



Disaster Risk Reduction Information Kit for Media



Scaling-up Community-Based Disaster Risk
Reduction in Lao PDR



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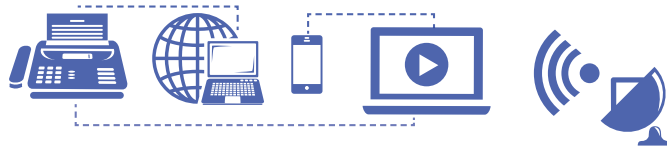
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Disaster Risk Reduction Information Kit for Media



Scaling-up Community-Based Disaster Risk Reduction in Lao PDR



Acronyms

CBDRR Community Based Disaster Risk Reduction

DDPCC District Disaster Prevention and Control Committee

DPCC Disaster Prevention and Control Committee

DRM Disaster risk Management

DRR Disaster Risk Reduction

EWS Early Warning System

NDPCC National Disaster Prevention and Control Committee

PRA Participatory Risk Assessment

VDPCC Village Disaster Prevention and Control Committee

VDPU Village Disaster Prevention Unit

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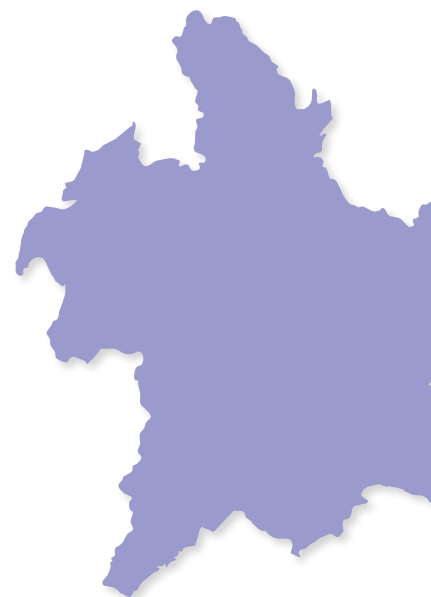
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Rationale and objectives of the Media Kit

The media is an integral part of the disaster risk management process. Radio, television and the internet are amongst the fastest channels for the transmission of knowledge and information across wide areas. These means of sharing information can also reach a large number of people from different backgrounds and engaged across a variety of sectors. Media has an important function to inform, educate and empower communities with relevant knowledge to influence public action and policy towards disaster preparedness and mitigation. The media has a huge power to influence national and global public opinion, giving visibility to disaster-related issues.

The media can make a real difference in the way people think about and act on disasters. Reporters, commentators, editors, broadcasters, and all members of the media can do more than just inform and raise awareness about disasters. By exploring the root causes of disasters and their social dimensions, the media can help communities and countries understand more fully what it is that makes them vulnerable, and what they can do to increase their capacities to cope with disasters.

The objective of this media kit is to give members of the media a basic knowledge of key disaster management principles and concepts in order to enable them to make an active and meaningful contribution to creating safer and more resilient communities. The media kit has been developed with reference to particular issues and challenges which media practitioners are likely to encounter in Lao PDR.



Section 1:

Understanding the importance of DRM

Disaster Risk Management aims to reduce or avoid the potential losses and damages caused by hazards, assure prompt and appropriated assistance to victims of disaster and achieve rapid and effective recovery. The media should play an important role in dissemination of Disaster Risk Management information through coordination and participation with National Disaster Prevention and Control Committee (NDPCC) and the concerned organizations in Lao PDR.

The Disaster Risk Management process

The Disaster Risk Management process consists of five steps: risk identification, risk analysis, prioritization of risks, treatment of risk and monitoring and evaluation:

1. Risk identification

This step is to identify hazards and the potential threats they may pose. Risk identification aims to develop a comprehensive list of sources of risks and events that might have an impact on the community. Having identified the possible risks, it is necessary to consider possible causes and scenarios. Approaches used to identify risks include checklists, judgments based on experience and records, flow charts, brainstorming, systems analysis, scenario analysis and system engineering techniques.

2. Risk analysis

Risk analysis aims to establish an understanding of the level of risk and its nature. It involves consideration of the source of risk, their positive and negative consequences and the likelihood of these consequences. Risk is analyzed by combining consequences and the likelihood of them occurring. This involves identifying the existing processes, devices or practices which are in place to minimize negative risks or enhance positive risks and assessing their strength and weaknesses. Another important step is to consider the magnitude of consequences and the likelihood of the event and its associated consequences. These will be considered in the context of the existing strategies and controls which are in place.



3. Prioritization of risks

The purpose of risk prioritization is to analyze and identify priority areas for action. Decisions may include whether a risk needs treatment, whether an activity should be undertaken and what should be the priorities for any interventions to be carried out. Decisions would be based on the level of risk, specified consequences, the likelihood of specified events or outcomes and the overall effect of multiple events. In some circumstances, the risk prioritization may lead to a decision to undertake further analysis.

4. Treatment of risk

Risk treatment involves identifying strategies for treating these risks, evaluating those options, preparing treatment plans and implementation. Before appropriate treatment actions can be determined, the analysis of each risk may need to be revisited and extended to draw out the information needed to identify and explore different treatment options. It is particularly important to identify the causes of risks so these are treated and not just the symptoms. Risk treatment may introduce and reveal new risks that need to be identified, assessed, treated and monitored.

5. Monitoring and evaluation

Monitoring is conducted to supervise the progress on implementation of disaster risk management process. Evaluation is organized to periodically investigate the progress and analyze its impact and achievements. Monitoring and evaluation are an essential and integral part of managing risk and is the most important step of risk management process.

Other key terms and definitions are contained in the annex.



Key phases of Disaster Risk Management

Prevention

Prevention activities aim to reduce the probability of disaster occurrence through measures meant to avoid its adverse effects. In many disaster prone countries, the severity of disasters may vary from year to year, but the disasters are seasonal and are therefore, to some extent, predictable. In those instances, technologies may be present or must be sought to address the issues of disaster prevention. These technologies exist for seasonal and predictable disasters such as wind-resistant housing technologies to prevent typhoon damage, dyke, dam, embankment construction to prevent and control flood.

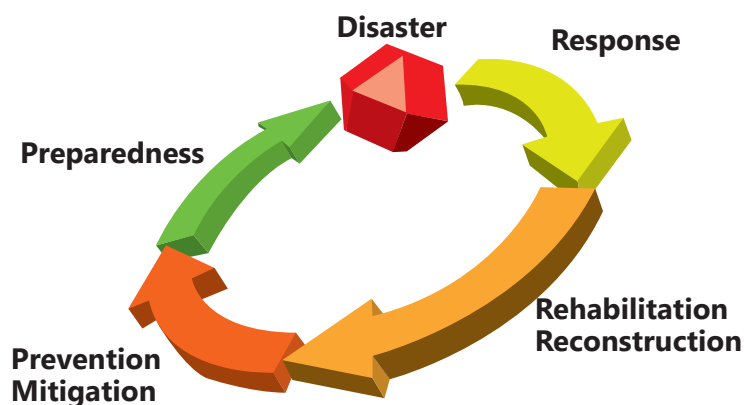


Figure 1: Key phases of the DRM cycle

Source: ADRC (2005) Total Disaster Risk Management - good practices.



Mitigation

Mitigation activities aim to reduce the impacts or effects of unavoidable disasters. Mitigation measures include building codes, vulnerability analyses updates, zoning and land use management, building use regulations and safety codes, preventive health care, and public awareness and education.

Some specific examples of mitigation activities:

- Strengthening building or incorporation of hazard resistance in structure to render them more resistant against typhoons, floods, and earthquakes.
- Changing agricultural crop cycles so that they can be harvested before flood of typhoon season.
- Restriction or zoning of activities in high risk areas
- Economic diversification to allow losses in one sector to be offset by increased output in other areas.



Preparedness

Preparedness includes planning exercises that strengthen the capacity of governments, organizations and communities. These measures contribute to readiness for dealing with disaster and can be strengthened by having response mechanisms and procedures, rehearsal, public education and early warning system. Preparedness can also ensure that strategic reserves of food, equipment, water, medicines and other essentials are maintained in case of natural and local disasters.

Preparedness measures include:

- preparedness plan,
- emergency exercises/drill;
- warning systems;
- emergency communication systems;
- evacuation plans and training;
- resource inventories;
- emergency personnel/contact lists;
- mutual aid agreements;
- public information/education.

Preparedness actions depend on the incorporation of appropriate measures in national and regional development plans. In addition, their effectiveness depends on the availability of information on hazards, emerging risk and countermeasures to be taken, and the degree to which government agencies, non-governmental organizations and general public are able to make use of the information.



Response

The aim of disaster response is to provide immediate assistance to maintain life, improve health and support the morale of the affected population. This may include assisting affected persons with transport, temporary shelter and food and establishing semi-permanent settlement in camps and other locations. It may also involve initial repairs to damaged infrastructure. The focus during the response phase is on meeting the basic needs of the people until more permanent and sustainable solutions can be found. Humanitarian organizations are often strongly present in this activity.

Recovery

Recovery involves actions taken after a disaster to restore or improve the post-disaster living conditions of affected communities. As the disaster is brought under control affected infrastructure, systems and services should be restored. The recovery stage represents an opportunity to enhance prevention and increase preparedness for disasters by restoring assets in ways which make them less vulnerable and reduce their exposure to risk.



Community Based Disaster risk reduction (CBDRR)

CBDRR is a process in which at risk communities are actively engaged in identification, assessment/analysis and reduce the risks of disaster. It aims to reduce socio-economic vulnerabilities to disaster as well as dealing with the environmental and other hazards that activate them and to minimize the damage caused by natural hazards like earthquakes, floods, droughts and cyclones, through an ethic of prevention.

The 8 steps of CBDRR have been conducted by government and non-government agencies in Lao PDR:

Step 1: Pilot site selection:

The Government of Lao PDR (GoL) will consider the following criterion as a basis for pilot site selection which builds on the government's policy, particularly, the four breakthrough policies and Sam Sang ('Three Builds') directive, rural development, poverty reduction and livelihood enhancement and gender sensitive approach:

-
- The extent of the risk exposure
 - Communities identified as comprising the poorest villages and located in rural development location
 - Extent of past, on-going and planned DRR initiatives
-



Step 2: *Baseline study- understand communities*

The baseline study is an analysis of the initial conditions before the start of the CBDRR program in order to develop a general understanding of the nature, needs and resources of the community. It provides basic demographic and disaster risk related information covering local experiences, knowledge and interpretation of risks. The study also helps building trust and rapport with the community which will later facilitate community participation.

The baseline study is intrinsically linked to monitoring and evaluation or the 'endline study' which takes place at the end of the program. The findings of the baseline and endline studies are compared to measure the impacts or any changes brought about the program, to evaluate the effectiveness and to identify key areas of improvement towards its objectives.



Step 3: Capacity building for CBDRR Facilitators

In this step the capacity building will be provided for Disaster Prevention and Control Committee (DPCC) and at community level to further facilitate the CBDRR implementation in their administrative area. Capacity building at this stage focuses on improving CBDRR knowledge and know-how of the DPCC members and ensures the functionality and effectiveness of the committee as well as skill enhancement on areas of disaster risk reduction. Apart from DDPCC other facilitators to include for capacity building are: PDPCC, village heads and Red Cross Volunteers.

Areas of Capacity Building

-
- Introduction to Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) Community-Based Disaster Risk Reduction (CBDRR) Participatory Risk Assessment (PRA)
 - Village Disaster Risk Reduction Planning
 - First Aid and Basic Life Support
 - Search & Rescue
 - Early Warning System (EWS)
-



Step 4: Capacity building for VDPCC

Village Disaster Prevention and Control Committees should be supported to improve their capacity on CBDRR for management of risk at the local level. The PM decree No. 220/PM, dated 28 August 2013 recommended the formation of DPCC's at national, provincial, district and villages levels to look after DRM issues at different levels. Village Disaster Prevention and Control Committee (VDPCC) is one unit at village level. It has been established and approved by vice district governor, who is chair of DDPCC. The Government of Lao PDR aims to establish Village Disaster Prevention and Control Committees (VDPCC) coverage for 25 per cent of vulnerable villages in the country by 2020. However, many villages have yet to form such VDPCCs. In cases where VDPCCs do not yet exist CBDRR facilitators can aim to support the formation of these committees as part of the CBDRR programs for which they are responsible and can build on existing village committee structures. There is no need to establish VDPCC where they have already been formed under the direction of Government activities.



Step 5: *Community disaster risk assessment*

The community disaster risk assessment – sometimes called Participatory Disaster Risk Assessment (PDRA), Participatory Risk Assessment (PRA), Hazard, Vulnerability and Capacity Assessment (HVCA) or Participatory Capacity and Vulnerability Analysis (PCVA) is a participatory process involving all groups (ages, gender, disabilities, religions, nationalities, minorities) of the community in the process of identifying and prioritizing the main risks that they face. It also helps in identifying the required skills and resources needed to prepare for, cope with or respond with identified risks and potential disasters.

The results of the participatory risk assessment then enable the community to identify and prioritize possible solutions to the main risks – and then plan for how these solutions can be implemented – both through their own skills and resources and utilizing external assistance where needed.

Overall the objectives of the completed risk assessment process can be summarized as follows:

- it enables communities to systematically assess the level of risk, and prioritize those risks, for each specific hazard that they face in their community
- it is an essential precursor to community decision-making about possible DRR measures to address the disaster risk related problems that the community have identified – and allowing community actions and resources can be allocated accordingly.
- it contributes to raising community awareness about potential disaster risks.



Step 6: Participatory disaster risk management planning

The participatory risk assessment (PRA) is the starting process of CBDRM planning. Its results will be main focus of data gathering for development of the plan. The village risk assessment report provides detailed activities, resources required, the level of capacity needed, responsible persons/agencies and timeline to be undertaken by the communities itself.

During development of community-based DRM action planning takes several steps, each step get involvement of VDPCC members and villagers. There 12 steps of developing DRM action plan:

- 1) Engaging the community in the action planning process
- 2) Formulation of planning objectives
- 3) Formulation of VDPCC and teams
- 4) Devising of risk reduction measures
- 5) Determination of required resources
- 6) Assigning of roles & responsibilities
- 7) Defining timeline
- 8) Development and enforcement of the operational procedure and policies
- 9) Identification of opposing elements in plan implementation
- 10) Finalizing the plan
- 11) Testing the plan
- 12) Updating the plan



Step 7: *Community managed-implementation*

The village CBDRR action plan included all activities and measures required by the village. VDPCC and its sub-committees will be the main implementers based on the role and responsibilities identified in the plan through supporting of the government and projects.

Step 8: *Participatory monitoring and evaluation*

Participatory monitoring and evaluation (PME) is a process which involves the target community, national and local government, implementing agency, donor and other stakeholders to decide how interventions should be measured and what actions should be taken as a result of this analysis.



Disaster risk in Lao PDR

Lao PDR is prone to numerous hazards: floods, droughts, storms, landslides, earthquakes and epidemics (NDMO, 2010). Among these hazards, floods and droughts are considered as the most recurrent and frequent hazards affecting the lives, infrastructures and livelihoods of people in Laos. In this manual we will focus on natural hazards.

Flood

A flood is a high flow or overflow of water from a river or similar source of water occurring over a period of time. Periods of heavy rain can result in an extra volume of water coming into the waterways, leading to increase in the water level of streams and rivers. A flood happens when the carrying capacity of the waterways fail to hold the total volume of increased water at any given time (ADPC, 2006).

Lao PDR is mainly affected by two main types of flooding:

Riverine flooding which primarily occurs in the lowland and upland, is characterized by river water flowing faster and at a higher level than normal; usually caused by heavy rains upstream.

Flash flooding, occurs often as a result of heavy rain and accelerated runoff (where trees and plants have been removed and the soil cannot absorb water). This type of flooding can lead to dam failure and often occurs quickly without any warning due to its very fast moving nature. It also occurs in small rivers or streams in mountainous areas. (LRC/FRC CBDP manual).

Floods are the most frequently experienced natural hazard in Lao PDR. Floods affected a very high number of people and are associated with high numbers of damaged and destroyed basic infrastructure, livelihood, crops, livestock etc. Some instances of major flooding events in Lao PDR are featured below:



August 2008 large flood covered Luang Nam Tha, Luang Prabang, Bokeo, Xayabouly, Vientiane, Houaphan, Boilikhamsay, Khammouane, Savannakhet, Champasak provinces and Vientiane Capital. It damaged houses, infrastructure (irrigation systems, bridges and roads), agriculture (crops, livestock and forestry) as well as assets for health, nutrition and hygiene. Roughly 204,189 people were affected as well as 886 villages and 53 districts (UNDP, National Risk Profile Lao PDR, 2010).

Floods occurring due to typhoon Ketsana 2009 impacted 5 provinces (Salavan, Sekong, Attapeu, Champasak and Savannakhet), 33 districts, 822 villages, 52,547 households. 28 people died, 1 person was recorded missing and 94 others were injured. In total, 272,943 households were affected and 10,609 households were homeless. More than 5000 livestock were lost. Besides these, it caused damage to around 31,967 hectares of agricultural land. There was also widespread damage to infrastructure: 1553 houses were damaged as well as 91 schools, 3 hospitals, 74 bridges and 65 roads (NDMO, 2009).

The severe flood in 2011 caused by Typhoon Haima and Norken killed 42 people in 12 provinces and severely destroyed houses, crops, schools, hospitals, roads, bridges, electricity poles, extension lines, communication systems, and caused wide spread damage to irrigation schemes, aquaculture infrastructure and river banks. The total damages amounted to 200 million USD as estimated by the NDMO (Government of Lao PDR, 2011).



Attapeu, 2009



Khammouane, 2011



Xayabouly, 2011



Bolikhan, 2011



XiengGneun, 2012



Xiengkhuang after Hai ma, 2011

Storm/ tropical storm (Typhoon)

Based on past history, Lao PDR has witnessed several storms from tropical depressions (0–62km/hr) to very strong storms (category 3 which has its velocity of 178–209 km/hr). The storm hazard map below shows the areas most commonly affected by storms in Lao PDR over a 50 year return period.

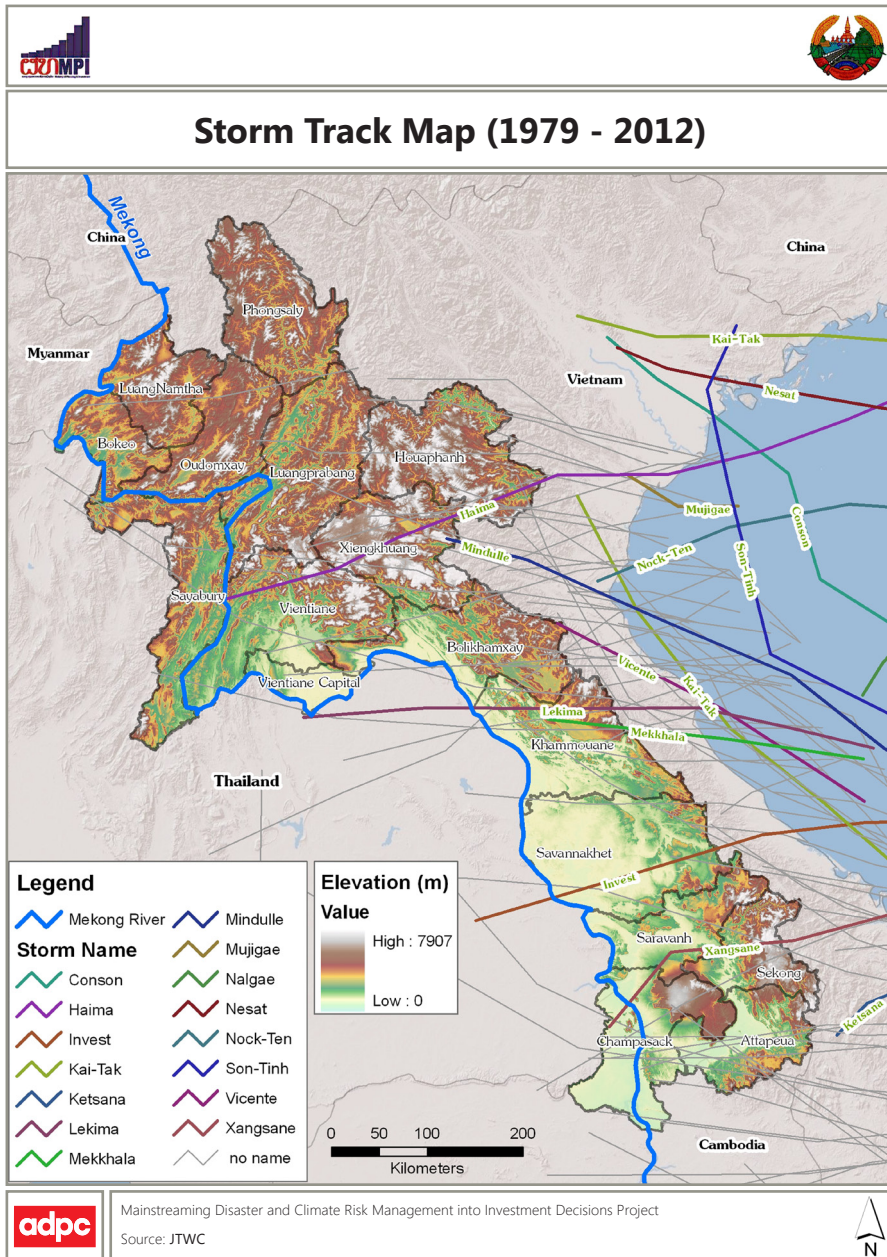


Figure 2: Storm hazard map of Lao PDR



Table 1: Description of color coding for typhoon hazard map

Category	Wind speed (km/h)
Class 2	154 - 177
Class 1	119 - 153
Tropical Storm	36 - 117
Tropical Depression	0 - 62

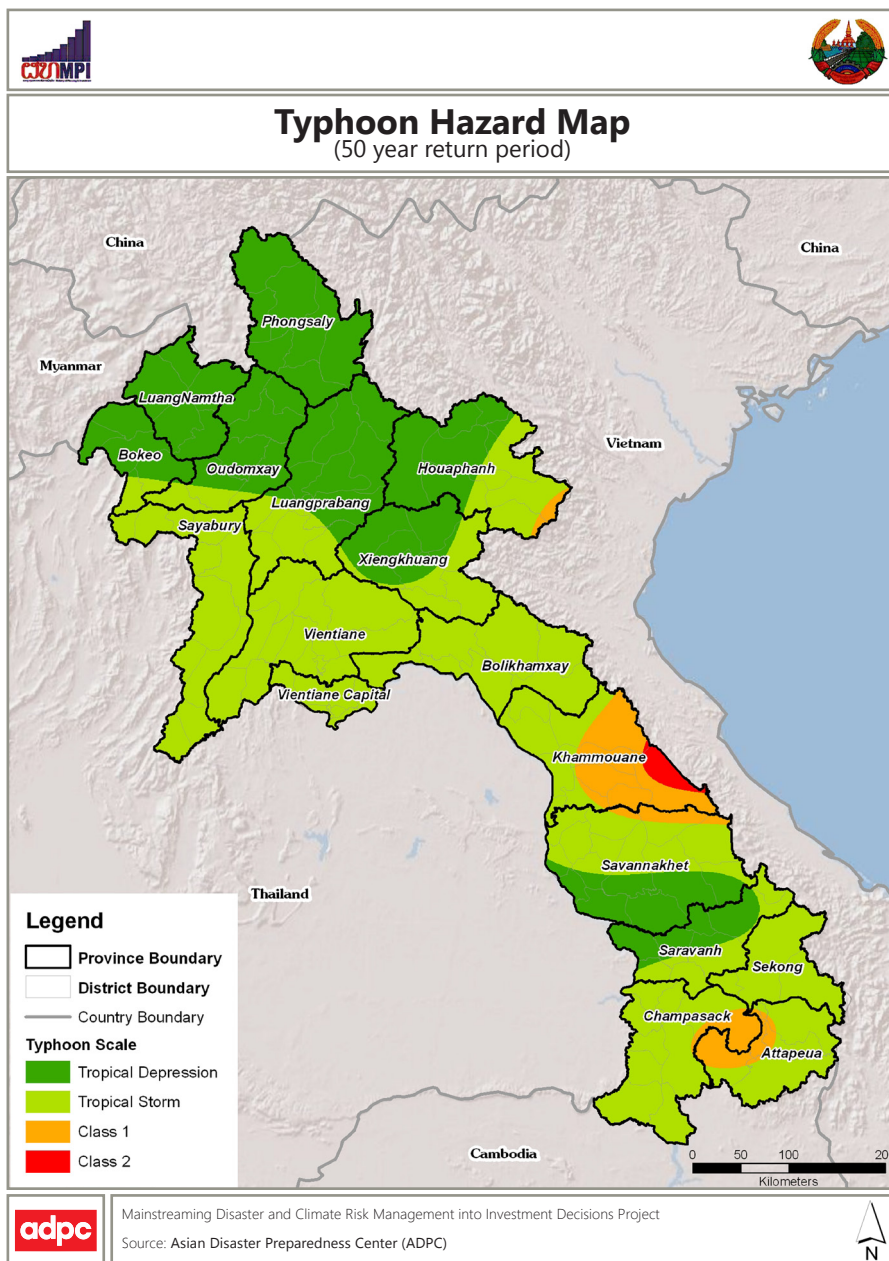


Figure 3: Typhoon hazard map of Lao PDR



There are on average 2 to 3 tropical storms in Lao PDR per year. Several typhoons have been reported with the most significant, recent typhoons being Xangsane (2006), Lekima (2007), Ketsana (2009), and Haima and Nokten (2011). Such storms can bring heavy rains and strong winds, as well as causing floods and landslide.

Table 2: Impact of Storms on Provinces in Lao PDR (1993-2012)

Province	Noof Events	Affected	Death	Houses Destroyed	Houses Damaged	Hospital	Lost Cattle	Damaged Crops in Ha.
01 Vientiane Mun.	24	1,917	0	1	0	0	12	0
02 Phongsaly	47	2,762	0	36	0	0	1	0
03 Luangnamtha	35	6,307	0	43	0	1	0	0
04 Oudomxay	22	1,824	1	1	0	0	0	0
05 Bokeo	40	13,188	0	614	640	0	0	0
06 Luang Prabang	47	2,752	0	122	70	0	0	0
07 Huaphanh	13	5,470	0	0	7	0	0	644
08 Xayabury	102	5,612	8	137	1,327	1	0	2
09 Xiengkhuang	38	3,326	16	0	0	0	0	0
10 Vientiane	24	305	0	5	0	0	0	0
11 Borikhamxay	45	15,015	0	49	114	0	8	312
12 Khammuane	16	123,172	0	28	29,464	14	0	0
13 Savannakhet	30	111,580	2	102	17,447	5	0	0
14 Saravane	88	62,074	2	327	0	0	10,696	262,973
15 Sekong	43	131,335	4	243	424	11	1,169	1,522
16 Champasack	66	63,344	4	142	73	0	28	0
17 Attapeu	13	432	1	19	22	0	0	0
Total	693	550,415	38	1,869	49,588	32	11,914	265,453

Source: DesInventar 2012



Drought

Drought involves “unusually dry seasons, without rain or with rain deficit... these are long periods (months, years and even decades) typical in limited continental areas or regional scale” (DesInventar,n.d.). The National risk profile of Lao PDR shows that all parts of Lao PDR has experienced drought to some extent. Every year the country faces either a short or long dry period of drought even during the wet season.

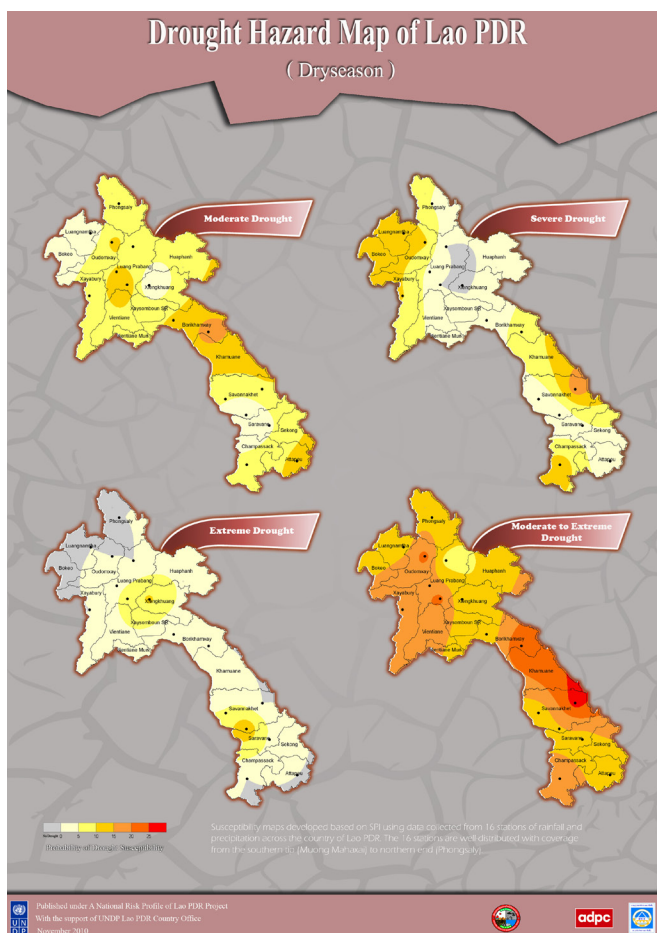


Figure 4: Drought hazard map of Lao PDR



Table 3: Overview of the Impact of Droughts on the Different Province (1996-2012)

Province	Noof Events	Affected	Damages in cropsHa.	Losses in Kip
01 VientianeMun.	6	1,255	0	0
02 Phongsaly	18	27,053	1,232	697,470
03 Luangnamtha	1	3,131	0	0
04 Oudomxay	8	30,460	566	0
05 Bokeo	3	0	2,048	0
06 Luang Prabang	12	25,634	0	418,500,000
07 Huaphanh	29	79,131	2,878	120,000,000
08 Xayabury	10	1,745	1,628	735,360,170
09 Xiengkhuang	10	19,639	11,324	10,541,180,000
11 Borikhamxay	2	881	620	0
12 Khammuane	3	0	2,227	297,200,000
14 Saravane	13	5,840	675,847	0
15 Sekong	6	23,386	72	6,336,103,000
16 Champasack	14	265,537	37,818	6,252,810,000
17 Attapeu	15	4,071	0	104,655,000
Total	150	502,751	736,260	25,748,505,640

Source: DesInventar 2012



Earthquakes

Lao PDR has experienced several small and moderate scale earthquakes in the past in northern and western parts of the country. Only one event of more than a seven magnitude on the Richter scale was reported in the past. The details of earthquake events for the last 38 years are replotted in Figure 5. The Department of Mines and Geology is responsible for monitoring seismic activity in the country.

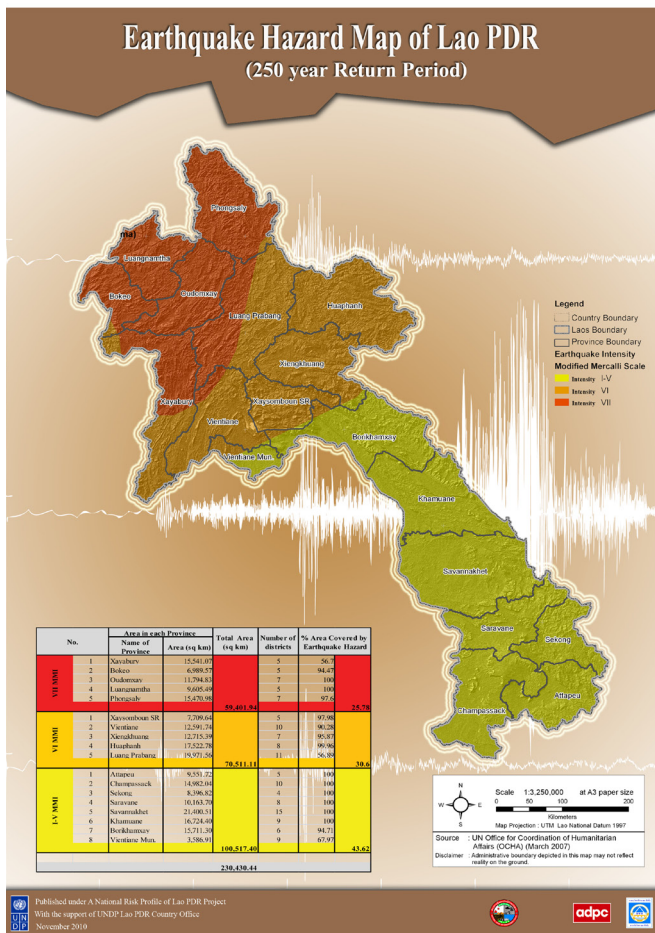


Figure 5: Earthquake hazard map of Lao PDR



Table 4: Earthquake events in Lao PDR (based on USGS catalogue)

SN	Area in each Province		Total Area (sqkm)	Number of districts	% Area	
	Name of Province	Area (sqkm)			Covered by Earthquake Hazard	
VII MMI	1	XayaburyBokeo	15,541.07		5	56.7
	2	Oudomxay	6,989.57		5	94.47
	3	Luangnamtha	11,794.83		7	100
	4	Phongsaly	9,605.49		5	100
	5		15,470.98		7	97.6
			59,401.94			25.78
VIII MMI	1	XaysombounSRVie	7,709.64		5	97.98
	2	ntianeXiengkhuang	12,591.74		0	90.28
	3	gHuaphanh	12,715.39		7	95.87
	4	LuangPrabang	17,522.78		8	99.96
	5		19,971.56		11	56.89
			70,511.11			30.6
I-V MMI	1	AttapeuCham	9,551.72		5	100
	2	passackSekong	14,982.04		10	100
	3	SaravaneSava	8,396.82		4	100
	4	nnakhet	10,163.70		8	100
	5	Khamuane	21,400.51		15	100
	6		16,724.40		9	100

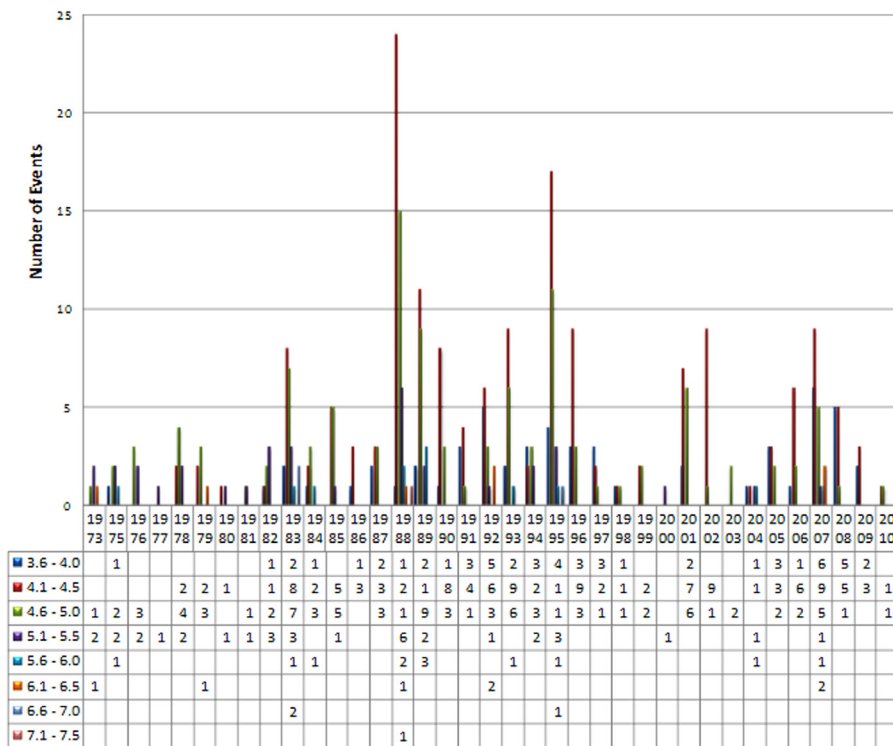


Figure 6: Earthquake events in Lao PDR (based on USGS catalogue)

Landslide

The country is prone to landslides which are mostly triggered by heavy precipitation in the northern provinces. There is, however, no detailed database available at any of the focal agencies. Landslide usually affect transport infrastructure during the monsoon season in Lao PDR. Rainfall is the main cause for landslide occurrences. Other principal factors influencing landslides include slope gradient, rock condition (lithology) and land use. The study found that only 5.24% of the country is prone to very high landslide susceptibility. These high susceptibility zones are localized in the southeast and central part of Lao PDR as can be seen in the landslide susceptibility map of Lao PDR below.



Landslide Susceptibility Map of Lao PDR

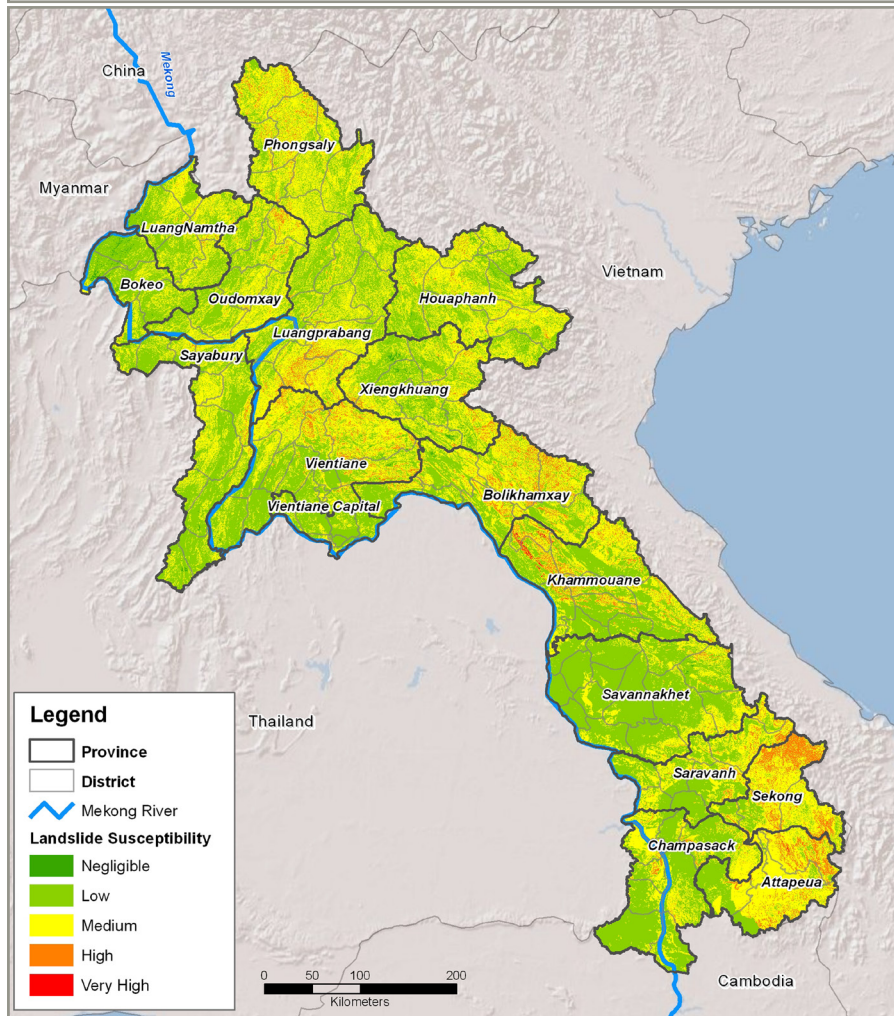


Figure 7: Landslide susceptibility map of Lao PDR

Map production date : Jan 2014



The pictures below show the situation of landslide in provinces across Lao PDR.





A landslide in Nan district on 8 September, 2015, 5 villages reported affected: Ban Nafai (severe), Ban Nalao, Ban Paphai, Phonhin and Sibounheuang (severe), 4 people were killed (2 female), 9 houses were washed away by water, and 32 houses partially destroyed, 2 irrigation systems were destroyed and numerous livestock affected: 17 buffaloes, 30 pigs.



Source: DRRTWG, 2015



Landslides which affect road networks are a common occurrence



Measures for disaster risk reduction in Lao PDR

Risk reduction measures are activities, projects and program that the communities may identify after assessing and analyzing the risk that they face. These measures are specifically intended to reduce the current risks and prevent future risks in the community.

An overview of DRR measures which have been implemented in Lao PDR

- Establishment of National Disaster Management Committee (NDMC) under Decree No. 158 of the Prime Minister, 22 August 1999. NDMC was changed into National Disaster Prevention and Control Committee (NDPCC). It is the overall coordinating body on Disaster management policies, mobilization and coordination of national and international assistance; information management and public awareness; disaster preparedness, response and rehabilitation; and promotion of local disaster management committees, down to the district and village level.
- National Strategy on Disaster Management is in place
- National, provincial, district and village DRM plans
- Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030



- DRR implementation Projects and Activities by government in partnership with development partners and I/NGOs in Lao PDR:
 - Institutional Strengthening and Capacity Development on Disaster Risk Reduction implemented
 - Operationalizing Strategic Plan for Disaster Management
 - Communities based disaster risk management in upland communities- LANGOCA
 - Disaster risk education for children (DREC, Establishing disaster information systems (EDIS), Sayaboury Integrated Hazard Mitigation –LANGOCA
 - Vulnerability and Poverty Reduction –LANGOCA
 - Flood Emergency Management Strengthening
 - Community based disaster risk reduction
- Public Awareness and Education, Celebration of ASEAN and International Day on Disaster Management:
 - Meeting and walking for health
 - Public Awareness through Media means: Radio, Newspaper, TV
 - Photo Exhibition, questionnaires and fire fighting simulation exercise
 - Banners along the main road in Vientiane Capital.
- Mainstreaming DRR into NSEDP planning process and in the sector planning.
 - Institutionalization of the DRR module in the national curriculum and in the teachers training system;
 - Pilot testing of DRR teaching aid materials in target schools;
 - Development of framework curriculum plan to aid in the future integration of DRR in Lao PDR;
 - Identification of specific opportunities for integrating hazard resilience school construction features in one pipeline project.



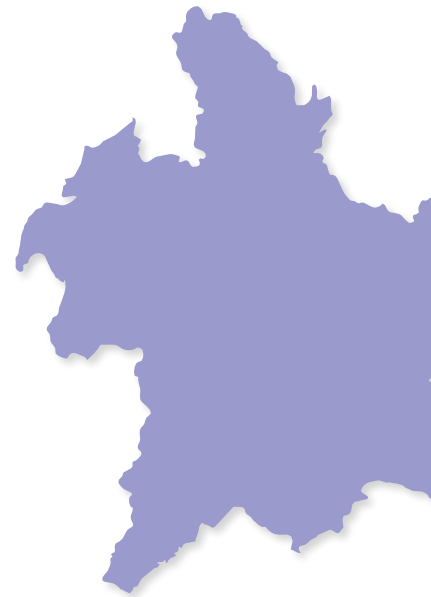
- Institutional capacity building for disaster prevention and control committee at all levels.
- Establish disaster early warning system:
 - Department of Meteorology and Hydrology: Early warning and dissemination to NDMO and other relevant authorities.
 - Early Warning (EW): weather forecast (rainfalls, storms, typhoons) and River Flood Forecasts along the Mekong River and its tributaries.
 - The NDMO then sends this EW to the local DM organizations to take appropriate actions and disseminate early warnings to communities at risk.
 - Communication system: from national to the local (provincial) level by using the telephone, fax machines, etc.
 - Early Warning from province to district and villages (in particular in mountainous and remote areas).

Section 2:

Media and Disaster Risk Reduction

Disaster risk communication is at the heart of the disaster risk management process. Risk communication includes the means of transferring relevant information from authorities to the public and, on the other hand, risk information can be transferred from the public (risk areas) to the authorities. Through efficient disaster risk communication, it is possible to prevent and mitigate losses and damages from disasters, prepare the population before a disaster, disseminate information during disasters and aid subsequent recovery.

The media has an important role in terms of disaster risk communication which can contribute to helping reduce loss of life and property due to disaster. The media can disseminate news, entertainment, education, data or promotional messages. In the same way it can help deliver key messages to help people be better prepared for hazards. Channels for delivering messages include face-to-face conversations, stake holder meetings (workshops, conferences, seminars, training and etc.), telephone calls, newspapers, magazines, radio, TV, internet, cinema films, billboards, books as well as CDs, DVDs, etc.





Media as a key stakeholder for DRR

Key stakeholders (government officials, NGOs, UN, private sector and communities) can identify and analyze risks and implement solutions to reduce those risks. All disaster management actions including risk identification, risk analysis, risk prioritization, risk treatment, and monitoring and evaluation, involve communication among multiple stakeholders. Various stakeholders have different viewpoints about the nature of risks, the proposed solutions and their implementation. Stakeholders should be given platforms through which they can share their concerns and opinions, understand each other's perspective and identify commonly agreed solutions, which are acceptable to everybody.

Disaster risk reduction related media can be published or broadcast most easily when a disaster is imminent or has recently past. This is important when the event is still a popular topic and is easy to get into the news. It is more challenging to get disaster related information during times when a disaster is not imminent. This is because in times of peace people are rarely thinking about hazards and how to prepare for them. For this reason, it is important for the media to take extra care to include disaster risk reduction news when times are good. This is most commonly done by sharing preparedness techniques and reflecting on past events or lessons learned.



Journalists acting as 'translators'

The concept of disaster risk reduction is technical, academic and often hard to understand for non-practitioners. Often, the writing related to the subject is just as hard to understand. This is why journalists need to build their own understanding of disaster risk reduction to better relay the information to the public in an easy-to-understand way.

Journalists can present the information in a way that makes a community want to engage in preparedness activities. Facts and clear data related to how disasters affect peoples' lives, whether directly or indirectly, can make a lasting impact on their view of disasters. This is why presenting the key concepts of disaster risk reduction is so important. It helps people build their own understanding of disaster events.

When writing or broadcasting stories related to disasters it is important to avoid technical words such as 'capacity', 'resilience' and 'mitigation'. These words often confuse people and may cause them to tune out from the report. As a journalist, it's your job to take these concepts and present them in an understandable way.

The list below complements the disaster risk reduction terms list earlier in this publication and gives examples of how to define terms in an understandable way.



Popular terms and useful translations

The following is a list of common disaster risk reduction terms and how to explain them in a basic way.

Disaster risk

The damage that may affect the community.

Disaster risk reduction (DRR)

Key concepts for preparing for disasters.

Disaster risk management (DRM)

The activities to reduce disaster risk.

Capacities

A person's DRR skills.

Hazard

Events that can harm.

Preparedness

Activities done before a disaster to reduce damages.

Recovery

Actions done to rebuild after a disaster.

Resilience

How prepared a community is for a dangerous event.



Examples of simplified statements

Here are examples of technical statements being reworded so they are more understandable. The words in *italics* are the technical words and their easy to understand definition in the paragraph below it.

Example 1

Statement: After the 1999 super cyclone, UNDP carried out infrastructure enhancement projects.

Translation: UNDP trained hundreds of people in better, safer and more economical construction. Amongst the trained was KarunakarPatra, who now employs 15 people in a firm that builds resilient brick-and-mortar housing, and who has built hundreds of homes and schools.

Example 2

Statement: In Bhubaneswar, Odisha's capital, UNDP undertook institutional capacity building for the Odisha State Management Agency (OSDMA)."

Translation: UNDP supported OSMDA as it trained and equipped rapid response teams; these teams are important to saving lives during a disaster, and have impressive skills, such as the ability to climb buildings or dive into lakes to rescue people.

Example 3

Statement: In Baliupar village, UNDP helped strengthen community level preparedness and awareness capacity building.

Translation: In Baliupar, a local women's group has taken it upon themselves to hold mock drills to expedite emergency evacuation. While we were there, an entire dramatized disaster was acted out, complete with community medical volunteers supporting the elderly and injured.



The role of the media before a disaster

Before a disaster occurs the media should play a role in underlining the importance of disaster risk reduction and preparedness to help decision makers and the at-risk communities to understand appropriate actions to avoid future disasters. The media can perform the following functions to promote disaster mitigation and preparedness:

1. Analysis of risk sources and patterns.

The process of urbanization, population growth, industrialization and environmental degradation without consideration of disaster risk are contributing towards generating risks and disaster. The media can publish articles, reviews and expert opinions on how these four factors are increasing vulnerabilities of certain groups of people or certain geographical region in the countries.

2. Public information.

The media can play an important role:

- In providing information of the risks in a country;
- In building awareness of different hazards: e.g. flood, drought, landslide, typhoon/storm, earthquake and etc.
- In highlighting groups of people, which are most at risk and disseminating information provided by key experts and official sources on preparedness and mitigation measures.

3. Early Warning:

The media can broadcast early warning information and scientific forecasts about hazards through radio, TV, and newspapers etc.



4. Preparedness information:

The media can disseminate early warning information and information about the precautionary measures communities can take to avoid losses of lives and damages to property in times of natural disasters. This includes information of evacuation, crop safety (early harvesting), safety of family assets, food storage, documents, livestock safety and other mitigation measures.

5. Encourage people's participation:

The media can also publish viewpoints of people from at risk communities on different approaches to reduce their vulnerabilities and risks and how to facilitate their participation in government and NGO programs.

- The representative of the Ministry of Information and Culture shall serve as a member of the NDPCC; shall appoint a disaster management contact person from the Ministry and establish focal points at the provincial, district and institutional levels as needed;
- Develop a communication action plan to ensure the availability of communication services in case of the occurrence of a disaster;
- Train the staff of communications ministry and the private sector media personnel from electronic, and print media to raise their awareness about disaster risks and the role of media in promoting community preparedness.

Source: the National Disaster Management Plan.



The role of the media during a disaster

During the occurrence of any disasters the main focus is to save as many as possible and avoid the risks from any secondary hazards. In this phase the main tasks which need to be undertaken are damage and loss assessment, provision of emergency assistance (food, water, clothing, shelter, first aid, search & rescue, and evacuation of affected people). The media need to be provided information on the basic facts about the disaster and actions being taken by the authorities. During the emergency situation the media can perform the following functions:

1. Inform the public with timely and factual information:

This includes provision of information about what happened or the extent of the disaster, the losses caused and the current situation of the hazard.

2. Advise the public on actions to be taken:

The media can provide relevant information for emergency and precautionary measures, e.g. evacuation, areas they should not go to, water purification techniques for safe drinking water.

3. Inform on actions being taken by authorities and aid groups:

Information on what the government has done to save the lives and property in the affected areas; what other agencies are undertaking; and what other plans, actions and measures authorities have been carried out to save lives and provide essential assistance to the victims.

4. Broadcast/relay messages concerning the welfare of affected groups:

The media can gather and provide information about groups of people or families might be affected in certain areas (over the roofs, trees, etc.).



5. Facilitate communication among affected people and their relatives, friends, families in other parts of the country or worldwide:

(in case of a large scale disaster). The media can facilitate communication among survivors and their families.

- Initiate timely early warning information, emergency operations, and mitigation information broadcasts through multi-media services.
- Coordinate with the NDMA to receive information about the disaster risks and preparedness strategies, particularly about community preparedness.

Source: the National Disaster Management Plan.

What key role can the media play at each stage?

Preparation: early warning; educating the public on various disaster components; reporting on initiatives and plans to address vulnerabilities.

Response: immediate impact on affected areas; projecting core needs of communities and informing affected people where they can access aid; and tracking ongoing initiatives.

Recovery: Accountability in usage of aid; lessons to be learnt; success stories; sustainable construction practices and material usage in recovery; alternate livelihood options.

Mitigation: Reporting on and influencing larger policy and development agendas; connections to climate change. Mainstreaming DRR discussion and measures into topics such as water, construction, food security, health, livelihood and women and child welfare.



The role of the media after a disaster

This phase will focus on rehabilitation and reconstruction of damaged infrastructure, livelihoods, environment and economic and social systems. During this phase it is important to integrate disaster risk reduction into rehabilitation and reconstruction process, so that future risks can be reduced. The media can:

1. Communicate about rehabilitation and reconstruction plans:

This involves informing the public in the affected areas as well as other stakeholders about rehabilitation and reconstruction plans developed by government, UN and I/NGOs. The media can facilitate debates regarding the plans in order to ensure that the concerns of survivors are truly addressed and that such plans are developed and implemented with the active participation of all stakeholders, particularly the beneficiaries and community members.

2. Influence for integrating risk reduction and prevention:

The media can contribute to sustainable social development by providing relevant information which will highlight, promote and advocate the need for the integration of risk reduction considerations into rehabilitation and reconstruction efforts.

Promote disaster management public awareness and education media broadcasting programs and publications on environmental protection of natural resources.

Source: the National Disaster Management Plan.



Why should the media report on disaster preparedness topics?

- Disaster affects everyone (even media organizations themselves), therefore preparedness can help everyone to cope with disaster.
- Network increase-preparedness activities often involve high-level ministers/officials, community leaders, high profile news companies which can the media engage with important actors and agencies relevant to their field.
- We cannot stop disaster, but we can help stop its effects. Disaster managers need your help to spread key messages - warning and informing through social media and news organizations is an imperative preparedness technique.
- Media has the expertise and resources to reach all target audiences in effective ways which appeal to mass audiences in interesting in informative ways.



International and national experiences of media in DRR

1 Examples of high profile disaster events reported by the media in Lao PDR

Newspaper/ Web site: Paxaxon, Vientiane Mai, Vientiane times etc.

Vientiane Times

www.vientianetimes.org.la

Rising Mekong River threatens to flood Champasak

The Meteorology and Hydrology Department yesterday warned people living in low-lying areas alongside the Mekong River in Pakxe and Khong districts, Champasak province, and the Xe Banghay River to move their possessions to higher ground.



Flooding in Champasak province yesterday.

Yesterday, the water level of the Mekong River in Pakxe district rose to 12.21 metres, above the danger level of 12m, and is expected to continue to rise in the next few days.

The level of the river yesterday morning rose 12.21m and rose to 12.38m at 1pm, according to the provincial meteorology and hydro-power section.

The level of Mekong tributaries in Rhammuan province also continue to rise, with the Xe Banghay River in Khongkay district swelling from 17.20m on Sunday to 17.37m yesterday, well above the danger level of 15m. The level of the river rose from 21.20m on Sunday to 21.46m yesterday at the Xe Banghay Bridge.

The level of the Mekong River in Vientiane reached 7.60m yesterday and is expected to decline to 7.55m today, while the river also fell from 12.28m to 11.07m in Pakxan district, Bouliammy province, and from 11.20m to 11.35m in Saxonharat province.

TV Broadcasting through Lao National TV



Flood in Champasak 2011



2 Experience in Thailand in 2013

- In 2013, when significant flooding occurred in Thailand, Thai PBS TV recognized that the media needs to play an important role in provision of knowledge on DRR for risk communities to assist them in preparing for coping with disaster events which may occur in the future. Thai PBS reported information on disaster events in the following way:
 - Report on initial flood/disaster information and follow up flood situation during and after the event
 - Produced TV program documentary film "Knowing how deal with disaster"
 - Follow up with news items about the disaster response of the government
 - Disseminate DRR activities by various agencies to prepare risk communities in dealing with disaster



- Featured interviews with water experts on water management in dams, reservoirs and warn local people on what to do and what not to do during crisis situations.



3 Other International Experiences

TV Debate: Disaster risk Reduction and the Private Sector



The well-known BBC World presenter, Mr. David Eades, hosted a special televised panel discussion at the Third United Nations World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction in Sendai, Japan. In this special event, a high-profile panel of key business and government leaders discussed whether the global building industry needs to make urgent and radical changes in order to protect communities from the impacts of disasters given that the private sector is responsible for up to 80% of investment in all urban infrastructures.



TV Film Documentary on Disaster Risk Reduction

Twelve films were shortlisted for the first edition of the International Award for Best TV Documentary on Disaster Risk Reduction, a competition honoring work that spotlights human stories, investigation and innovation. The four categories for competition entries were: Best Human Story; Best Investigative Story; Most Innovative Documentary; and Best Disaster Risk Reduction Story. The award ceremony took place at the Third UN World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction in Sendai, Japan.

Examples of disaster risk reduction reporting

1. Published stories "Australia's disaster preparedness helped prevent cyclone YasiCasuaties" UN News Center, 4 February 2011.
2. Published stories "Deforestation and poverty behind Haiti flood crisis" AFP, 7 September 2008. (why are disasters happening?)
3. Flooding: Blame ministers' penny pinching and the planners-Not the weather. By Geoffrey Lean, Daily Mail, 27 June 2007 (how can we prevent disasters?)

Media initiatives to promote DRR

- Indonesia's Tempo Magazine was one of the first magazines to publish articles on disaster risk reduction on a regular basis.
- UNISDR interview with the magazine's Executive Editor, Yulilsmartono, about DRR coverage.



DRR on TV: RPN9 Television-Radio Philippines Channel 9 dedicates one regular piece on disaster risk reduction news every day in their bulletins.

Orlando Mercado, Radio Philippines Network President and CEO explained the logic behind this coverage: “we want to help change common perceptions about disaster. That while response and prevention may be important, mitigating disaster risk is what really matters. On TV it may seem out of synch. We may be the only network talking about floods and typhoons during sunny days, but we have embraced a large cause, a strategic vision. It helps us marginalize what has been troubling us. it gives us a reason to stay on the air and find meaning in our existence”.





Media Strategies

- **Organizing expert dialogues:** the media can organize/hold forum among representatives of scientific organizations e.g. meteorological department, national disaster management committee, MRC, UNDP, WFP, FAO, Red Cross etc. to discuss about disaster, risks vulnerabilities, identification of appropriate solutions in order to play the important role in facilitating communication among stakeholders on disaster problems and also in raising awareness.
- **Research broadcast and articles:** media professional can coordinate concern department on specific issues such as the risk generating factors in the community and publish them in newspapers or broadcast through radio and TV.
- **Interview:** the media can organize interviews with disaster management officials e.g. the director of National Disaster Prevention and Control Committee, Lao Red Cross, experts of the Mekong Commission, etc. to highlight certain issues in DRM.
- **Field visits:** the media professionals can cover plight of the vulnerable or disaster affected people in order to advocate for disaster risk reduction or provision of appropriated relief and rehabilitation.
- **Help create early warning systems** to provide information of risks and technologies to aid development and more.
- **Broadcast, publish warning and preparedness actions:** the media can publish and broadcast warning and preparedness messages to inform the general public about the risks and possible disasters they may face and actions they can take to avoid or minimize loss of life and property.
- Positively influence government to **prioritize disaster risk issues**—exposing any political agenda that could be stopping this.
- **Improve coordination** of risk assessment and risk reduction activities by integrating stakeholders; resulting in improved work and increased resources to **save lives**.
- **Provide instant and trusted public safety information** to the public before and after a disaster strikes. Inspiring others to take practical steps to protect them selves from harm.



The importance of local media reporting on disaster risk reduction during major disasters

After a major disaster international media often portrays the situation in a negative way, while simultaneously asking for people to donate relief funds. This sends mixed messages to the public and leaves them thinking the local people do not have the ability to help themselves. However, there are usually cases where community members band together to help one another.

Local media can often give a better situation of what is happening after a disaster hits. They understand the local people and culture much more than any international media source. It's up to them to give a clear picture of the situation and celebrate local efforts. This can pave the way for greater preparedness efforts in the future.



Guidelines for media on development of messages for public awareness

Information which can be disseminated through various media channels:

- Description of the event
- How and when it happened?
- How many people were killed and affected?
- How many survivors and what are their conditions and needs?
- Why such a heavy toll in mortality and morbidity?
- Extent of damage
- What safety measures are being taken?
- Causes or contributing factors which led to the disaster?
- Has this ever happened before? And has the preparedness and emergency response improved?
- What about psychosocial assistance to those who have been injured?
- How does this problem affect operations?
- What are the next steps to be taken to ensure care of survival?
- Measure being planned to ensure care of survivors.

In order to ensure that the messages that are prepared and transmitted by newspapers, radio and TV channels are understandable and meet the information needs, the following guidelines should be followed:

A good message must:

- Address public concern
- Contain what people want to know
- Give guidance on how to respond
- Provide accurate and timely information
- Use examples, stories analogies to take your points
- Not assume that there is a common understanding between expert and target group.



Media professionals must consider the following aspects while developing a risk message:

- Information is clear and comprehensive
- Information is credible
- Message does not arouse / produce unnecessary fear
- Length of the message is appropriate to convey the meaning and not too long
- Think how the message will be received
- Written communication leaves a record
- Choice of words and the tone of language demonstrate a relationship of trust and partnership with the target group

Avoiding misleading statements

When writing about disasters it is important to keep in mind that information can be easily misinterpreted because the public may lack knowledge in the subject.

A common example of disaster writing that can be misinterpreted is writing the statement "A major earthquake happens once every 10 years." This statement makes people think that when an earthquake occurs, they are then safe for the next nine years before another is "due."

It is better to write statements that group disaster events so people understand many can happen over a period of time. It's better to say, "Four events between 1986 and 2015." This way people know that many events can happen over a period of time.



What can make a message ineffective?

- The application of probabilistic information may increase confusion
- “Rational appeal” often comprised of numerical or statistical information may not be understood by target groups who use different criteria to assess risks, which is not “rational”.
- A rational argument is based on the induction of empirical evidence presented in a logical and consistent way.
- An argument is assume to be emotional when of addresses the feeling, values or emotions of the receiver. Arguments mainly focusing on the consequences of hazardous activities could be conceptualize as emotional arguments because they usually appeal to the values, emotions or feelings of the receiver.
- An emotional appeal from an attractive source may have more effect than a rational appeal from an unattractive.

Tips for reporting on disaster risk reduction

Newspaper reporters, broadcasters, and news agencies play a crucial role in promoting DRR before and after disaster.

Here are some tips for ensuring good DRR coverage:

For editors:

- Have an internal policy about who covers disaster
- Have an internal contingency plan to cope with disaster
- Have plan to alert and issue early warning messages
- Assign one reporter to cover DRR; the same reporter can also cover climate change
- Allow time and space to investigate the cause of a disaster
- Invest in DRR knowledge by sending reporters to DRR media training or on disaster field trips
- Understand the role you can play in policy change
- Organize private meetings at the higher level with national disaster managers
- Organize awareness programmes to sensitize and educate vulnerable people



For reporters

- Develop private contacts with disaster experts before disaster happen; know who they are, their exact speciality and have regular contact with them.
- Have a contact list for experts in urban risks, early warning systems, climate change, gender, environmental and development issues to enrich the disaster story.
- Have contacts with national and local meteorological departments, disaster managers, ministers and ministries involved in disaster reduction, civil protection or civil defense.
- Keep update statistics on previous events in your region
- Become familiar with the most disaster prone zones and vulnerable areas
- Keep a tract record of past disaster and lessons learned
- Get familiar with main prevention and mitigation measures taken by your authorities so that you are ready when disasters strike.
- Know the factors that can make disaster worse.
- Base on your information only on sound scientific knowledge
- Listen to communities and what they have to say.
- Develop more contacts in communities, or contact communities more frequently to conduct interviews of how these people have been affected.
- Stories centered on people tend to be more interesting to the audience.



Media questions checklist

When disasters occur the following questions should be asked:

General questions

- Where did it occur and when? What are the specifics of the disaster context?
- Why did it happen?
- What are the main underlying factors behind the event (poverty, climate change, environmental degradation, urban growth)?
- Could it have been averted?
- Was there any DRR policy in place?
- Was an early warning system in place? Did it function?

Questions about Structural elements

- How many houses were destroyed?
- How many hospitals and schools were destroyed?
- Was there any land use planning in place?
- Was there any land use planning policy integrating a multi-hazard approach?
- Were houses and schools protected against hazards?
- How was the houses built? Were any building codes in place? Was resilient building material used?



Questions about Non-Structural elements

- What non-structural measures were in place?
- Were there any natural buffers?
- How was the environment affected?

Questions about preparedness measures

- Was there a contingency plan in place?
- How were vulnerable groups (poor people, women and children) affected?
- What was the impact on different economic groups?
- Who was the most impacted?
- Were there any shelters in place?

Economic questions

- What was the economic impact?
- How much should be invested in DRR?

Recovery process questions

- In what way is it built back better?
- Is DRR integrated in the recovery process?
- What is needed to better protect the most vulnerable population?
- What is DRR budget in the reconstruction budget?

Responsibility questions

- Who was in charge?
- Who should have been in charge?

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Common Disaster Risk Management terminologies:

Adaptation

The adjustment in natural or human systems in response to actual or expected climatic stimuli or their effects, which moderates harm or exploits beneficial opportunities.

Capacities

The resources and skills people possess can develop and access to reduce disaster risks and prepare for hazards.

Climate change

The climate of a place or region is changed if over an extended period (typically decades or longer) there is a statistically significant change in the mean temperature or variability of the climate for that place or region.

Disaster

A serious disruption of the functioning of society, causes widespread human material or environmental losses, which exceed the ability of the affected communities to cope using their own resources. Disaster occurs when the negative effects of the hazards are not well managed.

Disaster risk

The potential disaster losses, in lives, health status, livelihoods, assets and services, which could occur to a particular community or a society over some specified future time period.

Disaster risk management

The systematic process of using administrative directives, organizations, and operational skills and capacities to implement strategies, policies and improved coping capacities in order to lessen the adverse impacts of hazards and the possibility of disaster (UNISDR,2009)

Disaster risk reduction (DRR)

Is a systematic approach to identify, assess and reduce the risks of disaster. It aims to reduce socio-economic vulnerabilities to disaster as well as dealing with the environmental and other hazards that activate them and to minimize the damage caused by natural hazards like earthquakes, floods, droughts and cyclones, through an ethic of prevention.



Early warning

The provision of timely and effective information, through identified institutions, that allows those exposed to a hazard to act to avoid or reduce their risk and prepare for effective response. Early warning systems include: understanding and mapping the hazards; monitoring and forecasting impending events; processing and disseminating understandable warnings to political authorities and the population; and undertaking appropriate and timely actions in response to the warning.

Exposure

People, property, systems, or other elements present in hazard zones that are thereby subject to potential losses.

Hazard

Phenomenon which has the potential to cause disruption or damage to people, their property, their services and their environment. Hazards alone need not be dangerous. However, when clubbed with vulnerable factors and exposure can turn into disasters.

Mitigation

Measures taken prior to the impact of a disaster to minimize or limit the effects of hazards (sometimes referred to as structural and non-structural measures).

Preparedness

Activities and measures taken in advance to ensure effective response to the impact of hazards, including the issuance of timely and effective early warnings and the temporary evacuation of people and property from threatened locations.

Prevention

actions taken to avoid the adverse impact of hazards and minimize related environmental, technical and biological disaster.

Public awareness

The process of informing the general population to increase consciousness about risks and how people can act to reduce their exposure to hazards. Public awareness activities foster changes in behavior leading towards a culture of risk reduction, changing attitudes and behavior contribute to promoting a "culture of prevention".



Recovery

Actions taken after a disaster to restore or improve the pre-disaster living conditions of the stricken community, while encouraging and facilitating necessary adjustment to reduce disaster risk. Recovery (rehabilitation and reconstruction) provides an opportunity to apply disaster risk reduction measures.

Resilience

The ability of a system, community or society exposed to hazards to resist, absorb, accommodate to and recover from the effects of a hazard in a timely and efficient manner, including through the preservation and restoration of its essential basic structures and functions.

Relief/Response

The provisions of emergency services and public assistance during or immediately after a disaster in order to save lives, reduce health impacts, ensure public safety and meet the basic subsistence needs of the people affected.

Risk

The probability that negative consequences may arise when hazards interact with vulnerable areas, people, property and environment

Risk assessment/Analysis

A methodology to determine the nature and extent of risk by analyzing potential hazards and evaluating existing conditions of vulnerability that together could potentially harm exposed people, property, services, livelihoods and the environment on which they depend.

Risk management

The systematic approach and practice of managing uncertainty to minimize potential harm and loss. Risk management comprises risk assessment and analysis, and the implementation of strategies and specific actions to control, reduce and transfer risks. It is widely practiced by organizations to minimize risk in investment decisions and to address operational risks such as those of business disruption, production failure, environmental damage, social impacts and damage from fire and natural hazards. Risk management is a core issue for sectors such as water supply, energy and agriculture whose production is directly affected by extremes of weather and climate.



Risk transfer

The process of formally or informally shifting the financial consequences of particular risks from one party to another whereby a household, community, enterprise or state authority will obtain resources from the other party after a disaster occurs, in exchange for ongoing or compensatory social or financial benefits provided to that other party.

Risk communication

Any purposeful exchange of information between interested parties regarding levels of hazards or environmental risks; or decisions, actions or policies aimed at managing or controlling such risks.

Vulnerability

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

Hazard vs. disaster:

Another important consideration for the media is an appreciation of the differences between hazards and disasters. A hazard is an occurrence such as a flood, drought, cyclone, landslide, earthquake or tsunami. A hazard turns into a disaster due to (mostly manmade) vulnerabilities. Over time, the continuous interchanged use of these terms can result in a perception that there is nothing we can do. However, in fact, attempts to reduce vulnerability and exposure to natural hazards help reduce the negative impacts of hazards which can lead to disasters.





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Scaling-up Community-Based Disaster Risk Reduction in Lao PDR



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