

HELP-GWP consultation in South Asia on Draft Principles on Investment and Financing for Water-related Disaster Risk Reduction

Consultation Report

Date:	12 October 2018
Place:	Colombo, Sri Lanka
Number of participants:	29 from 7 countries (Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Japan, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka)

Background

Organised upon the request of the High-level Experts and Leaders Panel on Water and Disasters (HELP), the main focus of the consultation was to collect comments on the proposed Principles on Investments and Financing for water-related disaster risk reduction, and to gain understanding on the regional perception of what is effective disaster response. Consultations were organized back-to-back with the Regional Meeting of GWP South Asia. The Principles are closely related to the activities of GWP South Asia, as “Emerging challenges in DRR in South Asia” is in fact one of its key issues.

Objectives

- to collect comments on the proposed Principles on Investments and Financing for water-related disaster risk reduction
- to discuss the Principles and their operational value
- to formulate the Implementation Plan of the Principles

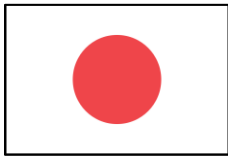
Short Summary

The Consultation meeting in Colombo opened with welcome remarks by Dr. HIROKI, coordinator of HELP, professor of GRIPS (The National Graduate Institute for Policy Studies).

He said that this meeting in Colombo was the 2nd of the GWP-HELP joint consultation meetings, explaining that the first consultation meeting was held in Central and Eastern Europe. He expressed his appreciation and gratitude to GWP and International Water Management Institute (IWMI).

Dr. HIROKI proceeded to introduce Dr. Monika Weber-Fahr Executive Secretary and CEO of GWPO, who was co-organizer of this consultation meeting. In her opening remarks, she pointed out that Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) is an important topic for this region as 90% of the damage cost from natural disasters comes from water-related events such as floods and droughts. She also referred to the importance of commitment to expertise, not only in Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM), but also in how to convene/bring the perspectives of multi-stakeholder participation, since working with multi-stakeholders can provide useful platforms to create effective discussion and cooperation on particular issues, adding that this series of consultation meetings on the draft principles is a substantial opportunity to explore further cooperation between HELP and GWP.

Dr. Claudia Sadoff, Director-General, IWMI, where the consultation meeting was held, followed with her welcome remarks. She briefly introduced several main initiatives and programmes of IWMI, stressing that we should shift much effort to upstream actions in order to reduce the economic impact and casualties caused by water-related disasters, and expressing her expectation for a long and fruitful cooperation with GWP and



HELP.

Next, Mr. HASHIMOTO, representative of Sri Lanka Office, Japan International Cooperation Agency, delivered his remarks, introducing some DRR-related initiatives and projects implemented by the Government of Japan. The majority of the participants were from South Asian countries (Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka).

Following the opening session, two experts presented:

Firstly, Dr. Pervaiz Amir from Pakistan Water Partnership shared the concept note on “Emerging Challenges in Water-related Climate Disaster Risk Reduction in South Asia and redressal”, pointing out the necessity to improve the gap between post disaster Rescue and Relief and the lack of attention to disaster prevention. Secondly, Prof. Santosh Kumar, Director of National Institute of Disaster Management (NIDM) of India, Professor of Policy, Planning and Community Issues, Former Director SAARC Disaster Management Center, delivered his presentation online. He offered an overview of water-related disasters and existing measures in South Asia and stressed the importance of strengthening regional cooperation for DRR at all kinds of levels.

After the presentation on the draft Principles on Investment and Financing for Water-related Disaster Risk Reduction by Mr. OKADA, Director for International Coordination of River Engineering, Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism, Japan, the participants filled in a survey form (questionnaire of the Principles).

Then, all participants were divided into 4 smaller groups each with a facilitator and a rapporteur to discuss:

- the Principles and their operationalization
- citizens’ perceptions about recovery from mega-disasters.

It was pointed out by HELP facilitators that they are not seeking official endorsement of the Principles from the UN. Their intention is to see that these principles be used in-country; they are seeking for ownership of the principles at the national level.

Discussion (summary of the group discussions)

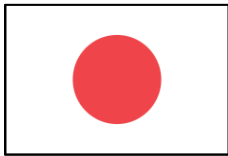
Discussion 1: On Principles and its operationalization

Group 1

- Balance at basin level should be considered, for example, upstream flooding may be beneficial to the downstream
- Sometimes political parties may politicize to take advantage and influence voting patterns
- Water pricing and tariffs need to be rationalized
- An insurance mechanism can supplement the government budget
- Early warning systems should be incorporated in DRR
- It is important to consider gender and the disabled community within the process of financing

Group 2

- Prevention investment is one time whereas disasters are frequent and require frequent disbursements
- Prevention investment can save the budget for reconstruction from frequent disasters, and the savings can then be channelled to overall social development
- A systematic approach of IWRM, such as fee-based management, is required for socio-economic development
- Pre-disaster prevention measures pay off in the long run and need to be a high priority, with adequate budgetary provisions to be provided in the overall country’s development budget.



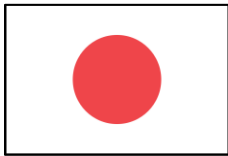
- The government must allocate adequate funds in government budget. Such commitments would facilitate the government to conduct timely interventions and also secure additional funds from other donor agencies.
- Various funding options should include i.e. donor agencies, bilateral agreements, private sector involvement, local banks, charitable organizations, etc.
- The private sector can be involved if provided with reasonable incentives in the form of tax exemptions
- For developing countries with limited resources, financial assistance would be essential to save lives and properties.
- Creation of an international DRR fund and provisions for country allocations would benefit the developing countries.
- Out-of-the-box decisions and solutions based on science and technology would be effective and economical.
- There is a lack of institutional mechanisms and coordination which provides for DRR policy, disaster prevention and preparedness projects to communities/local governments and which serves as a basis to effectively respond to disasters.

Group 3

- The principles can be re-grouped into 4 dimensions (social, economic, political, and environmental groups) as the 20 strategies are inter-related
- It does not seem that item 11 has something to do with the fiscal system
- Principle IV can be involved in Principle III
- Principle IV and V are similar
- Stakeholders should communicate with other organizations from the planning stage of DRR
- New technologies and innovation should be considered for infrastructure design
- Land use planning is important. A strategy of land use planning serves as a kind of platform for DRR
- A beneficial trust fund with a good accounting system can be established to receive private funding for new investments
- Indigenous knowledge of DRR should be included
- Cost of water usage (e.g. irrigation) in IWRM should be identified for appropriate investment decisions
- It is easy to demand more budget but it is difficult to obtain it. Water pricing is fundamental, and is related to government investments.

Group 4

- Communities should be aware of potential risks and be resilient without depending on the relief forever
- It is not possible to provide relief for all of the frequent disasters, so prevention is important, communities should emphasize on more risk reduction than relief and financial aid
- People often do not respond to governments' early warnings
- Climate change will make disaster impact more frequent, so governments should empower communities for other livelihoods after disasters
- Access to relief aid should be secured especially in hard-hit disaster areas
- Disasters' magnitudes differ in types (flood, drought, etc.) and across countries
- Communication facilities in communities should be financed
- Maintenance budget should be sufficiently provided for rehabilitation of infrastructure
- Legal provision of DRR should be prepared
- DRR should be incorporated in school curriculum



- Guidelines on how to return to normal life for evacuees are necessary
- Media should disseminate the experience of previous disasters and good practices of DRR
- Information about the effect of DRR investment should be disseminated through the media to the public
- How to deploy medical teams to prevent water-borne diseases should be prepared in advance
- Pricing of water and evaluation of water benefits are necessary, because increased funds for water infrastructure is not easy to access
- Refer to UNISDR terminology on DRR
- Human trafficking of young women and children should be prevented during disasters; because everyone takes shelter in one-place, young women and children are in danger

Discussion 2: On citizens' perception about recovery from mega-disasters (on effective disaster response)

Group 1

- In order to raise the citizen's perception, a mechanism protecting a community is necessary
- The establishment of assessment procedures of risk hazards for multi-stakeholders is important
- Media campaigning using a new communication technology such as social networking service, drone and remote-sensing is very useful
- Disaster preparedness plans should be prepared at various levels
- Plans including "Establishment of a media center" and "Standardization for mass communication" should be made, as structured information is important
- Law and order should have provisions for:
 - transporting vulnerable livelihoods and livestock to safer places
 - safe, mobilized and facilitated hygiene and drinking water
 - coordinating maintenance for assistance, including different livelihoods
 - mental health management facilities
 - special needs for the education of children
 - first line assessment of damage to life and property, with permissions from community leadership and for distribution of benefits
 - transparency of relevant organizations

Group 2

General Comments

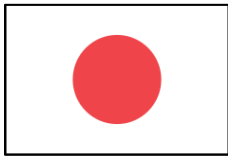
- Relief comes immediately to the affected areas in the form of shelter, food, water (cold & hot), toilets. Sometimes people in hard-hit areas are forced to stay in dangerous and/or uncomfortable conditions for a long time
- Medical care with sufficient numbers of medical personnel and drugs, hospitalization facilities and transportation for further referral, and burial facilities are one of the topmost issues in times of emergency
- Proper clothing according to weather conditions
- Gender privacy is necessary to consider

With regard to Responsibilities (Agencies and type of response)

Group 2 classifies the related sectors and their responsibilities as :

Central Government

- Law & Order
- Plan & organize relief operations



- Resource mobilization
- Local government
 - Communication
 - Plan, organize and operate ground services
- Communities
 - Support to relief services
- Aid agencies
 - Mobilize resources
 - Medical relief
- CSOs (Civil Society Organizations)
 - Mobilize resources
 - Provide relief support
- NGOs
 - Mobilize resources
 - Provide relief support
- Charitable trust
 - Mobilize resources
 - Provide relief support
- Media agencies
 - Effective communication
 - Social media

Regarding “Risk communication”,

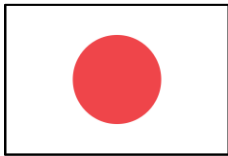
- An effective early warning system is essential.
- Preventive shelter should be prepared in advance, and it is important to get everyone informed about the location of the shelter.

Concerning Responsibility of decision makers,

- Advance establishment of effective and rapid response policies and delivery mechanisms are important
- Effective monitoring of the delivery is necessary

Group 3

- Preparedness of mechanisms for community communications are very important as communities at the grassroots-level play an important role for protecting people not only from the viewpoint of recovery but also for preparedness
- Satellite education facilities by central governments would be useful
- Guidelines to clarify the command line during and after mega-disasters and to define what should be done and who should do them
- A sustainable financial mechanism for DRR, though it would take a long time to establish it, should be proposed in the principles
- The local government needs to translate what central government does for the community level
- Communities are required to communicate actively with concerned agencies so that they can be well involved in the preparedness programs
- An early warning system is of necessity and should be very effective



Group 4

- Governments should have a well-planned framework and schedule in terms of recovery from mega-disasters, through which the government can show a tangible path to recovery, which can give the disaster-hit communities hope
- Quick response by the government is important to minimize casualties
- The government is not alone with prime responsibilities for DRR. It is a collective responsibility of all the relevant organizations and stakeholders
- The failure to respond quickly to disasters has an impact on the support rate of political leaders, as everyone watches what actions the leaders and government would take
- Political leaders should recognize their success or failures in their response and DRR actions
- Most recurring aspects of criticism and/or appreciation are related to:
 - Fast recovery of public service
 - Provision of monetary grants
 - Provision of special care to vulnerable people
 - Fast recovery to their normal life
 - Giving hope and mental support as well as material support to people
- Reliability on issued warnings should be improved. The early warning broadcasted to communities should be timely and accurate. Otherwise people will ignore the warning
- Easy access to warning systems is also important
- Mobilizing local bodies, such as Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), NGOs and Community Based Organizations (CBOs), is important
- Involvement of youth groups is good for communications, as they are generally good with communication tools
- Transparency in the use of relief funds should be secured

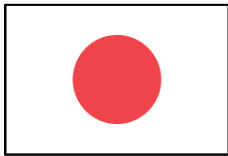
Conclusions and Next steps

By concluding the consultation, Dr. Kenzo HIROKI, coordinator of HELP, expressed his appreciation to all of the participants for their enthusiastic discussion and constructive comments.

There will be three more consultation meetings organized in Southern Africa, Southeast Asia and South America by April 2019, adding that the revised principles would be circulated to the participants and that the final ones would be shared with them.

**Completed Questionnaires on Principles shared with participants before the event were delivered to HELP coordinators at the Consultation meetings.*

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May 3, 2018

Draft Principles on Investment and Financing for Water-related Disaster Risk Reduction

by

High-level Experts and Leaders Panel on Water and Disasters (HELP)

Double the investments and financing for water-related disaster risk reduction with a focus on disaster risk reduction/preparedness, so that the proportion of financing in international assistance for disaster risk reduction/preparedness and that for emergency response/rehabilitation will shift from the current 10%:90% to 90%:10%.

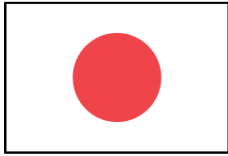
- Globally, direct economic losses caused by disasters are significantly increasing, and the number of people affected by disasters is on the rise. The direct damages of disasters alone over the past 10 years amount to about 1.4 trillion US dollars. Water-related disasters account for almost 90% of the world's top 1,000 disasters.
- The importance of increasing investments and financing for disaster risk reduction is now widely recognized in international agreements, such as the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction. However, about 90% of the international assistance is directed for emergency response and reconstruction/rehabilitation, while the amount disbursed for disaster prevention and preparedness is limited to only 10%.

I. Water-related disaster risk reduction is indispensable for socio-economic development

1. Water-related disasters caused by extreme water-related events can be prevented or mitigated by developing disaster prevention infrastructure ahead of the disaster events. These measures can include construction of levees and reservoirs, development of resilient infrastructure, utilization of innovative green infrastructure, or issuing timely early warnings.
2. Countermeasures implemented in advance to mitigate water-related disasters are not a cost, but an investment for the socioeconomic development of the future.
3. Water-related disaster risk reduction is a key component of Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM), and should be promoted through participation of water users and to yield multi-faceted benefits, such as efficient water use and enhanced biodiversity. Unevenly distributed water, both temporally and spatially, can be effectively managed by an integrated systems approach.

II. Ex-ante measures of water-related disaster risk reduction should be prioritized

4. Relatively frequent water-related disasters should be forestalled mainly by implementing preventive structural measures at lower cost than the amount spent for recovery.
5. Countermeasures against large-scale and less frequent water-related disasters should also be implemented in order to avoid devastating damages to the society and economy, while putting the highest priority on protecting human lives.
6. A "Build Back Better" approach should be incorporated into the recovery and reconstruction process so as to improve the resilience of communities and prevent recurrent damages from similar disasters.
7. Various sectors support "mainstreaming disaster risk reduction," including urban development. Land use management can effectively prevent the increase of runoff discharge and consequently contribute to water-related disaster risk reduction.
8. Investment needs to be enhanced for adaptation measures to climate change, which is projected to increase the frequency and scale of water-related disaster damage.



9. Investment for the maintenance and management of existing infrastructure should be secured to prevent malfunction of facilities and the devastating damages caused by deteriorated infrastructure.

III. Governments should improve their fiscal systems and allocate sufficient budget for water-related disaster risk reduction

10. Governments must prepare the legal, budgetary and administrative systems for water-related disaster risk reduction. The central government should prepare support and financial assistance systems for disaster-hit local governments in case a large-scale disaster exceeds local capacity.
11. It is crucial to define the roles and responsibilities of all stakeholders, including residents, local governments and the central government, and to empower the local governments and communities.
12. Budget for ex-ante disaster risk reduction should be secured at local level as well as at national level, considering the circumstances and frequency of natural disasters. That budget data should be recorded and made traceable.
13. An emergency reserve fund, if secured as a portion of the annual budget, can be swiftly disbursed after disasters in disaster-prone countries.

IV. Various funding sources for water-related risk reduction should be mobilized

14. Mobilization of private funds can support increasing demand for resilient infrastructure. Implementation of countermeasures for water-related disasters in conjunction with other sectors, such as water resources management and urban planning, helps diversify funding sources.
15. Incentives for awareness raising and self-prevention measures by the private sector should be explored, through subsidies and tax exemptions for instance.
16. Flood insurance is effective for the speedy recovery of daily life from disasters. However, it should be noted that the insurance does not physically reduce flood risks.

V. The international community should expand financing for water-related disaster risk reduction

17. International cooperation in disaster prevention should be strengthened under the international frameworks, because disaster damages in a single country have ripple effects to the world, for example through supply chain disruptions. Therefore, the international community should focus more on investments for disaster risk reduction over recovery and reconstruction.
18. Any surplus funds in the pledged assistance of emergency response should be effectively utilized for further disaster risk reduction to build more resilient societies.

VI. Financing for science and technology should be strengthened to support sound investment decisions

19. Data and knowledge on the losses and impacts of water-related disasters should be improved to evaluate the effectiveness of investment and facilitate better investment decisions.
20. Cooperation and alliances among science communities should be enhanced to develop and apply science and technology to disaster risk reduction.