

Thematic Area:

Reducing Risks of Extreme Events and Weather Related Disasters

UNDP: Climate Risk Management Technical Assistance Support Project

Outcomes and impacts of actions

Against the backdrop of uncertainties in climate change results, there is increasing consensus that extreme events will increase both in frequency and intensity. By aiding adaptation to extreme events, development programmes will be able to address and manage climate risks even in a changing climate. Thus, analysis of extremes is important, since extremes are the bridge between climate variability and change.

To assist countries in adapting to climate change and reduce risks of extreme events and weather-related disasters, UNDP's Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery (BCPR) and Bureau for Development Policy Energy and Environment Group (BDP/EEG) are working together to address short- and long-term impacts of climate variability, prevent disasters and promote development on the ground. BCPR and BDP/EEG are collaborating through an initiative entitled "***Climate Risk Management Technical Assistance Support Project (CRM TASP)***", led by BCPR with BDP/EEG inputs. The objective of this project is to analyze risks to development associated with climate variability and change in order to define and prioritize risk management solution measures in both the short-term and long-term. Analysis generated by the project will contribute to greater coherence in national strategies for managing climate variability and change and the effort will help to bring about a "unified climate-risk management effort" within the government, UN agencies and the donor community.

As a starting point, the CRM TASP includes a set of four country-level demonstrations – initially one per region – linked into regional processes and supported globally. The pilot countries include: Indonesia (Asia), Armenia (Europe/CIS), Ecuador (Latin America & Caribbean) and Mozambique (Africa). The CRM TASP is currently being implemented by Asian Disaster Preparedness Center (ADPC) based in Bangkok, Thailand, in collaboration with the UNDP Country Offices and relevant national and regional partners. The primary stakeholders of the CRM TASP include representatives of the government, local and regional experts, representatives from UN and UNDP country offices and other partner agency staff working at regional and global levels. Other local actors and partners are determined through the development of locally-owned, stakeholder-driven country level working strategies.

The intent of this project is not to launch yet another disaster risk reduction or climate change adaptation project in the selected countries. Rather the project seeks to better position countries to effectively use available disaster reduction and climate change adaptation resources based on hard evidence concerning the nature and level of climate related risks to their development plans. This will assist countries in developing country capacity to capitalize on the flood of new climate-related resources coming on-line from the Spanish MDG fund, Japan funds, the UNFCCC Adaptation fund, and other sources.

UNDP also harmonizes and coordinates the services of three cutting-edge institutional technical partners, the Asian Disaster Preparedness Center (ADPC), the International Research Institute for Climate and Society (IRI) and the International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD). All three institutions are non-profit and already extensively engaged in climate risk management as part of their core missions and have extensive networks of regional and national partners whom they can engage. These partners will draw upon their networks and in-house expertise to implement a coordinated, technical terms of reference in each country, working with the UNDP country offices and national counterparts.

In all four countries, the project has already strengthened capacities of national meteorological services to undertake climate analysis, especially in using statistical tools for data quality, analysis of extremes control, derivation of extreme indices and statistical downscaling. This was achieved through a hands-on training of participants from the four countries, undertaken in collaboration with the Indian institute of Tropical Meteorology (IITM), Pune, India and University of Cantabria, Spain.

The project has also been successful in identifying climate risks and options at a practical level, leading to practical measures and solutions for climate risks by linking science, institutions and society. In Indonesia, based on demand expressed to evolve practical climate change adaptation measures, the project has developed locally appropriate, district level climate change adaptation project designs for NTT and Band Aceh provinces.

CRM TASP, by encouraging a participatory and consensus-oriented approach, has also resulted in initiation of a dialogue-process between the national climate risk information providers and users in climate-sensitive sectors (such as agriculture, power, and water resources, among others). This will be further institutionalized during the continuation of the project.

In response to an identified need from agencies, the project has also developed tools for integrating information on extreme climate events into development planning process. This will be adopted by all pilot countries. Further, Country reports prepared in collaboration with national stakeholders will capture these findings for a wider audience.

Emerging opportunities, challenges and further needs

After the successful launch of these initial list of countries, there is now a proposal to expand the CRM to 22 countries, 6 in Asia (Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Bhutan, India, Nepal, Bangladesh, Mongolia), 11 in Africa (Rwanda, Tanzania, Kenya, Uganda, Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Ghana, Malawi, Mozambique, Senegal and Zambia) and 5 in Latin America (Dominican Republic, Peru, Bolivia, Nicaragua, Honduras). At a later stage, there will also be an additional 5 Small Island Development States (SIDS).

The current CRM TASP project creates a context in which joint work of a high standard in the pilot countries can be rapidly up-scaled into work in the remaining countries. This is accomplished in four ways:

1. Each country analysis will involve active participation by staff from bureaus, the country office, and partner organizations at the national, regional and global level.
2. In each country, the project will engage regional and national organizations as a means of drawing upon local expertise and knowledge and building capacity for similar work in high risk regions.
3. The project will produce a set of country reports that will inform the development or enhancement of a comprehensive climate risk management program in each selected country.
4. The country reports will be integrated into a single global report. This report will be widely disseminated, providing a vehicle for disseminating the methods and results broadly among practitioners.

The project will continue to undertake multi stakeholder climate risk assessments in each of the additional countries, resulting in the identification of risk management priorities in each case. These are expected to become a basis for the further development or enhancing of climate risk management projects supported by UNDP and other partners. The combined results will advance the practice of climate and disaster risk management globally.