Towards Mitigating Loss Caused by Megadisasters

Risk reduction based on prevention, preparedness & cooperation: Experiences from the Netherlands

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Megadisasters:

Natural hazards PLUS

• Population growth
• Urbanisation
• Climate change,
• Inadequate land & water management
Prevention pays, but is only part of the chain

- Prevention
- Preparedness
- Respons
- Recovery
- Reconstruction
- Rehabilitation
Zero Risk doesn’t exist

Southeast Asia Tsunami 2004
Hurricane Katrina  2005
Hurricane Sandy 2012
Typhoon Haiyan 2013
Tohoku Tsunami 2011
The Netherland’s new adaptive water policy

Wake up call Katrina
Delta Act
Delta Program
Delta Fund
Delta Decisions
3 layer approach

Prevention (dams, dikes)

Living with water (resilience, spatial planning)

What if it happens (early warning, evacuation, build back better)
Dutch activities abroad:

**Multilateral, bilateral cooperation**

**Dutch Surge Support Facility (DSS):**
Helps international humanitarian organizations in technical assistance by offering expertise in the area of (urban) water supply and sanitation and water management.

**The Dutch Risk Reduction Team (DRR Team):**
Unlocks Dutch water and delta expertise to foreign governments in need of preventing a water related disaster or countries who suffered already from one and are interested in long term approaches to prevent such disasters from happening again.

**Delta Coalition**
6 Important lessons

The Netherlands
+ High Level Expert and Leaders Panel for Water and Disaster
Climate shifts and other global changes are already impacting water-related disasters.

Be prepared for more extreme events and even higher impacts of disasters.

Even the most developed countries are vulnerable to water-related hazards.

Population growth, poverty, land shortages, urbanization, poor maintenance of drainage infrastructure increase vulnerability flood hazards and droughts.

Message 1
Disaster Risk Reduction, Water Resources Management and Climate Adaptation should no longer be treated as separate topics

• The divisions between climate adaptation, water resources management, and disaster response seem potentially dangerous, exacerbating risks to communities, economies, and the environment

• An integrated approach increases synergetic effects, leads to more effective solutions and gives a more solid base for financing

• Message 2
Use new data and tools; optimize risk awareness and emergency planning

- **Vulnerability analysis is an essential tool in water-related disaster management**
- **Improve quantity and quality of data, including public health effects and secondary economic consequences**
- **Greater consistency in reporting + documenting of water-related disasters, and better understanding of impacts are crucial to establish baselines, set priorities, track trends and assess the effectiveness (costs and benefits) of any proposed response.**

Message 3
Risk reduction, preparation and prevention pay off in terms of reduced loss of life, avoided damage, and long-term economic growth and stability

• Shift Disaster Management from Reaction to Prevention
• Developing measures to prevent disasters from happening or measures to increase the resilience
Integrate risk prevention & long-term planning; create opportunities for synergies with planned investments, incl. plans for adaptation to climate change.

• Change focus from “mitigating the impacts” of disasters to
  – a broader focus on prevention, mitigation, preparedness, and vulnerability reduction,
  – the recognition that disaster risk management is surrounded by many uncertainties and should therefore be an iterative or continuous, on-going effort requiring experimentation and learning
  – an integration and mainstreaming into sustainable development policies, planning and programming at all levels
• Use preventive action is an opportunity for (economic) development
Uncertainties are no excuse for inaction: be flexible and adaptive

- Look forward, be flexible, adapt measures and implementation to actual developments
- Short term actions should be linked to long term goals,
- Try to inter-link different investment agendas
- Use the post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction to develop a framework that builds on preventive action and that promotes flexible implementation of measures.

• Message 6
Conclusion

• stay alert, look forward, be prepared
• Look at the whole risk chain
• cooperate, use experiences from other countries
• exchange of basic information on policies, strategies
• create clever coalitions for bilateral / regional / multilateral cooperation?
• Build back better.
• Invest in resiliency, accent on cities