

**Disaster Risk Management Project
(DRM Project)**

**Annual Project Report
2006**

**United Nations Development Programme
China International Centre for Economic & Technical Exchanges
Ministry of Civil Affairs, P.R.China**

DRM Project

2006 Annual Project Report

Foreword

With the objectives to improve the Chinese coordination, assessment and policy formulation for disaster risk management, to strengthen national implementation and information management for disaster risk management, and to build up the local disaster capacity, the *Disaster Risk Management Project* (DRM Project) was signed into effect in June 2006 by representatives of three sides, namely, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the China International Centre for Economic & Technical Exchanges (CICETE), and Ministry of Civil Affairs, P.R.China (MoCA). The 2006 Annual Project Report (APR) documents the activities and results achieved during the period between June – December 2006. The APR also highlights the major constraints and lessons learned to date while providing recommendations for future programming.

I. 2006 DRM Project Activities and Results

At the beginning stage of the Project implementation, 2006 saw a series of activities which were fully implemented in accordance with the 2006 annual work plans. The following are details of the main activities:

- **Establishment of Project Management Office and recruitment of personnel.** The Ministry of Civil Affairs, as the Executive Body of the China National Committee for Disaster Reduction (CNCNR), is designated to be responsible for the implementation of DRM Project on behalf of CNCNR. In this connection, Mr. Zou Ming, Deputy Director-General of the Department of Disaster and Social Relief, was officially appointed as National Project Director. Mr. Li Baojun, Director, Department of Disaster and Social Relief, serves as National Project Manager and Ms. Guan Yan from the National Disaster Reduction Center of China as Deputy Manager. Another two officials from MoCA, Mr. Li Cheng and Ms. Cheng Yaoying are selected to provide assistance to deal with Project Management. The Project Management Office was set up in the National Disaster Reduction Center of China. The address and contact information of PMO are as follows:

DRM Project Management Office
Room 1411, Zhongmin Plaza
7 Baiguanglu Road, Xuan Wu District
Beijing 100053
Telephone: 010-83529990
Fax: 010-83529991

- **DRM Inception Ceremony.** The DRM Project inception ceremony was held on 29 November 2006, co-organized by MoCA, CICETE and UNDP with over 50 participants

from governments, international organizations, private sectors, civil society, academia, media, and project pilot cities. Key speakers included Ms. Alessandra Tisot, Senior Deputy Resident Representative, UNDP China, Mr. Zou Ming, Deputy Director-General, Department of Disaster and Social Relief, MoCA, Mr. Wang Yue, Director-General, Ministry of Commerce, P.R.C, and Mr. Shao Xuemin, UNEP Representative on behalf of the UN Disaster Management Team (UNDMT). Mr .Li Baojun, Director of Department of Disaster and Social Relief, MoCA and National Project Manager, made a brief introduction of the DRM Project prior to the inquires from the media. The introduction was followed by active discussions about the project among representatives from pilot cities. Officials from UNDP, CICETE, MoCA answered questions raised in these discussions respectively. According to the media coverage, the inception meeting was a success, highlighting the commitments of UN system and Chinese government to promote the disaster risk management in China and improve the capacity-building of disaster management at national and local levels.

- **Seminar on Disaster Risk Assessment and Policy Implementation in China.** On June 27-30, 2006 the Seminar on Disaster Risk Assessment and Policy Implementation in China was held by Ministry of Civil Affairs to pursue the objectives of facilitating disaster risk policy assessment and promoting international exchange and cooperation on disaster assessment. 50 participants including officials, experts and academicians from UN Agencies, international organizations, departments of Chinese and foreign governments related with disaster management attended this meeting. The meeting was structured in two parts, with a panel session and thematic session on the following four topics: (1) Disaster Risk Governance, (2) Disaster Risk Identification, Assessment and Knowledge Management, (3) Disaster Preparedness and Response, and (4) International and Regional Cooperation on Disaster Risk Reduction. With focus on the above- mentioned topics, the seminar achieved great success. It facilitated the disaster risk assessment in China and the improvement of disaster resilience at national and regional levels. It is also meaningful for further promoting the formulation of National Comprehensive Disaster Reduction Plan in the period of the 11th 5-year Plan for National Development.
- **Seminar on Assessing the Implementation of National Disaster Reduction Plan 1998-2010.** A major target under Output 2 of DRM is to strengthen national implementation capacities. On November 22-25, the PMO successfully held a seminar on the implementation of national disaster reduction plan 1998-2010 to review what we've done and to find what we need to do in the future. Through a four day investigation, consultation and discussion period, a conclusion was drawn that the Chinese government attach great importance to disaster reduction, which provided momentum for the full implementation of disaster reduction plan in the past few years. As disaster risks are increasingly evolving and becoming more and more complex, the national plan should be adept to meet the challenge that they pose. In all, this seminar is a good opportunity to review the disaster reduction activities of the government in the past provided new concepts for the future planning.
- **Construction of the website of National Committee for Disaster Reduction.** As required

in the project document, objective 1.4 of the project is to ensure disaster information sharing and effective communication among partners and stakeholders as well as to promote public awareness. In this connection, the National Committee for Disaster Reduction established its website in December 2006 (www.ncdr.gov.cn). The website was created through a sub-contractor under the procurement guidelines of a UNDP Project. At present, the website is in the period of trial operation and has served well as the platform of information sharing. In the future, it will also serve to support activities to build partnership with other developing countries to acquire and share good experiences and practices in disaster risk management.

- **Construction of DRM Information Management Systems.** Strengthening information management capacity plays a critical element in the development of a sound national disaster risk management system. Through many years of data collection and analysis, the China National Committee for Disaster Reduction has accumulated a great amount of disaster information which have played an important role in disaster management. From December 2006, a DRM information management system was officially launched by CNCDR to connect local disaster management authorities with national management system through the Internet. This has contributed in strengthening information management capacity and has provided support to the decision-making process.
- **Development of DRM Manuals and Guidelines.** A series of awareness-raising activities will be designed and implemented to raise the public perception and understanding of disaster-related preparedness and response. Knowledge and information related with disaster have been compiled as part of the efforts for achieving these goals. According to one of the subcontracts of 2006, a set of disaster information pamphlets or pictures will be developed by Feb. 2007, including 4 pamphlets related with floods, fires, drought and landslides, and also 7 disaster related pictures. These publications will be distributed to local communities to build up local disaster awareness.
- **Launching the Television Campaign on Disaster Reduction Knowledge.** As the International Day for Disaster Reduction 2006 was approaching, CNCDR, MoCA and Emergency Response Office of State Council jointly launched a TV campaign on disaster reduction knowledge. 6 candidates out of 3 million contestant national wide participated in the final competition which was held On October 28, 2006 in China Centre TV. During the competition, candidates were tested in knowledge about disaster preparedness, prevention, emergency response, and reduction, and also in its practical application. Through verified methods and splendid performances, the CCTV campaign provided a significant chance to publicize disaster knowledge in a vivid way, thus to make the public to perceive those knowledge deeply and perceptively.
- **Development of 11th Five Year Plan on Disaster Reduction Strategy.** Under the support of the project, the MPO organized relevant experts and compiled A National 11th Five Year Strategy for Comprehensive Disaster Reduction which will serve as guideline for the

disaster reduction in china in the following 5 years (2006-2010) after it is approved by the State Council.

II. Major Constraints

Despite some achievements and development of key initiatives, CNDR faced significant delays in implementation and delivery of programme activities planned for 2006. As a result of the slow start, the allocation of funds of CNDR was very limited against original budget. The following factors will explain the delay in delivery and implementation.

- **Choosing of Pilot City.** As it was the first time for the local government to participate in a UN project, it was hard for them to understand the implementation procedures, especially the proper procedure to transfer funds which, in some way, are against the Chinese financial regulations. It was an important reason why the pilot city could not be confirmed immediately which resulted in the delay of the inception of the project.
- **Decision Making Processes.** The complex coordination system is a very important factor which influenced the decision making process. Lack of access to key personnel for decision making also contributed to delays.
- **Lack of Capacity.** Though the project management office has been established, and the personnel are professionals in disaster management, they lack in experiences for implementing UNDP projects, which contributed to delays.
- **Fund Availability.** Due to a late official launch of the project, government funds allocated and transferred to the UN accounts, have not been able to be put into use, which has led to delays in program activities.

III. Lessons Learned

At the very beginning of every project, there is a “learning” period between partners where each organization learns to familiarize themselves with the implementation methods, rules and regulations, management structures and procedures of one another, which lead to delay in programme activities. The following are key lessons learned during the first period of project implementation, to be used to improve and strengthen future management and programming activities.

- **Quick Decision Making.** As highlighted above, the decision making process during the initial period was slow, cumbersome and lacked proper structure when addressing differences between key partners. As was often the case when differences in opinion arose, a significant amount of time elapsed before a solution was discussed. A proper management and communication mechanism will need to be developed to streamline the decision making process.

- **Effective Communication.** A lack of a clear communication plan and structure between the key partners in 2006 contributed to delays in programme activity. The PMO often experienced periods of inactivity due to delays in decision making and communication between the key stakeholders. To improve and strengthen the communication between project partners, a mandatory, regular operational meeting is suggested as a mechanism to discuss and decide on programme issues.
- **Full Implementation.** The planning of project activities should be better managed, and it also should be fully implemented. Many of the activities included in the DRM Project in 2006 AWP lacked proper planning and did not require sufficient qualification for execution. So the Activities for 2007 will be planned in a more feasible manner, with proper budget, assessments, and clear objectives so to secure full implementation.
- **Working Team.** The recruitment of project personnel needs to be improved. Delays in recruitment, such as the Chief Technical Advisor (CTA), resulted in undue stress and increased the workload of the PMO. Other short and long-term consultants which are qualified in DRM project implementation should also be recruited and be settled to provide regular support to PMO.
- **NEX Procedures.** Some delays in the 2006 programming were a result of lack of proper knowledge of the UNDP NEX rules and regulations. With full project activities envisioned for 2007, it is advisable to conduct a NEX training session to the members of the PMO. This will lead to more efficient and accurate project management and delivery.

IV. Recommendations

The successful launch of DRM project in the end of 2006 brought the necessary visibility, attention, and most importantly, momentum for entering 2007 which is a critical period in the life term of the DRM Project. In this year, we should not only continue and follow up the activities launched in 2006, but also start the key project activities scheduled in 2007 as envisioned in the original workplan in an efficient and timely manner. The anticipated increase in tasks will require more effective programme management and efficient personnels in 2007. The following are key recommendations to help strengthen and improve on future programme management and implementation:

- (1) The Project Management Office should immediately convene partners whenever major difference in opinion occurs so as to prevent project delays;
- (2) The delayed funds applied for the activities 2006 should be made available for subcontractors before the beginning of the activities 2007;
- (3) Annual Work Plan 2007 should be completed and reviewed by March 2007;
- (4) An international Chief Technical Advisor should be recruited;

Attention

- (5) Quarterly Project activities must be planned well in advance;
- (6) The PMO should be trained on NEX procedures for some time ; and
- (7) Make Proper budget revision to make sure of the full implementation of the whole project.

Mr. Zou Ming, DRM National Project Director

Date

Disaster Risk Management Project

Minutes; Review of 2006 Annual Project Report and 2007 Annual Work Plan

Date: 13 February 2007

Venue: CICETE, 12th Floor Meeting Room

Participants: Mr. Li Baojun, DRM National Project Manager, MCA
Ms. Guan Yan, Deputy Manager, MCA
Mr. Li Cheng, Project Assistant, MCA
Ms. Zhu Duan Ni, Division Director, CICETE
Mr. Wei Xuemin, Programme Officer, CICETE
Mr. John Hanawa, Programme Manager, UNDP

Discussion:

On Feb. 13, 2007, representatives of MCA, CICETE of MOC and UNDP Beijing Office gathered at CICETE office to review the 2006 Annual Project Report and discuss the 2007 Annual Work Plan for the Disaster Risk Management project.

First, the representatives of the three parties all expressed the good will to cooperate closely and delivered the comments and suggestion on the complementation process of 2006 including the main constrains and challenges faced in 2006.

Upon review of the DRM project activities for 2006, it was noted by both UNDP and CICETE that some good achievements have been made during the initial start-up period. It was however, suggested by both parties that the communication mechanism and management structure required strengthening. This was the first meeting between the three partners since the inception ceremony in November 2006, with limited communication or information provided by the DRM Project Management Office (PMO) on activities planned and implemented since the inception workshop. More periodic updates to the DRM activities was requested. Major activities should be consulted to all the partners, and when appropriate, implemented together.

Despite facing constraints in raising government cost-sharing and unfamiliar with UNDP procedures, Mr. Li Baojun explained that MCA has carried out many project activities and acquired good social impact, such as the TV Campaign on Disaster Reduction knowledge, the formulation of National Comprehensive Strategy on Disaster Reduction as well as the establishment of the National Website on Disaster Reduction, which all showed great impact on government policy making and public awareness raising.

To improve the communication and management of the DRM project, Mr. Li Baojun suggested that the PMO submit a monthly report of the DRM activities via electronic mail. It was suggested that in 2007, the PMO will need to make better use of experts (international and national) budgeted for this project. Finally, it was announced that the PMO will have some staff changes, in particular, a new DRM National Project Manager will begin duties

after the Chinese New Year.

The three parties agreed on the general contents of the 2006 Annual Project Report (APR). Mr. John Hanawa highlighted that some activities conducted were missing in the APR and requested that they be inserted. It was agreed that additional comments and suggestions should be forwarded to the DRM Project Management Office. The final 2006 APR will be completed and submitted to CICETE by 16 February 2007, before the Chinese New Year.

As for the 2007 AWP , CICETE suggested MCA to complete the final AWP during March 2007. The activities which were not finished in 2006 should be moved into the AWP of 2007. Consequently, the budget will be amended according to the updated activities. In order to make the fund advancement, the 2007 AWP, budget revision along with the quarterly work plan be submitted as soon as possible.

Finally, the representative of UNDP Beijing Office informed that the new Chair of the UNDMT was recently confirmed by UN China. A meeting was proposed by Mr. Hanawa between the office of CNCDR and UNDMT in March or April 2007 to exchange information and discuss the planned activities for 2007 under Output 1 of the DRM project.

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