

Regional Strategy Paper: Barguna

DHAKA AHSANIA MISSION

Barguna region is comprised of four major districts including Barisal, Patuakhali, Barguna and Bhola. The region has certain geographical variations. It has forest on one side and swamp land on the other side. The region is a rich reservoir of fishes. It has fishing centres, dried fish villages, river way communication system and newly emerged landmasses. It is surrounded by rivers and rivulets. The region also has Rakahing villages. The major economic activities of the region are agriculture, fishing, fish business and fish farming. Muslims, Hindus, Buddhists, Christians and Rakhaing live in the region fairly peacefully for years. The major agricultural products of the region include paddy and vegetables.



However, Barguna region is a disaster prone coastal area. Its economic activities are based on sea and river resources/ fishing. *Kuakata* sea beach has not only been a tourist spot also a source for income and local employment generation. *Char Kukrimukri* and other char areas are have equal potentials and opportunities.

Objectives of the plan:

- ❖ To align regional strategic directions with DAM priorities.
- ❖ To guide and outlining strategic direction for designing and implementing regional development plan.
- ❖ To facilitate a cohesive well coordinated programmatic framework incorporating all stakeholders.

Strategic targets (to be achieved by 2015):

- Almost 50 % of intervention areas will have local level planning for own development.
- In almost 80% intervention areas there will be a strong evidence of implementing the interventions of which DAM has excellence.

Prevailing problems & challenges:

Barguna region struggles with different problems as well as challenges. Obviously it is recurrent natural disaster followed by the climate change which outpaces its development. Some of the major challenges that the region is grappling with are the natural calamities (cyclone, tidal bore and river erosion), increased salinity, scarcity of safe water, dependency on relief, overlapped development activities, poor road communication infrastructure, environmental refugee issues and abduction of fishermen for ransom and so on.

To what extent existing programs address coastal people's needs?

Coastal people's foremost need is to secure safety of lives from the vagaries of natural calamities and stable livelihood apart from other needs. Dhaka Ahsania Mission has quite a good number and type of interventions in Barguna region. It has a large stake in education sector with almost every type of education ranging from children education to adolescent and adult education. Also DAM has activities for early learning and early childhood development with a focus of pre-primary education.

Development interventions like life-skills development, disaster risk reduction, micro-finance, Disaster friendly sanitation, WatSan, Human rights and social justice particularly for women and girl- child are major thrust in this region.

A number of DAM led community organizations has been instrumental in this region. These include Ganokendra, CLC, CRC, LRC and MCRC. DAM has earned wider acceptance and access to this community at grassroots level. Relation and networking with local government and non-government agencies are also worth-mentioning.

Regional Excellence: DRR

The context of Barguna region suggests that disasters are the major issues which affect their lives and livelihood to a great extent. **The National Policy on Disaster Management 2010** emphasizes that:

1. *Disaster management would involve the management of both risks and consequences of disasters that would include prevention emergency response and post-disaster recovery.*

2. *Community involvement for preparedness programmes for protecting lives and properties would be a major focus. Involvement of local government bodies would be an essential part of the strategy. Self-reliance should be the key for preparedness, response and recovery.*
3. *Non-structural mitigation measures such as community disaster preparedness training advocacy and public awareness must be given a high priority; this would require an integration of structural mitigation with non-structural measures.*

DAM has substantially complied with the national policy. Since 2006, DAM interventions for disaster risk reduction have been receiving enormous support from the community. As part of the intervention, DAM undertakes the activities like: community based DRR, Strengthening disaster management committees and organizing different meetings and awareness programs, orienting the stakeholders on Disaster management as well as relief and rehabilitation activities along with establishing the MCRCs.

As a result, local community has now been more aware of disaster and weather, coastal based people have formed their Disaster contingency plan and salinity resilient cultivation. The government has also taken up different programs in this region.

What can be done to make the existing programs contextually appropriate?

- Since DRR is a major focus in this region, all existing and new programs to be taken in this region covering all four target districts should consider the DRR issues as a cross cutting issue.
- During any planning for the coastal people, the nature of vulnerabilities needs to be given highest consideration.
- Local level need assessment and planning are must to design any intervention for this region.
- Since disaster and natural calamities have a major impact on the lives of coastal people each intervention taken by DAM in this region should have a DRR component as well as pre-disaster disaster management.
- In schools and education centers, children and parents can be taught Interventions like safe water and sanitation can also be a focused area to work on.
- Understandably, programs on education in emergencies will have further impetus.

What are new initiatives can be taken in the context of missing opportunities?

There are some missing opportunities out there. Such missed opportunities include char development, livelihood development of the people living on dam and embankment and eco-tourism in long term perspective, but DAM may immediately undertake the following interventions:

- **Development of Rakhaing and fisher community:** Micro-financing, NFE for children and awareness on rights and social justice; supplying fishing net-boat;
- **Initiatives for hardcore poor people living in Ashrayan/Abashan:** establishment of day-care center, pre-school for 5+ children; life-skills and vocational training and micro-credit support;

- **Ganokendra, CRC and LRC based Adolescent development program:** Education, Life skills support, post literacy and continuing education;
- **Safe water provisioning:** Through rain water harvesting, Pond-sand filter establishment and so on, safe water can be provided to local community.

Stakeholders:

Local community particularly fisher community; Different Committees at local level; Local government and district and upazila administration; Civil society groups/ Local youth/socio cultural organizations/CBOs; Political leaders; CSR bearers; Local chambers and business community;

Integration and Coordination:

DAM and its respective projects/programs may take initiative through the on-going mechanism of Coordination among different projects in DAM working areas. All DAM offices from head office to branch offices at remote areas may undertake initiatives using this mechanism of coordination to identify the needs of local community and tap the resources for implanting the development agenda.

Respective Central focal person from DAM may coordinate with all Central Focal Persons and Regional Focal Persons to lead, coordinate and carry out this movement at local level once the issue/regional action plan is decided.

Resources to implement the plan:

Although it is the respective community who will be responsible for materializing regional plan, there are other sources through which resources can be explored: These are: (a) From DAM's existing project/program, (b) from community/stakeholders DAM works and (c) From the core fund of the organization (DAM/partner organizations/forums).

Review process:

This document can be changed, revised, re-strategized from time to time according to changed situation and needs.

PREPARED BY BARGUNA REGION APRIL 2012

Dhaka Ahsania Mission

Barguna Region

3rd version (17 February 2013)

Thematic Paper on Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR)

Conceptual Clarity on DRR:

Disaster risk reduction (DRR) is a systematic approach to identifying, assessing and reducing the risks of disaster. It aims to reduce socio-economic vulnerabilities to disaster as well as dealing with the environmental and other hazards that trigger them. There are potentials for DRR initiatives in just about every sector of development and humanitarian work.

It is unrealistic to expect progress in every aspect of DRR capacities and resources are insufficient. Governments and other organizations have to make what are in effect 'investment decisions', choosing which aspects of DRR to invest in, when, and in what sequence. This is made more complicated by the fact that many of the interventions advocated are developmental rather than directly related to disaster management. Most existing DRR guidance sidesteps this issue. One way of focusing is to consider only actions that are intended specifically to reduce disaster risk. This would at least distinguish from more general efforts toward sustainable development. The concept of 'invulnerable development' attempts. In this formulation, invulnerable development is development directed toward reducing vulnerability to disaster, comprising 'decisions and activities that are intentionally designed and implemented to reduce risk and susceptibility, and also raise resistance and resilience to disaster'.

The DRR approach requires redefining the role of government disaster reduction. It is generally agreed that national governments should be main actors in DRR: They have a duty to ensure the safety of citizens, the resources and capacity to implement large-scale DRR, a mandate to direct or co-ordinate the work of others, and they create the necessary policy and legislative frameworks. These policies and programs have to be coherent. More research is needed into why some governments are more successful than others in disaster management.

Country Context:

Bangladesh has a unique geographical location in South Asia and it is geologically a part of the Bengal Basin, one of the largest geo-synclinals in the world. As with floods; cyclones, storm surges, Bangladesh is also vulnerable to

tornadoes and drought. The Himalayas, the Assam, and the Burmese mountain ranges in the north and the northeast and the Bay of Bengal in the south influence its tropical monsoon climate. The strong monsoon rains; coupled with Bangladesh's location in the delta of the world's second largest river basin, make it extremely exposed and vulnerable to recurring floods. The delta is very active because of the process of its alluvial deposits, behavior of the river system and the tectonic movements. In its unique location, the delta is at the lower part of the basins of three mighty rivers, the Padma (known as the Ganges in India), the Brahmaputra and the Meghna. These mighty rivers converge and meet at a place within the country prior to their discharge into the Bay of Bengal. The country is characterized by the flat terrain of alluvial soil crisscrossed with an intricate system of over 230 rivers, canals and streams.

Each year Bangladesh experiences more than six seasonal depressions having potential for cyclone and storm surge (in 2007-9 we have witnessed already four including Sidr, Reshmi, Bijlee and Aila cyclone, two of whom hitting the land). Country's approximately 710 kilometers of coastline leave huge tracts of land open to the destructive effects of cyclones and storm surges. Because of such location, Bangladesh is one of the most highly disaster prone countries of the world. These disasters, as happened in the past, continue to impact seriously on the society in terms of grievous human casualties, economic and social losses, disruption of livelihoods and degradation to environment.

In such a disaster-focus situation, those living near the poverty line are often slipped below it; similarly, the landless and near landless are found forced to sell their limited assets for survival needs, thereby rendering themselves to rootless pauper. Those who depend upon wage labor for subsistence are also compelled to compete with those entering the labor market. The labor market, in turn, becomes further depressed by the loss of harvest and alternative sources of employment.

Regional Context & Relevancy of DRR:

Barguna region is recognized as a region at high risk for its geophysical location, very close to sea of coastal region, land characteristics, multiplicity of rivers and monsoon climate. More intense cyclones, storm surge, river bank erosion significantly disrupt Barguna's economy and the lives and livelihoods of its population. Every year a huge number of people become worst situation recurring natural hazards. Barguna region could expect and that a rise in sea levels could have a significant impact on the lives and livelihoods of up to 5 million people.

DRR approaches looked at disasters as exceptional events, not related to the ongoing social and developmental processes. In this context it is appropriate to

briefly trace the paradigm shift that has occurred in disaster management theory and practice over the last several years in the Barguna region. Gradually this attitude changed to an emphasis on preparedness measures, such as stockpiling of relief goods, preparedness plans.

Till a few decades ago, disasters were viewed as one-off events and responded to by governments and relief agencies without taking into account the social and economic implications and causes of DRR. With significant advancement in our understanding of the natural processes that underlie the hazardous events, a more technocratic paradigm came into existence that believed that the “only way to deal with disasters was by public policy application of geophysical and engineering knowledge”. These approaches looked at disasters as exceptional events, not related to the ongoing social and developmental processes.

This reform is based around a paradigm shift that will see risk reduction move from conventional response and relief to a more comprehensive risk reduction culture. The overall objective of this theme paper is to reduce the vulnerability of people, especially the poor, to the effects of natural, environmental and human induced hazards to a manageable and acceptable humanitarian level.

Disaster’s impacts and implications:

While it is clear that the poor are often the most affected in a disaster, it is perhaps too simplistic to assume that there is a direct and absolute correlation between vulnerability and poverty. Poverty, as an indicator of lack of access to resources and income opportunities, is one of the several dimensions of vulnerability. In addition to the economic dimension, there are also other aspects of social positioning such as geographical location, age, gender, class, ethnicity, community structure, community decision making processes, and political issues that determine poor people’s vulnerability. Secondly though poor communities are economically vulnerable, they very often have social, cultural, and political capacities to cope with disasters, which are the greatest assets in disaster management.

Risk reduction strategies for the poor should work toward reducing economic vulnerability and at the same time capitalize on the inherent social and cultural capacities of the poor communities. The existing local level mechanisms for managing risk should be identified and strengthened. Risk reduction is not a stand-alone DRR theme but needs to be consciously integrated into our planning and implementation of development. It is both tragic and futile to see the benefit of years or decades of development investment washed away in a cyclone or flood, when marginal additional investment in incorporating hazard resistance could have protected these assets. Recognition of the proneness to natural

hazards of each geographical location and the use of available hazard maps to assess risks needs to become an integral part of each project appraisal by development agencies. Thus disaster risk assessment should be part of the project appraisal process just as environmental impact assessment is; and construction adhering to higher hazard resistance standards becomes mandatory for hazard-prone locations. It is becoming clear that the nature of the vulnerability of the poor is complex and varied. Hence there are no straightforward solutions for risk reduction for the poor. It will require multidimensional approaches and innovative institutional arrangements to achieve the goal of risk reduction for the poor. Nonetheless, the overall objective of risk reduction for the poor should be to make development sustainable for them. It could be emphasize that communities alone cannot implement community-based disaster management. It will take concerted efforts at different levels and across different sectors to improve our understanding of the linkages between poverty and vulnerability and to devise effective mechanisms for risk reduction for the poor.

Way out to reduce vulnerabilities/ Strategy to implementation:

Capacity is the combination of all the strengths and resources available within a community that can reduce the level of risk or the effects of a disaster and coping is the manner in which people use their existing resources in the adverse conditions of a disaster or risk.

Resilience describes the capacity to survive, adapt and bounce back from disaster situation. The emphasis on identifying and building strengths and capacities represents a paradigm shift in approaching risk. The resilience of poor communities depends as much on invisible social capacities such as their ability to organize themselves, make decisions and solve conflicts as on material or technical assets. The most resilient communities are those, which work together towards a common aim. Even if natural hazards do extract a disproportionate toll from the poor, this does not mean that they constitute the greatest threat to poor communities. When risk mapping and capacity-vulnerability analyses are conducted within the safety of established relationships, poor communities rarely identify sudden impact “natural disasters” as their greatest concern, and more often priorities risks associated with the uncertainties of daily life. Hazards commonly identified by poor communities include: food, employment and housing insecurity; disease; inability to access or afford health care, education, legal and financial services; social and economic; exclusion from decision-making processes and political representation; corruption; and conflict. With such diverse risks to manage, investing in typical disaster preparedness projects may reduce a community’s capacity to deal with more dangerous hazards and so decrease its vulnerability overall.

-----/-----

Dhaka Ahsania Mission

Barguna Region

Subject: Implementation plan of Barguna region for 2013.

Date: 10 February 2013

Micro level:

Sl.	Activities	Location	Time/Month										Responsibilities	Support required	Monitoring mechanism
			Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec			
1	Staff training on DRR (Up to union/supervisor level)	Barguna Sador, Mirzagonj, Charfasion, Barisal sador, Boharuddin, Patharghata		Bar			Mir, C.F		Bari sal				Barguna- FC, ACCESS Mirzagonj- UPC, WD Charfashio- AC, EWSDRR Barisal- PC, SFP	DMU	Review the progress report by all concerned
2	Awareness session on DRR issue at CLC/ MF Group/ Ganokendra/ CRC /LRC/MCRC	All working Upazills	C	O	N	T	I	N	U	O	U	S	All Upazilla focal person	DMU & TMD for IEC materials	
3	Mobilize DRR fund at Ganokendra/ MCRC level	Barguna Sador, Amtoli											FC-ACCESS	MFP for involvement of MF group	
4	To prepare a area level DRR contingency plan	All working Upazilas											All Upazilla focal person	RFP & CFP	
5	To prepare hazards map at Upazel level	Barguna Sador, Amtoli, Mirjagonj, Char Fashion, Tozumuddin &											Barguna & Amtol- FC, ACCESS Mirzagonj- UPC, WD Charfashio- AC, EWSDRR Patharghata- AM,	DMU, RFP & CFP	

		Patharghata											UNIQUE		
6	To conduct CRA (Community Risk Assessment)	Bar Sador, Amtoli, Mirjagonj, CF, Bhola, Patharghata				Bar, Amt	Mir, Bho	Patg.					Bar & Amt- FC, ACCESS Mirjagonj- UPC, WD Bhola- AM, UNIQUE Patharghata- UC, WD	DMU, RFP & CFP	
7	To arrange mock drill & simulation	Barguna Sador, Hijla, Amtoli, Mirjagonj, Bhola Sador					Bar, Amt, Mir,	Hij, Patg					Barguna & Amt- FC, ACCESS Mirjagonj- UPC, WD Hijla- PC, SFP Patharghata- AM, UNIQUE	RFP	
8	Advocacy workshop at divisional level on DRR	Barguna or Barisal											RFP	CFP& DMU	
9	To organize local level mitigation works at school, CLC, MCRC	Barguna, Barisal Sador, Hijla, Bhola Sador, Amtoli, Patharghat			Patg	Hij, Amt	Bar, Bho						Barguna & Amtoli- FC, ACCESS Char F- AC, EWSDRR Hijla- PC, SFP Patharghata- AM, UNIQUE	All area focal person and concern project personnel	
10	Day observation (DRR)	All working Upazila								10 Oct			All Focal, RFP,CFP	DMU, All area focal person and concern project personnel	
11	Formation DRR volunteer group at CLC/Ganokendra/ CRC/LRC level	CLC/Ganokendra/ CRC/LRC level of DAM, Barguna											AM-UNIQUE FC-ACCESS	RFP RM-UNIQUE CFP	
12	Provide training to volunteer on DRR	CLC/Ganokendra/ CRC/LRC level of DAM, Barguna											AM-UNIQUE FC-ACCESS	RFP RM-UNIQUE DMU, CFP	

Macro level:

11	Review DRR strategy paper	Dhaka HQ											Coordinator, DMU	All relevant stakes
12	To update contingency plan	Dhaka HQ											Coordinator, DMU	All relevant stakes
13	To prepare regional level contingency plan	Barguna region											RFP & CFP	All concern PC/PM & DMU
14	Develop & print leaflet, poster	Dhaka HQ for all working area in Barguna											PC-EWSDRR PC- WD & CFP	DMU
15	Advocacy workshop at national level on DRR	Dhaka HO											CFP	DMU, Sector Focals

Prepared by: Regional Team

Coordinated by: CFP & RFP

Date: 17 February