

Planning at District and Community Levels

District disaster management plans

In each district, there is a District Disaster Management Committee (DDMC). The DDMC consists of the Deputy Commissioner (DC) of the district who acts as the chairperson and all district-level department heads, leaders of NGOs, and leaders of civil society are members. The District Relief and Rehabilitation Officer (DRRO) acts as the member secretary of the committee. Members of Parliament act as advisors to the committee. The committee is required to meet bi-monthly during normal periods and as and when necessary during emergencies.

There is a provision in the SOD for the DDMC to develop a District Disaster Management Plan to cover both disaster risk reduction and emergency response. This plan is to be prepared by compiling the 'upazilla' (sub district) and 'pourashava' (city corporation) disaster management plans received from the respective 'upazilla' and 'pourashava'/city corporation DMCs. In 2002, the Disaster Management Bureau developed 29 district disaster action plans from inputs from 64 districts, and these served as material for preparedness plans for the DDMC. The DDMC is developing prototype plans by distilling plans from 64 districts into 29 plans and then finding the common denominators. These are being tested in seven prototypes which will eventually be merged into one comprehensive plan.

'Upazilla' disaster management plans

The 'upazilla' is an important and vital administrative unit in Bangladesh. There is an 'Upazilla' Disaster Management Committee (UZDMC). The UZDMC consists of the 'Upazilla Nirbahi' officer as chairperson and its membership is composed of 'upazilla' department heads, NGO leaders, and representatives from civil society. The project implementation officer (PIO) acts as the member secretary of the committee. Members of Parliament act as advisors, and each committee is required to meet bi-monthly during normal periods and as and when necessary during emergency situations.

The SOD states that each 'upazilla' shall develop a plan entitled the 'Upazilla' Disaster Management Plan' covering both disaster risk reduction and emergency response. This is to be prepared by the committee by compiling all the union disaster management plans received by the 'upazilla' from the respective union DMCs in its area. The Disaster Management Bureau developed 74 'upazilla' disaster action plans out of 501 'upazilla' with the financial assistance of the UNDP. Other than the DMB, CARE, Concern, World Vision, and Oxfam have developed 'upazilla' disaster management plans. However, these plans are neither well circulated among the members of the DMC nor are they kept in the institutional memory of the DMC. At present, the MoFDM, under the CDMP is developing 57 'upazilla' disaster management plans that include risk reduction and emergency response aspects also. These plans will be available in June 2007.

'Pourashava' (city corporation) disaster management plans

The 'pourashava' is at the bottom of the urban administrative tier. However, there is a Disaster Management Committee at this level. The 'pourashava' chairman is the head of the committee. The members of the committee are 'pourashava' commissioners as well as representatives from all government departments, NGOs, and community-based organisations (CBOs). The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the 'pourashava' is the member secretary of the committee. The committee is required to meet monthly during normal periods and as and when necessary during emergencies. Metropolitan cities in Bangladesh have city corporation DMCs with the Mayor as the chairman; and its membership is similar to that of the 'pourashava' committees. According to the SOD, there will be a plan for each 'pourashava' entitled 'Pourashava' and City Corporation Disaster Management Plan prepared by the relevant departments and these plans will have linkages to the National Plan for Disaster Management. In 2002, the DMB developed 24 'Pourashava' Disaster Action Plans out of an original 308, and these are predominantly preparedness plans. At present, the CDMP is developing disaster management plans for 19 'pourashava' and one city. However, to date there is no disaster management plan for a city.

Union disaster management plans

The union parishad is the lowest administrative unit, but there is a disaster management committee at union level, the Union Disaster Management Committee (UDMC). The UDMC is chaired by the elected chairman of the respective union parishad. The UDMC consists of the union parishad chairman as chairperson and its members are government department heads at the union level, members of the union parishad, NGO leaders working in respective unions, and civil society members. The secretary of each union parishad acts as the member secretary of the committee. The committee is required to meet bi-monthly during normal periods and as and when necessary during emergencies.

As per the SOD, there will be a plan for each union entitled the Union Disaster Management Plan covering both disaster risk reduction and emergency response. This is to be prepared by the UDMC with the participation of vulnerable groups and communities following proper community risk assessment procedures to be provided by the MoFDM. In 2002, DMB developed 744 union disaster action plans or union preparedness plans out of 4,489 received, and these remained unused for a long time. Other than the DMB, World Vision, CARE, Oxfam, and Concern developed union-level preparedness plans. However, none of these plans received the necessary funding for their implementation. The CDMP is currently reviewing these plans and carrying out risk assessment in 525 unions in order to develop a more comprehensive disaster management plan, followed by small grants to implement the plan and to facilitate mainstreaming of the plans into the core business of development agencies.

Disaster preparedness plans at community level

There is little evidence of the existence of specific community-level (fishermen, farmers, and so on) preparedness plans. In some areas, Action Aid and Oxfam have developed community-based preparedness plans. South Asian partnerships, such as the Coastal Association for Social Transformation Trust (COAST) and Community Development Centre (CODEC), have some fishermen-specific preparedness programmes. The Cyclone Preparedness Programme (CPP) sometimes assists coastal communities in developing preparedness plans for small communities (for example the Rakhain community in Patuakhali).

