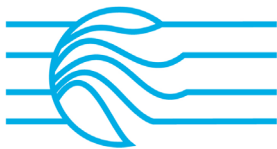




# Disaster Risk Reduction India Workshop



International Strategy for  
Disaster Reduction



Global Compact Network  
India

**HCC**





## Introduction

United Nations Office for Disaster Reduction's (UNISDR's) Global Assessment Report 2013 argues that the private sector should start protecting itself against natural disasters and also help the community around to make global economy more resilient as governments can't do it alone.

The private sector today represents 75 to 85 percent of all investments in the economy in any country in the world. Hence it is utmost important for the private sector players to protect their investments by adopting proper risk reduction mechanisms against natural hazards.

This is not a cost to companies any more but the fundamental in doing a business. Investing in disaster risk reduction (DRR) can ensure that your business survives, safeguard your long term investments, and protect your employees, families and communities.

## DRR Workshop in India

In support of UNISDR, Hindustan Construction Company Ltd (HCC) in collaboration with United Nations Global Compact Network India organized a workshop in Mumbai on disaster risk resilience on February 27, 2014 at the office premises of HCC Ltd. Representatives from UNISDR, UNDP, Private sector companies, Public Sector companies, Government, NGOs and educational institutions participated in the workshop.

## Current scenario of DRR in India

India is currently the world's second most disaster prone country with disasters ranging from floods, droughts, cyclones, earthquakes, landslides, avalanches to forest fires. Having experienced numerous disasters, India recognizes the importance of strengthening DRR efforts but considering the natural, economic and social diversity of India, as well as its large population,

creating a national capacity building programme for disaster risk in India is a huge challenge.

Towards strengthening DRR efforts, the Government of India had set up a working group in Planning Commission for mainstreaming the efforts of disaster risk reduction activities in the Twelfth Five Year Plan (2012-2017). However, these efforts urgently require higher levels of understanding, preparedness, mitigation and response mechanisms which are only possible with better coordination among government and other stakeholders.

India has been actively pursuing a paradigm shift in disaster management from a relief centric approach to a holistic approach, encompassing all facets of disaster management. However, the understanding and approach to management of disasters remain myopic and need to be broadened.

The private sector in India is usually supportive when some catastrophes occur and actively participate in humanitarian emergencies till the response phase, limiting its overall potential for effectiveness and efficiency.

As a partner in DRR, the private sector should get involved in planning as they are important actors and stakeholders as they have lot of practical assistance to offer through their knowledge, skills, project management capabilities, products and services. As of yet, only large corporations in India have Business Continuity Plans and are contributing directly in reducing disaster risk.

The participants deliberated on how their company can contribute to increase resilience of the city and how the private sector, public sector and government can collectively engage themselves in leading DRR global agenda.

### Recommendations from participants:

#### 1. Advocacy and awareness for DRR

**Mass Campaign:** The general awareness about the importance of DRR is missing in India. The government needs to formulate a task force to decide on DRR mechanisms and allocate due importance to it in their disaster management plan. The private sector today is taking many initiatives beyond the statutory compliances; however, there is no focus on DRR. It is recommended that there should be DRR campaigns all across India.

**DRR Workshop for decision makers:** The CEO's and the top management of the company need to be taken on board for formulating effective DRR plans. It is recommended that UNISDR encourage meetings /brief workshops for the CEOs and the top management level for engaging the private sector in India.

**Capacity Building:** The various business councils like Confederation of Indian Industries (CII), Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI), Bombay Chamber of Commerce and Industries (BCCI)



**Participants:** ACC Ltd, Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd, CMC Ltd, Cordaid, HCC, IBS Business School - Mumbai, Konkan Railway, Maharashtra Government, Mahindra & Mahindra, Radhee Foundation, Sahara India Ltd, Shapoorji Pallonji & Co Ltd, Siemens Ltd, Tata Consultancy Services, Tata Institute of Social Sciences, UNDP, UNISDR



etc., that can play an important role as a mediator with the government for DRR initiatives and activities. However, these industry bodies need to build capacity for the DRR agenda. It is recommended that the UNISDR facilitate capacity building for these councils to take the DRR agenda forward.

## **2. Collective efforts:**

**Common platform:** Every sector has its own strengths and weaknesses if they operate in silos. For DRR agenda implementation, it is crucial that the best of public sector, private sector, NGOs and government come together on a common platform. Such collaborative efforts can also avoid duplication of work, wastage of resources, time and energy. This also helps in sharing best practices. It is recommended that the national platform for DRR does this, with support from UNISDR.

**Sharing of data:** The government of India has the satellite images and resource mapping of the entire country. It is recommended that the government shares these valuable data with the private sector to facilitate the creation of their own Business Continuity Plans, supporting their supply chain, and supporting the community in which these businesses operate.

## **3. Policy making**

**Inclusion of Private Sector in policies making:** The private sector are key stakeholders in the society and can play an important role in DRR as they have project management capabilities, skills and knowledge ,assets, experts etc. It is recommended that the government should proactively involve private sector right from the preliminary discussion to formulation of policies and action plans.

**Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs):** The private sector is willing to support DRR but there is lack of knowledge as to how to get involved and what to offer. It is recommended that the Government of India (GOI) should formulate SOPs and guidelines for the private sector for engaging in DRR.

**Corporate governance:** To make a serious impact, DRR should be made mandatory for all the private sector players and not voluntary, so that it becomes

part of Corporate Governance activities.

**Standard Certification and Audit of DRR:** It is recommended that there should be a certification similar to ISO certification for the engagement in DRR and there should be regular internal as well as external audit of the procedures undertaken by the companies for DRR.

## **Inclusion of DRR in Company's Sustainability**

**Reporting:** There should be transparent reporting of the engagement in DRR. It was suggested that the assuring agencies like GRI should include indicators on DRR along with other indicators on social, environmental and economic factors. It is recommended that there should be a DRR index for every company and the performance should be put on the website or in the public domain, for transparency and others to follow the best practices.

## **4. Incentives:**

It is suggested that the companies abiding by the DRR agenda should get incentives in terms of rebate from the government taxes and provide subsidies for creating an enabling environment within the company, supply chains and all the stakeholders.

## **5. Educational Courses and Research on DRR:**

The participants from the educational institutions recommended that there can be specific courses designed on DRR from the institutions and to train the students and the community around on DRR. The faculty members and students can conduct the research on DRR on various stages of identifying risks, implementation and evaluation of DRR activities. They can also make policy suggestions on DRR.

## **Going Forward**

The Business for DRR workshop was the first meeting in India and we look forward to incorporating some of the recommendations in the forthcoming Asia Ministerial Conference for DRR in June 2014 in Thailand, and subsequently to the UN World Conference on DRR in March 2015 in Sendai, Japan.