



Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief
Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh



Workshop on Disaster Recovery Planning

CIRDAP Auditorium, Dhaka, Bangladesh

25-27 May 2015

Draft Summary

Introduction

Following the stakeholders' recognition of the need to mainstream and articulate "build back better in recovery, rehabilitation, and reconstruction" (as expressed during the Stakeholders' Consultation in December 2014), the Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief (MoDMR), the Institute of Strategic Recovery Studies for Disaster Resilience and Research (ISRSDRR), the United Nations Development Programme in Bangladesh (UNDP), and the International Recovery Platform (IRP) had jointly organized a three-day workshop on disaster recovery planning, 25-27 May 2015 at CIRDAP Auditorium, Dhaka, Bangladesh.

The event gathered over 50 high level and technical delegations from various ministries of the government, universities, development partner organizations, NGOs, and private sector to achieve the following key objectives: (i) discuss recovery agenda in Bangladesh in the context of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction; (ii) brainstorm strategies and actions on recovery that will be integrated in the existing development plans and related planning instruments; (iii) review and update the Bangladesh Disaster Recovery Action Plan; (iv) explore options for strengthening of existing policy frameworks, including amendments to the Disaster Management Act of 2012, Standing Orders on Disaster, and the National Plan for Disaster Risk Reduction; and (v) enhance linkage among government, partners, and universities in understanding disaster recovery. The event was inaugurated by Mr. Mofazzal Hossain Chowdhury Maya Bir Bikram, Minister for Disaster Management and Relief (MoDMR) of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, who expressed commitment to pursue effective disaster management programs by incorporating 'build back better'. At the closing, Mr. Hasanul Haq Inu, Minister for Information, assured the participants that build back better efforts in recovery, rehabilitation, and reconstruction will be advocated in Bangladesh through the support of the ministry and media organizations.

In addition to the group workshops (where participants deliberate on strategies and actions for recovery), each day of the three-day event was highlighted with panel discussion to reflect on key recovery issues in Bangladesh. The members of the panel were from relevant government agencies, private sector, universities, international development organizations, and NGOs. In particular, representatives from the Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief, Ministry of Planning, University of Dhaka, Bangladesh University, CARE International, Islamic Relief, UNDP, OCHA, UNOPS, Bangladesh NGOs Network for Radio and Communication (BNNRC), and Bangladesh Disaster Preparedness Centre (BDPC) served as panelists to share experience and expert opinions. In one of the panel discussions, the IRP co-chair Mr. Stefan Kohler served as panelist.

Outcomes

Recovery issues experienced in Bangladesh were identified by the participants and came up with initial listing of strategies and actions along various sectors, including infrastructure, housing, livelihoods, health and psychosocial, among others to be integrated in the proposed Pre-Disaster Recovery Plan of Bangladesh. On top of this, the event was a rare occasion to bring together a wide array of inter-ministerial delegates as well as disaster risk reduction practitioners and experts who were further oriented on the 'build back better' options in the context of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction. The presence of key ministers and their respective secretaries indicated a positive sign of putting in place policies and programs to further mainstream recovery agendas such as establishing a national recovery platform, recommending recovery responsibilities for the Inter-Ministerial Disaster Management Coordinating Council as articulated in the SOD, and endorsing the Bangladesh Disaster Recovery Action Plan.

Next Steps

On the bases of the workshop outcomes, the following next steps were identified.

Firstly, a parliamentary meeting on ‘build back better’ will be organized at the Bangladesh Parliament to discuss disaster risk reduction and recovery issues that require legal support and legislation. Under the auspices of the MoDMR and along with the Build Back Better Foundation (BBBF) of the ISRSDDRR, the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), the Islamic Relief, and IRP, the parliamentary meeting is proposed on 16 June 2015.

Secondly, the MoDMR through the support of UNDP Bangladesh will take forward the initial strategies and actions for Pre-Disaster Recovery Plan by organizing a writeshop on the first week of August 2015. The expected outcome of the writeshop is a draft Pre-Disaster Recovery Plan of Bangladesh which will be coordinated by the MoDMR. Relevant ministries, agencies, and stakeholders are expected to participate in this event.

Thirdly, through coordination between MoDMR and BBBF, the list of recovery agendas shall be advocated in existing policy and planning instruments in Bangladesh, including the Delta Plan that is facilitated by the Ministry of Planning.

Fourthly, under the auspices of MoDMR, the BBBF shall take further steps to advocate in linking up key stakeholders in Bangladesh so that the Inter-Ministerial Disaster Coordinating Council (IMDCC) is convened and recovery agenda is integrated in the plans. Among the specific recommendations is to recommend the establishment of a National Recovery Platform or the creation of a Directorate on Recovery at MoDMR.

Finally, new programs and projects to promote build back better shall be proposed by BBBF in collaboration with MoDMR and other relevant stakeholders. The initial proposals include: (i) campaign for safe schools, (ii) building critical mass of local recovery experts and volunteers, (iii) partnership between local universities and international knowledge hubs to promote recovery agenda in school curricula as well as facilitate knowledge-sharing and exchange, and (iv) partnership with media in increasing level of awareness among policymakers, practitioners, and communities.