



# Basics of Capacity Development for Disaster Risk Reduction



**CaDRi**

**ACRONYMS**

AAA	Accra Agenda for Action	HFA	Hyogo Framework for Action
BCPR	Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery	INGO	International Non-Governmental Organization
CADRI	Capacity for Disaster Reduction Initiative	ISDR	International Strategy for Disaster Reduction
CDG	UNDP's Capacity Development Group	MDG	Millennium Development Goal
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency	OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation & Development
DAC	Development Assistance Committee	OCHA	UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
DMTP	Disaster Management Training Programme	UN	United Nations
DRR	Disaster Risk Reduction	UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
ECDPM	European Centre for Development Policy Management	WBI	World Bank Institute
GTZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit		

# Contents

<b>1.</b>	<b>Introduction</b>	<b>6</b>
1.1	Linking the Hyogo Framework for Action to Capacity Development	6
1.2	Context and Scope	8
1.3	Resources and References for This Paper	8
1.4	Structure of This Paper	8
<b>2.</b>	<b>Some Fundamentals of Capacity and Capacity Development</b>	<b>9</b>
2.1	Working Definitions and Terminology	9
2.2	The Three Levels of Capacity	9
2.3	Types of Capacity	11
2.4	The Capacity Development Process	11
2.5	Core Capacity Development Actions	13
2.6	Capacity Development vs. Capacity Building	14
<b>3.</b>	<b>Considerations for Practice in Developing DRR Capacity</b>	<b>16</b>
3.1	The Process Needs to be Locally Driven	16
3.2	Developing Capacities for DRR is a Society Wide Endeavour	18
3.3	There are Many Dimensions of Capacity that Need to be Developed	20
3.4	The enabling environment is essential for translating capacity into performance	23
3.5	Capacity Development Goes Beyond Training and the Classroom	24
3.6	Summing Up	27
<b>4.</b>	<b>Ways ahead...</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>5.</b>	<b>Annotated References</b>	<b>29</b>



# Foreword

“While each State has primary responsibility for its own economic and social development, an enabling international environment is vital to stimulate and contribute to developing the knowledge, capacities and motivation needed to build disaster resilient nations and communities.

**States and regional and international organizations should also support the capacities of regional mechanisms and organizations to develop regional plans, policies and common practices, as appropriate, in support of networking, advocacy, coordination, exchange of information and experience, scientific monitoring of hazards and vulnerability and institutional capacity development and to deal with disaster risks.**

- Paras. 22 and 23, Hyogo Framework for Action

**The International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR) system, guided by the efforts of its secretariat and working through its many official and civil society partners and collaborating organizations promotes the implementation of the Hyogo Framework.** It is hoped that this paper will stimulate reflection and discussion in the disaster reduction community on the broader, more systemic implications of capacity development.

## Acknowledgements

Many individuals and resources have made a contribution to this document. Thanks are due to all those individuals that attended the DMTP global Future Search meeting, “Rethinking Capacity Development for Disaster Risk Reduction: Action 2005-2015” in February 2006, the results of which provided the impetus for this paper.

Others who made significant contributions to this paper through drafting, re-drafting and commenting are Geraldine Becchi, Joanne Burke, Piero Calvi-Pariseti, Jennifer Colville, Terry Jeggle, Tony Land, Claudia Liebler, and Kenneth Westgate.

# Introduction

## CHALLENGES POSED BY DISASTERS

There is now international acknowledgement that efforts to reduce disaster risks must be systematically integrated into policies, plans and programmes for sustainable development and poverty reduction, and supported through bilateral, regional and international cooperation, including partnerships. Sustainable development, poverty reduction, good governance and disaster risk reduction are mutually supportive objectives, and in order to meet the challenges ahead, accelerated efforts must be made to build the necessary capacities at the community and national levels to manage and reduce risk. Such an approach is to be recognized as an important element for the achievement of internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the Millennium Declaration.

– Para.4 Hyogo Framework for Action

## 1.1 Linking the Hyogo Framework for Action to Capacity Development

6

UNISDR in its 2009 terminology defines Disaster Risk Reduction as:

**The concept and practice of reducing disaster risks through systematic efforts to analyse and manage the causal factors of disasters, including through reduced exposure to hazards, lessened vulnerability of people and property, wise management of land and the environment, and improved preparedness for adverse events.<sup>1</sup>**

In 2005, 168 countries drafted and approved the Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA) at the World Conference for Disaster Reduction, Kobe, Japan. The HFA provides guidance for achieving a set of outcomes and results over the next ten years (2005-2015) towards reducing disaster risk, and underscores the relationship between reducing disaster risk and achieving broader development challenges such as the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). It mobilises stakeholders<sup>2</sup> at local, national and international level to pay increasing attention to Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) as part of their wider development agendas and crucially, **recognises the centrality of capacity development to that task.**

The HFA lays out a detailed ten-year strategy to integrate risk reduction as an essential component of national development policies and programmes. The strategy identifies five priority areas of action:

1. Ensure that disaster risk reduction is a national and local priority.
2. Identify, assess and monitor disaster risks and enhance early warning.
3. Use knowledge, innovation and education to build a culture of safety and resilience at all levels.
4. Reduce the underlying risk factors, by “mainstreaming” activities into many development sectors and programme areas.
5. Strengthen disaster preparedness for effective response at all levels.

The HFA presents a challenge to all stakeholders: focus on developing capacity for DRR. Indeed, none of the five priorities for action can be achieved unless capacity development issues and measures are made an integral part of the action agenda. The “development of capacities” in fact features prominently in the HFA, as such references are referred to at least 40 times in the 19-page text, and in quite varied contexts.

The imperatives of capacity development to reducing disaster risk have been underlined by the experiences of recent major disasters. Since the Indian Ocean tsunami in December 2004, there have been the other serious consequences of the unprecedented destruction caused by hurricanes Katrina, Rita and Nargis, along with recent tragic earthquakes in China, India, Pakistan and Haiti.

1. UNISDR, *Terminology on Disaster Risk Reduction*, 2009, page 4

2. Stakeholders for DRR include governments, non-governmental organisations, the private sector, local governments, community groups, as well as regional and international development organisations and specialised agencies.



## Capacity development is a central strategy for reducing disaster risk

(*Words into Action, ISDR, 2007*)

Repeatedly such events drive home two realities:

- that disasters can reverse hard-won development gains, illustrating the relationships between poverty reduction, environmental degradation and vulnerability to disasters
- that capacity or the lack thereof lies at the heart of reducing the risk of disaster.

The emphasis now given to capacity development for DRR reflects broader recognition of its link to sustainable development. A capable and accountable state supported by an effective civil society and engaged private sector is recognised to be indispensable for achieving national development objectives. Without capable and viable local institutions, there is little that external resources can do alone to tackle poverty, reduce disaster risk or to reduce country dependency on aid.

Within the HFA, three core principles are expressed that are particularly relevant to capacity development and to this paper:

1. Countries have the leading role for realizing national disaster risk reduction.
2. Regional and international actors need to provide support to countries' own efforts.
3. Capacity development is a "cross-cutting element" for disaster risk reduction.

### Challenges Related to Capacity Development

Reviews of aid effectiveness increasingly note that the development of capacity is invariably recognised as one of the most critical issues for both donors and partner countries. The 2005 Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness and the 2008 follow-up meeting in Accra highlight the need for significantly enhanced support for country efforts to strengthen governance and improve development performance and called for capacity development to be an explicit objective of national development and poverty reduction strategies. Meanwhile the UN General Assembly High-Level Plenary Meeting on the Five-Year Review of the Millennium Declaration that took place in September 2005 pointed to the fact that public sector capacity is lagging behind all other MDG indicators, underscoring the fact that capacity development is one of the key challenges facing low income countries and their external partners alike.<sup>3</sup>

While the importance of capacity is widely recognised, how it emerges, how to develop and evaluate it and how to sustain it is for many less clear. There are a number of experiences, tools and resources that are now available in the field of disaster risk reduction and relate to capacity development. Lessons

3. "Development agencies invest huge amounts in Capacity Development (CD). Even so, it seems to have become a catch-all concept incorporating almost any form of technical assistance, and is often presented as a rather neutral, value-free form of engagement." Institute of Development Studies, *Capacity for a Change*, January 2008

4. For some pointers for good practice, see, for example, the OECE/DAC paper *The Challenge of Capacity Development: Working Towards Good Practice*, 2006

5. Acknowledged in discussions at the Future Search global meeting on *Rethinking Capacity Development for Disaster Risk Reduction: Action 2005-2015*, February 2006

of past experience, for example, point to many inappropriate approaches with short-lived impacts on the part of development cooperation partners.<sup>4</sup> There is however the need for many to better familiarise with the link between capacity, its development and disaster risk reduction. The evidence and knowledge available within the disaster risk reduction community on how to support the development of capacity “in practice” is still not widely systematised and shared, although examples do exist.<sup>5</sup>

## 1.2 Context and Scope

This paper seeks to promote a common understanding of what capacity development means for disaster risk reduction, including considerations on how it develops in both conceptual and practical terms. It is intended as a reference for the broader global community who work at the international, regional, national and sub-national levels in disaster risk reduction.

This paper reflects on and seeks to offer insights on two broad questions: What is capacity and capacity development mean for disaster risk reduction, in the context of the Hyogo Framework for Action? What can external partners do to best support countries’ own efforts and processes to develop their capacity? Readers are encouraged to draw upon elements of the paper that may be useful to their respective contexts and work. By design the paper does not focus on any specific thematic area for disaster risk reduction capacity development, nor does it focus on any specific target group or types of capacities.



## 1.3 Resources and References for This Paper

The paper draws on many sources and has many reference points not least of which are the results of the Future Search meeting of 86 international disaster risk reduction stakeholders from 35 countries organised by UNDP/BCPR and DMTP and held in February 2006. The theme of this meeting was “Rethinking Capacity Development for Disaster Risk Reduction: Action 2005-2015”. In the meeting participants noted the need for the disaster risk reduction community to have a more common conceptual framework for capacity and capacity development to guide their efforts and work.

Other selected resources and reference points that inform this paper include the conclusions of the ministerial level High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness known as the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness of March 2005 and the follow-up meeting resulting in the Accra Agenda for Action (AAA) in September 2008. UNDP’s own continuing work on capacity development through its Capacity Development Group (CDG) is also a major reference point for this paper. The paper also draws upon the work of OECD/DAC, the Capacity Collective at the Institute of Development Studies, University of Sussex, the World Bank Institute (WBI) and findings of the recent study on Capacity and Performance by the European Centre for Development Policy Management (ECDPM).

## 1.4 Structure of This Paper

Following on from this introductory chapter, chapter two outlines some fundamentals of capacity development including the key definitions used. Chapter three presents five considerations concerning capacity and capacity development and offers some pointers for practice on how national stakeholders and their international development partners can support a country driven process for DRR capacity development. Chapter four suggests a number of actions for going forward.

# Some Fundamentals of Capacity and Capacity Development

## CAPACITY

UNISDR offers the following definition of capacity:

The combination of all the strengths, attributes and resources available within a community, society or organization that can be used to achieve agreed goals.

## CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT

UNDP's definition of capacity development is as follows:

The process through which **individuals, organizations and societies** obtain, strengthen and maintain the capabilities to set and achieve their own development objectives **over time**.

Other definitions are useful for clarification:

- **OECD/DAC:** Process whereby people, organizations and society as a whole unleash, strengthen, create, adapt and maintain capacity over time.
- **GTZ:** Process of strengthening the abilities of individuals, organizations and societies to make effective use of the resources, in order to achieve their own goals on a sustainable basis.
- **CIDA:** Activities, approaches, strategies and methodologies which help organizations, groups and individuals to improve their performance, generate development benefits and achieve their objectives.
- **UNISDR:** The process by which people, organizations and society systematically stimulate their capacities over time to achieve social and economic goals, including through improvement of knowledge, skills, systems and institutions.

This section seeks to provide a conceptual framework for capacity and capacity development that underpin its general application to disaster risk reduction. It includes a short list of definitions and basic terminology that is followed by a short discussion of the three levels where capacity resides – in the individual, in the organization and in the overall working environment within which individuals and organizations operate (the enabling environment). To complete the conceptual framework two types of capacities (functional and technical) are elaborated briefly followed by a description of a five-step capacity process and a short overview on types of capacity development actions.

## 2.1 Working Definitions and Terminology

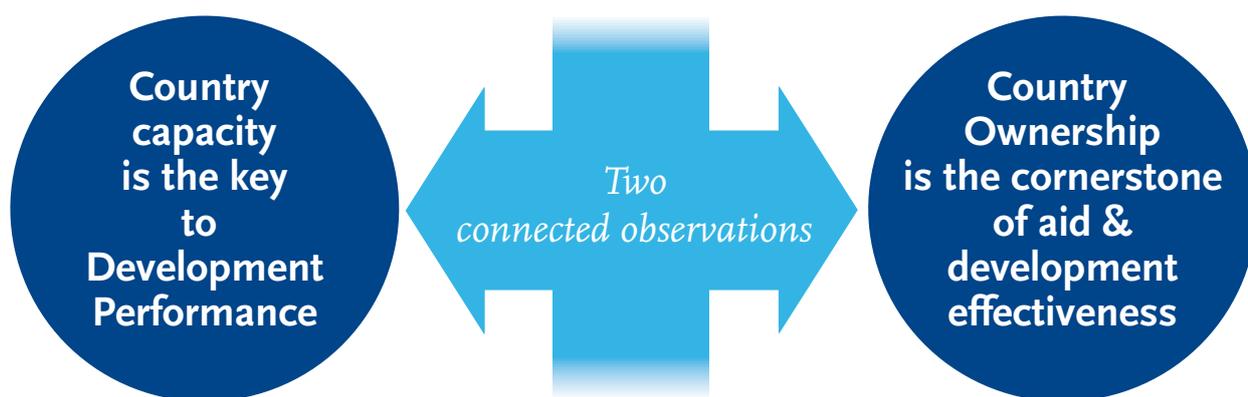
The different terminology shares some common messages. One is the concept of capacity which is a country's overall capability to manage its own development process. A second is that developing capacity is an ongoing process of change that needs to take place over time. Third is that the capacity issues and priorities will very much depend on a country's own level and path of development –there are no set formulas or blueprints. Fourth is that capacity issues are multi-dimensional and complex in nature and relate as much to broader societal challenges and systemic issues as they do to training, skills development and technology transfer. In addition, it is important to bear in mind that outside actors have an important role to play to help countries achieve their own development goals and objectives –but the process needs to be nationally owned and led.

## 2.2 The Three Levels of Capacity

Although the language on capacity development varies, increasingly there is an emerging consensus that capacity resides at three interrelated levels and that capacity issues need to be looked at from this perspective:

- **The Enabling Environment** pertains to the broader system within which individuals and organizations function that can either facilitate or hamper their existence and performance. This level of capacity is not easy to grasp tangibly but it is central to the understanding of capacity issues. This level determines the “rules of the game” for how a society operates, including the interaction between and among organizations and government units, and with the private sector and civil society. Capacities at the level of the enabling environment relate to such things as **policies, legislation, institutional arrangements, leadership, political**

## Importance of Capacity Development



processes and power relations and social norms (values, incentives, motivation, trust, legitimacy, transparency) all of which govern the mandates, priorities, modes of operation and civil engagement across different parts of society.<sup>6</sup>

The significance as well as the complexity of the enabling environment cannot be over-emphasised. It is here that the conditions are created that will allow for the effective development of individual and organizational capacities. It sets the context for capacity development and determines the changes that may be necessary to ensure results – which may require a shift in values and approaches, in power dynamics and possibly even in power relations.

The UNDP definition of capacity development refers to “societies” and this is preferred by others to describe the enabling environment. The report from the Capacity Collective Workshop organised by the Institute of Development Studies in September 2007 identifies the enabling environment as “societal” implying a wider, systemic level.<sup>7</sup>

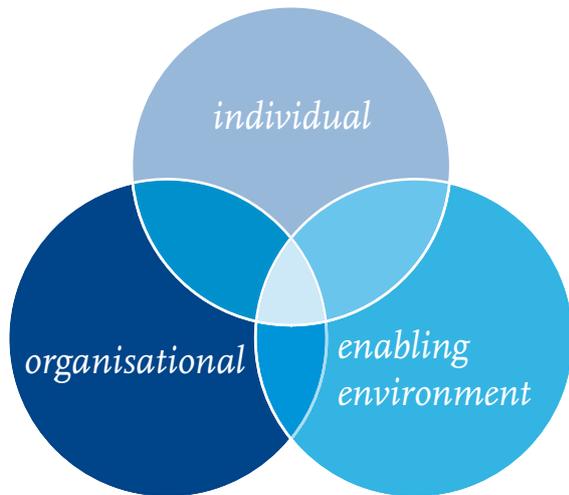
- **The Organizational Level** of capacity pertains to the internal policies, systems and strategies, arrangements, procedures and frameworks that allow an organization to operate and deliver on its mandate and that enable the coming together of individual capacities to work together and achieve goals. If these exist, are well-resourced and well-aligned, the capability of an organization to perform will be greater than that of the sum of its parts. Capacities at the level of the organization include such things as leadership, the organization’s ability to engage, to produce results and to manage change, as well as to provide relevant rewards and incentives, to adapt and self-renew.

- **The Individual Level** pertains to the skills and knowledge that are vested in people (individuals, communities, groups, teams). Each person is endowed with a mix of capabilities that allows them to perform, whether at home, at work, or in society at large. Capacities at this level are acquired through formal education, through training, learning by doing and experience, and increasingly through coaching and mentoring, networks, communities of practice and platform mechanisms.

The diagramme illustrates that the three levels of capacity are not stand alone nor are they mutually exclusive. They have an interrelationship. Consequently, with capacity development there are no recipes or blueprints – the context will be case-or country specific and thus it will differ. All three levels need to be taken into account when determining “who” needs “what” capacities for “what purpose”. Analysis of the three levels of capacity development helps to develop an understanding of this context. There are enabling conditions that increase the potential for success, such as peace and economic development and the ways in which politics and society help to institutionalise improved governance. What may at first seem an individual level issue may turn into an organizational level concern when looked at from the perspective of the institutional arrangements within which the individual stakeholders operate. Organizational arrangements may or may not support effective performance or an individual’s ability to effectively apply newly acquired skills, knowledge or experience. At the organizational and societal levels, capacity development can lead to changes in roles and responsibilities and a change in “power dynamics” which in turn can affect existing vested interests, power structures, norms and values. These are all important factors to keep in mind.

6. The three levels of capacity as understood by UNDP are described in *Capacity Development Practice Note*, October 2008, pages 5 and 6  
7. Institute of Development Studies, *Capacity for a Change*, 2008, page 19

## The Three Levels of Capacity



### 2.3 Types of Capacity

Closely linked to the idea that capacity resides at three interrelated levels is the recognition of two types of capacity that are interrelated yet distinct.

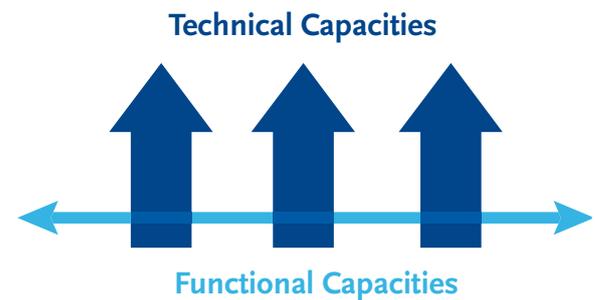
**Functional capacities** are cross-cutting in nature and are not associated with any one particular sector or theme. “They are the management capacities needed to formulate, implement and review policies, strategies, programmes and projects.”<sup>8</sup> UNDP has identified five categories of functional capacities which all focus on “getting things done” and include:

- Capacity to engage stakeholders –which relates the ability to motivate and mobilize stakeholders, build consensus, create partnerships and networks, plan and manage large group processes, maximize and manage diversity, etc.
- Capacity to assess a situation and define a vision and mandate –which includes the ability to access, analyse and synthesize different sets of data and information, translate information into a vision and/ or mandate;
- Capacity to formulate policies and strategies –that set objectives for how a vision and/or mandate will be executed- creates relevant organizational execution strategies, sets objectives, formulates sectoral and cross-sectoral policies, etc.
- Capacity to budget, manage and implement –including managing human and financial resources and procurement, managing change, setting benchmarks for monitoring progress, etc.

- Capacity to evaluate – including codifying lessons learnt, promoting, learning, collecting feedback and adjusting policies and strategies, etc.

**Technical capacities** are those associated with particular areas of need and with particular sector requirements or themes. In the context of disaster risk reduction these capacities correlate with the Hyogo Framework for Action. Section 3 further details these technical capacities for disaster risk reduction.

Consequently, the process for deciding “who” needs “what” capacities for “what purpose” needs to be based on a good understanding of both the functional as well as technical capacity dimensions, particularly at the level of the individual and the organization. It also opens up the potential that capacity development support may require a mix of interventions -technical and cross-cutting in nature. Any decision making on capacity development assistance or support needs to take into account what people or organizations are already good at –based on a recognition and understanding of the capacity that already exists towards ensuring that any new capacity development measures will further strengthen or build upon that capacity.

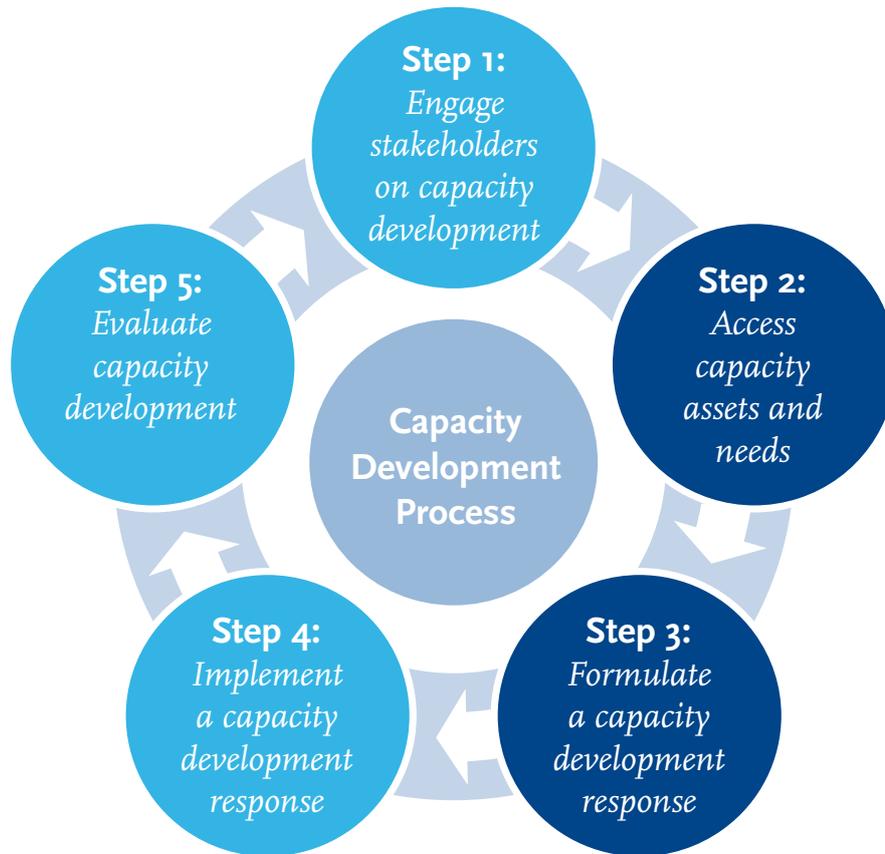


### 2.4 The Capacity Development Process

Just as capacity development needs to be context and case-specific, so also it needs to be viewed as an “iterative” process of assessment-design-application-learning-adjustment”. The five steps presented frame UNDP’s own work and coincide with the steps of the programming cycle.

Care must be taken in the interpretation of these five steps since they are not always carried out in a sequential or linear manner. The length of time it takes to complete each step will also vary from case to case. A great many factors are involved that impinge upon the effective completion of this process.

## UNDP Capacity Development Process



1. **Engage stakeholders in capacity development.** For a start, there needs to be commitment to and sponsorship of the process among all key stakeholders –local ownership and participation is critical. This requires a good understanding of the relevant actors at different levels and analysis of the critical types of stakeholders that need to be involved –ones with need, resources, information, expertise, who can influence. Various tried and tested tools and methodologies for stakeholder analysis, mapping and engagement are available to support this.
2. **Assess capacity assets and needs.** The avoidance of a blueprint approach has already been mentioned. In each case, a thorough assessment of what capacities are needed, why they are needed and who they are for needs to be made before any capacity development action plan can be set. A good starting point is some form of a capacity assessment exercise, preferably undertaken with the active engagement by the relevant stakeholders, at all stages of the capacity assessment exercise. The assessment will help determine what capacity

already exists and will help ascertain local partners' commitment and constraints they may face to drive the change process needed to improve capacity. Guidance and tools on undertaking capacity assessments is also available from UNDP<sup>9</sup> and through other resources.

3. **Formulate a capacity development response.** In response to the assessment of capacity assets and needs, a response needs to be formulated with the active participation of those who were engaged in the assessment exercise. The response can be at the group, community, organizational, regional or national level. It will likely include a mix of actions, probably starting with some short-term interventions to generate some “quick wins” or that will enhance known capacity assets before addressing more complex or long-term capacity issues or needs. The response will identify evidence and indicators against which progress can be measured, outcomes signifying the desired changes in capacity. The capacity development response also needs to be costed to establish the realistic funding needed for implementation. An exit strategy also needs to be developed.

4. **Implement a capacity development response.** Implementation will be part of that required for an overall programme or project. Experience shows that capacity development needs to be embedded in strategy formulation and programme planning and not added in as an afterthought or as a stand-alone measure. To ensure sustainability, the delivery of any capacity development assistance is best managed through already-established national systems and processes rather than through the creation of new or parallel implementation units. Implementation can be a mix of short-term measures in the form of performance or skills enhancement and more complex and long-term measures to address more challenging organizational or institutional issues. Developing a monitoring plan and respecting it allows to assess the implementation of the capacity development response against fixed targets. It also provides the opportunity to monitor where advances are slower than expected or faster, analyse the reasons and implement corrective measures where needed.
5. **Evaluate capacity development.** To ensure that inputs are being transformed into capacity development outputs and to support effective “learning from doing”, implementation needs to be flexible and it needs to be monitored. This includes allowing processes to evolve and paying attention to unplanned consequences that may not have been anticipated and means having the necessary flexibility to adapt to those changes. To ensure that outputs are translating into outcomes (capacity development) and impact (development goals) an evaluation framework should be established to measure results.

## 2.5 Core Capacity Development Actions

When answering the question – Capacity for What – actions generally fall into four domains. The four core approaches are complementary and mutually reinforcing. Capacity development support may take the form of multiple capacity development actions being taken at one time or, as already noted, adopting a more incremental approach that includes mix of technical and cross-cutting measures that may be both short and long-term in nature. These four domains include:

### 1. Institutional Strengthening and Development

Institutional arrangements refer to the policies, systems and processes that countries have in place to organize and manage their national development policies and objectives, including reducing disaster risk. Experience notes the link

between the effective performance of the public sector as a means to promote good governance. Capacity development measures may include reform strategies, policy dialogue forums, creation of offices or strategies for disaster risk reduction, development or revision of legislation, support for decentralization initiatives, development of a national capacity development strategy or facility, the introduction of organizational effectiveness measures, etc. Partnership approaches such as twinning arrangements between Southern institutes and between Southern and Northern institutes are increasingly being used to help support institutional and organizational development objectives. Motivation is important to sustain institutional reforms as is an overall supportive environment offering public safety, basic services and the rule of law. Addressing corruption is a strong motivator for institutional reform while salary reform will help to attract and retain good employees.<sup>9</sup>

### 2. Leadership

In this context, leadership is not necessarily synonymous with having a position of authority, nor does it only apply to individuals. Leadership can be formal or informal, and can demonstrate itself in many ways at multiple levels –centered around the elements of vision, competence and integrity. Capacity development strategies can seek to target individuals, groups, communities and even organizations to enhance their leadership capacity. This can be provided through targeted leadership development programmes, brokering partnerships, supporting individuals who can “champion” and provide leadership for advancing key themes and messages, or building broad based multi-stakeholder coalitions that can act as change agents in supporting reform, advancing an issue.



9. UNDP, *Capacity Assessment Practice Note*, 2008  
 10. UNDP, *Supporting Capacity Development: the UNDP Approach*, January 2009, page 3

# Capacity development is about change and transformation from the inside.

### 3. Knowledge

Knowledge refers to capacity development measures for knowledge creation and enhancement purposes, through education, classroom based training, informal or on-the job learning, coaching and mentoring. Capacity development actions are often at the individual level but can also be stimulated at the level of the organization to make better use of knowledge and information, e.g. knowledge management system. Actions may also be stimulated between organizations through networks, communities of practice, multi-agency information and learning platforms that bring together civil society organizations, donors and government agencies. In training, it is important for it to be targeted to the needs of the organization and to ensure that there is adequate support or resources for individuals and groups to apply what they learned in the context of their own job or organization.

### 4. Accountability

Accountability refers to the ways in which rights holders and duty bearers deliver on their obligations. It is important because it allows organizations and individuals to monitor, learn and self-regulate and adjust their actions accordingly with those to whom they are accountable. Accountability between the state and communities promotes mutual engagement and should be made a priority. Accountability is also needed between donors and countries in respect of development finance and will be enhanced by the sustained participation of civil society.<sup>11</sup> Capacity development actions to strengthen accountability can range from the creation or strengthening of public sector oversight and arbitration bodies (audit, finance, and parliament) to creating coalitions and networks, public information campaigns and town hall meetings to address specific issues.

## 2.6 Capacity Development vs. Capacity Building

There are fundamental conceptual differences between capacity building and capacity development and UNDP and others prefer to use the latter as capacity development is generally considered to be more comprehensive and is about change and transformation from the inside. Capacity building is more associated with “mechanical” processes and with technical cooperation, suggesting that capacity do not exist initially and so has to be built:

CAPACITY BUILDING	CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Narrower scope –capacity development as a means to an end</li> <li>■ Focuses more on the initial stages of building or creating capacities</li> <li>■ Often concerned with what outsiders will do to help build capacity and the contribution they can make</li> <li>■ Linked more to technical cooperation and to skills development, training, technology transfer</li> <li>■ One off or shorter –term interventions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Broader scope –capacity is both the means and the intended outcome in itself</li> <li>■ Includes both creating and building (or enhancement) as well as the (subsequent) use, management, retention and sustainability of capabilities</li> <li>■ Seeks to capitalize on existing national capacities as a starting point</li> <li>■ Understands that capacity development is nationally owned and led, with outside actors providing support to country led processes</li> <li>■ Includes a mix of approaches and measures, technical and less tangible, formal and informal</li> <li>■ Longer-term perspective</li> </ul>

11. Ibid page 5



# Considerations for Practice in Developing DRR Capacity

As noted in section 2, lessons from past experiences have demonstrated that the development of capacity is a far more complex process than previously thought. The importance of **local ownership** and **political leadership** has been underscored. It has also been recognised that capacity development goes beyond training or the transfer of technology, which have been the traditional realms of support, primarily based on the transfer of know-how from North to South. It is now increasingly recognized that capacity development may require engagement in sometimes complex change processes within organizations and society more generally.

Development cooperation partners increasingly acknowledge that their principal role is to accompany and help stimulate and support locally driven processes, all the time taking care not to undermine local initiative or to lead parallel processes. In 2005, delegates at the Paris High-Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness further challenged low-income countries to create effective and accountable institutions to drive national development efforts, and called on donors to harmonise and align their support around country-driven agendas, within the framework of partnership. Support for country-driven agendas was also reinforced at the 3rd High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness held in Accra, Ghana, in September 2008. **The Accra Agenda for Action** stressed the importance of strengthening country ownership of development, building more inclusive partnerships for development and delivering and accounting for development results.

**What implications do these wider trends have for the development of capacity for disaster risk reduction? What are the implications for external partners seeking to support countries to enhance their capacity to reduce disaster risk?**

Drawing both on emerging good practices from development cooperation as well as specific experiences from the realm of disaster risk reduction, this section presents five key considerations for practice in the implementation of capacity development for disaster risk reduction, providing practical illustrations and pointers for practice drawn from the disaster risk reduction community. This section also provides some examples on ways that outside partners support capacity development in the context of country processes for disaster risk reduction. In the interest of brevity the document provides a limited number of “good practice” examples.

The five considerations for practice are:

- The process needs to be locally driven
- Developing capacities for disaster risk reduction is a society-wide endeavour that requires multi-stakeholder engagement and participation
- There are many levels and dimensions of capacity that need to be developed
- The enabling environment is essential for translating capacity into performance
- Capacity development goes beyond training and the classroom

## 3.1 The Process Needs to be Locally Driven

The HFA offers a broader framework against which countries can judge progress made in the implementation of national strategies against internationally agreed targets. The five priorities of the HFA offer a medium-term planning horizon and as such are intended to guide countries in the preparation of national strategies for disaster risk reduction. The HFA encourages countries to develop *national disaster risk reduction strategies* as a way to establish a national framework, set priorities and to mobilise political support, as well as financial and technical resources among local, national and international stakeholders. A national strategy provides important and consistent guidance for the many parties involved. It is crucial that an overall vision be expressed clearly at the outset, but with a common understanding that resulting plans also need to be flexible, benefiting from adjustments borne of later experience. National strategies offer a point of reference for developing sub-national, sub-sector and eventually community action plans that translate broad objectives into actionable activities on the ground.

National strategies can serve as the basis for identifying capacity assets and for developing capacity enhancement objectives that support the achievement of national strategies. Such frameworks can also assist a country in determining the specific types of support that it needs from

## ROAD MAP DEVELOPMENT EXERCISE – SRI LANKA

The Government of Sri Lanka has taken significant steps towards strengthening legislative and institutional arrangements for disaster risk management. This has included the:

Creation of the Ministry of Disaster Management (MoDM) and the Disaster Management Centre (DMC) to act as the lead agency for disaster risk management in the country.

- Additionally, a comprehensive disaster risk management framework for Sri Lanka was developed through a consultative, multi-stakeholder dialogue process, that was supported by UNDP. The framework identifies and coordinates multi-stakeholder efforts in the next ten years through a holistic strategy or “roadmap” towards building a safer Sri Lanka. The roadmap focuses on seven thematic components that include: Policy, Institutional Mandates and Institutional Development; Hazards,

Vulnerability and Risk Assessment; Multi-hazard Early Warning System; Preparedness and Response Plans; Mitigation and the Integration of Disaster Risk Reduction into Development Planning; Community-based Disaster Risk Management; Public Awareness, Education and Training. This process was preceded by a very intensive groundwork which adopted a very consultative approach.

- Establishment of a Parliamentary Select Committee on Natural Disasters.
- The adoption of Sri Lanka Disaster Management Act No. 13 of 2005, which provides the legal basis for instituting a Disaster Risk Management (DRM) system in the country.
- Creation of the National Council for Disaster Management (NCDM), a high level body chaired by the H.E. the President that provides direction to DRM in the country.

its outside partners and to help address issues related to harmonisation and alignment of external support around country driven agendas.

Some form of *national coordination mechanism* is desirable to oversee the strategy formulation, implementation and monitoring process. Signatories to the HFA have committed themselves to designate an appropriate coordination mechanism for implementation and follow-up on the five priority actions. This becomes important as the number of stakeholders increases and the field becomes more complex. A need also develops for greater coherence and requirements that can provide opportunities for more exchange amongst the various agencies and interests involved. The designation of national focal points for reducing disaster risks is an important commitment to implementation and is a first step towards a systematic mobilisation and enhancement of national disaster risk reduction capacities. Countries and regions have understandably adopted a wide range of institutional mechanisms, arrangements, strategies and policies to manage and reduce disaster risk, based on their existing capacity and their own perceived national priorities.

Experience has demonstrated the very close link between ownership, commitment and sustainable capacity development. The success of any national disaster risk reduction strategy will necessarily depend on political support from the highest levels of office. Leadership is required to galvanise interest and mobilise the support and

engagement of concerned groups. National ownership and leadership for disaster risk reduction is contingent on a number of factors. These capacity elements will vary and cannot therefore be assumed or taken for granted. There is a particular need to mobilise support across development sectors and various professional disciplines, and to find ways of overcoming resistance to change. It is crucial to build partnerships and create networks, exploring new ways of working together.

**External partners can play an important role in giving legitimacy to nationally led initiatives and processes**, by engaging in or supporting strategy development and planning processes, providing support for establishing and strengthening national coordination mechanisms, and contributing to the identification of needs and priorities or in particular circumstances mediating differences.

External partners can also seek to link or base their disaster risk reduction assistance (funding, technical or process expertise, advocacy, information/knowledge, advisory services) with national strategies. In countries where the commitment to disaster risk reduction appears to be weak or there is a perceived lack of a coherent strategy in support of the HFA, outside partners need to assess carefully how best to engage productively in the process. In such a situation a more selective approach may be warranted, characterised by smaller or more complementary efforts that build on and further lead to emerging opportunities and that can help to mobilise political support and generate wider interest.

*A wide range of perspectives and skills are needed to gain a sense of the whole.*

#### **AN INTEGRATED AND PARTICIPATORY APPROACH TO DRR ACTION PLANNING AND BUDGETING: INDONESIA**

The Government of Indonesia has taken some extremely important steps to put in place the necessary policy, regulatory and institutional environment that is beginning to form the foundation required for communities to begin to invest government development budgets in their own safety by making disaster risk reduction a part of their development planning process. This started with the passing of a new, forward-looking National Disaster Management Law and the initiation of an intergovernmental, public/private dialogue at national, provincial and local levels from which the current Indonesian National Action Plan for Disaster Risk Reduction (NAP-DRR) was prepared. It is organized based on the framework of the Government of Indonesia adopted UN Hyogo Framework for Action on DRR. Recently, the newly established National Disaster Management Agency (BNPb) initiated the process to establish a National Platform on DRR consisting of government, public and private stakeholders that will use the Indonesian NAP-DRR as a tool for identifying DRR needs and gaps.

Correspondingly, a number of Indonesia's local governments such as disaster prone Aceh, Central Java, and Yogyakarta have begun to prepare their own Local (Provincial) Action Plans for Disaster Risk Reduction (LAP-DRR) and have started to set up Provincial Platforms on DRR that similarly will use their LAP-DRR as a tool for identifying provincial DRR gaps and needs. In recent years, Annual National Government Work Plans prepared by the National Development Planning Agency (BAPPENAS) have included substantial budgets for pre-disaster risk reduction programmes based on the NAP-DRR. The Provincial Development Planning Agency (BAPPEDA) in Aceh has begun to follow this trend and it is hoped that this will be repeated in other provinces as well.

### **3.2 Developing Capacities for DRR is a Society Wide Endeavour**

Linked to the consideration that countries need to lead the process for advancing disaster risk reduction is the increasing recognition that **the development of disaster risk reduction capacity is the concern of an entire society** rather than of any single agency, area of professional discipline or stakeholder group. It requires the active participation and engagement of official institutions, political institutions and multiple stakeholders from civil society to academia and the private or commercial sector –all contributing their respective part to achieve a common end state. Experience demonstrates that this requires countries and external partners to go beyond their traditional relationships with emergency and disaster management actors, e.g. meteorology, civil defence, police, fire and rescue to forge new forms of collaboration and partnerships. A wide range of perspectives and skills are needed to gain a sense of the whole, to determine the various requirements and related capacities and to meet identified needs. This includes representatives of affected or vulnerable communities, governmental entities as well as specialised development, disaster and civil society entities that offer relevant expertise in particular fields.

■ **Stakeholder “mapping” and analysis** is a useful process to help to identify the many different groups and organizations that are, or ought to be, involved in any disaster risk reduction capacity development process. Such mapping can help to determine appropriate roles and responsibilities and the potential for cooperation and new relationships. It can also be used to ascertain where capacity strengths and weaknesses lie, and to identify areas where there is potential fragmentation and duplication of efforts. It is especially useful in identifying existing capacities and for exploring possibilities to mobilise or strengthen these capacities to tackle common problems through dynamic and expanding relationships. Frequently participants become surprised at the extent of information, knowledge, skills or abilities that they together already possess, once they are linked to a common understanding or purpose.

■ **Multi-stakeholder fora and participatory planning processes** offer valuable opportunities for galvanising diverse interests and mobilising capacities around disaster risk reduction. They are particularly suited to addressing complex problems and issues that require innovative solutions and broad engagement and participation. Participatory dialogue processes convene different stakeholders to share their respective perspectives and to build consensus on: what needs to be done, who needs to be involved and how to go forward. Such processes specifically allow for different positions and viewpoints to be shared on the basis that diverse perspectives hold the potential for innovative solutions. This

## MAPPING THE DRR LANDSCAPE, THE CASE OF NEPAL

The UNISDR secretariat facilitated a mapping of the DRR landscape in Nepal between September 2008 and January 2009. The mapping looked at the broad DRR enabling environment, including the DRR policy environment, the existing institutional mechanisms and conducting a stakeholders' assessment. The mapping was conducted through a desk review, field practitioners' surveys, and face-to-face interviews. Government officials as well as international organisation's members and representatives of the civil society and the private sector were part of this exercise.

The report included the analysis of the current status of DRR in Nepal, the progress achieved against the 5 priorities of action of the HFA and the challenges and gaps in furthering the DRR agenda in the country. The report was shared with the Government, international organisations and civil society.

The aim of the mapping exercise was that, through the DRR landscape mapping, all relevant national and international DRR stakeholders (the Government, World Bank, Asian Development Bank, UN agencies, etc.) would dialogue and initiate the foundations for developing a joint work programming.

## LOCAL LEVEL RISK MANAGEMENT IN THE ARARAT REGION OF ARMENIA

Under the framework of UNDP project «Strengthening of National Disaster Preparedness and Risk Reduction Capacities», the Local Level Risk Management (LLRM) module was piloted in the Ararat region of Armenia. The project addressed risk, vulnerability and capacity assessments, trained and arose awareness of communities and local authorities on disaster preparedness and risk reduction, and promoted small scale mitigation projects. The activities targeted communities that often face the consequences of regional and global trends that have an impact on their environment and increase their vulnerability to disasters. The importance of the active participation of the local population was widely recognized and efforts were done to systematically strengthen local capacities for disaster preparedness and response.

During the first year of implementation (2008) the LLRM module included addressing risk, vulnerability and capacity assessments which served as a starting point for reducing disaster risk. Five main activities were carried out in 2008/9: a. Conduct a risk assessment in the Ararat region; b. Conduct a Vulnerability & Capacity Assessment (VCA) in the Ararat region using the International Federation of the Red Cross/Red Crescent methodology for Vulnerability & Capacity Assessment (VCA); c. Produce public awareness materials; d. Conduct trainings/workshops for community members and local authorities aimed at increasing awareness on disaster risk reduction and preparedness and elaborating disaster response plans; e. Organise a training of trainers (TOT) in disaster preparedness and risk reduction in 20 communities (2009); f. Identify and support small-scale disaster mitigation projects based on the VCA recommendations and in close consultation with the regional Governor's office and local communities.

Two assessments were used to identify the most vulnerable communities to disasters and to identify small-scale disaster mitigation projects with the extensive participation of communities and local authorities. In parallel, a series of trainings were organized in 15 most vulnerable communities on disaster preparedness and risk reduction. This raised the level of awareness and helped communities to develop disaster preparedness plans that were tested during the second round of workshops in November 2008. Small-scale disaster mitigation works (clearing drainage system) with a potential for substantially reduce impending risks, resulted in tangible outcomes, and communities felt more ownership over such initiatives. These in turn increased understanding of the importance of focused disaster-prevention activities.

Additionally, a pilot methodological manual was developed by the Crises Management State Academy specialists and published for the TOT course. The manuals were distributed to all the TOT participants. The manual were considered extremely useful and the Armenian Rescue Service decided to distribute two copies of the manual to each Rescue Service and Education Department in all regions of the country.

Among the lessons, the project showed how the interest, ownership and commitment of local population grows over disaster risk reduction initiatives which make their livelihoods safer. In the beginning community representatives seemed somewhat hesitant to cooperate but gradually this barrier was avoided and a very fruitful cooperation established.

12. As the participants in the global Future Search meeting noted, there is a prevalent tendency to think about the subject from a much narrower standpoint and in specific technical terms. Often it is considered in only a basic sense of "who needs what abilities" to accomplish their specific tasks or responsibility.

all helps to contribute to creating the opportunity for national dialogue that invites the involvement of public participation in addition to expert opinion provided from government, professional and commercial sources and external partners that can serve as a strong motivation to build ownership and commitment to apply, strengthen or develop capacities for reducing disaster risk, within a community or throughout a society. The extent to which such a process can become closely associated with the direction of a national strategy for implementing the priorities and targets for disaster risk reduction will contribute to a more dynamic and organic process that will allow new capacities to emerge. Such dialogue processes need to identify incentives that can assist and those that may constrain progress, drawing on and mobilising existing expertise, sharing knowledge and experiences and creating new networks and new working relationships and partnerships.

Various tools and for convening large groups and for multi-stakeholder dialogue and consensus building are widely available. They can be applied contextually and at multiple levels. These are best organized with a multi-agency planning group, meeting facilitation support and with a clear sponsor to coordinate follow-up. External partners can encourage and support countries to utilize participatory, multi-stakeholder dialogue processes for disaster risk reduction strategy formulation and action planning purposes, as well as for monitoring progress. External partners can also support the implementation of the actions and solutions that emerge for disaster risk reduction as a result of these dialogue processes.

### 3.3 There are Many Dimensions of Capacity that Need to be Developed

**Thinking beyond technical capacities:** When thinking about disaster risk reduction, it can be tempting to focus on developing the technical capacities associated with professional disciplines or functions such as environmental management, land use management, planning and public investment, engineering and public health, among others. Some of these are quite specialised, such as climate modelling and forecasting, conducting risk assessments or operating early warning systems.<sup>12</sup> Yet the development of such technical capacities needs to be combined with other types of capacity development actions that include the promotion of leadership and other managerial capacities and performance enhancing measures. These are important in both organizations and communities. It is important, therefore, to look beyond the technical capacities, important though they are, to the five cross-cutting functional capacities that are relevant not just to one particular sector or theme.

#### WHAT THE HFA SAYS ABOUT CAPACITY

The overall guidance provided by the Hyogo Framework gives an indication of the types of capacities required to address the various outcomes and results that relate to the five priorities agenda. While these offer an insight into the kinds of capacities required for DRR, they should only be considered indicative, as every country situation is different. The following broad categories are identified:

- Developing policy and related implementation frameworks, legislation, national strategies and platforms, etc. (especially related to improving resilience of developing countries).
- The availability and use of data being crucial to hazard, vulnerability and comprehensive risk assessments, with particular emphasis given to both the technical and human aspects of monitoring disaster risk factors and early warning activities.
- Development of human resources through knowledge, education, training and the transfer of experience by means of information, networking and advocacy.
- Specific technical applications such as those identified with the development and use of building codes, protection of health facilities, the particular requirements of small island developing states, disaster recovery initiatives, and other examples of specific technical abilities or development subject interests.
- Improved disaster response, including specific areas of technical expertise such as urban search and rescue, the incorporation of risk-reduction approaches into response management and recovery planning, local level partnerships, etc.

There are numerous examples of how such capacities, at the individual, organizational and enabling environment levels, have been instrumental in mobilising communities to work together in extraordinary efforts during times of crisis or impending disasters. It is especially at national levels of responsibility where efforts to galvanise political will are critical to mobilize human and material resources around a shared and comprehensive disaster risk reduction strategy.

Within the disaster risk reduction context, it is the technical capacities that for now appear to be the best understood and for which there is greater consensus on their composition. There is less evidence of practice across the disaster risk reduction community on how to maintain capacities or how to incorporate leadership and less tangible functional capacities

## INDIA'S NATIONAL HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT PLAN FOR DRR

The Human Resource (HR) Development Plan is the outcome of a felt need at the national level to undertake planned human resource development to meet the challenges of disaster management. The Plan aims to enhance the capacity and quality of human resources available within key government departments in India, mainly at State level, for more efficient and effective disaster management. These identified sectors include the police, revenue, health, agriculture, rural development, animal husbandry, public works, public health and engineering, power, water and food and civil supplies.

All these sectors have critical roles to play in the event of a natural or human-made disaster in varying ways and degrees. Functionaries working in these departments need to be aware of their respective roles and responsibilities in the face of disasters of different kinds and intensity on the

one hand and require having necessary knowledge, skills and attitude to perform their roles with desired efficiency and effectiveness on the other. The HR strategy includes:

- Creating a critical mass of trainers at the village, block, district and state levels
- Imparting strategic inputs to a wide range of government and non-government functionaries
- Reaching the un-reached government and non-government functionaries at the cutting edge
- Building awareness and enhancing the coping capacity of communities at risk
- Developing capacity at the policy planning level
- Creating reliable networks of communication with the help of grassroots organisations such as PRIs, NGOs and CBOs

into thematic and technically oriented capacity development strategies. Constraints at the level of the enabling environment tend to be overlooked or if recognised, are considered beyond the scope of intervention. Nevertheless, because of these shortcomings, a greater focus on functional capacities needs to be promoted in any programme of capacity development support to disaster risk reduction.

A **capacity assessment** is a useful entry point that can help distinguish between the different dimensions of the three capacity levels and the two types of capacity, as well as to show how each contributes to the development of national disaster risk reduction capacity. It can be used to determine those dimensions that deserve priority attention as well as how best to sequence activities. For example, in a situation where the regulatory framework is sound, and where organizational mandates are well defined, it may be sufficient to focus on the development of technical skills or management training. In other respects, a capacity assessment may reveal that the main constraint may not actually be a lack of capacity but rather a lack of political vision or poor mobilisation of existing capacities around a common goal.

Capacity assessments can also serve to engage stakeholders - whether in a community or in the workplace - in a discussion about their existing respective capacities and gaps. This can contribute to better understanding about the factors that influence what they can and cannot do and to promote local engagement for bringing about change in capacity. It also helps to raise the discussion above sweeping statements about “lack of capacity” or general commitments to “building capacity”.

External partners can promote the regular use of capacity assessments within the context of their own programming and as part of their assistance to countries and organizations for advancing disaster risk reduction. There is a wide range of tried and tested tools and processes available for these purposes that can be adapted or applied to disaster risk reduction themes and contexts. UNDP's Practice Note on Capacity Assessment (2008) provides a comprehensive discussion on capacity assessment, including the presentation of UNDP's capacity development methodology and a range of different examples. As noted in section 2, capacity assessments can support countries and external partners to jointly identify priority capacity enhancement interventions that will be most beneficial and for which external partners can provide support.



*Seek active engagement by the relevant stakeholders at all stages of the capacity assessment exercise.*

#### CAPACITY ASSESSMENT EXERCISE, THE EXAMPLE OF DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

The *Programa Prevencion y Preparacion a Desastres* (Disaster Prevention and Preparedness Programme - PPPD) in the Dominican Republic is a disaster risk reduction programme involving at least 5 separate organizations, both governmental and NGO. PPPD requested that the UNDP Country Office and the Regional Capacity Development Cluster perform a capacity assessment on work plan updates, strategic plans, and sustainable maintenance of achievements. After comprehensive preparation and programme review, based on client requirements, the Capacity Development team and the programme teams together developed a capacity

assessment questionnaire. Responses highlighted a need for capacity development in planning and evaluation; therefore each team formulated prioritized work plans. The Regional Capacity Development Cluster ran a capacity assessment to identify where the difficulties were, and combined it with training on results based management and a workshop that utilized the assessment findings to create prioritized plans of action for each organization in the larger programme. The results included expanded capacities in work planning, prioritization, monitoring & evaluation, as well as, an improved understanding of results based management.

#### CAPACITY ASSESSMENT EXERCISE, THE EXAMPLE OF LAOS

In December 2007, a capacity assessment of the National Disaster Management Office (NDMO) of Lao PDR took place with the support of the Capacity Development team of the UNDP Regional Centre in Bangkok. The objective of the capacity assessment exercise was to assess the NDMO's strengths and areas for improvement, as related to its mandate in DRR and disaster management. It also aimed at recommending capacity development strategies to address capacity needs and improve its effectiveness. The NDMO decided to adopt the UNDP capacity assessment tool and tailor and adapt it for this exercise.

The capacity assessment team identified three key functions assessed against six core issues to be assessed during the capacity assessment exercise:

- Preparedness, Public Awareness, Emergency Response
- Leadership, Human Resources, Physical Resources, Financial Resources, Multi-stakeholder Engagement, Knowledge Management

The assessment took place through four steps:

- I. A pre-mission desk research which included identifying all stakeholders and becoming familiar with the relevant documents and literature.

2. Key informant interviews. This took place through bilateral and small group meetings with stakeholders (including representatives from several government ministries, INGOs, UN agencies, Inter-Agency Standing Committee members, etc.) and aimed at triangulating information.
3. The NDMO assessment with primary stakeholders. Two discussion groups were organized in a workshop style modality. Primary stakeholders included ministerial representatives, NDMO staff members, INGOs, and members of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee. The exercise focused on one hand on assessing tangible "relational" capacities and also "softer" issues of perception of the NDMO, including credibility and influence as they affect the NDMO's ability to effectively carry out mandated activities
4. The NDMO internal assessment. The methodology chosen to carry out the internal assessment was as well though a workshop modality and it focused on the NDMO's internal capacities. The one-on-one with key NDMO staff encouraged frank feedback on strengths and areas for improvement.

### 3.4 The enabling environment is essential for translating capacity into performance

**A supportive enabling environment creates the incentives to translate capacities into better performance.** Countries are more likely to develop and make use of available capacities when there is strong political ownership and commitment at the highest levels of authority, extensive participation, transparency and clear public accountability. Organizations which can count on a supporting policy and legal framework, and whose clients or users demand accountability are more likely to deliver to the standards expected of them. Communities that enjoy the support of their local authorities are better able to organise, take action and become self-reliant. Staff that receives adequate pay and work in an environment where achievement is acknowledged and rewarded - whether financially or otherwise - is more likely to perform to a high standard.

**There is a strong relationship between capacity and the performance of country systems for disaster risk reduction.** However, lessons learnt from capacity development effectiveness that have examined the relationship between capacity, results and performance, highlight that the relationship is not always straightforward. One does not necessarily lead to the other, suggesting that “more” capacity may or may not directly lead to improved performance or better results in terms of the delivery of goods and services. The task of developing and sustaining capacity for disaster risk reduction must be viewed as an iterative and long-term venture. Growth and change always occur over time, so organizations and systems also develop their capacities incrementally through repeated cycles of exposure, learning, experimentation and responding to new challenges. Periods of rapid gains may be followed by periods of consolidation or even inertia, resulting in the loss of or the diminishment of capacity and consequently reduced performance. Significant improvements may follow from unforeseen events or unanticipated consequences, rather than from carefully planned and sequenced interventions.

Some aspects of capacity can be improved relatively quickly, particular those that involve technological inputs such as enhanced communications, resulting from access to mobile phones or the Internet. Other areas that depend on behavioural change, including shifting of mindsets or attitudes or that related to policy or institutional reform processes may take much more time.

**Enabling change over time and the role of external partners in supporting an enabling environment for DRR.** Thus, the challenge of capacity development does not solely lie in

strengthening capacities per se. Indeed, a capacity assessment might well reveal that capacity is adequate. By contrast, what may emerge is that the pre-conditions for mobilising and using capacities are needed. It is essential, therefore, to relate the development of capacities to the interplay of the social, economic, political and cultural contexts that shape both the public and official perceptions of disaster risks. It might be concluded that attention be re-focussed on issues of governance, or on creating more effective systems of accountability. This may particularly apply in post-conflict countries or so-called “fragile” states where core institutions may be ineffective or where there may be significant lapses in the rule of law. *A good understanding of context is therefore fundamental*, and various tools such as “*Drivers of Change*” or “*power analysis*”<sup>13</sup> can be used to better understand the various positive incentives or negative constraints to the engagement of people and performance of organizations.

In such circumstances, the contributions that external partner organizations can play may be very different from those associated with the more conventional “toolbox” of human resource development activities or even organizational strengthening work. A focus on creating the conditions for disaster risk reduction capacity development may warrant explicit support in policy dialogue and advocacy, determining operational priorities, building interdisciplinary consensus and cross-sector partnerships that create more favourable conditions for capacity to translate into performance that achieves specific disaster risk reduction results. It may equally require temporary practical support to ensure that essential functions of government continue to operate until such time as local capacity can be restored. Such “gap-filling” roles can be justified provided there is a clear strategy in place to transfer responsibility to local institutions at the earliest possible time.<sup>14</sup>

It is desirable to have planning and programming frameworks that assure consistent support to capacity development over the medium and long-term and that include a mix of different types of capacity development actions. Strategies need to be sufficiently flexible to allow for adaptation to changing needs and priorities and that take into account the variations and unplanned factors that may directly impact the translation of capacity inputs into improved performance and results. In instances where countries have a well-defined national strategy or plan, outside partners want to ensure that their support aligns with stated priorities and there is a shared consensus on the results to be achieved. In countries where governance structures are weaker and where commitment to a disaster risk reduction strategy may be less well defined, external partners can stay engaged by promoting dialogue with national stakeholders, supporting promising local initiatives that have the potential to be scaled up, and maintaining a focus on achieving capacity development outcomes.

13. These are examples of political-economy studies. In 2005, the DAC/Govnet prepared a document (room document no.5) entitled: “Lessons learned on the use of Power and Drivers of Change Analysis in Development Cooperation” which was discussed at the 7th meeting of the Govnet.

14. See Institute of Development Studies, *Capacity for a Change*, 2008, page 9

## ADDRESSING THE ENABLING ENVIRONMENT FOR CD IN NIGERIA

A number of programme reviews undertaken by DFID in Nigeria between 2000 and 2003 suggested that the impact of technical, transfer-based CD was less substantial than anticipated. DFID set out to discover what factors were diluting the impact of this assistance. A Drivers of Change analysis revealed that apparently significant changes in the formal institutional environment – such as the transition from military to civilian rule – had had less impact than expected on key problems blocking Nigeria’s development: the mismanagement of revenue from oil, the weakness of formal accountability mechanisms and the slowness of non-oil economic growth. As well as highlighting the lack of will for pro-poor political reform, the analysis led to a greater appreciation of the role of quasi-structural constraints on the behaviour of individual agents within and outside government. Informal institutional arrangements – for both private (including business) and public transactions – were more powerful and pervasive than their formal counterparts. These factors have combined to act as a significant barrier to reform.

DFID concluded that in Nigeria, as in many developing countries, pro-poor change requires elements of the status quo, and the apparatus of government that defends it, to be changed. Therefore, engagement of the government in isolation from the broader political context would not be productive. Change tends to happen when broad alliances across civil society, often supported by media attention and the private sector, and linked into reform elements within government, coalesce around an issue of political importance and exert pressure for effective change. Recognising this reality, DFID is now taking an “issues-based approach” in Nigeria, aiming to contribute to the institutional changes needed to make successful CD a possibility in the longer term. The approach focuses on issues rather than organisations. It is non-prescriptive about both the issues and the organisations it engages with.

OEDC/DAC, **The Challenge of Capacity Development: Working Towards Good Practice**, 2006, page 21, citing DFID (2004)

### 3.5 Capacity Development Goes Beyond Training and the Classroom

**Training is one tool for capacity development, probably best for targeting the individual level.** Training will continue to be an integral strategy for capacity development for disaster risk reduction, on its own or, preferably, as an integral component of a broader capacity development strategy for disaster risk reduction. Training is recognized to be particularly relevant for enhancing the capacity of individuals and groups for skills acquisition and knowledge enhancement purposes, relevant to both functional and technical types of capacity. Experience demonstrates that a training needs assessment, as a stand-alone activity or linked to a broader capacity assessment is a useful means to identify performance gaps and to ascertain if, in fact, training is the relevant solution. Needs assessments can also serve to identify other actions that maybe required in order for the training to be effectively utilized and/or applied and can help to ensure that the most appropriate participants will be targeted for training.

In considering training at the organizational level, it is best if initiatives grow out of conscious efforts and organizational commitments to enquire what is actually involved in improving performance and changing systems, with an

understanding and appreciation of the importance of financial and non-financial incentives. Any initiative designed to improve individual or group skills or an organization’s overall abilities needs to be framed within an understanding of the organizational or institutional contexts in which the competencies are valued, if they are to be transferred effectively. This necessitates an understanding of the formal and informal organizational structures, and the rules and norms that influence the organization and the broader external environment.

**Capacity development methodologies go well beyond classroom training.** While the term “training” continues to be used widely, expanded concepts of learning are gaining wider currency in many professions and throughout societies. Increasingly, learning reflects any number of ongoing activities, not necessarily confined to classrooms or specific job tasks. Learning also reflects an expanded range and source of information, less likely conveyed from a knowledgeable teacher or expert to a less accomplished “student”, in contrast to the more formalised approaches to training.

**Learning is ongoing and makes use of new and established methods and technology.** Information and communications technology affords considerably more opportunities to acquire, disseminate and share knowledge but it also requires that people have the skills and hardware to use the technology.

## THE IMPACT OF TRAINING - EVIDENCE FROM THE WORLD BANK

One of the most common tools used for capacity development is that of training. But for training to contribute to the capacity of developing world institutions it is not enough that training results in participant learning. Learning must be relevant to the needs and goals of target organisations and trainees must have the resources and incentives to apply what they have learned on the job. A recent World Bank Independent Evaluation Group (2008) study of training efficacy found that while in most cases former training participants had demonstrably learned, this resulted in workplace behaviour change and, subsequently, organisational impact, only about half the time. Where training did not contribute to sustainable organisational capacity, the two primary causes were insufficient targeting of training to organisational needs and insufficient resources or managerial support for trainees to apply what they had learned on the job. This finding reinforces a growing body of evidence that in order to enhance training efficacy, considerably more attention and resources must be devoted to focusing training programmes on the specific needs of target organisations through thorough needs assessment and to supporting implementation of learning in the workplace.

From Institute of Development Studies, **Capacity for a Change**, 2008, page 19, quoting Aliza Inbal, **Capacity Collective Independent Evaluation Group**, 2008; World Bank, **Using Training to Build Capacity for Development**, Washington DC, 2008; Brinkerhoff, R. O. and Apking, A. M., **High Impact Learning**, Perseus Publishing, Cambridge, MA, 2007.

Those designing training programmes need to take into account the different purposes, locations and contexts in which this form of learning can best work the various applications possible, and its relative cost-effectiveness. The ease of exchanging information globally has also elevated “networking”, in both electronic and institutional terms, to new levels of learning endeavour.

**Learning can take place through informal mechanisms as well as more formal means.** Networks and “communities of practice” provide alternatives to the more traditional “knowledge transfer” and workshop or classroom approach to learning. In these forms of exchange, learning occurs through mutual and peer learning, often in a virtual, globalized dimension, through “south-south exchanges”.

Other forms of informal learning are increasingly valued as relevant means of knowledge and performance enhancement including on the job training, action learning, coaching, and mentoring, exercises and simulations which can all serve to build technical skills, expand critical thinking and sharpen problem solving capacities by putting learners in the “driver’s seat” for what they need to enhance or change. All of these opportunities build individual self-confidence as they open up additional personal opportunities at the same time that they collectively contribute to increased organizational capabilities. As such, they equally offer considerable and promising potentials for developing capacities for disaster risk reduction. Research shows that most organizations using communities of practice have not cultivated them to their full potential and hence reaped their benefits which are numerous.

Learning also takes place informally through the day to day interactions and experiences of community members, many of whom may never have the opportunity to participate in formal learning activities. For rural communities in particular, talking and sharing with neighbours on substantial issues/ current events, listening to commentaries on radio, having the opportunity to read newspapers, or participate in community meetings and social gatherings contribute to the development of capacity. Community based disaster risk reduction activities that are grounded in participatory processes and specifically seek to draw upon local knowledge and resources help ensure that learning draws upon the collective experience of the community and address their needs, as they perceive them.

External partners are an important source of training support for disaster risk reduction. They can exert a positive influence on how training is conceived and delivered and ensuring that knowledge exchange enhancement approaches result in enhanced capacity. External partners need to promote the inclusion of training and learning elements as part of broader capacity development strategies and capacity assessment exercises and avoid stand-alone or one-off exercises and activities. Additionally, external partners can systematically promote the use of known, sound training practices such as the following: training needs assessment that include an analysis of organizational factors that will support or undermine the transfer of learning and training; the inclusion of follow-up measures to support trainees to help participants and their organizations to apply new insights and skills; partnering with national capacity development practitioners and with national and regional training organizations; monitoring and evaluation of the impact of knowledge enhancement and exchange initiatives; documentation of lessons learnt and good practices; ensuring that there is a good fit between “supply” and “demand” factors; more emphasis on the use of approaches that promote peer learning and south-south exchange.



### DEVELOPING EMPOWERING TRAINING PACKAGES

The Capacity for Disaster Reduction Initiative (CADRI) has developed two training packages with the perspective of empowering the users in leading the workshop.

The aim of the first one is to provide a basic orientation on what disaster risk is and how it can be managed in the context of sustainable development. The target audience is relevant different government ministries and institutions, international organizations, civil society including NGOs, scientific and academic communities, the media, Red Cross and Red Crescent societies, and the private sector. When existing, it targets the members of a coordination mechanism, e.g. National Platforms, National Disaster Management Committees or Focal Points, including members of civil society, academia, media, or NGO disaster network, etc. The originality of this workshop package is that it applies a very participatory methodology. Presentations by the facilitators are few and very short and the knowledge present in the room is used to strengthen the groups understanding of DRR in the national context.

To facilitate its use, the workshop package contains a facilitator's guidance which helps organisers to understand which are the requirements to set up the workshop, the needed tailoring of the workshop package to the national context and provides additional information on the exercises and templates to be used.

CADRI also supported the Disaster Preparedness and Prevention Initiative of South Eastern Europe (DPPI SEE), which brings together 12 National Disaster Management Agencies, through a two years capacity development project for DRR, designed for DPPI in collaboration with Romania, Croatia, Macedonia and MSB (Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency). The project aims at strengthening the understanding of DRR among members of the national disaster management agencies, line ministries and their partners. The project includes training courses and a training of trainers that should enable the region to pursue a sustainable capacity development process in the area of DRR.

### DEVELOPING COMMUNITIES OF PRACTICE

A community of practice began to develop around knowledge and education for disaster prevention before, during and after the 2005 World Conference on Disaster Reduction. The Disaster Reduction Education Network listserv gained more than 1,000 subscribers by signing up regional conference attendees en masse by acclamation. Towards the end of 2008, the Coalition for Global School Safety (COGSS) and Disaster Prevention Education (DPE) emerged from a small advocacy group to support transition from a free-floating LISTSERV to the wider constituency of an emerging social network. COGSS & DPE now provide a twice-monthly newsletter to these subscribers, and encourages Q&A, discussion fora, interest group and regional group interaction on its new

social networking site at <http://cogssdpe.ning.com> . By mid-2009 COGSS & DPE had more than 250 members and began to consciously adopt a network functions approach to blend :

1. Community-building
2. Filtering
3. Amplifying
4. Learning and Facilitating
5. Investing and Providing
6. Convening

A sister network, the Edu4DRR Teacher's Network also maintains a social networking site specifically aimed at classroom teachers. (<http://edu4dr.ning.com>).

### 3.6. Summing Up

This paper has sought to make a modest contribution to practically illustrating what it means for capacity development to be a cross-cutting element for disaster risk reduction, including some of the challenges and difficulties inherent in the process. It notes that capacity development is much more than the transfer of knowledge and technical skills and that there are not any formulas or recipes for

capacity development that will work in all contexts –rather it is more a matter of finding the “best fit” for a particular set of circumstances. Countries need to lead their processes for disaster risk reduction and there are a number of factors and determinants that need to be taken into account in order to achieve sustainable capacity development results.

In closing we offer UNDP’s principles of Capacity Development as a useful summary of this discussion:

#### UNDP’S BASIC PRINCIPLES OF CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT

- The UNDP approach makes the concept of national ownership. This is about the ability to make informed choices and decisions.
  - It addresses power relations, mindsets and behaviour change. It therefore emphasises the importance of motivation as a driver of change.
  - Capacity development is a long-term process. It can be promoted through a combination of shorter-term results that are driven from the outside and more sustainable, longer-term ones that are driven from the inside.
  - It requires sticking with the process under difficult circumstances.
  - The UNDP approach links the enabling environment, as well as organisations and individuals, and promotes a comprehensive approach.
  - It looks beyond individual skills and a focus on training to address broader questions of institutional change, leadership, empowerment and public participation.
  - It emphasises the use of national systems, not just national plans and expertise. It discourages stand-alone project implementation units; if national systems are not strong enough, they should be reformed and strengthened rather than bypassed.
- It requires adaptation to local conditions and starts from the specific requirements and performance expectations of the sector or organisation it supports. There are no blueprints.
  - It should link to broader reforms such as those in education, wage structures and the civil service. There is little value in designing isolated, one-off initiatives.
  - It results in unplanned consequences that must be kept in mind during the design phase. These should be valued, tracked and evaluated.
  - It measures capacity development systematically, using good-practice indicators, case evidence and analyses of quantitative and qualitative data, to ensure that objective judgements are made about capacity assets and needs, as well as the progress achieved

(UNDP, *Supporting Capacity Development: the UNDP Approach*, January 2009, page 1)



# Ways ahead ...



The paper intentionally offers few if any ready-made solutions, but has concerned itself instead with provoking a deeper reflection on concepts, approaches and methodologies. Based on such reflection, the paper envisages a practice oriented follow-up on the part of International Agencies such as CADRI, national governments, external development agencies, NGOs, academia, media & the wider cross section of society, which may include:

- Mapping of existing capacity development efforts by topic or thematic area for the purposes of documentation, consolidation and information sharing.
- Organization of forums (real or virtual) to assess and exchange pragmatic lessons on what works in different contexts and for different thematic areas.
- Tools development and adaptation guidance for conducting gender sensitive capacity assessments exercises and capacity development strategy formulation.
- Mapping at national and local levels to better understand the scale and scope of capacity resources and needs in support of national strategies and programmes.
- Intentional inclusion of capacity development into projects and action plans of all agencies working to reduce disaster risks
- Training on how to facilitate regional, national and sub-national consultative dialogue processes as a basis for developing a common vision and national strategy for disaster risk reduction and capacity development .
- Collecting, analysing and disseminating more systematic practical capacity development evidence and creating the mechanisms necessary for knowledge-sharing.

- Encouragement and promotion of an increased convergence between the disaster risk reduction and those communities working in capacity development, recognising that disaster risk reduction is an important component of any development process.
- Placing greater emphasis on the sharing of knowledge and experience and practical application between the countries of the South, lessening the previously dominant “transfer” from North to South.
- Development of guidance for knowledge enhancement and exchange design, delivery and monitoring/evaluation towards ensuring greater consistency in training and learning practices.

As a final note, the reader is invited to continue to search on the web or contact directly different organizations in order to be informed of their latest publications and experiences in relation to capacity development for disaster risk reduction. There are several networks, tools, case studies, experiences and lessons learnt on capacity development actions for disaster risk reduction that have already been implemented or developed in different countries by governments, non-governmental organizations, UN agencies and programmes, and donors. The annotated references provide some selected references, with the hope to stimulate this search.

15. Mozambique has for instance requested a Future Search meeting to bring together people to develop a road map to formulate a strategy for addressing climate change and disaster risk reduction.

# Annotated References

This is not an exhaustive list of references but some of the important resources applicable to both capacity development and disaster risk reduction.

**1. UNDP, Capacity Development Practice Note, October 2008**

This note provides a common point of reference for UNDP staff and national and international partners supporting national capacity development. It introduces key concepts underlying the UNDP approach to supporting capacity development, discusses the three levels of capacity and distinguishes between technical and functional capacities. It presents the basic principles underlying the UNDP approach and introduces the five steps of the capacity development process. It presents the four core capacity development issues that UNDP prioritises and explores some policy and programme implications for UNDP.

**2. OECD/Development Assistance Committee, The Challenge of Capacity Development: Working Towards Good Practice, 2006**

This practical document focuses on why there is a need to place an emphasis on capacity, what has been learned from past practice and how that might feed into better practice on the ground in the future. There is a section on capacity development in fragile states and the document finishes with what it terms unfinished business, particular challenges for the future.

**3. Institute of Development Studies, University of Sussex/ Capacity Collective Workshop, Capacity for a Change, January 2008**

This paper details the outcomes of a workshop held in September 2007. It aims to set out for policy makers and a

range of stakeholders across donor/practitioner/research communities a series of challenges and opportunities for support to capacity development. It pays particular attention to a systemic approach for understanding and supporting the development of capacity at three interlinked levels: the individual, the organization and in wider society. It assesses its conclusions as being of universal relevance as they indicate the need to identify and overcome the gaps in our knowledge and practice of capacity development in a range of key areas.

**4. UNDP, Capacity Assessment Practice Note, October 2008**

UNDP Capacity Assessment methodology consists of three components – the UNDP Capacity Assessment Framework, a process and supporting tools. The practice note introduces the first two components. It discusses the dimensions of the UNDP Capacity Assessment Framework and provides process guidelines for managing an assessment, from mobilising stakeholders to designing the assessment approach to conducting the assessment and analysing and interpreting its results. It also discusses how these results lead to the formulation of a capacity development response. Additional guidance on the process and supporting tools can be found in the UNDP Capacity Assessment Methodology User's Guide.

**5. High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness, Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness: Ownership, Harmonisation, Alignment, Results and Mutual Accountability, Paris. February 28 – March 2 2005**

Statement from Ministers of developed and developing countries responsible for promoting development and Heads of multilateral and bilateral development institutions on far-reaching and monitorable actions to reform the way aid is managed and delivered particularly in respect of the MDGs. The statement includes significant capacity strengthening components.

**6. Third High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness, Accra Agenda for Action, Accra, September 2-4 2008**

A follow-up to the Paris Declaration, in which Ministers of developed and developing countries responsible for promoting development and Heads of multilateral and bilateral development institutions agreed to the acceleration and deepening of the Paris Declaration.

**7. UNDP/UNISDR, Disaster Risk Reduction: Rethinking Capacity Development Action 2005-2015, Global Future Search Meeting, 13-15 February 2006, Chavannes-de-Bogis, Switzerland**

The meeting was instrumental in prompting this publication. The meeting of 86 participants from 35 countries was organised in direct support of the Hyogo

Framework for Action. The meeting was organised to create a dialogue on capacity development, to help establish a shared understanding of what capacity means and how it can be developed and to identify some very specific tools, methodologies and information resources that need to be developed or made more accessible to ensure that capacity development is an integral and cross-cutting element for disaster risk reduction. The documentation includes a report and a CD-rom.

**8. UNISDR, Words Into Action: A Guide for Implementing the Hyogo Framework, May 2007**

The guide was created to provide advice on useful strategies for implementing the HFA. It represents a distillation of the wealth of experience that exists throughout the world on how to manage and reduce disaster risks. The guide can help states to assess where they stand in the implementation process and, by building on existing experience and structures, to identify possible gaps and useful next steps to take. Some sections outline basic points and processes for disaster risk reduction, while others describe more complex tasks.

**9. UNISDR, Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015: Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters, 2007**

A summary version of the five priorities of the HFA, together with examples of action taken. More information on the HFA can be found at [www.unisdr.org/hfa](http://www.unisdr.org/hfa).

**10. Learning Network on Capacity Development (LenCD), Perspectives on Capacity Development for Accra and Beyond: Towards Concrete Action.**  
<http://sites.google.com/site/lencdorg/>

This document outlines the rationale for the action areas and the concrete steps that may be taken at the national and international levels. It is not a consensus document but a compendium of collective wisdom that may help shape the priorities for moving forward in a variety of country conditions and contexts. For more information on this and other network resources contact the website.

**11. World Bank Institute, Capacity Development Briefs.**  
<http://go.worldbank.org/N7Z62SQWMo>

The World Bank Institute (WBI) helps countries share and apply global and local knowledge to meet development challenges. WBI's capacity development programmes are designed to build skills among groups of individuals involved in performing tasks and also to strengthen the organizations in which they work and the socio-political environment in which they operate. Special attention is drawn to Issue No. 14 (December 2005), "Applying a Capacity-Results Framework in Lao PDR and Other Pilot Countries", Issue No. 19 (December 2006), "Linking

Individual, Organisational and Institutional Capacity Building to Results" and Issue No. 29 (January 2009), "Strengthening Southern Leadership Through a Capacity Development Alliance".

**12. UNISDR, Terminology on Disaster Risk Reduction, 2009**

The UNISDR Terminology aims to promote common understanding and common usage of disaster risk reduction concepts and to assist the disaster risk reduction efforts of authorities, practitioners and the public.

**13. Capacity Change and Performance: Insights and Implications for Development Cooperation, Policy Management Brie No. 21, December 2008, the European Centre for Development Policy Management (ECDPM).**



The Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA) lays out a detailed 10 year strategy to integrate disaster risk reduction into national development policies and programmes. It presents a challenge to all stakeholders to focus on developing capacity for disaster risk reduction. CADRI's creation is designed to support this integration. CADRI was formally launched by UNDP/BCPR, UN OCHA and UNISDR at the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction in June 2007.

CADRI succeeds the UN DMTP, a global learning initiative which trained UN, Government and civil society professionals between 1991 and 2006. CADRI's creation and focus builds upon the success of and lessons learned from the DMTP and reflects the significant evolution in the training and learning field since the start of DMTP, particularly in regard to advances in understanding on how to develop sustainable capacity. CADRI's design also reflects the critical role that the UN system plays at the national level in supporting government's efforts to advance disaster risk reduction. In the context of the UN's increasingly important role, CADRI provides capacity enhancement services to both the UN system at the country level and to governments. These services include learning and training services, and capacity development advisory services to support governments and ISDR system members to establish the foundation for advancing risk reduction

## CaDRI - Capacity for Disaster Reduction Initiative

International Environment House II  
7-9 Chemin de Balexert  
CH 1219 Châtelaine  
Geneva, Switzerland

Postal Address:  
UN/ISDR  
Palais des Nations  
CH-1211 Geneva 10, Switzerland

Tel: (+41) 22 917 8923  
info@cadri.org  
www.cadri.net



**CaDRI**