



CMDRR FORUM BULLETIN

- Community participation and implementation is what we mean to promote



1st ISSUE: JULY 2010

Inaugural Words from Forum Advisor

Bangladesh is extremely vulnerable to a set of multi-hazard phenomena such as cyclones and storm surges, floods and flash floods, river-bank erosion, droughts, tornadoes, cold waves, drainage congestion/water logging, arsenic contamination, saline water intrusion and earthquakes. Most of these hazards lead to disaster situations, sometimes these disasters are very severe, causing human casualties and damaging and destroying property, resources and the economy. The frequency of these disasters has increased; the 2002 Cold Wave, 2004 Flood, 2006-2007 Water-logging in the south-west, 2007 Flood and Cyclone SIDR and 2009 Storm Surge are just some of the recent events that have caused devastation for the people of Bangladesh.

The increased frequency of disasters can be attributed to changing climatic conditions caused by world-wide Global Warming. This knowledge and the methods for dealing with the issue of climate induced disasters and mitigating the effects of climate change have caused tensions between poor countries like Bangladesh and economic giants like the USA, China and India.

Many measures for grappling with the prevailing issues of disaster management and climate change, which affect the lives and livelihoods of millions of people, have been widely discussed and implemented at Government, non-government and corporate levels. CORDAID and its Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) partners in Bangladesh have been implementing a community-managed approach to reducing hazard risks and vulnerability. Cordaid and its partners recently decided to formulate a Community Managed Disaster Risk Reduction (CMDRR) Forum, using this as a method for encouraging periodic but regular interaction, collaboration and cooperation by way of (i) meetings and discussions, (ii) workshops and seminars, (iii) dialogue and advocacy at government and civil

society level, (iv) information exchange and maintenance of a databank, (v) idea and experience sharing, (vi) partner-to-partner exposure visits, and (vii) documentation and dissemination of DRR and Climate Change Impact Adaptation & Sea Level Raise (CCIA&SLR) issues, programs and best practices.

While thirteen Bangladesh based DRR partners of CORDAID are initially involved in the Forum, (ADD, CARITAS, Concern Universal, DAM, Friendship-Bangladesh, FFH, INDAB, PGUK, POPI, RDRS, VARD and YPSA) the door is open to like-minded partners to join the CMDRR Forum. Cordaid and the current partners would welcome the involvement of more organizations to realize the CMDRR Forum's objective of contributing to disaster risk reduction through a community-managed approach.

We fervently hope to move forward by joining our minds and hearts to work towards our common goal of helping communities to provide safe and sustainable livelihood options despite the existence of multiple hazards. We see this Bulletin/Forum Newsletter as a medium of information, idea exchange and a promotional tool for community managed DRR and Climate Change Impact Adaptation & Sea Level Raise and would like all concerned to read over its contents and to participate in its growth.

DAM has been selected to work in the role of secretariat to the CMDRR Forum Bangladesh, and we would like to solicit everyone's support and assistance in ensuring the success of the CMDRR Forum; we invite all to peep through the window of its Bulletin's maiden issue.

Shafiqul Islam
Advisor, CMDRR Forum Bangladesh
And
Director Programs
Dhaka Ahsania Mission

Why a CMDRR Forum?

All the 15 Member-organizations working under CORDAID support and assistance in the area of Community Managed Disaster Risk Reduction in Bangladesh, that gathered at Mymensingh on the occasion of 1st Learning Cycle Meeting, March 29 to April 02, 2009, decided to attempt at a hazard-specific and risk reduction-focus Forum towards collaboration, cooperation and coordination in the area of Community Managed Disaster Risk Reduction, so as to maintain a regular operational link throughout the coming months and years in the interest of better risk fighting, capacity building and livelihood protection and promoting performance.

GOAL

For communities to provide safe and sustainable livelihood options despite the existence of multiple hazards at all times (including during the aftermath of disasters).

PURPOSE

- Coordinated Partner NGOs linkage to foster shared understanding and conceptual clarity
- Collaborative involvement for positive DRR and Capacity Building impacts
- Improving Partner NGOs risk reduction processes
- Supporting Partners' capacity building initiatives

- Sharing information, learning's, strategies, good practice news and events
- Policy Advocacy/Issue-based Dialogue towards facilitating a smooth paradigm shift
- Substantial focus on community-managed disaster risk reduction

Benefits for Partner Organization

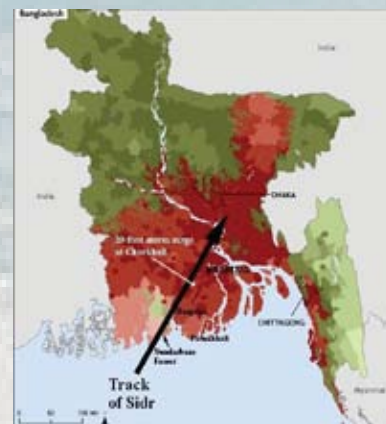
Through this CMDRR Forum, participants will learn from the best practice examples of partner organizations, as well as gather further knowledge allied to DRR and CCA through national-international announcements, news and events. The Forum will be used as a platform to promote common understanding; common practice, and improve advocacy efforts locally, nationally, regionally and internationally.

Strategy regarding like minded DRR Forums/Agencies:

It is important to network with other DRR and CCA associated Forums nationally and internationally. Together, all concerned organizations can raise their voices globally to advocate for reduced carbon emissions globally and for increased accountability from carbon intensive economies.

Agenda for Way Forward: Bangladesh 2015

- Formation of Regional and International forum on CMDRR
- Include "Climate Change" issue in strategic plan
- Develop "Journalist forum" at Bangladesh level
- Work for the visibility of the issue
- Coordination with other NGOs
- Ensure community leadership in advocacy
- Develop and strengthen linkages with Government of Bangladesh
- Information and knowledge centre at Bangladesh level
- Integration of CMDRR in school and colleges/courses on CMDRR for students
- Plan for dealing with Climate Change migrants, refugees, conflict situation due to climate change
- Strengthen partner's forum or Multi stakeholders forum
- Conduct researches and facilitate access to market for producers
- Coordination with European donors who operates in Bangladesh (Cordaid can take up this issues)
- Brainstorming on different approaches and identify the common aspects
- Explore possibility of insurance as a "Tool" for risk reduction measures
- Cross border Cooperation especially on "Early warning systems"
- Mapping of hazards, stakeholders and other agencies at National/Regional level.



Note: This "Agenda 2015" was evolved through brainstorming and plenary discussion. Later it was also compared with Global Agenda 2015 decided in Malawi (June 2009). The purpose was to ensure the Bangladesh agenda contributes to the Global Agenda; it was noted that most of the points overlapped. Those aspects which are covered in Malawi and not covered in Bangladesh agenda were "highlighted" and the Bangladesh forum has the option to consider those points if the partners feel they are important.

Mock Drill



Monday morning at 10:00, suddenly a Cyclone & Storm Surge escaped from Sea and headed towards Rajopara village at Kalapara Upazila under Patuakhali district. Many people including children and elderly women, as well as houses, household assets and livestock were wiped out by the Cyclone and Storm Surge. In fact; it was a Mock Drill to protect lives and livelihoods from disaster. Observing this Mock Drill were Rajopara Din-E-Elahi Madrasha's students and about 1000 community people, many of them could not resist tears. This drill brought back memories of the destructive power of Cyclones SIDR and AILA. The Mock Drill was role- played to raising awareness among the students and community. Assisted by CORDAID, implemented jointly by CUB and DAM and organized by Rajopara Din-E-Elahi Madrasa students in 4 Districts 7 Upazila and 32 Unions; this drill was a part of the CBDRR Project.

Rafiquzzaman Biswas
CMDRR Forum Coordinator, DAM

Capacity Building Project on CMDRR and Climate Change Adaptation

Concern Universal Bangladesh (CUB), with the financial support of Cordaid, is implementing a capacity building project on Community Managed Disaster Risk Reduction (CMDRR) and Climate Change Adaptation (CCA). The 18 months project started from June 2010 in partnership with 64 NGOs from Bangladesh, India (West Bengal and Assam) and Nepal. The goal of the project is "to effectively integrate community based climate change adaptation and community managed disaster risk reduction into the socio-economic development process of local peoples in the targeted areas to facilitate sustainable and equitable development".

The principles the project follows is the suitable future joint activities of the partner NGOs and network members for large scale impact at local, regional, national and international level, while respecting the independence of the partner NGOs.

The approach of the project is as follows:

- 1) CUB builds the capacity of partner NGOs
- 2) NGOs build the capacity of their local communities
- 3) CUB and partner



NGOs establish linkages and networks with local authorities and other relevant agencies, and

- (4) CUB and partner NGOs undertake advocacy work together.

climate change is running riot with global weather pattern
so much so that we are experiencing
unbearable hit, untimely rainfall, erratic humidity and intensive disaster loss

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Training Course on Community Managed Disaster Risk Reduction (CMDRR)

In conjunction with Concern Universal Bangladesh (CUB), Cordaid recently organized a 12-days intensive training course on Community Managed Disaster Risk Reduction (CMDRR) for its long-term partner NGOs in Bangladesh. A total of 29 participants from 15 NGOs attended this course. Among the 15 NGOs represented at the course, 13 were local NGOs from Bangladesh who have been long-term partners of Cordaid and two NGOs were from Nepal. The Nepalese NGOs are capacity building partners of CUB.



The course aims at strengthening the capacities of development workers to mainstream Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) concepts, principles and practices into the planning and implementation of development activities.

The residential training course was held on 07-18 June 2010 at Hotel Media International, Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh. The course was facilitated by International Institute of Rural Reconstruction (IIRR) and ASK from India.

Changing livelihood patterns to create better economic platforms for enhancing the capacity of char-dwellers



During the past few decades, Bangladesh's population has continued to surge, resulting in a decrease in agricultural land, changes in land-use patterns, soil degradation and a decreased capacity to cope with natural disasters. The effects of climate change are likely to aggravate the situation, making Bangladesh's climate-sensitive economy even more vulnerable. The situation will be particularly dire for northern char-dwellers, with the expected increases of river erosion and flooding due to climate change making their livelihoods extremely insecure. With this in mind, Friendship has been working with local communities to establish several sustainable weaving centers in the chars; these centers are operating as both a training centre and a location for income generation for women in these communities. These weaving centers are designed to be easily shifted to a safe place during floods. The weaving centers are producing quality products and are also dramatically improving the economic status of these char-dwellers.

Ahmed Toufiquir Rahman
Manager, Friendship

We have reduced certain levels of disaster risk by ourselves

Khada is a village in Rayenda Union under Sharonkhola Upazila (Sub-district) of Bagerhat district. Khada was severely affected by Cyclone Sidr in 2007. Mr. Harun (Rashid) lives in this village with his wife and four sons. He is an elected member of the Rayenda Union Council (Local Government) and the Chairman of the Caritas-formed Ward Disaster Management Committee (WDMC). He has received training on disaster risk management from Caritas, and was inspired to help his village mitigate the risks of disaster.

Following Cyclone Sidr, the community (including Mr. Harun) had suffered greatly, due to a lack of safe drinking water caused by the high salinity of the ground water. People were forced to depend on surface water, mainly pond water and rainwater harvesting.

After the training on disaster risk management, Mr. Harun identified a silted pond located in the village, which could be a good site for storing water if its embankment were constructed by re-excavating it. The deeper pond would contain more water and the raised embankment would reduce the risk of tidal surge/pollution during future cyclones. Mr. Harun shared his ideas with other WDMC members and the community, and it was agreed that his proposal was good and they would re-excavate the pond themselves.

The WDMC, with help of the community, re-excavated the pond by April 2010 and now the community is utilizing the drinking water from this pond and feeling more secure about their water supply for the future (even following cyclones). The community is very grateful to Caritas for changing their mindsets through the training and other project activities. Mr. Harun, the chairman of WDMC very proudly says "we have reduced our disaster risk related to having access to water by re-excavating the embankment and raising one of our silted ponds. We can do this type of work by ourselves"



Trying to Survive Ourselves

My name is Nurul Alam Sikder, I am an inhabitant of Kawarchar, union: Dhulesor, Upazila- Kalapara, Dist.-Patuakhali. I am President of the Village Level Disaster Management Committee (VDMC) of the Kawarchar village. This village is located 0.5km from the Bay of Bengal; this village has a population of about 1,300 people over roughly two square kilometers. The main occupation of those living in the villages is Fisherman, day laborer and marginal farmer. Cyclone SIDR created a lot of damage to the village when it struck on 15 November 2007.



In 2008, PGUK initiated Capacity Building for Disaster Risk Reduction (CBDRR) project in our area. Palli Gono Unnayan Kendra (PGUK) staff discussed with us, the meaning and

importance of ideas such as hazards, disaster, vulnerability, capacity and contingency and development planning. For the greater interest of the village we formed a committee of over 40 villagers (16 female, 26 male) named the "Village Level Disaster Management Committee" (VDMC) to implement strategies to better cope with disasters.

As the facilitating organization, PGUK worked with villagers to assess disaster risk contingency and development plans. The local disaster volunteers taught us different techniques to survive during disasters. During cyclone AILA we worked according to our contingency plan to save the lives of many villagers. We are really grateful to our local volunteers and to PGUK.

Collected by:
Md. Habibur Rahman and Miss Khema
Development Worker, PGUK, CBDRR Project
Dhulesor Union, Kalapara, Patuakhali

CRA Workshop of Pidim Foundation

Community Risk Assessment (CRA) is comprehensive participatory method for reducing disaster risk in Bangladesh. By using this method people



living in specific areas have the opportunity to prepare a plan which ultimately reduces their vulnerability to different disasters. Pidim Foundation is a practitioner of Community Managed Disaster Risk Reduction (CMDRR) concept in Bangladesh. With funding from Cordaid, Pidim has been executing CMDRR projects in Jhenaigati of the Sherpur district from January 2009. During the project period, a series of CRA had been organized from November 2009 to January 2010. Participants were people of the community and local elected bodies (LEB) of the area.

Community efforts to protect the river bank erosion

Mr. Nazrul Islam Sarkar Chairman of the Village Disaster Management Committee (VDMC) recently explained that our village is one of the most vulnerable and flood prone areas in Bangladesh. Floods and Monga (lean Period) repeatedly strike our village each year, causing much suffering, especially for the poorest members of our communities. In 2009 most households were affected by river erosion and many lost their access to shelter and cultivable lands. The VDMC and Village Task Force (VTFs) were formed in order to boost the knowledge, skills and capacities of our communities. These important community groups were also able to create more effective linkages with local Government bodies and service providers to help protect communities from the negative effects of disasters and climate change.



The Chairman also added that due to the capacity building training, regular meetings and interaction with project staff from the Alleviating Poverty through Disaster Risk Reduction in North West Bangladesh (DRR) project, we have become more sensitized to the concepts of Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) and Climate Change Adaptation (CCA)

At present we are working to reduce our vulnerability to disaster and accordingly have arranged meetings in our village to discuss prevailing hazards. During these meetings, we decided that in order to protect the river banks of the Dharla river near our village, we would insert bamboo-piling to strengthen the banks. During the formal meeting of our Union Parishad, it was agreed the VDMCs, VTFs and villagers would work together to complete this task with their own donated bamboo and sandbags. The Chairman and member of the Union Parishad also took the opportunity to contribute to this work from their own pocket, as well as contributing aid from the Union Parishad fund. Villages very satisfied with the Union Parishad chairman and members for their support and for supplying them with plastic bags, rope and wire as well as their willingness to work together. Together, the villagers, Union Parishad, VDMC and VTF were able to build 50 feet of embankment protection within three days. They now consider their village protected against river erosion and their households, life and livelihoods are much more secure as a result.

RDRS Bangladesh as implementing organization co-funded by EU & DCA

Haor Flash Flood, 2010: Way Forward

Flash flooding generally occurs during the pre-monsoon season (March-May) in the north-eastern part of Bangladesh. This year, flash flooding occurred much earlier than previously observed in the past several decades in the Haor area, and the volume of water was so immense that most dykes overflowed. Consequently, Sunamgonj district was severely affected by the inundation of crops just before harvesting, which had a huge impact on food and livelihood security in the area. 61 percent of crops on Sunamganj land were fully damaged by the flash floods, causing a loss of Tk 112.6 Million; some 1.5 Million families were affected. Oxfam along with its partner NGO POPI conducted a Need Assessment (NA) for this area, finding the following:

Main Reasons for Early Flash Flood:

- Heavy rain in upstream water flow
- River siltation and loss
- Late cropping & poor dredging
- Poor maintenance of embankments
- Erosion of embankments
- Climate change
- Lack of an effective early warning mechanism

Major Impacts of the Flash Flood:

Crisis of agricultural inputs, unemployment, asset sale, crisis of cattle for cultivation, social conflict, malnutrition, increased health expenditure, trafficking, prostitution, early marriage, domestic violence, high interest loans were all observed as a result of the floods.

Recommendations:

Immediate (1-3 months)	Mid Term (up to 1 year)	Long Term
• Food support (Cash/Food for work) • Better village protection • Promote alternative livelihoods • Write-off agricultural loans • Provide education support	• Agricultural input support • Increase access to Agriculture loans • Promote alternative livelihoods • Promotion of early variety crops • Awareness building	• River dredging • Improved drainage • Embankment raising, repair, maintenance, monitoring and research • Improve coordination among all concerned stakeholders • Develop early warning mechanism • Promotion of early variety crops • More Effective Haor Development Board

Way Forward:

Based on the NA report, Oxfam advocated for river dredging, reestablishing functional drainage systems and proper maintenance of dykes. As no early warning system has yet been developed, the weather forecasting department must forecast these unusual weather events correctly but due to the unavailability of data from India they cannot do so. Whenever it begins to rain in Indian upland, Indian weather centres must inform the relevant Bangladeshi counterparts, who can alert farmers to better prepare them. In this way, the government can help save the agricultural products of Haors through proper negotiation with Indian authorities to share rainfall data. Affected Haor people are looking for the government and donors to reduce their vulnerability to disasters.

Safina Naznin
Disaster Manager, POPI

Oxfam continues its Campaign against Climate Change Impact

Oxfam launched last year the time-befitting move named Here and Now Climate Campaign calling on the Asian communities to offer lead in the global movement against Climate Change, where Bangladesh is in the fore-front of those severely under threat.

The Campaign aims at working to ensure that the interests of the affected communities are at the heart of International Treaty Negotiations on climate change.

It has been revealed that there shall be 54 per cent increase in people suffering as a result of climate disasters by 2015, involving a staggering 375 million people, unless action is taken forthwith.

Experts suggest that global warming must be kept as far below 2°C as possible, requiring the industrialized countries as a group to cut their emissions by 40 per cent below 1990 levels by 2020, in order to avoid catastrophic climate change impact.

Oxfam is calling for \$50billion, above and beyond current aid packages, to help poor countries adapt to the effects of climate change, before crisis strikes.

Here and Now aims at raising £40m within couple of years and mobilize the UK public to demand that the right decisions are taken at the climate negotiations.

While we have failed in Copenhagen last December, there is no scope to cut a sorry figure in CoP 16 at Mexico this December (2010).

Training on disaster: Certificate distribution ceremony and drill on preparedness for disaster



As part of DIPECHO-V, Young Power in Social Action (YPSA) and Community Development Center (CODEC) have been working on a project to increase the level of preparedness for earthquakes and cyclones in Chittagong City Corporation and Sitakunda Upazilla in cooperation with ActionAid Bangladesh and the European Commission Directorate General for Humanitarian Aid. One of the main activities of this project is to seek volunteers at the community level and to enhance their capacity in the areas of "First Aid" and "Emergency Search and Rescue". Training courses to achieve this objective have been completed for 260 volunteers from 30 December 2009 to 14 January 2010. The training course was conducted by the Training and Development Department of Bangladesh Fire Service & Civil Defense.

A drill on "Preparedness for earthquakes" was held on 16 January 2010 at 11am in the outer stadium, Chittagong premises. Volunteers from YPSA and, staff from fire services took part. Certificates were distributed among the trainees. Mr. ABM Mohiuddin Chowdhury, Mayor, Chittagong City Corporation Ms. Farah Kabir, CD ActionAid, Mr. Arifur Rahman, CE, YPSA and Mr. Khurshid Alam, MD, CODEC and Major Matiur Rahman, Director (Training) Fire Service and Civil Defense were all present during the occasion.

Farah Amina, YPSA

Sharing Workshop

A CMDRR workshop organized by Voluntary Association for Rural Development (VARD) was held at Sunamganj Sader Upazila under Sunamganj district on 11 July 2010 from 10.00am to 3.00 pm. Upazila Vice Chairman, Assistant Commissioner (land), Chairman of Mohonpur Union Parishad as well as all members of Upazila Disaster Management Committee participated in this workshop.



Following an open discussion session and group work, the following recommendations emerged from the workshop:

- The involvement of community people should be ensured during the advocacy and monitoring process of DRR activities
- Relevant disaster related information should be disseminated to the community as soon as possible
- Early warning system should be more effective and disseminated earlier
- The plan (Development & Contingency) should be more practical and must be followed by the community
- Advocacy for related departments to create and disseminate early variety paddy as well as other crops and vegetables to adapt to the effects of climate change is important, and
- More Killa (animal shelters) must be available during hazard periods

All because of the tormenting Climate Change Phenomenon

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has recently called on the scientists of the country to evolve new variety of paddy / rice that is compatible with, and friendly to, the erratic weather pattern resulting from the world-wide changed climatic scenario triggered by the Global Warming.

(Daily Star: July 14, 2010)

Speakers at a Dialogue session have opined for constituting a solid Front of the Climate Change impacted countries towards redeeming the just cause of the people in the area.

These countries including Bangladesh, Maldives, Nepal, etc., are getting wrong end of the stick in the face of climate-politics pursued by the economic giants, and so the former led by their respective governments must join forces in order to make the developed countries like USA, Saudi Arabia, Brazil, Canada, Japan, South Africa, European block, China as well as India (a) to reduce their CO₂ emission range to a specified level (by 40 per cent below 1990 levels by 2020) and (b) also extract their due share from them (in the form of compensation), Climate Change issue Experts advocated in the session.

(Protham Alo: April 03, 2010)

Bangladesh: Getting ready for the big one

The densely populated Bangladeshi capital of Dhaka, which lies dangerously close to a major fault line, comprises thousands of shoddily engineered buildings at risk of collapse in a powerful earthquake, experts warn.

Almost 80,000 buildings would be destroyed if a six magnitude tremor originated beneath Dhaka, according to a government study. A 7.5-magnitude shake from the Madhupur Fault, 140km away, would kill 130,000 people instantly and cause structural damage worth US\$1.1 billion. "Dhaka will be hit by a major earthquake in the future. It could happen any time in future, said Mir M Ali, professor and chairman of the structures division at the University Of Illinois School Of Architecture.

Bangladesh recently topped the 2010 Natural Disasters Index, compiled by the Maplecroft research group. Tectonic plate activity beneath Bangladesh has a lot of people

worried and the Department of Geology at Dhaka University says the city is moving 30.6mm a year. "If something happens, it will cause a major catastrophe. People will be killed, infrastructure will be destroyed," Ali said by telephone from Dhaka during a recent visit.

However, Ahsan Zakir, DG-DMB, said the government was slowly but surely getting the city and its people in shape to respond to an earthquake. "We are preparing volunteers and we are looking to buy some equipment for search and rescue, he said." "We are raising public awareness. We are doing workshops as a continuing process and training volunteers. We have already trained 1,000 volunteers and there will be 60,000."

The UN Development Programme in Bangladesh has contributed \$40 million for disaster preparedness activities that will begin in August.

Bangladesh amongst the most Risky Countries

A recent Study titled The Natural Disasters Risk Index (NDRI), conducted by a British risk advisory Firm, Maplecroft, analyzed the disaster havoc in 229 countries during last thirty years covering 1980 through 2010, and has identified Bangladesh along with Indonesia and Iran as well as the Asian giants China and India as the most vulnerable countries in terms of natural disasters. They have found various natural calamities like cyclone and storm surge, flood, tsunamis, earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, landslides, drought, heat waves and epidemics as common to 15 countries including the above-mentioned.

The Study based its conclusion on (i) the number and frequency of the disaster occurrences / events, (ii) the total deaths that were caused, (iii) the death toll as a proportion of the country's population, etc.

The Study based its conclusion on (i) the number and frequency of

the disaster occurrences / events, (ii) the total deaths that were caused, (iii) the death toll as a proportion of the country's population, etc.

Two vital conclusions drawn by the Experts in the Study should merit attention of all concerned:

A. Climate Change has much to do with the impact we are experiencing on rainfall, humidity, heat, temperature, etc., and disruption of the weather patterns is destined to lead to more frequent and bigger episodes of drought and flood.

B. Even the Wealthiest Countries are now required to focus on disaster risk reduction.

(Daily Star dated May 24, 2010)

Seminar at Dhaka suggests formation of a Regional Forum of the Co-riparian Countries towards Disaster Risk Reduction

Speakers at a Seminar on "Watershed Management for Rural Development and Poverty Alleviation" held recently at CIRDAP, Dhaka, have seriously advocated to form a regional Forum comprising the co-riparian countries in this region, viz., Bangladesh, Bhutan, China, India and Nepal, aiming at (A) better river-basin management towards (B) reduction of disaster risks associated with monsoon flood, flash flood, river-bank erosion as well as drought. And this calls for strong political commitment among the countries concerned, meaning respective governments must come forward to materialize the proposal.

Collaboration and cooperation leading to (i) regular interaction, (ii) info / data exchange, (iii) experience sharing, (iv) adoption of relevant measures, etc., have got potential for (a) protecting both agriculture and animal stock, (b) ensuring availability of adequate surface water, (c) looking into the matter of upstream water reservation to the neglect and damage of habitation in the downstream, thereby effecting (d) rural development at a congenial pace and promoting the cause of poverty alleviation in all the countries including ours, they noted, adding that adoption of regional program is imperative to conserve such vital natural resources as water, soil and forest.

coping mechanism to forestall disaster havoc has much to do with strengthening people's resilience capacity

1st ISSUE: JULY 2010

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