intended role, resistance in managing change and resource constraints. These are discussed in following sections.

Seven countries have identified focal points and have officially launched National Platforms so far. The contexts and levels of achievements vary across countries. These may be looked at from the point of view of policy, plans, legislative framework, institutional framework and financial commitments.



EFFORTS TO PROMOTE THE DEVELOPMENT OF NATIONAL PLATFORMS

A number of initiatives have been taken up in the past years by UNISDR in partnership with CADRI, UNDP, ESCAP, ADPC and EC towards creating tools, establishing processes, bringing in technical expertise, setting up pilot projects and assisting policy development at a number of specifically vulnerable countries in the region. These initiatives fall under the following categories:

- Capacity development tools
- Regional strategy
- Integration of Climate Change experts as part of National Platforms
- Strong support in Maldives, India, Indonesia and Sri Lanka
- Building Resilience to Tsunamis in the Indian Ocean
- SNAP project

The HFA puts particular emphasis on the role of Regional Organizations for support to national processes, including National Platform establishment and strengthening. Though external support to demystify National Platforms and accelerate progress is needed, UNISDR, UNDP and IFRC support alone cannot be enough and concerted efforts are needed from other players. The specific attention to establishment of National Platforms in countries slow on the start-up phase, as well as capacity building for the nascent National Platforms are areas requiring special attention where experiences from other countries and even other regions can be brought in for making the process easier and faster.

Capacity development tools have been developed by CADRI and UNDP, to provide capacity enhancement services to both the UN system at the country level as well as governments. These include learning and training services and capacity development services to support governments to establish the foundation for advancing risk reduction. This tool, as applied in the case of the Philippines, will serve to support the capacity of existing and forthcoming National Platforms in coordinating actions on DRR.

A regional strategy is being developed by UNISDR Asia and Pacific and UNDP Regional Centre to promote jointly the development of effective national coordination mechanisms for DRR along the lines of HFA through UNDP-COs and other key in-country stakeholders. This is based on an approach of capitalizing on the present strengths in the countries where the UNDP has been present, has the goodwill of national governments and other stakeholders, and is in the present context already playing a role of bringing stakeholders together on a common platform for developmental as well as emergency response issues.

In view of the growing concern that Climate Change represent globally and for the Asia and Pacific region, integration of CC experts as part of National Platforms is also being attempted. Cases such as the Maldives and Bangladesh are particularly threatened by Climate Change impacts, and there is a clear approach here for inclusion of Climate Change as a major threat to be addressed under risk reduction initiatives.

Specific efforts are being made at present to assist with the strengthening of National Platforms in Maldives, India, Indonesia and Sri Lanka.

NATIONAL PLATFORMS ALREADY ESTABLISHED

Seven countries have formally established National Platforms for DRR. These are:

- China

The State Council of China established the China National Committee for the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction in April 1989. At the end of the International Decade, the State Council renamed the Committee the National Committee for Disaster Reduction (NCDR). It was declared in April 2005 to be China's National Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction, with the support of the UNISDR secretariat. The NCDR is a counseling and coordination structure operating under the guidance of the State Council's Vice-Premier responsible for disaster issues. It is hosted by the Ministry of Civil Affairs.

The NCDR has 34 members, who represent the range of expertise required for promoting and mainstreaming DRR into development planning and processes. These include Government Ministries, State Bureaus, National Defence Organisations, Technical Service Agencies and Civil Society Organisations. The NCDR has set up an Expert Committee of academics and other specialists, which serves as a think tank and provides advice for decision-making. The

NCDR is also responsible for sector analysis to inform decision-makers, meeting at least twice a year on these issues. In addition, each month the NCDR meets to summarise the disaster situation of the month and to analyse and predict the potential threats of disasters during the next month.

Primary activities of the NCDR are:

1. Efficient preparedness for response through better national coordination,
2. Defining standards to reduce risk,
3. Investments in reducing underlying risks, and
4. Promoting education on disaster management and disaster reduction.

National Committee for Disaster Reduction
(Ministry of Civil Affairs)

34 Multi-stakeholder Members

(Government Ministries, State Bureaus, National Defence Organisations, Technical Service Agencies and Civil Society Organisations)

Expert Committee
(Academics and specialists as think tank for advice for decision making)

The NCDR operates as a multi-sectoral and multi-stakeholder platform for DRR, meeting regularly to chart and monitor DRR actions.

The NCDR has been in existence for a long time, though under a different name. It fulfills the need of having a representative platform, specially as it is hosted by the Ministry of Civil Affairs. It has the range of DRR stakeholders and expertise represented. It also has a think tank comprising academics and specialists. The Platform thus fulfils the need and meets the objectives of a National Platform. It applies the main principles, and carries out functions and activities expected from a National Platform. It is a formally announced National Platform and is engaged with the UNISDR for DRR functions.

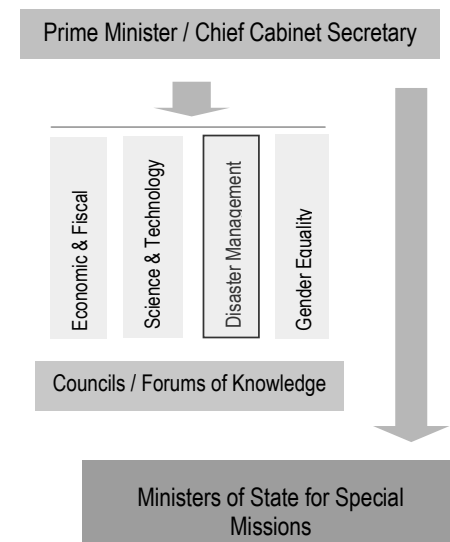
- Japan

Under the Basic Act on Disaster Control Measures, the Central Disaster Management Council was formed, its brief being to ensure the comprehensiveness of disaster risk management and to discuss matters of importance with regard to disaster management. The Council was designated as one of four Councils on key policy fields of the Cabinet Office. The four councils of important policies comprising relevant government ministers and persons of expertise have been established under the Prime Minister or the Chief Cabinet Secretary. These councils assist the Cabinet and the Prime Minister by serving as “forums of knowledge” for them. They are: Council on Economic and Fiscal Policy, Council for Science and Technology Policy, Central Disaster Management Council, and Council for Gender Equality.

Ministers of State for Special Missions are placed within the Cabinet Office in order to draft plans and provide comprehensive coordination for important Cabinet policies in a powerful and timely manner. Currently, Ministers of State for Special Missions are placed in charge of the following areas: Economic and Fiscal Policy, Regulatory Reform, Industrial Revitalization Corporation of Japan, Science and Technology Policy, Disaster Management, Okinawa and Northern Territories Affairs, Youth Affairs and Measures for Declining Birthrate, Gender Equality, Food Safety, and Financial Services.

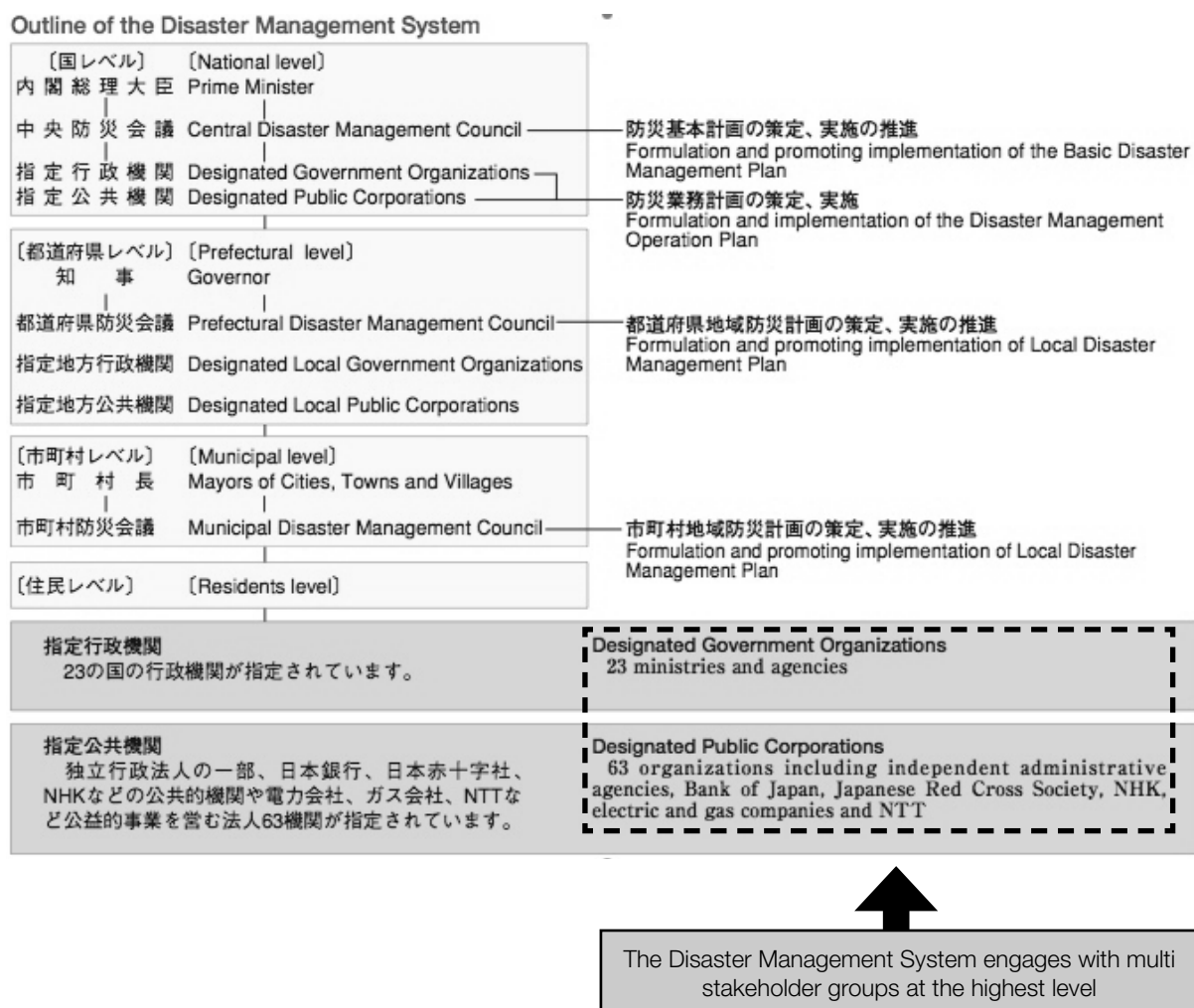
The duties of the Central Disaster Management Council are⁴:

- a) Formulation and promotion of implementation of the Basic Disaster Prevention Plan and Earthquake Countermeasures Plans;
- b) Formulation and promotion of implementation of the urgent measures plan for major disasters;
- c) Deliberating important issues on disaster reduction according to requests from the Prime Minister or Minister of State for Disaster Management; and
- d) Offering opinions regarding important issues on disaster reduction to the Prime Minister and Minister of State for Disaster Management.



Japan's National Platform system is centred around the highest level of government, with the Prime Minister and the Cabinet directly engaging with the stakeholders and think tank. It brings in sectors of social development and DRR concern. It uses a knowledge-based approach. Representation of civil society is limited, as are the sustained activities on a regular basis.

4 Japan National Progress Report on the Implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action, June 2009, http://www.preventionweb.net/files/9809_Japan.pdf



As illustrated in the figure above, the National Disaster Management System of Japan engages with multi stakeholder groups that include bank, media, civil society and infrastructure representatives besides the ministries and government agencies. Other than this, the Central Disaster Management Council, that reports to and gives opinion to the Prime Minister or Minister of State for Disaster Management, has heads of designated public corporations, President of Japanese Red Cross Society, President of Japan Broadcasting Corporation, Nippon Telegraph and Telephone Corporation, and subject experts as its members⁵. This very structure ensures multi stakeholder representation and cooperation at the highest level.

5 Director General for Disaster Management, 'Disaster Management in Japan', Cabinet Office, Government of Japan, <http://www.bousai.go.jp/1info/pdf/saigai.pdf>

■ Iran

Iran was one of the first countries to create its National Platform, the Iranian National Platform on Disaster Risk Reduction (IR/DRNP), as early as February 2005, immediately after the WCDR. The working mechanism, under the supervision of the National Disaster Management Organisation of the Ministry of Interior, is of a multi-sectoral National Platform, with designated responsibilities at the national and local levels to facilitate coordination between different stakeholders. The National Platform meets at two levels: (i) High level meetings every three months by the Ministry of Interior, and (ii) Expert level meetings held by the Secretariat as and when needed. For purpose of implementing the HFA, the National Platform has identified a range of projects for each Priority for Action, and these are being implemented under the National Platform's Biennial Working Plans.

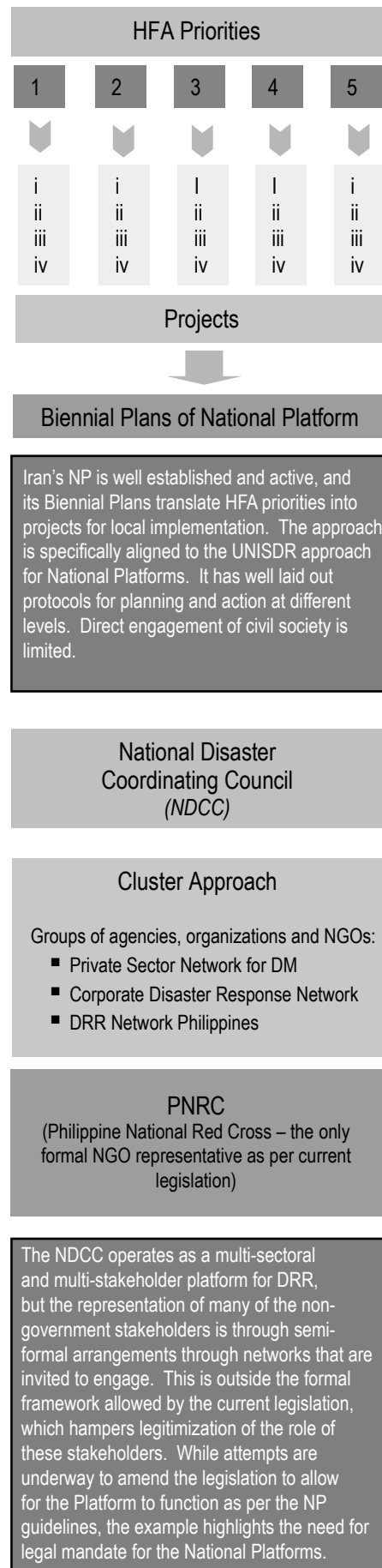
■ Philippines

With the adoption of HFA in 2005, the National Disaster Coordinating Council (NDCC) took steps to shift from the focus on relief and response to that of Disaster Risk Management. Advocacy roles were undertaken by various stakeholders in order for the Philippine Congress to legislate a new and more responsive DRM Act. A major achievement has been the drafting of "Strengthening Disaster Risk Reduction in the Philippines: Strategic National Action Plan (SNAP) 2009-2019" as well as the "Strategic Plan on Community-Based Disaster Risk Management (SP-CBDRM) 2007-2011."

The UN Cluster Approach has been adopted by the NDCC as a coordination tool to ensure a more coherent and effective response by mobilizing groups of agencies, organizations and NGOs. The SNAP and national framework for DRM also help promote a national platform for DRR.

The current legislation, PD 1566, limits the membership of non-government entities to only the Philippine National Red Cross (PNRC). However, this has not prevented the private sector, civil society, and academia from participating in NDCC's activities such as consultation workshops and seminars.

Involving organized networks and federations facilitates the communication and dialogue process. Among these organizations are the PSNDM (Private Sector Network for Disaster Management) and the CDRN (Corporate Disaster Response Network); both are networks of private companies. Most recently, the DRR NetPhils (Disaster Risk Reduction Network Philippines) was formed by civil society organizations involved in CBDRM, advocacy for the passage of the DRM Bill, and awareness raising and meaningful action towards the SNAP formulation and



implementation at national and local levels. The national platform for DRR is still evolving but will be clearly defined with the new DRM law.

- Sri Lanka

In May 2005, Disaster Management Act No. 13 of 2005 was enacted. A National Disaster Management Plan was subsequently prepared and is awaiting cabinet approval.

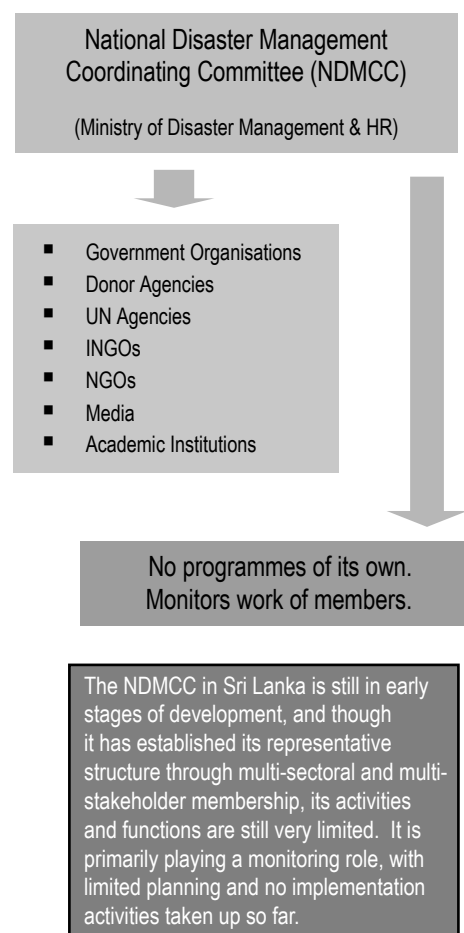
A National Platform for DRR, named as National Disaster Management Coordinating Committee (NDMCC), was established in October 2007 and formally designated in January 2008. It comprises representatives from government organizations, donors, UN agencies, I/NGOs, Media and Academic institutions, and operates under the chairmanship of the Secretary, Ministry of Disaster Management and Human Resources.

A programme has been developed with UNOCHA to monitor who is working where and on what activities. The NDMCC regularly monitors work programmes of members to avoid duplication and to facilitate coordination for implementation. Some prominent activities of NDMCC since its inception are:

1. Establishing baseline information for DRR, including disaster and risk profiles, national policies, strategies, capacities, resources and programmes.
2. Identified targets, gaps, concerns and challenges and setting forth accepted priority areas in DRR.

Major achievements:

- A rapid and steady improvement of the National Platform's function since past 18 months. New improvements came in such as annual work plan, formation of core groups, increase of membership up to 90 members, diverse sectoral participation, new partnerships and regular meetings.
- Two core groups formed: Training & education core group, and Disaster risk reduction core group. Activities completed include compilation of all resource materials on DM published by different agencies, finalization of training materials for disaster managers ToT programme, and development of guidelines for community based disaster management mapping.
- Quarterly disaster management newsletter from the first quarter of 2009.
- Development of format with guidelines for collection of information about disaster management programmes conducted by stake holders (3W database).
- Women's participation in NDMCC is approximately at 30 percent.



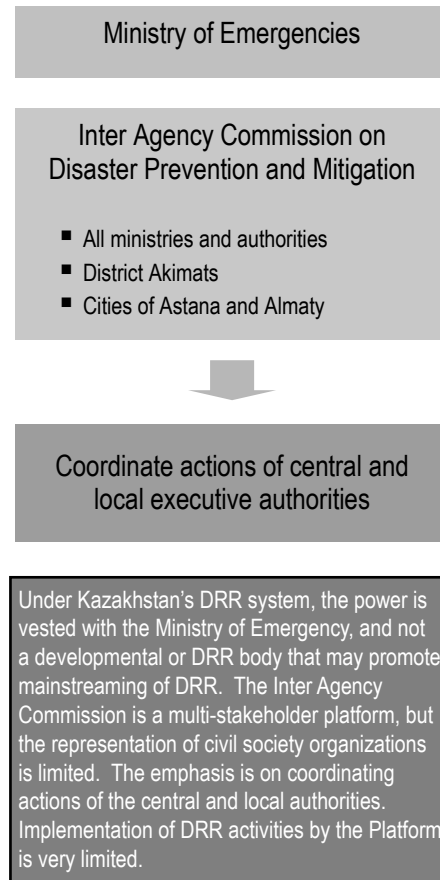
Major challenges faced:

- Motivating stakeholders to be accountable on NDMCC activities while providing them the ownership of the NDMCC
 - All stakeholder groups are not yet represented in the National Platform
 - Difficulty in influencing policy decisions due to absence of policy level stakeholders
 - The National Platform does not carry out activities for documenting lessons learned and good practices, and sharing the findings
 - The capacity to monitor and report progress still needs to be built between the National Platform and UNISDR
 - Financial, technical, political and public support still needs to be built to support DRR
 - Media and CBO participation needs improvement
 - No regular funding source
- Kazakhstan

To prevent disasters of technological and natural character, and to ensure the safety and security of the population of the Republic of Kazakhstan, effective measures have been taken for implementation of the “President’s Decree on measures aimed to prevent disasters in the territory of the Republic”, dated 19 March 2004 (No. 451). To implement the President’s decree, the Ministry developed and the Government approved the “concept of prevention and mitigation of natural and technological disasters and improvement of the state management system in this field” in 2005. Following this, the State Program for 2007-2015 was developed.

The State system of disaster prevention and mitigation was established for the purpose of improving the coordination of activity of the central and local executive authorities, by the decision of the Government of Kazakhstan on 28 August 2007. This forms the functional basis of the National Platform for responding to disasters.

Ministry of Emergencies of the Republic of Kazakhstan is responsible for the general management of the State system in relation to disaster prevention and mitigation. To coordinate actions of the central and local executive authorities and organizations in Kazakhstan, the Inter-Agency Commission on Disaster Prevention and Mitigation has been established. The activities of this commission have participation of all ministries and authorities, district akimats, and the cities of Astana and Almaty. It covers all agencies involved in ensuring the safety of the population.



- Indonesia

The declaration of commitment to establish the National Platform for DRR took place on November 20th, 2008. Since then, series of meetings and focused group discussions were convened to discuss the vision, mission, function, organizational structure, etc. of the National Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction, which was then referred as PLANAS PRB (Platform Nasional Pengurangan Risiko Bencana). These activities/processes have led to the final draft of PLANAS' concept note and these activities have been able to bring multi-stakeholder participants to discuss together the details of the PLANAS.

Participants of PLANAS meetings and FGDs are from various stakeholder groups, including Government, Civil Society Organisations, International Community / Convergence Group, University / Academia, Private Sector and the media.

These stakeholder groups are now working towards formalizing the National Platform for DRR. An integrated programme and activity plan was finalised in April 2009. The focus on DRR under the National Action Plan (2006-09) is backed with the Disaster Management Law of 2007, and allocation of budget for DRR in 2007, 2008 and 2009 as an initiative to make DRR a priority in the Annual Development Plans.

The National Platform establishment process in Indonesia is in its initial stages. Participants of current activities include National Agency for Disaster Management (BNPB), National Planning Board (BAPPENAS), and House of Representative/Parliament who have high level of commitment to mainstream DRR into development and planning. Non government stakeholders including NGOs, private sector and media are also engaged in various activities. NGOs and CBOs have played critical role for supporting the drafting and enactment of Law No. 24/2007 on Disaster Management, as well as its ancillary regulations; they are also engaged in building and disseminating early warning information at community level.



Structure of National Platform in Indonesia.
(BNPB, 2008)

DRR is seen as a common issue involving all, such as the Convergence Group, Forum for DRR University, Forum for Disaster Mitigation, the Consortium for Education in Indonesia and other thematic and geographical groups such as the Merapi Forum, Bengawan Solo Forum, Palu Forum etc.

The government has taken a further step by stating its willingness in the Medium Term Development Planning (Rencana Pembangunan Jangka Menengah/RPJM) of 2010-2014 that DRR will be mainstreamed and become the priority in the national programmes.

The Indonesian National Platform for DRR sources its funding from different stakeholders, including the government, members, as well as other non-restricted/binding sources.

Observations from Established National Platforms

The National Platforms of the countries listed above have been formally designated to UNISDR as “National Platforms” with necessary supporting documentation (decrees, statutes etc.). The formal establishment of the above National Platforms has been along the lines of the following key principles, as stated in their national reports:

- Multi-stakeholder and multidisciplinary
- Consultative approach
- Capacity to mobilize key national stakeholders

The UNISDR has, based on the initiative and declaration by the national governments, recognized the bodies as National Platforms for DRR, and has supported their strengthening. The primary constraint in reviewing the performance of these National Platforms is that they are very new and need more time to establish themselves and to show results, particularly in view of the newness of the DRR approach and the bureaucratic complexities of establishing and operating multi-stakeholder bodies.

On the whole, it is seen that the established National Platforms are facing some serious challenges, such as:

- Finding the legal mandate to operate as per the National Platform approach
- Ensuring representation of all sections and stakeholders, particularly NGOs
- Translation of intent into activity implementation on the ground
- Sustainable funding sources

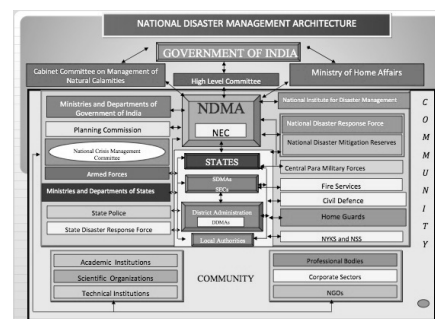
RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

A number of countries have started taking steps towards the establishment of National Platforms, and are in different stages of progress therein. The prominent ones with progress on this are:

- India

Discussions are ongoing with the Ministry of Home Affairs, which also is the HFA focal point for India. With the background of the National Disaster Management Act of 2005, and the subsequent establishment of a National Disaster Management Authority, India is in the process of preparing a national policy and developing national and sub-national plans for disaster management. A National Disaster Management Architecture has been developed in this regard, which gives the basic structure and range of the stakeholders for a National Platform, but the actual linkages between the stakeholders and the institutionalization of the platform is yet to take place. The duties related to disaster management are currently divided between the Ministry of Home Affairs and the National Disaster Management Authority that is headed by the Prime Minister. The National Institute for Disaster Management provides academic support and did play the role of a National Platform in the past during the formulation of a draft disaster management plan for the country by a High Powered Committee on Disaster Management. It is now, however, not playing such a role anymore. The primary responsibility of coordination disaster management actions of the government rests with the National Executive Committee mandated to carry out such functions by the National Act on Disaster Management. It is, however, a completely government centric body with no representation of the civil society.

On the other hand, a number of bodies play the role of multi-stakeholder engagement. While there used to be a Government of India – NGO Committee on Disaster Management in the 1990's, it was disbanded when the charge of disaster management shifted from the Ministry of Agriculture to the Ministry of Home Affairs. Around the same time, SPHERE-India⁶ emerged as a national level platform for humanitarian aid agencies, with the national government, UN bodies and the Red Cross participating in its meetings. In addition, the National Alliance for Disaster Risk Reduction (NADRR⁷) is a platform of NGOs working on DRR issues and functions with support of the NDMA. The Confederation of Indian Industries (CII) has a National Committee on Disaster Management with corporate and NGO members, which has national though irregular meetings. The Disaster Resource Network (DRN India⁸), is a corporate collaborative that works to build capacity for collective disaster response and has a number of interventions to its credit. The



National Disaster Management Architecture of India (Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India, 2008)

India has a well established democracy, and within its established framework the National Executive Committee linked to the Ministry of Home Affairs and the National Disaster Management Authority plays the role of multi-sectoral coordination in the disaster management context. There have been bodies like the Government-NGO Committee on Disaster Management in the past, and there are initiatives like the National Task Force on Role of NGOs in Disaster Management presently under the National Disaster Management Authority, but these initiatives have either not sustained, or are de-linked with the mainstream activities of the National Executive Committee. The focus thus remains on approaches focused on government agencies and government supported academia, with limited engagement of NGOs. DRR actions are implemented under UNDP and Government of India programmes, though not directly under a National Platform or its equivalent.

6 <http://www.sphereindia.org.in/>

7 <http://www.nadrindia.org/>

8 http://www.hccindia.com/four_pillars.php?id=13

NDMA has also established a number of National Task Forces, including those of NGOs, Corporate Agencies, Media and technical sectoral groups that are working towards development of National Guidelines on various themes. All of these bodies collectively represent most of the multi stakeholder representatives that need to be brought together as the National Platform in India.

In view of a large number of fora working on these themes within and across various sectors, the option of designating one existing forum as the National Platform is not an easy one for India.

- Maldives

Under the previous government a Project Steering Committee existed, which played the role of a National Platform. A Disaster Management Bill was drafted by the Committee through coordination and consultation of various stakeholders. Now Maldives is in its initial stages of establishing a democracy and in the process of decentralization, hence the National Platform establishment process is taking time. The New Government has drafted a Civil Defence Bill and based on its acceptance the progress on the National Platform will be determined.

Discussions have been going on for the past two years, and the National Disaster Management Centre has been endorsed by the government as the national coordination mechanism for DRR, but this has not yet officially been designated as the National Platform nor the status conveyed to UNISDR. Maldives is still seeking capacity support in DRR to carry out its mandate most effectively. The country has very few NGOs and INGOs, and hence their representation in the National Platform will be relatively easily manageable.

There is no national policy, and hence stakeholders are not clear of their role in DRR. Fund allocation systems are still not established. Past DRR initiatives have been ad-hoc, and need to be streamlined. Clarity of roles and responsibilities, budget allocations and training of personnel are primary areas requiring attention. The NDM Centre can progress only with highest level of support from the government. The identified approach is of starting from island community level and building the system upwards. Though the willingness is there at the level of the NDM Centre, it has low capacity and person-power to carry out activities.

Alternate platforms fulfilling part of the NP functions in India:

- National Alliance for Disaster Risk Reduction
- National NGO Task Force, NDMA
- Thematic Task Forces, NDMA
- SPHERE India
- National Committee on Disaster Management, Confederation of Indian Industries
- Disaster Resource Network - India

Maldives is in very initial stages of establishing a National Platform. It is still in the process of strengthening its nascent democracy and the National Platform is part of the advanced system development under this process. It is expected that the National Platform will be part of the actions related to the Civil Defence Act once it is accepted. The civil society and academic field in Maldives is not very wide, and hence their involvement in the National Platform will not be difficult once the process is taken up.

■ Vietnam:

Vietnam has not established its National Platform in according with the UNISDR definition so far. However, many related activities have been effectively carried out, mainly through the efforts of the relevant ministries of the government as well as initiative such as the Natural Disaster Mitigation Partnership.

The Natural Disaster Mitigation Partnership (NDMP) is both an agreement and an entity serving the Government, donors, NGOs and other stakeholders in disaster management in Vietnam. The current phase (Phase II) will end in June 2009 and a planning mission was conducted from November 2008 - February 2009 to examine the feasibility of a possible NDMP Phase III. This upcoming phase will include steps to fulfill the commitments to the Hyogo Framework for Action, including the establishment of a National Platform. The Platform, in the shape of a partnership, will have as members the government, donors, NGOs, academic institutions, regional/international organizations, and private sector representatives.

Vietnam has a unique institutional arrangement in the form of the NDMP, which is truly multi-stakeholder and has been serving the disaster management sector through various DRR activities since its establishment with support from UNDP. It is an example of an institution functioning as a National Platform under a different name and fulfilling its functions in a cross-sectoral manner. It also demonstrates the success of a combination of external support and internal commitment.

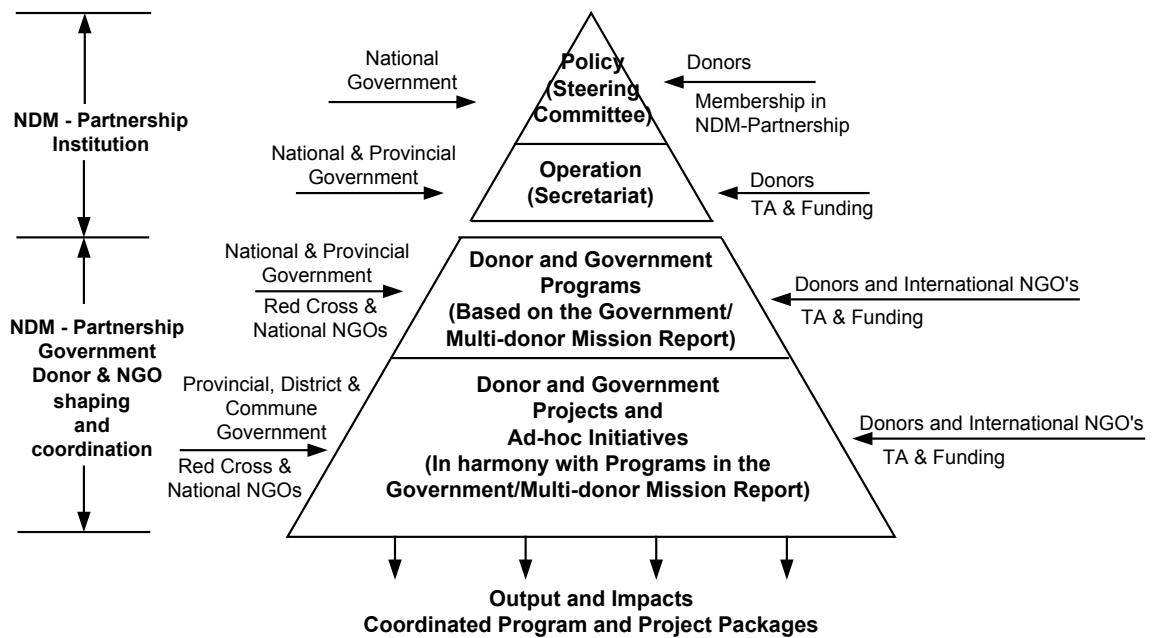


Fig.: Institutional Framework of NDM Partnership, Vietnam

Major Achievements:

- Vietnamese government organizes annual meetings to review, and evaluate the DRR activities within the government systems. Other thematic meetings/workshops are also organized with the participation of other stakeholders
- The Natural Disaster Mitigation Partnership (NDMP), relevant organizations, Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MARD), and Central Committee for Flood and Storm Control (CCFSC) have also organized many thematic workshops to deal with the emerging issues occurred during the process of DRR.
- NDMP's Inter-Agency Working Group (IAWG) and Disaster Management Working Group (DMWG) actively and regularly share and discuss DRR issues.
- National Strategy for Natural Disaster Prevention and Mitigation, National Target Programme on Climate Change Adaptation, National Action Plan and Ministerial and Provincial Action Plans.

Major Challenges Faced⁹:

- The need to ensure NGO participation and a sufficient voice in policy discussion.
- Meaningful policy discussion would require input from other sectors and levels within the Government. Thus the national platform would need to ensure continued representation from relevant ministries, as well as some representation from provincial or lower level disaster management staff.
- The national forum would also need to include representation from the academic community, the private sector and regional/international organizations.
- Finally, a collaborative method of identifying issues for discussion and setting of the policy discussion agenda would need to be employed.

9 Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, 'Viet Nam National Progress Report on the implementation of the Hyogo Framework For Action', April 2009

- Nepal

The National Disaster Risk Management Plan was developed through consultations carried out with all national stakeholders (national, local and thematic) to facilitate the mainstreaming of DRR. Some progress has been made on establishing a National Platform, but in the absence of a systematic policy or institutional commitment. Ministry of Home Affairs has initiated the process to establish a multi-sectoral national platform with representative from concerned government agencies, UN agencies, donors, INGOs, NGOs, media, academic institutions, private sector, and CBOs. Concrete initiatives are, however, yet to be taken up for activation of the National Platform.

Nepal initiated the process of HFA implementation much earlier, and incorporated the HFA principles in its National Disaster Risk Management Plan, for which wide consultations were conducted. It is, however, still to establish a National Platform for want of a wider policy and legal framework at national level, and institutional commitment. There are no initiatives or activities on this front, and there are no parallel institutional arrangements that are fulfilling the role of a National Platform as of now.

- East Timor

The National Plan for Disaster Risk Management has been revised along the lines of HFA and submitted to Government for adoption. The existing National Disaster Management Office (NDMO) is currently being transformed into a National Department for Disaster Management under Inter-Ministerial Committee for DRR as National Platform for DRR.

East Timor has taken the approach of institutionalizing its existing, government centric, nodal organization, the NDMO, as a National Platform. Being under an inter-ministerial committee, it is cross-sectoral and has the mandate for performing its functions, but lacks representation of non government stakeholders as a multi-stakeholder platform. There are no significant DRR activities being implemented by the Platform so far.

- Bangladesh

While overall institutional commitment for establishment of a National Platform for DRR has been attained, achievements are neither comprehensive nor substantial. The country has a long tradition to work in multi sectoral and multi stakeholder environment and culture, which has been reflected in the SOD (Standing Order on Disaster). The National Advisory Committee is the national multi sectoral platform for DRR, which needs be activated, as embodied in the draft Act. The roles and functions of the said committee in relation to DRR are, however, not well defined.

Bangladesh has a long standing institutional lead on disaster preparedness and risk reduction in the region, being the first country to establish a ministry for disaster management. The progress on the National Platform, however, has been sluggish despite a strong multi-stakeholder presence and tradition of work. This can be attributed to the lack of clarity in the roles and functions of the proposed Platform in the form of the National Advisory Committee in the legal provisions.

- Mongolia

The Parliament of Mongolia adopted the Law on Disaster Protection in 2004, and established the NEMA (National Emergency Management Agency) of Mongolia. NEMA developed a National Platform for Strengthening Disaster Protection Capacity of Mongolia in line with the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015. NEMA is implementing the UNDP Project “Strengthening the Disaster mitigation and management system in Mongolia” and in the framework of the project, a beginning was made for developing a disaster management system based on local communities.

The establishment of the NEMA and the parliamentary and legal backing provided to it make the policy environment conducive to coordinated disaster management in Mongolia. The National Platform, established by NEMA and the UNDP supported activities for capacity building indicate progress, but the multi-stakeholder nature of the Platform, particularly the engagement with civil society actors is limited. Self initiated and sustainable activities of the Platform on DRR issues are also limited.

VERY LIMITED PROGRESS

- Korea, Rep of

Substantial achievement has been attained but with recognized limitations in key aspects, such as financial resources and operational capacities. In 2006, the Disaster Mitigation and Countermeasures Task Force was established, inviting private experts to survey and analyze disaster causes and to feedback what went wrong in disaster sites. The task force organizes an annual forum inviting local governments’ officials and experts in private sector to find better ways to minimize disaster risks in Korea. Since the Disaster Mitigation and Countermeasures Task Force is composed of officials and private experts, citizens in disaster sites are not represented in the task force and their opinions are not usually reflected.

There are a number of countries in the Asia Pacific region wherein progress on the establishment and activation of National Platforms has been very limited or close to none. Though there is a presence of multi-sectoral and multi-stakeholder players in all the countries, clear mechanisms mandated with powers and resources have not emerged yet. Some form of coordination mechanisms do exist in most cases, but these are primarily for coordinating post disaster response, and are housed within government systems without any significant role of non governmental stakeholders.

The country cases alongside illustrate these key characteristics:

1. Multi-sectoral, but government centric mechanisms
2. Commitment made, but little legal mandate
3. Focus mainly on emergency preparedness, response and recovery
4. DRR commitment primarily driven by UN and SNAP process
5. No resource allocation for sustained DRR work
6. No significant activities carried out on DRR so far

- Lao People's Democratic Republic

Minor progress has been made so far, with few signs of forward action in plans or policy. A proposal is under consideration for expanding the membership of the NDMC to include other important sectors. Good working relationships between stakeholders do exist, although most are on bilateral basis through MOUs between the NDMO and NGOs. The Inter Agency Standing Committee for natural disaster response preparedness is more actively involving different stakeholders in disaster management with UN agencies currently leading the group. This forum is seen as a potential foundation for a national multi sectoral platform that the NDMC/NDMO may assume leadership of in the near future. There is, however, no agreed plan or road map for the formation of a National Platform. Overlapping of mandates and duplication of efforts are key challenges. NDMO's authority to initiate intersectoral actions is inadequate and the current strategic plan on disaster management is too broad to provide appropriate direction for intersectoral actions in disaster risk reduction.

- New Zealand

While an institutional commitment has been attained, achievements are neither comprehensive nor substantial. No national committee or forum for disaster risk reduction exists in New Zealand. However, committees or fora exist for managing particular hazards and risks, for example, biosecurity, civil defence emergency management, pandemic, transport security.

A formal structure exists nationally for emergency preparedness, response and recovery management. The central decision-making body of executive government that addresses emergency management is the Cabinet Committee for Domestic & External Security Coordination (DES). The DES committee is chaired by the Prime Minister, and includes those Ministers responsible for departments that play essential roles in such situations. To support that process, an Officials' Committee for Domestic and External Security Coordination (ODESC), consisting of the departmental chief executives, provides strategic policy advice to the DES ministers. The ODESC is supported by the National Crisis Management Centre that coordinates operations nationally and is led by the agency that has primary responsibility for managing the emergency, depending on its kind.

- Singapore

Singapore's OPS Civil Emergency (CE) Plan is a national contingency plan for managing large scale civil and natural disasters. This plan spells out the roles and functions of each agency whose distinct expertise is required to support the operations. Singapore Civil Defence Force (SCDF) has been entrusted by the Singapore Government to be the Incident Manager (IM) for civil emergencies that is defined as sudden incidents involving the loss of lives or damage to properties on a large scale. As the pre-designated Incident Manager for civil emergencies, SCDF is the overall in-charge of the multi-agency response under the Operations Civil Emergency Plan, or "Ops CE".

Some progress has been made on HFA implementation, but without systematic policy or institutional commitment. The Singapore Civil Defence Force and the Police Force are actively engaged by different responsible agencies in their respective disaster risk reduction effort. At the moment, each agency is responsible for their own areas of disaster risk reduction effort and warning.

- Tajikistan

Institutional commitment for implementation of the HFA has been attained, but achievements are neither comprehensive nor substantial. A special resolution of the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan created the State Commission for Emergency Situations in 2002. Resolutions of the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan ordered formation of 15 Civil Defense service units on the basis of key ministries and organizations, and determined their basic functions. The Government, through a resolution, created non-military formations for Civil Defense and approved their regulation in 2007. The Rapid Emergency Assessment and Coordination Team, consisting of international and local organizations and agencies (donor and non-governmental organizations, bilateral and multilateral organizations, various ministries), is a partnership for management of risk of natural disasters in Tajikistan. This mechanism aims at coordination in risk management, in response to natural disasters and in recovery.

- Cambodia

To address the implementation of the HFA in Cambodia, the National Committee for Disaster Management (NCDM) and the Ministry of Planning (MOP) spearheaded the formulation of a “Strategic National Action Plan for Disaster Risk Reduction 2008 – 2015” (SNAP) for the Royal Government of Cambodia (RGC). The SNAP was developed through a government-led participatory process that involved getting the views and opinion of different disaster management stakeholders in the country including disaster management officials from local governments (provincial, district and commune levels), local and international NGOs, and institutional donor agencies. One of the components identified for action by the SNAP is creation and strengthening of a national DRR coordination mechanism or “National DRR Platform”.

- Thailand

The Department of Disaster Prevention and Mitigation (DDPM), Ministry of Interior, in the capacity of the Secretariat and administrative arm of the National Disaster Prevention and Mitigation Committee, which is the highest policy-making body for disaster management in Thailand, was mandated to develop the SNAP for Thailand. Various coordinating mechanism existed at national level to facilitate the effective implementation of disaster risk reduction plan of all stakeholders. These mechanisms included the National Platform that comprised National Disaster Prevention and Mitigation Committee, the main policy making and coordinating body for disaster risk management in Thailand, under which the Steering Task Force for SNAP Development Sub Committee was established. It was recommended that another multi-stakeholder in nature coordinating mechanism or national platform be established at national level to provide advice and to monitor and evaluate the implementation work of all agencies. The members of this Committee should comprise not only the representatives from government agencies and public enterprises but also the representatives from civil society, private sector, mass media, technical and scientific entities, international community etc.

APPRAISAL OF NPs ESTABLISHED AND IN PROCESS

INDICATORS									
	Name and nature of NP	Multi stakeholder nature	Main functions	Level of activities	Major achievements	Strengths	Weaknesses	Challenges	
NATIONAL PLATFORMS ESTABLISHED									
China	National Committee for Disaster Reduction under Ministry of Civil Affairs	34 members including government agencies, technical agencies and civil society organisations	Knowledge support for decision making. Regular review of situation and threats. Support benchmarking, coordination and education	The review meetings are regular and focus on assessment and planning. The implementation of DRR activities is generally weak.	Alignment with IDNDR and HFA approaches from the beginning. Establishment of the Platform and regular functioning as per protocols established.	Commitment of the government at the highest level. Institutional arrangements put in place. Emphasis on knowledge based and informed decision making.	Implementation of DRR activities is weak. Funding mechanism for sustained DRR work by the Platform is absent. Engagement of line ministries is low.	To move from a decision support system to a Platform for leading DRR work. To have sustained resource commitment for DRR activities.	
Japan	Four forums of knowledge supporting the Prime Minister's Office / Chief Cabinet Secretary	The Forums as well as the Ministers of State for Special Missions are government centric and representation of other stakeholders is limited	To advise the highest decision makers in government with core policy related and special knowledge	Generation of knowledge based plans and provide comprehensive coordination in powerful and timely manner	Multi sectoral disaggregated platform structure providing high level of knowledge support for decision making and planning	Commitment at the highest level of government. High end knowledge based approach leading to highly informed decision making and planning	Absence of singular focal platform structure. Representation of non governmental stakeholders weak. Implementation of DRR activities largely indirect.	Engagement with and empowerment of non governmental stakeholders.	
Iran	Iranian National Platform on DRR under National Disaster Management Organisation of Ministry of Interior	The Platform is institutionalized with a multi-sectoral structure. Multi-stakeholder coordination is on the mandate, but not strong in the structure itself.	Facilitate coordination between different stakeholders at national and local levels	The activity planning is highly advanced, with Biennial Plans for activities as per the HFA priorities. Regular meetings and consistency in approach.	A national system of planning and implementing DRR activities oriented to the HFA. Direct implementation of field based activities such as school safety.	Very proactive process of establishing the Platform. Very clear planning system completely oriented towards implementation of the HFA.	Representation of non governmental stakeholders on the Platform is weak.	Engaging with and ensuring participation of a truly representative range of stakeholders, particularly from civil society.	

INDICATORS									
	Name and nature of NP	Multi stakeholder nature	Main functions	Level of activities	Major achievements	Strengths	Weaknesses	Challenges	
COUNTRIES									
Philippines	National Disaster Coordinating Council with a UN cluster approach	The core of the Platform is mainly government centric, with other stakeholders engaged in a limited way.	Coordination tool to ensure a more coherent and effective response by mobilizing groups of agencies.	Preparation of SNAP and Strategic Plan on CBDRM. Coordination functions carried out through meetings.	Strategic Plan on Community Based DRM. Corporate and civil society actors engaged indirectly despite legal hurdles.	Commitment at highest level of government. This has led to initiation of legislative changes.	Representation of NGO restricted to the Red Cross due to present legislative restriction. Engagement of line ministries is low.	Shifting focus from response to DRR more effectively. Ensuring truly multi-stakeholder nature. Implementation of DRR activities with sustained resources	
Sri Lanka	National Disaster Management Coordinating Committee under Ministry of DM and HR.	Range of government and non government stakeholders, including academia, UN and media and donors	Monitoring the work programmes of members to avoid duplication and to facilitate coordination.	Establishing baseline information. Situation analysis. Monitoring of work of members.	Preparation of National Disaster Management Plan. Identification and prioritization of DRR work areas, needs, targets and gaps.	Multi stakeholder platform with wide representation. Monitoring based approach developed with UN support.	No implementation of direct activities so far. New establishment, still in early processes of establishment.	Finding sustenance of implementation actions and resource commitment for the same.	
Kazakhstan	Inter Agency Commission on Disaster Prevention and Mitigation, under Ministry of Emergencies	The Platform is largely government centric with limited engagement with non governmental stakeholders	Coordination of activities of central and local executive authorities.	Taking up measures aimed to prevent disasters, both natural and technological, and improvement of the state management system in this field.	Highest level of commitment attained through presidential decrees for a DRR approach by the national and local governments.	Commitment level, backed with legislative mandate. Emphasis on local level actions and coordination at all levels.	Representation of civil society organizations, academia and other non governmental stakeholders is very limited.	Shifting focus from Emergency Management to true DRR actions. Engagement with non government stakeholders.	
Indonesia	PLANAS (Platform Nasional)	-	-	-	-	Multi stakeholder consultations held for planning the platform.	-	Ensuring sustained resource flow and commitment for DRR actions	

INDICATORS								
	Name and nature of NP	Multi stakeholder nature	Main functions	Level of activities	Major achievements	Strengths	Weaknesses	Challenges
COUNTRIES								
SOME PROGRESS MADE								
India	National Executive Committee, under National Disaster Management Authority and linked to Ministry of Home Affairs	The Platform is largely government centric with representation of non government stakeholders being very limited	Planning, coordination and monitoring of activities in the area of disaster management and DRR	Meetings for coordination and planning purposes.	Mobilisation of opinion and state commitment for focus on DRR work	High position within government structure for influencing decision making.	Very limited representation of civil society stakeholders. Interaction of the platform with implementation process of DRR activities is limited. Role definition between NDMA and MHA, and status of Platform lacks clarity.	Ensuring true multi-stakeholder nature of Platform through participation of non governmental stakeholders. Finding legal mandate and sustained resources to ensure implementation of DRR work.
Maldives	Project Steering Committee existed earlier. Now new system of National Disaster Management Centre to come in place on approval of Civil Defence Bill.	-	-	-	-	-	-	Ensuring sustained resources for implementation of DRR actions.

3. FINDINGS

This section draws upon the appraisal of the National Platforms operational and being established in the region, as arrived at based on review of country reports, questionnaire responses and interviews with key informants. It brings out major issues, and identifies specific challenges in establishing National Platforms as well as alternatives and options that can be looked into. It identifies priority issues that have strategic implications. These are the areas that require specific attention while promoting National Platforms.

ACHIEVEMENTS IN PROMOTING MULTI-STAKEHOLDER DRR

Multi-stakeholder DRR thinking and action has grown significantly over the past few years, in particular since the conclusion of the IDNDR. Most of the countries covered in the study have, in some way or the other, demonstrated some degree of influence of the paradigm shift that global efforts have sought to bring about in terms of moving from a totally response oriented approach to one of risk reduction. Some of the evidences that can be highlighted in this regard are as follows:

High political commitment for DRR

There is a high political commitment for DRR across the countries. While some have directly taken the line advocated by UNISDR and have established National Platforms, others who have not done so are still demonstrating commitment to promote DRR activities and have moved towards domestically developed DRR programmes. China's National Committee for Disaster Reduction, Kazakhstan's Inter Agency Commission on Disaster Prevention and Mitigation, and Philippines' National Disaster Coordinating Council are direct outcomes of such commitment. The countries where no significant progress have been made on establishment of exclusive platforms, however, are also showing signs of the shift. The commitment and mandate of the National Disaster Management Centre in the Maldives and the National Emergency Management Agency in Mongolia are conscious of the need for DRR mainstreaming and are having the DRR agenda as a significant component of their Disaster Management mandates.

Integration of DRR into national policy, legislation and development plans

DRR has been integrated at the national policy and legislative level in many of the countries in the region. The National Disaster Management Act in India, and China's national policy, have a strong bearing towards DRR as an approach to national disaster management thinking. DRR also figures in the development planning process in many countries, as in the case of the Five Year Plan of India. Such viewing of risk reduction as a developmental issue and one requiring planned interventions and funding, is a significant milestone in the way disaster management is being viewed in the region.

Establishment of Disaster Risk Management institutions and programmes

China, Japan, India and Indonesia have demonstrated significant programmes and new institutions focused on DRR based approaches. The engagement of civil society actors, and the focus on community based approaches is a recent and welcome phenomenon. Community participation not only in relatively passive disaster mitigation and preparedness activities, but also in active introduction of risk reduction in disaster response processes is a highlight. This is evident in the DRM programme in India and the Post Tsunami recovery programmes in Indonesia and Sri Lanka.

Involvement of Academia, Media and Private Sector

Inclusion of a wide range of designated public corporations including banks, infrastructure companies and media houses in the disaster management system by Japan is a groundbreaking move of opening up the disaster management process in a truly multi-stakeholder manner. The recent emergence of national and regional academic institutions is also a significant development. Many countries have introduced disaster

risk reduction aspects in school curricula and co-curricular activities. Japan, China, India, Sri Lanka and Indonesia have implemented significant programmes in this regard. Universities and colleges in Japan, China, Indonesia, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, India, Nepal and Pakistan have not only introduced risk reduction as a subject, but have also engaged with governments, international agencies and national NGOs in recent years to yield model activities bringing together the often distant areas of scientific knowledge and field practice.

While the role of UNISDR may not be the only or primary reason behind all of these developments, there is range of activities carried out by the UNISDR that has definitely brought together the regional stakeholders, and has created a policy environment that has supported many of the abovementioned developments. The evidences of commonality in approach, cross-learning and programming that is distinctly carrying the message of the HFA, all point to the significance of the work on promotion of the HFA and its principles in the overall change of approach in the region. The key actions of UNISDR that were referred to during information gathering for this study are:

- Facilitation of multi-stakeholder meetings and engagement
- Preparation and dissemination of guidance documents and tools
- Organise thematic meetings, such as the Asian Ministerial Conferences
- Facilitation of experience sharing and progress monitoring
- Capacity assessment and support through initiatives such as CADRI
- Providing access to expertise and technical support, as reported from the Maldives, Sri Lanka, and Indonesia
- PreventionWeb platform for sharing, dissemination and monitoring

CHALLENGES IN ESTABLISHING NATIONAL PLATFORMS

Continuing legacy of disaster response approaches and institutions

Despite global advocacy initiatives and stated national positions on focusing more on DRR and establishing and activating the National Platforms, the shift of focus from response to risk reduction has not fully percolated to action agendas of many national governments. The Chinese NCDR maintains its main regular activities under status observation and threat analysis for response preparedness; the NDCC in Philippines is aimed to be a coordination tool to ensure a more coherent and effective response; Kazakhstan's Inter Agency Commission on Disaster Prevention and Mitigation is placed under the Ministry of Emergencies; the Indian National Executive Committee meets infrequently as a disaster management group; and the institutions in Nepal, East Timor, Bangladesh and Mongolia are mainly based on emergency response structures with little achieved so far by way of transforming into risk reduction mechanisms.

The concept of mainstreaming DRR in development practice seems to have still not found a strong footing in many countries in the region, wherein the legacy of emergency response carries on in the new and evolving systems. Cross cutting issues such as land use planning, gender, conflict, multi-hazard approach, indigenous practices, and poverty reduction are missing in the representation models of most National Platforms, giving further rise to the concern that risk reduction is not being viewed as a cross sectoral and developmental issue.

The link between Disaster Management and Climate Change is also currently ambiguous, and not reflected in most national approaches. The relevance of environment in reducing the incidence of catastrophic events as well as climate change induced stresses does not seem to have been given due recognition and does not reflect in the way of relevant ministries taking an active role. Keeping in view the economic context of the region, emphasis on Climate Change Adaptation, which can be approached through DRR, needs to be highlighted and seems to be missing. It may be subsumed in the institutional activities, but even in such a case, is not reflecting in the activities being taken up thus far.

Initial reluctance of power structures to transform and devolve

There is initial reluctance on part of governments for establishing National Platforms. This appears to be a major hindrance in the growth of National Platforms in the region, and in some cases even where National Platforms are formed, it leads to a low sense of national ownership and, as a result, low levels of output. The issue of involvement of NGOs and other stakeholders in the NPs has been a stumbling block in many cases, primarily due to the tradition of governments and NGOs viewing each other with suspicion and in a spirit of confrontation. Feedback from stakeholders outside the government in many of the countries indicates a reluctance on part of the government agencies to open up to external stakeholders, and to shift from the visible and power driven relief mode to a non-event based risk reduction mode that requires greater inter agency coordination due to its multi sectoral nature.

Weak legal mandate and financial commitments

The National Platforms often have a weak legal mandate. Participating members are invited, but no real impact of participation is evident neither at the National Platform end nor at the end of the sectoral participant. The National Disaster Coordinating Council in the Philippines cannot engage with NGOs due to legal restrictions for agencies other than the Red Cross to be allowed for such engagement. Kazakhstan has a high level of commitment demonstrated by the Presidential Decrees, but the establishment that emerges from these is almost entirely government centric. The Indian National Disaster Management Act and the establishment of the National Disaster Management Authority thereafter have not helped in creating a legislative environment conducive for a multi stakeholder platform, and in the absence of role clarity between the NDMA and the Ministry of Home Affairs, the National Executive Committee that operates as the National Platform is neither inclusive nor effective.

There are no dedicated budgets for National Platforms in almost all the cases. Availability of funds is even lesser in poorer in more vulnerable countries. As a result, the focus on DRR is least where its need is maximum.

Government centric structures with weak multi stakeholder character in many cases

Many NPs do not have a multi-hazard/stakeholder/sectoral membership and approach throughout, as a result of which true outreach is not attained as required by DRR principles. The NDCC in Philippines is primarily government centric because the current legal framework does not allow any non government stakeholders other than the Red Cross to be engaged; the Inter Agency Commission on Disaster Prevention and Mitigation in Kazakhstan is largely a government centric establishment; the Japanese system of forums of knowledge largely caters to the government decision making systems; the Indian National Executive Committee has no representation of non governmental actors; Maldives has very few non governmental stakeholders and therefore the representation of the civil society will be an issue to watch for as the system evolves; Nepal, East Timor and Mongolia have very limited provisions for engagement of non governmental stakeholders in the platform; and Bangladesh, though very rich in civil society action and in partnerships for disaster response, still lacks a clear and effective system of such partnerships and representation with regard to DRR.

A people centric approach and inclusion of civil society organizations is completely missing in some cases and is very limited in many others. This issue needs to be looked into seriously to make the platform relevant in the prevailing context of high vulnerability and poverty, and also high human resource availability in these countries.

Weak institutional support mechanisms

Institutional mechanisms of established NPs are limiting in most cases, since the Platforms are not operating with a permanent secretariats, and do not have a sustained presence and activities. Platforms are often in the form of committees that meet very infrequently and are not effective mechanisms for implementing meaningful DRR activities. Many NPs do not go beyond coordination meetings and plan and implement actions for concrete impacts. The National Committee for Disaster Reduction in China, the knowledge forums in Japan, the National Disaster Coordinating Council in Philippines, The National

Disaster Management Coordinating Committee in Sri Lanka, the Inter Agency Commission on Disaster Prevention and Mitigation in Kazakhstan, the National Executive Committee in India, and the National Advisory Committee in Bangladesh are all such committees that do not have a real time presence and as such are not suited for ongoing actions that the DRR field requires.

National Platforms also do not have the visibility and identity required to have an outreach and ownership of the wider multi stakeholder group. There are no effective windows of communication and dissemination to make the presence of the initiatives felt.

Line ministries unaware and not linked

While it is often reiterated that risk reduction is a developmental issue, and needs to cut across all sectors of development, the level of engagement of line ministries is very low in almost all cases. Ministries dealing with environment and forests, public works, transport, and other such subjects that have a direct bearing on disaster risk reduction, do not show signs of being aware and engaged in the DRR process. While their representation in Emergency Operation Centres as Emergency Support Functions is now being promoted in most countries as a disaster management system based on the American model, their role in DRR is still not recognized. No evidence was found of any ministerial DRR policies or plans. Such plans will be essential for any effective multi-stakeholder action on DRR.

Continuing dependence on external / UNISDR support

Dependence on external support such as that of the UNISDR remains high, and most countries have made progress on the SNAPs and National Platforms under such support and persuasion. Further progress on the Platforms stalls where sustained support is not ensured. The monitoring approach of the National Disaster Management Coordinating Committee of Sri Lanka, the overall support for establishment of new governance systems in Maldives, the UNDP supported project mode of the Vietnam National Disaster Management Partnership, and the HFA related activities initiated in Nepal by the UNDP are all examples of external assistance leading to initial progress but the progress not sustaining beyond the thrust provided. In case of other countries too the presence of support agencies within or close to the government systems responsible for HFA implementation and establishment of National Platforms is a continuing input on which much progress is dependent.

Lack of knowledge and capacity building facilities

In the absence of credible research and training actions towards building capacity, and user-friendly training packages, the countries have had no significant source that could be tapped into for capacity building towards establishment and strengthening of National Platforms. The guiding documents from UNISDR and other similar sources being the only recourse for guidance, a substantial part of the NP planning is a homegrown process, under which similar mistakes are being made and similar lessons learnt in different parts of the region. Credible training and capacity building support is being provided primarily by regional players such as Asian Disaster Preparedness Centre and IFRC, and to some extent by World Bank, UNDP, RedR and other INGO supported initiatives. The training and capacity building institutions of the government, though mandated to and seen to be delivering programmes, leave much to be desired in terms of quality of the programmes organised, curriculum used and training delivered.

Knowledge management has come up as a core strength in some National Platforms, but in others it is still a gap. This is a critical issue since most countries not focusing on knowledge based systems are the ones that have continuing legacy of disaster response mechanisms being the core of superimposed DRR work.

Gender imbalance, and lack of community based representation

The structure of the National Platforms, wherever they are emerging, is reflective of the traditional structures and roles within the governance systems, thereby making them male dominated institutions. Most of the government officials who represent their respective departments on the Platform are men, thereby resulting in a very low women's representation on the Platforms. Similarly, community based representation

is generally low. In some countries, like Japan and Indonesia, where specific steps have been taken to include civil society representation, and in Vietnam, where an alternate system of a multi stakeholder partnership exists, the representation of women and community based organizations is relatively higher. In case of India, where the NEC is the official body serving the purpose of a National Platform, women's representation is very low and community representation non-existent.

MULTI-STAKEHOLDER PARTNERSHIPS: NPs BY ANOTHER NAME

In most countries national coordination mechanisms, such as evolved National Disaster Management Organisations and civil society networks other than formal National Platforms, exist and are playing part of the intended role of the National Platform.

Many cases show that building on existing institutional frameworks is an effective way to facilitate quick establishment of National Platforms, as it bypasses many hurdles such as the initial reluctance of power structures to transform and devolve, and the legal and bureaucratic delays involved in establishing new systems and empowering them, particularly wherein non state stakeholders are to be involved. India, Vietnam and Nepal are pursuing strengthening of existing organizations or institutional frameworks for developing them into National Platforms.

A larger number of countries, however, that have shown results have taken steps for establishment of National Platforms in response to the WCDR, HFA and the SNAP process initiated under the UNISDR initiative. China, Iran, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Kazakhstan and Indonesia are among countries that have demonstrated more progress than others on the front of establishing National Platforms, and they have done so through new initiatives in the legislative and institutional domains for enabling the shift to DRR as a response to, or timed after, the HFA initiative.

Considering both the approaches and the results seen in the region, it appears that establishment of new or significantly transformed institutions as National Platforms may be more desirable than transferring the responsibility to existing multi-stakeholder institutions as a blanket approach. Countries such as India, Bangladesh and Nepal, that have had a long history of disaster response management, and have so far worked with existing institutions instead of establishing new ones or significantly transforming existing ones, are at present showing greatest resistance to change towards effective multi stakeholder partnerships. Cases of pre-existing partnerships that are effective and truly multi stakeholder, such as in the case of Vietnam, are very few. In most cases the existing systems are government centric and focused on disaster response. The Vietnam case also is one of a project partnership mode, restricted so far by project timelines and thus having a lack of assured continuum.

In considering alternative approaches to National Platforms, there is an opportunity to include an enhanced focus on multi-stakeholder partnerships by strengthening and transforming existing institutional and legal frameworks, in support of meeting HFA Priority Action 1. This approach goes beyond the option of finding alternatives to National Platforms in the form of multi stakeholder partnerships. It involves strengthening, through institutional transformation or expansion, legal empowerment, capacity building and resource mobilization, of existing institutions to give them a viable form for functioning as National Platforms.

This will still require substantial amount of commitment and investment from the national government, and support from regional agencies, but may be more viable and acceptable than institutionalizing entirely new entities as National Platforms. It will, however, gain from the rich experience that may already exist with respect to the context, needs, local understanding and protocols for operating.

It needs to be noted that there is lack of clarity on the formal announcement and the actual aspects of being a national platform, even though with varying degrees of multi-stakeholder aspect. Though formal announcements may not have been made in many cases, the existing institutions appear to be playing a part of the intended role of National Platforms.

In some countries multi-stakeholder mechanisms function as de facto national platforms, but are not announced officially. A large number of institutions in the region are effectively functioning as National Platforms. Some countries – like Bangladesh and Nepal – have provisions to set up a “National Platform like” multi stakeholder consultation mechanism.

It should, however, be noted that designating an existing forum as the National Platform may not be an easy choice in all cases. As observed in the case of India, a number of wide-ranging platforms are existing at the national level that play a role of bringing together DRR stakeholders within a sector or across a sectoral cross section. In such cases it may be imperative to bring together such wide-ranging fora on a single platform for a truly multi-stakeholder representation rather than designating one of them as the National Platform.

It is widely felt among respondents though that with appropriate adjustments existing arrangements can be adapted or utilized for the activation of a designated National Platform. The approach of identifying existing national frameworks and working with them can be supported by engaging with players with a potential strategic role who are present in most of the countries of the region, such as IFRC, and seek a partnership or a supportive role from them.

WAY FORWARD

The achievements, challenges and alternatives that emerge from this study point to the viability of National Platforms, either as new institutions or strengthened and transformed existing ones, and also help identify ways of promoting them and helping achieve HFA Priority 1 targets. Some of the key aspects of moving ahead are as follows.

Official recognition of existing appropriate multi-stakeholder coordination mechanisms as National Platforms

In light of the findings regarding challenges in establishing new institutions, and viability of strengthening and transforming existing multi-stakeholder coordination mechanisms, such existing bodies may be identified, strengthened and transformed into National Platforms. The flexibility in this approach will make it easier for getting national government approval, based on which the National Platforms may be officially recognized.

Enhancement of organizational, technical and financial capacities within National Platforms

Designated National Platforms need dedicated operational support in the form of full time secretariats that are empowered for the assigned work, along with technical support systems and sustained funding. These must be made essential for operationalisation of a National Platform, and should be part of the committed establishment plan.

Inclusive approach, with specific focus on special vulnerable groups such as socially excluded groups and persons with disabilities

While making National Platforms multi-sectoral across developmental sectors and line ministries, and multi-stakeholder across national and local role-players, special attention needs to be paid for ensuring the participation of special vulnerable groups that are invariably at greater risk due to their limited capacities and social marginalization.

Ensuring a gender balance and enhancing the representation of community based organizations

Gender balance and community representation are essentials of good governance and so also for comprehensive risk reduction. National Platforms need to ensure such representation as they will set the agenda and the tone for disaster risk reduction work that will go down to local levels, where the engagement of these groups is of crucial importance.

Including representatives who will facilitate a transfer of national priorities and actions down to local governments and other local stakeholders

Though National Platforms principally have a role at the federal level, the true impact of their efforts will be at the local level. As such, the involvement of representatives of local governance systems, whether through concerned line ministries or through specialized agencies such as associations of local self governments, needs to be given due importance.

Engagement of line ministries and allocation of relevant risk reduction roles to them, and development of ministerial action plans

Risk reduction having been recognized as a cross sectoral developmental issue, it is imperative for National Platforms to ensure that line ministries are sensitized and engaged in the process, and that they develop their ministerial plans and pass the onus of risk reduction within their sectoral domain down to their counterpart departments and agencies at sub national levels.

Coordination between climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction policies and actions

Climate change adaptation is fast emerging as a priority area in most of the countries in the region, with national governments setting up missions to address this issue. Considering the proximity, and in some aspects overlaps, of the climate change and disaster risk domains, the National Platforms should recognize climate change as a disaster related risk and establish linkages with appropriate agencies and programmes.

Strengthening national systems for information sharing and dissemination

Just as PreventionWeb has provided an invaluable service of information exchange for the international community working on DRR, national systems suited to the context should be established to create awareness, and to facilitate the exchange of information on DRR that will support the work of the National Platforms.

Enhancement of information experience sharing across countries on their DRR work and multi stakeholder platforms

The exchange of information and the resultant collaborative policy environment created at Asian Ministerial Conferences on Disaster Risk Reduction has very significant impact on DRR work in the region as a whole. Such efforts need to be scaled up and widened to build the momentum for collaborative DRR work in the region.

Establish, where needed, sub-regional mechanisms for coordination of activities towards reducing trans-national risks

In many cases, such as the Nepal-India-Bangladesh floods, Mekong basin floods, Indonesian haze, and avian and swine flu, the implications of the disaster, and the need to take up direct actions to reduce its risk, are trans-national. Sub regional coordination mechanisms, and where possible funds, need to be committed for such situations, and the involved National Platforms are best positioned to play a major role therein.

ANNEX I: LIST OF KEY INFORMANTS

A number of potential key informants were approached for the study, both through email questionnaires, and in some cases through telephonic interviews. Some of them gave direct responses, and for other cases secondary information sources were used.

National Platforms already established:

COUNTRY	NAME	POSITION	ORG	EMAIL	TEL	FAX
China	Mr XIAONING Zhang; Ms CHAI Mei		China National Committee for International Disaster Reduction	chengyaoying@ndrcc.gov.cn	+86 1058123140	+86 1058123296
Japan	Mr TORISU Eiji	Director, Disaster Preparedness	Cabinet Office - Government of Japan	eiji.torisu@cao.go.jp		
Philippines	General Glen Rabonza	Administrator OCD & NDCC Executive Officer	NDCC	genrabonza@ndcc.gov.ph		632 912 2424
Sri Lanka	Major General Gamini Hettiarachchi	Director General	Disaster Management Centre	dgdmc@sltnet.lk; dgdmcsl@gmail.com	Mobile : +94 77 3957876, Direct line: +94 11 2670070	+ 94 11 2670025
Viet Nam	Mr. Nguyen Xuan Dieu, (Mr. Nguyen Huy Dzung)	Chief of Standing Office of Central Committee for Flood and Storm Control (CCFSC)	Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development	nguyen.xuan.dieu@ccfsc.org.vn (nhdzung@ccfsc.org.vn)	(+84-4) 733 5694	(84-4) 733 5701
	Mr. Peter Grzic	International Facilitator	National Disaster Mitigation Partnership (NDMP)	grzic@ccfsc.org.vn		
Iran	Dr. Aghda S.M. Fatemi	Head	Natural Disaster Research Institute of Iran	ir-disaster@noavar.com		
Indonesia	Mr. Sugeng Triutomo (alternate)	Deputy for Prevention and Preparedness	BNPB	striutomo@bnpb.go.id		
	Mr. Prijono Gembong	Secretary of Bakornas PBP	Indonesia Badan Koordinasi Nasional	gprijono@setwapres.go.id	+62 213456115	+62 213813849
India	Mr. Prabhanshu Kamal	Joint Secretary	Disaster Management Division- II Ministry Home Affairs	jsdm2-mha@nic.in	+91 1123092478 / 23092456 etx 373	+91 1123094019
Nepal	Mr. Pratap K Pathak	Joint Secretary	Disaster Management Section, Ministry of Home Affairs	pratap.pathak@gmail.com	4211212, 4211274, 4211224	4211286, 4211257
Timor	Mr. Francisco Franco Mendes DO ROSARIO	Head (NDMO)	National Disaster Management Office (NDMO), Directorate of Civil Protection, Ministry of Interior	francisco_ndmo@yahoo.com	670-332-2535	670 3322597
Maldives	Mr. Murthala Mohamed Didi	Director	National Disaster Management Centre		+9607782860 +960-3333436	+960-3333443

ANNEX II:

QUESTIONNAIRE ON EXPERIENCE OF NATIONAL PLATFORMS FOR DRR IN THE ASIA PACIFIC REGION

1. What has been your overall experience of the National Platform (National Platform) for DRR in your country?	
Major successes achieved so far:	
Major challenges faced so far:	
2. Context and fulfilling the needs	
	(Y / N)
a) Are all stakeholder groups represented in the National Platform?	
b) Is there a positive engagement with policy level?	
c) Do NGOs and CBOs get space to represent communities?	
d) Is there positive and regular engagement with the International Community and the UN?	
e) Are there specific channels for information sharing between National Platform members?	
f) Does the National Platform share information with other National Platforms in the region?	
Details and comments:	
3. Meeting objectives	
	(Y / N)
a) Does the National Platform play a coordination role across multiple stakeholders for any DRR work?	
b) Does the National Platform engage in advocacy and awareness work?	
c) Has the National Platform been instrumental in integrating DRR into any national policy, sectoral plan or programme?	
Details and comments:	
4. Application of main principles	
	(Y / N)
a) Does the National Platform have a political component for ensuring political commitment at the top level?	
b) Have you established any technological components such as knowledge bases, methodological framework for DRR or indicators of DRR so far?	
c) Do the NGOs, private sector agencies, academic institutions or media actively participate in the National Platform?	

d) Does the National Platform have sustained funding sources for its work?	
Details and comments:	
5. Carrying out major functions	
	(Y / N)
a) Do you have a time table for actions for the implementation of DRR activities in line with the HFA?	
b) Has the National Platform carried out any specific actions so far for national consultation and consensus building, priority identification, policy formulation or implementation of DRR activities?	
c) Do you have any monitoring and review mechanism for tracking the progress of this work?	
Details and comments:	
6. Primary activities: Have the following activities been carried out and monitored / reviewed:	
	(Y / N)
a) Establishing baseline information for DRR, including disaster and risk profiles, national policies, strategies, capacities, resources and programmes	
b) Identifying trends, gaps, concerns and challenges and setting forth accepted priority areas in DRR	
c) Advocating the urgent need for developing or adopting policies and legislations for DRR	
d) Benchmarking progress made in promoting DRR and its mainstreaming into development policies, planning and programmes	
e) Developing result-oriented work plans of National Platforms for DRR to coordinate the DRR activities in line with the HFA	
f) Coordinating joint efforts among members of National Platforms for DRR to reduce the vulnerability of people at relatively high risk	
g) Monitoring, recording and reporting of disaster risk reduction actions at national and community levels in line with the HFA	
h) Documenting lessons learned and good practices, and sharing the findings (including promoting twinning of National Platforms for DRR) at national, regional and international levels	
i) Working towards better integration of DRR into national planning, policies and programmes in development and humanitarian assistance	
Details and comments:	
7. Relationship with UN system and UN ISDR	
	(Y / N)
a) Has the National Platform benefited from the UN Resident Coordinator or the UN Country Team in the establishment or activities of the National Platform?	
b) Has the National Platform benefited in any of the following ways from the ISDR System:	
1. Visibility of national and local experience and expertise in DRR	

2. Visibility and recognition of national platform for DRR in facilitating the implementation of the HFA	
3. Access to knowledge and resources at regional and international levels for DRR activities	
4. Information on the progress of DRR in other countries	
5. Reduced risk and vulnerability, and thus disasters in the long term	
6. Contribution to the sustainability of various development sectors	
c) Do you feel that the ISDR System has benefited from your National Platform in any of the following ways:	
1. Updated information on progress of DRR at local and national levels	
2. Better position to guide and coordinate the international implementation of the HFA	
3. Capacity to provide an overview of achievements and challenges in DRR to regional platforms and the Global Platform for DRR, which meets biennially in Geneva	
4. Capacity to monitor and report on progress made in DRR in line with the HFA on a regular basis	
5. Increased political and public support to DRR	
6. Increased financial and technical support to the ISDR System for DRR	
Details and comments:	
Your Name, Organisation and Contact Details:	

ANNEX III:**CHECKLIST FOR INTERVIEWS ON NATIONAL PLATFORMS FOR DRR IN THE ASIA PACIFIC REGION**

1. General:

- 1.1) How long has the National Platform been in existence in your country?
- 1.2) What has been the overall experience?

2. Context and fulfilling the needs:

- 2.1) Which agencies are currently engaged with the NP? Do you feel it represents the range of stakeholder groups that is relevant to DRR in your country?
- 2.2) How does it engage with high level policy makers? With development actors and planners?
- 2.3) What space do NGOs and CBOs find in the DRR arena in the country? In the NP?
- 2.4) How does the NP engage with the international community? The UN?
- 2.5) Do you have specific channels for information sharing between NP members? Do you also share information with any other NPs in the region?

3. Meeting objectives:

- 3.1) Is there any specific instance where the NP would have played a coordination role across multiple stakeholders for any DRR work?
- 3.2) Does the NP also engage with advocacy and awareness work? Any specific instances where this has been done?
- 3.3) Has the NP been instrumental in integrating DRR into any national policy, sectoral plan or programme so far?

4. Application of main principles:

- 4.1) Does the NP have a political component for ensuring political commitment at the top level?
- 4.2) Have you established any technological components such as knowledge bases, methodological framework for DRR or indicators of DRR so far?
- 4.3) Do the NGOs, private sector agencies, academic institutions or media participate in the NP? Which ones of these? How actively?
- 4.4) How does the NP mobilize resources for its development and for carrying out its activities? Is there any sustained funding source?

5. Carrying out major functions:

- 5.1) Do you have a time table for actions and monitoring and reviewing the implementation of DRR activities in line with the HFA?
- 5.2) Has the NP carried out any specific actions so far for national consultation and consensus building, priority identification, policy formulation or implementation of DRR activities?
- 5.3) Do you have any monitoring mechanism for tracking the progress of this work?

6. Primary activities:

Are you in a position to confirm the carrying out of any of the following activities and able to monitor and review them (please tick):

- Establishing baseline information for DRR, including disaster and risk profiles, national policies, strategies, capacities, resources and programmes;
- Identifying trends, gaps, concerns and challenges and setting forth accepted priority areas in DRR;
- Advocating the urgent need for developing or adopting policies and legislations for DRR;
- Benchmarking progress made in promoting DRR and its mainstreaming into development policies, planning and programmes;
- Developing result-oriented work plans of National Platforms for DRR to coordinate the DRR activities in line with the HFA;
- Coordinating joint efforts among members of National Platforms for DRR to reduce the vulnerability of people at relatively high risk;
- Monitoring, recording and reporting of disaster risk reduction actions at national and community levels in line with the HFA;
- Documenting lessons learned and good practices, and share the findings (including promoting twinning of National Platforms for DRR) at national, regional and international levels; and
- Working towards better integration of DRR into national planning, policies and programmes in development and humanitarian assistance.

7. Relationship with UN system and UN ISDR:

- 7.1) Has the NP benefited from the UN Resident Coordinator or the UN Country Team in the establishment or activities of the NP? How?
- 7.2) Has the NP benefited in any of the following ways from the ISDR System (please tick):
- Visibility of national and local experience and expertise in DRR;
 - Visibility and recognition of national platforms for DRR in facilitating the implementation of the HFA;
 - Access to knowledge and resources at regional and international levels for DRR activities
 - Information on the progress of DRR in other countries;
 - Reduced risk and vulnerability, and thus disasters in the long term; and
 - Contribution to the sustainability of various development sectors and gains.

7.3) Do you feel that the ISDR System has benefited from your NP in any of the following ways (please tick):

- Updated information on progress of DRR at local and national levels;
- Better position to guide and coordinate the international implementation of the HFA;
- Capacity to provide an overview of achievements and challenges in DRR to regional platforms and the Global Platform for DRR, which meets biennially in Geneva;
- Capacity to monitor and report on progress made in DRR in line with the HFA on a regular basis;
- Increased political and public support to DRR; and
- Increased financial and technical support to the ISDR System for DRR.

8. Experiences and lessons learnt:

8.1) What according to you are the major issues of current concern in the NP process?

8.2) Are there any major opportunities that can be utilized for the promotion of the NP?

8.3) Can you share any good experiences that may be useful for other countries in initiating the process?

8.4) Do you have any words of caution to share with other countries initiating the process?

Name and contact details of respondent:



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