

Position Paper of কৃষকের শব্দ (Farmers' Voice) on  
“Integrating local people effectively with Disaster Risk Reduction”

Strategic Dialogue on Post-2015 Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction  
10-11 February, Geneva, Switzerland

As the conventional development approach does not imply to this linking process, so redesigning the concept may start from redefining out the “Local community”. Whether it refers to organization, institute, initiatives, people, community/Somaj or self-help group. Unfortunately, vast number of such community already has been contaminated with “project greed”.

It seems so far, that the desire of connecting locals to development hierarchy is largely driven by exploiting the resources- rather than exploring the knowledge, know –how, human resources and of course the emotion. As a result, development strategy is something reluctant globally for investing on local initiatives, but forming an umbrella like structure. This concept of exploring the local’s potentiality turned into exploitation. So the hope in this process, to consider the local people as a development partner had been evaporated. However, the following proposals can be considered to integrating local people effectively with DRR:

- Dealing with local people is a delicate process of nurturing the “struggling mode” of symphonic rhythms present in it. This process deserves to be slow, steady, continuous and flexible.
- When a local people put some seeds here and there around the homestead, it might seem to be nonscientific to an agricultural expert. But the same expert must be surprised to enjoy the multi layered garden formed as the result from scattered seeds. The perceptions of a uni-sectoral expert must be synchronized with the multi sectoral local layman. This sort of adaptation initiative should be identified and recognized.
- Freeing local people from “beneficiaries only” and exploring the scopes of integrating into development hierarchy is an important issue. In this process they will be free from blame of “cause of development failure” due to non-participation or motivation.
- Economic investment on local people is always a risky business. It certainly can change instantly the “innocent” face of a local people. It is better to adopt “reward” procedure of the past activities. So that the local people will habitually re-invest a part to future endeavor. It is interesting that a single local initiative is closely linked to some other initiatives. Cumulativeness often minimizes the investment and reduces risk of total failure. By considering this, joining hands to a single ongoing initiative will rhythm up other activities. So the local people will be able to yard sticking its sustainability.
- Rights, responsibilities and capacity for eliminating “fear” of losing unique characteristics of the local initiatives largely fall into academicians and researchers first. Local people’s’ philosophy of locality development largely differs from that one of conventional development discourse. Local initiatives always explore the deeper insights, policy and emotion of the locality itself. This view is to be rationalized for eliminating disbelieve and un-trust among the policy makers, researchers, funding partners and Local people.
- It is also necessary for the local people to be respectful to the wish of “emotional attachment” with locality development from the development partners’ side. For Disaster issue, “emotion” refers to life and death of local ecology (includes human).

Finally “Hope” refers very often to its rival “frustration”. So let’s sprinkle some “wish” on the journey, where the goal is to be the “Happiness”. Development is a byproduct- less in quantity but heavy in quality.

But still then the universal question remains unanswered “Why the rural must be suffered from the allusion to be developed as urban like?”