

Project title:	Comprehensive Disaster Management Programme (CDMP)
Funding sources:	Government of Bangladesh, European Commission, United Kingdom Department for International Development (DFID), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)
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UNOPS services:	Project management

Natural disasters in Bangladesh

A low-lying country with more than 230 waterways, Bangladesh is one of the most disaster-prone nations in the world. Fifteen per cent of its land floods annually on average. In 2004 that figure reached 34 per cent and in 2007 two floods and a cyclone together killed 4,000 people and caused economic losses of about \$3 billion. When such events occur water-borne diseases and mass internal displacements are inevitable consequences.

Natural disasters disrupt the nation's food supply and decimate the livelihoods of the many Bangladeshis who work in agriculture. Besides triggering flooding, severe weather frequently causes environmental damage by eroding riverbanks, directly affecting 100,000 people every year. Poor town planning, overcrowding and weak infrastructure amplify the threat of disasters to urban communities, particularly in cities vulnerable to earthquakes.



Risk reduction initiatives in Shunamgonj

Dealing with these many hazards is a major challenge for the national government. As well as the immediate cost to life and to the economy, large-scale disasters in such a small country can negate poverty-reduction efforts and divert development resources from more productive uses.

Comprehensive Disaster Management Programme

In 2003 the Ministry of Food and Disaster Management launched the Comprehensive Disaster Management Programme (CDMP) in partnership with DFID and UNDP. The European Commission became the Programme's third major donor in September 2006.

Phase I of the initiative, due to conclude in December 2009, aims to improve Bangladesh's disaster management system's ability to reduce unacceptable risks and improve response and recovery activities. It supports significant policy and planning reforms, shifting the focus of disaster management from response to comprehensive risk reduction. And it increases efficiency and coordination, integrating sustainable risk management initiatives into broader development planning.

The Programme has rolled out in two stages. Seven particularly vulnerable districts – Cox's Bazar, Faridpur, Lalmonirhat, Rajshahi, Shatkhira, Shirajgonj and Sunamgonj – were pilots for phase I. Remarkably the success of the Programme's partnership mobilization efforts has covered 32 of the total 64 districts in the first four years. In the second phase the Programme will extend to other districts.



Community risk assessment group meeting

Project contact information

Ian Rector - Portfolio Manager

Tel: +880 2989 0937

E-mail: IanR@unops.org

Project achievements

Since commencing field activity in June 2006 the Programme has realized significant results in the five priority areas of the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005–2015 that target building the resilience of nations and communities to disasters. As one of three implementing agencies UNOPS has played a leading role in delivering many key outputs, as summarized below.

Hyogo priority area 1: Ensure that disaster risk reduction is a national and a local priority with a strong institutional basis for implementation

UNOPS has helped develop a project management information system to monitor and report on key programme achievements and guided the development or review of key disaster management policies, including the Disaster Management Act, National Disaster Management Policy and National Plan for Disaster Management.

A full database of organizations undertaking disaster management activities in the pilot districts is now in place and capacity-building has commenced for 61 focal points from 28 government ministries, agencies and academic institutions to ensure mainstreaming of disaster management, including climate change impacts. UNOPS has managed establishment of a Policy, Programme and Partnership Development Unit and professional training of government and implementing agency staff.



Climate change workshop

Hyogo priority area 2: Identify, assess and monitor disaster risks and enhance early warning

With UNOPS support CDMP has created more than 550 union-level community risk assessments and risk reduction action plans, affecting 15–20 million people. Ten research projects analysing the impact of climate change have been implemented and a climate change library and website established, as well as an institutional mechanism that predicts climate and flood impact.

UNOPS has helped establish and strengthen the Disaster Management Information Centre and risk information network covering 150 million people in 64 districts and 230 sub-districts

Hyogo priority area 3: Use knowledge, innovation and education to build a culture of safety and resilience at all levels

UNOPS has contributed to a learning and development strategy and conducted professional development programmes for more than 60 government officials. The Programme has implemented numerous advocacy and media programmes and provided basic disaster management training to more than 25,000 disaster management committee members serving 70 million people; an additional 10,000 public sector employees are trained annually.

Hyogo priority area 4: Reduce the underlying risk factors

To empower local communities UNOPS has helped create a mechanism to coordinate interventions, overseen a programme gap analysis to assess what is needed, and helped establish a local grants programme to provide small-scale risk reduction interventions and livelihood security strategies.

The Programme has also generated options to address agricultural risks through adaptation research and contracted more than 70 government and stakeholder agencies and trained them to help implement field activities.

Hyogo priority area 5: Strengthen disaster preparedness for effective response at all levels

UNOPS provided early recovery technical support to the Government and the United Nations from July to November 2007 to address damage caused by two severe floods and Tropical Cyclone Sidr, which affected 8.9 million people.

During the flood and cyclone season 200 situation reports were produced and disseminated among 500 national and international organizations. CDMP also successfully advocated mainstreaming of risk reduction within all development project proposals.

The UNOPS advantage

With comprehensive United Nations systems and processes and established links with organizations within and outside the United Nations, UNOPS is able to provide its clients with the legal and administrative framework needed to ensure successful project implementation.

UNOPS combines highly effective service delivery with a low profile approach, ensuring that project ownership rests with clients.

Corporate contact information

UNOPS Headquarters, P.O. Box 2695
2100 Copenhagen Ø, Denmark
Website: www.unops.org

Tel: +45 3546 7511
Fax: +45 3546 7501
E-mail: hq@unops.org