


Second Session of Global Platform

The second session of the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction took place in Geneva on 16-19 June 2009 in a context of growing alarm about global climate change and increasing disaster risks. In the opening high-level panel of the Global Platform, political leaders, including heads of State and Governments, highlighted in stark, unequivocal terms that reducing disaster risk is critical to managing the impacts of climate change and avoiding erosion of social and economic welfare. Since the first session of the Global Platform in 2007, there has been a dramatic increase in political will in all regions to address disaster risk, across both developed and developing nations and both Governments and civil society organisations. This increase has been driven from the bottom up as communities recognise the dangers they face and the need for action. The energy and leadership in disaster risk reduction are increasingly coming from the South. The Global Platform recognised that significant progress has been achieved since the Hyogo Framework for Action was endorsed by UN Member States in 2005, as reported in the Global Assessment Report on Disaster Risk Reduction, particularly in terms of life-saving measures such as improved disaster preparedness and response, but much more needed to be done.

Governments, NGOs and other partners were united in the belief that greater urgency is now required to address the factors that are driving the increase in disaster risk, such as rural poverty and vulnerability, unplanned and poorly managed urban growth and declining ecosystems. Urgent action is necessary not only to reduce disaster risk, but also to maintain momentum in Millennium Development Goal achievement, including poverty reduction, adaptation to climate change and better health outcomes. The Global Platform highlighted that the implementation of the HFA must now accelerate rapidly from isolated actions and pilot projects to comprehensive programmes of action, and that the setting of targets in specific areas can help to achieve the necessary momentum. It was proposed that by 2011 national assessments of the safety of existing education and health facilities should be undertaken, and that by 2015 concrete action plans for safer schools and hospitals should be developed and implemented in all disaster prone countries. Similarly, disaster risk reduction should be included in all school curricula by the same year. It was also proposed that by 2015, all major cities in disaster-prone areas should include and enforce disaster risk reduction measures in their building and land use codes. The UN Secretary-General, Ban Ki-moon, called for a target to halve the losses of lives from disasters by 2015, when the term of the Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA) ends. The focus on implementation of the HFA at the highest level is expected to give a big push in the mobilization of resources nationally and globally for investment on disaster reduction in critical areas.



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Highlights

The Second Session of the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction

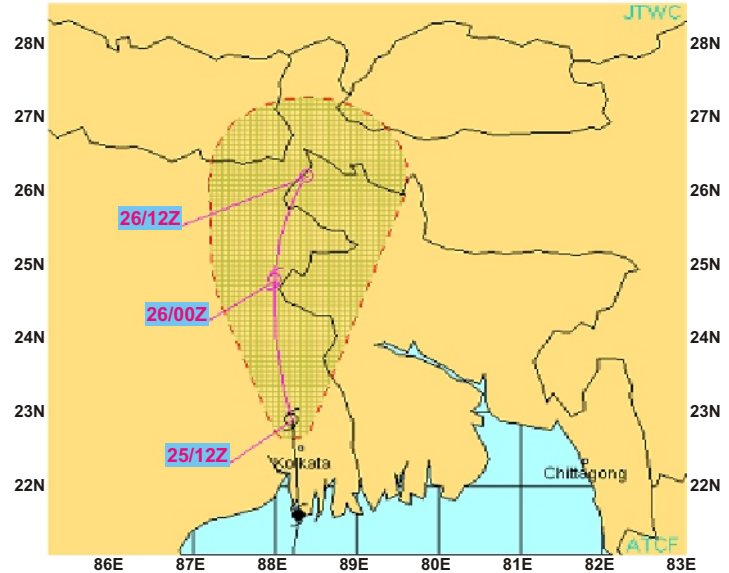
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Cyclone Aila

West Bengal, May 2009

The Aila struck on 25th May, 2009 and devastated several villages covering 18 districts of West Bengal. Heavy rainfall, high tides and tidal surges have breached river and flood embankments inundating large parts of the six Blocks of South 24 Parganas district. The initial formation of cyclonic depression was located at 950 km south from Kolkata on 21 May 2009. Over the next couple of days the disturbance slowly developed into a tropical cyclone. An alert was issued by the Joint Typhoon Warning Centre early on 23 May 2009 and was designated as a depression by Regional Specialised Meteorological Centre (RSMC), New Delhi. About 330 people were reported to have been killed by Aila and at least 8,208 more were missing, while about 1 million were rendered homeless in India and Bangladesh. As torrential rain led to flooding. The districts affected by the cyclone included East Midnapore, Howrah, Hooghly, Burdwan, South 24 Parganas, Darjeeling and Kolkata. High winds uprooted numerous trees, blocking roads throughout the region. All transit systems in the city of Kolkata were halted and daily life was at a standstill due to storm. The Sunderban region which houses 265 of the endangered Royal Bengal Tigers, was inundated by 6.1 m (20 ft) of water. Dozens of the tigers are feared to have drowned along with deer and crocodiles. The extent of damage to the mangrove forests was huge.



A stretch of nearly 400 km out of a total of 3,500 km of embankment in the Sunderbans was damaged inundating large areas, which contaminated the ponds and other fresh water sources with saline water ingress. Officials in Gosaba in the Sunderbans said that the area was facing acute shortage of drinking water as tubewells remained submerged. There was an outbreak of enteric diseases in some areas of Gosaba. Twelve days after the cyclonic storms the Sunderbans faced fresh inundation due to tidal waves which compounded the miseries of the people. The city of Kolkata was badly affected by the cyclone with large number uprooted trees blocking the roads, disrupting power, telecommunication and water supply services. The city life was severely disrupted for about 48 hours. Gusty winds and torrential rains badly affected life in the slum areas of the city. Many slum houses were damaged and many low lying areas were inundated forcing poor people to take shelter in safe places. In northern areas of the State, heavy rains triggered numerous landslides in many areas in Darjeeling district that killed 22 people and left 6 others missing. At least 500 homes were also damaged in the area. Aila produced gusty winds and heavy rains in the eastern Indian state of Meghalaya. Rainfall peaked at 213.4 mm (8.40 in) and winds reached 60 km/h (37 mph). Several homes were damaged in the area and power was cut due to fallen trees and power lines. The outer bands of the storm also produced torrential rains and high winds in eastern portions of Orissa state, with the heaviest rainfall recorded at Paradip as 260 mm (10 in). An estimated 1,000 acres of cropland in Orissa were lost due to Aila.



At least 50,000 hectares of agricultural land was lost during the storm, costing an estimated INR 125 crore (US\$26.3 million). The Army and the National Disaster Response Force were deployed in the affected areas for search, rescue and relief operations. Two MI-17 helicopters were also sent to air-drop food supplies to the worst affected areas in West Bengal. Several naval relief teams were also deployed to the Sunderbans region. Roughly about 100 relief camps were established in West Bengal. The State Government of West Bengal allocated an amount of INR 112 crores for immediate relief and restoration. The Government of India announced a package of INR 1000 crores for long term reconstruction of the affected areas. This would include reconstruction of damaged embankments, roads, bridges and houses.

Damage details in West Bengal as of 9 July 2009 : (GoWB Report)

S.N.	District	No. of Blocks affected	No. of ward/ municipality affected	No. of villages affected	Population affected	No. of human lives lost	No. of cattle/ livestock lost	Cropped area affected (in ha)	Estimated damage of crops (in Rs. Lakh)	No. of Houses Damaged	
										F	B
1	Cooch Behar	15	6	1,453	295,356	1	1	26,048		5,353	13,046
2	Jalpaiguri			133	16,500			31,322		710	1,223
3	Darjeling	8	4	425	95,000	27	4,260	429		4,554	12,021
4	Uttar Dinajpur			1,430	321,210			43,370		14,339	20,144
5	Dakshin Dinajpur	8	2	305	21,702			23,549		1,518	2,966
6	Malda			3,501	270,000	2		35,576		15,000	35,000
7	Murshidabad	4		130	18,675	3		16,726		3,020	4,512
8	Nadia	17	1		308,250	4				5,900	10,477
9	North 24 Parganas	20	10	1,967	1,335,574	33	4,167	85,830	31,217	103,699	73,152
10	South 24 Paraganas	14	7	2,282	1,226,874	37	45,682	125,260	2,457	124,858	122,521
11	Kolkata					5					
12	Howrah	14			80,820	9	52	16,220		11,929	27,205
13	Hooghly	18		810	600,028	5	3	46,338		19,648	45,385
14	Bardhaman	10	5		200,000	4	28	20,200		7,447	24,670
15	Birbhum	10		1,452	200,000	4				850	15,157
16	Bankura	14	2	5,187	97,500	1			150	10,752	13,632
17	Paschim Medinipur	29	7	6,310	628,545		44		13,700	37,537	79,348
18	Purba Medinipur	25	5	2,964	1,058,534	3	18	15,795	3,301	29,781	64,889
	TOTAL	206	49	28,349	6,774,568	138	Cattle 4,9994 PB-51,924	447,124	51,254	396,895	565,348

ICIMOD Project Team - Field Visit to Assam and Bihar

April-May 2009

ICIMOD Project team including Dr. R.K. Mall, of NIDM, visited flood prone areas of Assam and Bihar during April 2009 as a part of the study on **Local Responses to too much and too little water in the Greater Himalayan Region**. Objective of the visit was to conduct a reconnaissance survey of the area and interact with local people to know about the issues that are being faced in their day to day life with respect to water related hazards in these areas. The team had discussion with Ms Tighe (IIED) and Dr Partha J Das (Coordinator Field Team) for finalizing Policy and Policy analyzing part of the project. The team while interacting with the villagers of Demaji and Lakhimpur districts of Assam, learnt that the 2007 flood has affected about 40,000 villagers in the area though there was no causality. Govt. response was fast and within 24 hours relief activities were initiated; Boat, drinking water, medicine and relief was arranged Relief camp was operated for 30 days; villagers were provided relief and new embankment is also being constructed under the Embankment and Drainage Department of the State. The Project team also held discussions with NGO representative working in the area. The key issues in the area are developing and maintaining the embankment properly; accumulation of



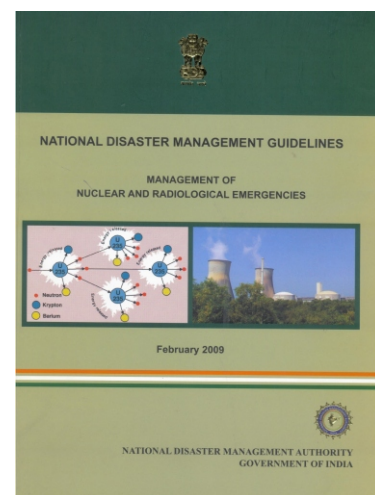
silt/sand deposits in the river bed (about 15 trucks load/minute); deforestation across the river bed (which has been destroyed by the villagers) and lack of community initiation in the area for collective solution during calamity or hazard.

The team with a field team from Winrock International visited some villages of Sharsha districts of Bihar from 18th to 22nd May 2009 for a reconnaissance survey similar to Assam to know about the issues related to water hazards that are being faced in their day to day life and to also discuss with the Government officials about the policies, programme and projects that are supporting the affected people in coping with the water related hazards (particularly flood). During the visit the team interacted with SDMA Members, key government officials Additional Commissioner (Relief), Joint Secretary (Department of Water Resources), Deputy Secretary, Development Commissioner and Personal Secretary to Minister, Department of Water Resources. As the next step the team will review the collected documents of the study area for the identification of relevant policies and based on inputs of different villagers and Govt officials, the preliminary policy analysis will be undertaken.

National Disaster Management Guidelines for Landslides and Snow Avalanches Released

New Delhi, June 2009

National Disaster Management Guidelines for Management of Landslides and Snow Avalanches developed by the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) was released by the Hon'ble Union Minister of Mines and DONER, Shri Bijoy Krishna Handique on 23 June 2009. Speaking on the occasion, Shri Handique said that the proposal for establishing a National Centre for landslides research, studies and management, as recommended by the guidelines is a welcome step in the direction of capacity building and research and development and he hoped that Geological Survey of India (GSI), will be able to host this Centre as part of its core activities. He said that such a centre of excellence would ensure adequate national coverage, information flow, community participation, networking, and feedback with regard to landslides and snow avalanches, besides coordinating the effort of the States and other concerned central organizations. He said that it would also foster, promote, encourage and sustain a scientific culture in the management of slopes and landslides.



The guidelines for Landslides Management have been formulated by NDMA in full consultation with all the stakeholders including the Central Ministries and Departments concerned, State governments, academic and scientific institutions, corporate sector, NGOs, eminent experts etc. after detailed debate and discussions. NDMA in its guidelines has identified 9 key areas of management of landslide hazards namely; 1) Landslide hazard, vulnerability, and risk assessment; 2) Multi-hazard conceptualization; 3) Landslide remediation practice; 4) Research and development; monitoring and early warning of landslides; 5) Knowledge network and management; 6) Capacity building and training; 7) Public awareness and education; 8) Emergency preparedness and response and 9) Regulation and enforcement. The Guidelines on management of landslides and Snow Avalanches describe in brief the phenomenon of landslides and Snow Avalanches and efforts made so far to control them by diverse organizations and institutions. They also provide a road-map for future course of action for management of landslides in the country. Based on the guidelines, the Central Ministries and Departments concerned and the State governments will prepare their landslide management plans, implementation of which will minimize loss of life and property on account of landslide hazards. Smt. Santha Sheela Nair, the Secretary to Government of India, Ministry of Mines, General (Retd) N. C. Vij, the Vice Chairman of the NDMA, Dr. Mohan Kanda, Member of NDMA and Shri N. K. Dutta Sr. Dy. Director General- incharge, Geological Survey of India, were also present on the occasion.

ICIMOD Meeting

The meeting on climate change adaptation was held at NIDM on 1 May 2009. International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED), NIDM and Win rock International India team were present in the meeting. The NIDM policy

team made a presentation about their field visit in Assam. Certain initial findings were discussed as also the meetings with the partner organization, community members as well as the district level administration. This led to a wider discussion by the group about policy issues to be kept in mind so as to go deeper into the research to make it more meaningful as well as address the disconnect that seems to have emerged from the findings in the field. It came to light in the course of the discussion that the priority issues that have emerged for both the Assam studies and Bihar, were flood management (e.g., embankment construction, forecasting, early warning, adaptation of housing and infrastructure), and post-disaster recovery (e.g., resettlement, land reclamation, livelihood alternatives, agricultural extension, employment opportunities, community services, access to credit). The work plan its time frame the structure of the draft report was finalized during the meeting.

The Second Session of the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction

Geneva, 16-19 JUNE 2009

The Global Platform is the main global forum for continued and concerted emphasis on disaster reduction. It provides a forum for Member States and other stakeholders to assess progress made in implementation of the Hyogo Framework for

Actions, enhance awareness of disaster risk reduction, share experiences and learn from good practice, identify remaining gaps and identify actions to accelerate national and local implementation. The UN Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator chairs the Global Platform, which is normally convened every two years in Geneva and at any other time as proposed by the Chair. Between sessions of the Global Platform, Regional Platforms are convened both to address issues of particular concern to the regions and to prepare for sessions of the Global Platform. In addition, the Chair may seek the advice and assistance of various ISDR System partners to provide input into the preparations for the subsequent session of the Global Platform including the ISDR Support Group and the ISDR Inter-Agency Group.

The Second Session of the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) was held from 16-19 June 2009 at the Centre International de Conférences de Genève in Geneva, Switzerland. Approximately 1,785 participants attended the session, including representatives from over 140 governments, 54 intergovernmental organizations, including UN specialized agencies, and 43 non-governmental organizations (NGOs). The meeting represented the primary multi-stakeholder forum for all parties involved in DRR and aimed to raise awareness on reducing disaster risk, share experiences and guide the United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UNISDR) system.

This Platform included high-level plenary sessions, roundtable discussions and an informal plenary to prepare for the Hyogo Framework for Action mid-term review. The Chair's Summary that emerged from the meeting will help set the agenda for the global DRR community to prepare for its mid-term review and the UN climate change negotiations in Copenhagen in December 2009. The meeting provided an opportunity for a broad range of partners to assess progress made on disaster risk reduction (DRR) since the First Session of the Global Platform in 2007, and to increase commitment and measurable actions to implement the Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA). Throughout the week, participants met in an opening plenary, followed by five high-level panels on: increasing investment in DRR; reducing disaster risk in a changing climate; enabling community resilience through preventive action; safer schools and hospital; and disaster reduction and the recovery opportunity. They also took part in five roundtable discussions on: early warning; local authorities and urban risk reduction; the role of ecosystems in DRR; education; and creating synergies at the grassroots level. On Friday in the closing plenary, participants heard closing statements and discussed the Chair's Summary.



The Executive Director, NIDM attended the session on Cooperation among Regional Organisations on Disaster Management organised jointly by the Asia Pacific Regional Office of the UNISDR and the UNESCAP. He made a brief presentation on the various models of Inter-Regional Collaboration and probable role SDMC can play in this regard. In addition, he attended the 6th Meeting of the Consultative Group of Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery (GEDRR) held on 15th June 2009 and attended various plenary and thematic sessions and other side events of the Global Platform.

New Training Programmes

Advance ToT course on Psychosocial Care in Disaster Management

Bangalore, June 2009

NIDM in collaboration with National Institute for Mental Health and Neurological Sciences (NIMHANS) organized a two weeks (12 days) advanced Training of Trainers Programme on Disaster Psychosocial Care from 1-12 June 2009 at the Training Hall of Psychiatric Social Work (PSW) of NIMHANS at Bangalore. This programme has proved very effective in enhancing the knowledge and skills of the participants to apply disaster counseling techniques and skills in the disaster affected communities. The target group for this programme included officials from Department of Health, Social Welfare, and Women & Child Development who have been already trained in the basic course on Disaster Psychosocial Care held at NIDM during the last three years. 16 participants from 8 states of India i.e. Gujarat, J & K, Karnataka, Haryana, Mizoram, Tamilnadu, Uttarakhand & Chhattisgarh attended the programme. The course was a highly participatory programme and only 10% of the time was devoted to lectures and presentations.

Course structure included session on Psycho Social Support (PSS), Higher Psychosocial Preparedness, Psycho Social Preparedness, support services to more vulnerable groups, analyses of case studies, Scale administration, Life skills as PSS competency, Stress Management, Plan of Action and Oath taking, confidentiality, ethics & Post-training assessment. The revision of the first ToT course on Psycho-social care in disaster management was done for the first two days. It was found that all the participants with little help are able to conduct the session moderately well. A three day field visit to Tsunami affected areas was organized on 4-7 June. The knowledge and skills gained during field visit to Kanyakumari, had a remarkable impact on the perceptions and skills of the participants. Participants were able to realize the implications and application of ToT knowledge and skills in the actual situations. More over, the self-less and voluntary activities by the community people without any tangible incentives in the affected areas surprised them a lot. A high level of ownership of the community on psychosocial aspects of development was the most satisfying lesson learnt during the visit.

This was the first such programme on “Advance ToT course on Psychosocial Care in Disaster Management”. The participants expressed their satisfaction on the course syllabus. A lot could be learnt from the training and the field visit which would be incorporated in the upcoming NIDM courses on this issue. More intervention-oriented new sessions such as sessions on counseling skills. Cognitive Behaviour Therapy simulation, Art therapy, play therapy for children, Body mapping and more depression related interventions for women, brief projective methods for adolescents, Common psychiatric disorders: symptoms and Social issues such as alcoholism and substance abuse shall be included in the upcoming courses to improve the applicability.

Papers

Gupta A.K., Nair S.S, and Sehgal V.K., Hydro-meteorological disasters and climate change: conceptual issues and data needs for integrating adaptation into environment and development framework, Journal Earth Science India Vol.2 (II), April, 2009, pp. 117 - 132

Satapathy,S., Disability focused disaster recovery planning in India; Development perspective and other implications for making the actual mainstreaming happen, Disaster Advances An International Journal, Vol.2 (2), April 2009, pp.- 41-48

Major Activities of NIDM (April- June 2009)

Training Programmes

- Debris Management, NIDM, 21-22 May 2009
- Flood Risk Mitigation and Management, NIDM, 25-29 May
- Climate Change and Disasters, NIDM, 1-5 June
- Formulation of District Disaster Management Plan, GB Pant Institute, Sikkim, 1-5 June
- Damage, Loss and Needs Assessment, NIDM, 1-5 June
- Advanced Training of Trainers Course on Disaster Psycho-social Care, National Institute for Mental Health and Neurological Sciences, Bangalore, 1-12 June
- Drought Mitigation and Management, NIDM, 8-12 June
- Earthquake Risk Mitigation and Management, ATI Tamil Nadu, 8-12 June
- Relief Management, NIDM, 10-12 June
- Flood Risk Mitigation and Management, UPAAM, Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh, 15-19 June
- Disaster Health Care Management, NIDM, 15-19 June
- Management of Industrial and Chemical Disasters, YASHADA, Pune, 15-19 June
- Earthquake Risk Mitigation and Management, NIDM, 15-19 June
- Basic Course on Disaster Management for NDRF Commanders, NIDM, 22 -26 June
- Disaster Safe Hill Area Development, UAoA, Nainital, 29 June - 3 July
- Mainstreaming Disaster Management in Rural Development Programmes, NIDM, 29 June-3 July

Online Training Programme with WBI

- Comprehensive Natural Disaster Risk Management Framework, 6 April - 17 May 2009
- Community Based Disaster Risk Management, 6 April - 3 May 2009
- Safer Cities, 4 - 31 May 2009
- Financial Strategies for Managing Economic Impacts of Disasters, 18 May - 14 June 2009
- Comprehensive Natural Disaster Risk Management Framework, 29 June - 9 August 2009

Upcoming Events (July - September 2009)

- Basic Course on Disaster Management for Civil Defence Officers, NIDM, 6-10 July
- Climate Change and Disasters, SKIPA, ATI Jharkhand, Ranchi, 6-10 July
- Urban Risk Mitigation and Management, HCMRIPA, ATI Rajasthan, 13-17 July
- Environment and Disasters, NIDM, 13-17 July
- Applications of GIS and Remote Sensing in Disaster Management, HIPA, ATI Haryana, 20-24 July
- Disasters and Disabilities, NIDM, 20-24 July
- Cyclone Risk Mitigation and Management, 20-24 July
- Drought Mitigation and Management, 27-31 July
- Mass Casualty Management, NIDM, 3-7 August
- Damage, Loss and Needs Assessment, ATI Bihar, 3-7 August
- Relief Management, NIDM, 10-12 August
- Early Warning of Disasters, 17-21 August

- Role of GIS and Remote Sensing in Disaster Management, 17-21 August
- Urban Risk Mitigation and Management, ATI Delhi, 17-21 August
- Disaster Management for Forestry Sector, FRI, Dehradun, 17-21 August
- Building Codes and Design for Disaster Safe Built Environment, ATI, J&K, 24-28 August
- Risk Insurance and Risk Transfer, NIDM, 24-28 August
- Training of Trainers on Community Based Disaster Risk Management, 31 August-4 September
- Formulation of District Disaster Management Plan, SIPARD, ATI Tripura, 31 August-4 September
- Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear (CBRN) Disasters, 7-11 September
- Cyclone Risk Mitigation and Management, ATI Meghalaya, 7-11 September
- Environment and Disasters, NIDM, 14-18 September
- Building Codes and Design for Disaster Safe Built Environment, ATI Nagaland, 14-18 September
- Disaster Psycho-social Care, NIDM, 22-25 September
- Long-term Recovery and Reconstruction Strategies, 23-25 September
- Climate Change and Disasters, GIDM, 22-25 September
- Comprehensive Landslide Risk Mitigation and Management, ILM, Kerala, 22-25 September
- Role of Police in Disaster Management, NIDM 29 Sept.- 1 Oct
- Early Recovery Strategies, NIDM, 29- 30 September

Online Training Programme with WBI

- Comprehensive Natural Disaster Risk Management Framework, 21 September - 1 November 2009
- Damage & Reconstruction Needs Assessment, 10 August - 6 September 2009
- Climate Change & Disaster Management, 14 September - 11 October 2009

We welcome comments / responses / articles from readers of our Newsletter
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