

Strengthening Capacities for Sub-National Post-Disaster Needs Assessment and Reconstruction

Case Study

July 2014

Khammouane province, Lao PDR – On 29 September 2009, Typhoon Ketsana ravaged Lao PDR's southern provinces causing widespread destruction and affecting more than 180,000 people. Twenty-eight storm-related deaths were reported. It was the first time the country experienced a disaster of this magnitude.

Two years later, Typhoons Haima and Nokten hit the northern and central parts of the country. Some of the most important infrastructure was severely damaged including the irrigation system, roads, bridges, hospitals, and schools. This had a direct impact on local people's lives and livelihoods, and the typhoons significantly disrupted public service deliveries.

As tropical storms and flooding continue to affect various government sectors in Khammouane province, the provincial government made the decision to improve post-disaster reconstruction efforts relating to damage and loss assessment, institutional and financial arrangements, disaster-resilient investments and project management.

As part of the Khammouane Development Project supported by the World Bank, ADPC provided the Khammouane Department of Planning and Investment - under the Ministry of Planning and Investment - with technical services for building government capability and efficiently conducting post-disaster reconstruction.

Focusing support to the sub-national level

Project partners wanted to build on the communication between the province and district level. To do this, clear guidelines and procedures were created to estimate damage and losses during a disaster, and what the affected sectors require to rebuild.

"Ultimately, the provincial government must have the capacity to respond swiftly to the impacts of a disaster so the community and local economy can recover quickly," states Ms. Somvath Keokhamphoui, ADPC's Project Coordinator.

What makes the project unique, is that it provides support specifically to the sub-national level, while following national level arrangements.

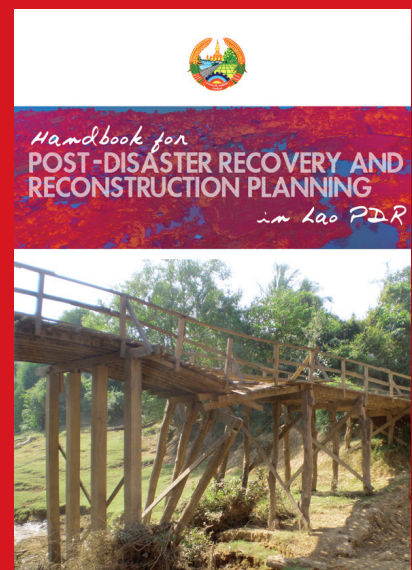
"The existing relationship between the district and provincial levels must remain strong for successful post-disaster reconstruction. This can only



National arrangements for post-disaster needs assessment and recovery

Following the aftermath of Typhoon Ketsana in 2009, the Ministry of Planning and Investment of Lao PDR with support from ADPC, Global Facility for Disaster Risk and Recovery, and the World Bank, defined a national approach for post-disaster assessment and recovery.

The *Handbook for Post-Disaster Recovery and Reconstruction Planning in Lao PDR* provides a comprehensive methodology for damage, loss, and needs assessment.



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Typhoons in Khammouane province cause economic losses, as well as physical damage.



From provincial assessment to recovery

Post-disaster recovery is about getting people's everyday life back to normal after a disaster and making sure money is invested appropriately for long-term reconstruction.

To make sure the recovery and reconstruction plan is responsive to the priorities and needs in the assessment, the project partners developed general guidelines on planning, budgeting, and financing for Khammouane province in Lao PDR. The guidelines take officials through the process of developing an effective plan. The steps include:

- strategic planning for recovery;
- identifying immediate financing resources;
- consolidating financial requirements;
- identifying implementation structure;
- drafting the plan; and
- approval and dissemination of the plan.

be sustainable if the responsibilities, functions and procedures are well understood by the relevant authorities," says Ms. Keokhamphoui.

"Sub-national governments need specific guidelines to conduct post-disaster needs assessment and recovery planning, and these guidelines need to be developed in full consultation with the government officials and in the national language," she continues.

Building a provincial system for post-disaster needs assessment and recovery

In Lao PDR, an effective post-disaster assessment and recovery plan depends on the arrangements and abilities of the Provincial Disaster Management Committees. They are the ones responsible for preparing for disaster.

In order to guide the arrangements for all sector departments in Khammouane, the project partners prepared a Standard Operating Procedure for the province. This was done through consultations with committee members.

The Standard Operating Procedure covers the specific activities, outputs, and responsibilities as well as a realistic schedule based on the province's ability. The activities guide the officials through the post-disaster assessment process including management meetings, sector assessment, fieldwork for damage and loss assessment, data validation, and consolidation of sector assessments into one provincial assessment report. The post-disaster needs assessment covers the estimated cost of damage, loss, and needs; and how businesses and local people were affected.

Empowering sectors to implement post-disaster needs assessment

Assessment teams also require sector-specific steps, templates, and explanations for an assessment to be conducted. In Khammouane province, there are twelve significant sectors. One of the twelve sector-specific guidance notes developed is a comprehensive guide on measuring damages and losses in the transportation sector.

Khammouane province's Department of Public Works and Transportation will use the guide when undertaking damage, loss and needs assessment of the transportation sector after a disaster.

"The teams responsible for assessing damages should include local and provincial engineers, architects, transport professionals and economists, and any other professionals familiar with the assessment methodology and socio-economic conditions of the affected areas. The variety of individuals ensures an accurate assessment of damages," states Mr. Emmanuel Torrente, consultant at ADPC.

The damage and losses reports need to be approved through crosschecking to confirm the information is accurate. As a result, the team will have validated data from the field that will be used as the basis for the final value of damages and losses, and finances can be distributed accordingly to begin the recovery phase.

A variety of recovery and reconstruction strategies can be considered based on the needs of the transportation sector: for example prioritizing the bridges that require the most urgent repair, and rebuilding stronger roads.

After long-term transportation reconstruction strategies are created, a full report for the transportation sector can be made and submitted to the provincial government of Khammouane to be included in the overall post-disaster report.

Building sub-national capacities through targeted training

The technical assistance ADPC provided to Khammouane officials included on-the-job support, a field visit to Indonesia, and short training courses.

"Effective post-disaster assessment and recovery planning requires both theoretical and practical capacities of participating officials. We delivered an action-oriented, scenario-based, and



Selected guidance documents on post-disaster needs assessment, and recovery planning and budgeting in Khammouane province.

multi-sector comprehensive short training program for post-disaster activities in Khammouane province," Torrente explains. Two five-day training sessions guided provincial and district officials through the key concepts, Standard Operating Procedures, sector-specific procedures, and recovery planning processes. The participants made a one-day field visit to Khoum Kham district in the province, which suffered from flooding in August 2013.

"I have collected disaster information in the field before, but now I learnt in detail how to collect the data properly. After the theoretical part, we practiced collecting real data in the field," said Mr. Khammanee Souvannaphom, Head of the District Labour & Social Welfare Office after the training.

"We now know how to prepare better and some information we can find before the disaster. I will report what I have learnt and share with my colleagues," reflects Mr. Khaima Sengsouliya, Technical Officer at Provincial Industrial and Trade Office, Khammouane Province.

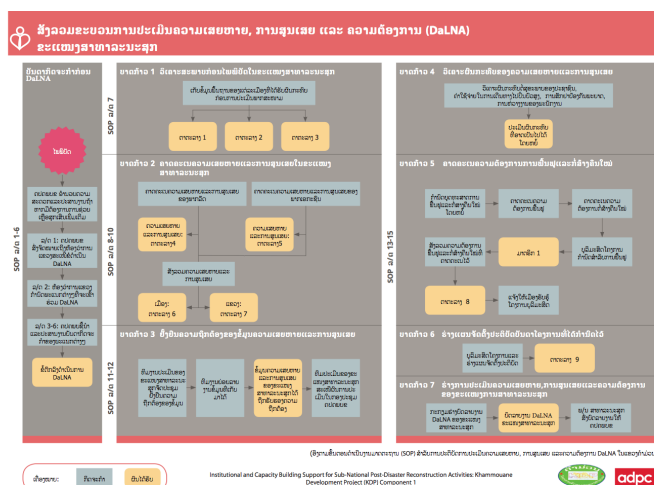
Adapting methodologies to local requirements

ADPC's technical assistance in Khammouane province forms a key component of its mission to reduce disaster and climate risk impacts on communities and countries in the Asia-Pacific region by working with governments, development partners and key stakeholders.

"Since the devastating earthquake in Gujarat, India in 2001, we have supported multiple countries' post-disaster assessment and recovery planning in Asia," says Project Officer Mr. Gregory Pearn from ADPC.

In recent years, there has been a growing international recognition that governments must take the full lead in assessment and recovery planning, with support from various development partners.

"We aim to build institutional arrangements and capacities, using internationally accepted methodologies, which are adapted to specific country requirements," Mr. Pearn states.



Wall charts illustrating the linkages between the common Standard Operating Procedure and the sector-specific guidance notes can be displayed in provincial sector department offices as a reminder of the post-disaster assessment processes.



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