

VIII. CONCLUSIONS

As a provider of technical assistance, UNDP plays a key role in helping governments to develop the capacity to respond to disasters and to integrate disaster countermeasures into their national plans. UNDP can help by providing experts, training and financial assistance to support institution-building within the government.

To assist governments to integrate disaster concerns into development planning, there are a variety of measures that UNDP can carry out, many of which have already been identified. Ideally, these measures should take place within the context of the country programme framework. As a prerequisite, therefore, UNDP must actively see that the procedures for programme and project preparation and review, outlined in the UNDP/UNDRO manual on disasters, are implemented as rapidly as possible in disaster-prone countries, through the training programme already envisioned and additional orientation of representatives, country-level staff and officials from counterpart agencies.

In all its interactions with government, UNDP needs to look for opportunities to stress the economic benefits of mitigation. For example, within the country programming process and when projects are reviewed, UNDP should document the costs of building in mitigation measures compared with the costs to the government if it does not do so.

UNDP needs to provide technical assistance and limited funding for developing national mitigation strategies, so that any projects or activities it supports can be carried out within the guidelines that a policy document would provide. In order to develop a policy, UNDP can also provide governments with technical assistance to develop information bases on vulnerability and projects in disaster-prone areas, and systems for collecting and distributing relevant information to concerned institutions. UNDP should also provide resources for carrying out inventories of existing institutions, including local agencies and major NGOs, that presently have disaster-related mandates, to identify gaps and overlaps, which agencies to strengthen, and the specific needs of those that could play a greater role in the field. Once these needs are identified, UNDP should help governments to find resources to meet these needs, by budgeting for them in the country programmes, or by using one of the alternative sources suggested in Section VI.B. of this document.

UNDP should not encourage the development of specialised mitigation agencies until a national policy exists and both the need for such an agency and its future role are clarified. It should instead focus on strengthening line ministries and local bodies which presently have responsibilities or interest in this field, through the provision of training, technical assistance and other financial inputs. In the short term, the mechanism for such strengthening will probably have to be through new stand-alone demonstration projects or by making small adjustments to existing projects, until a new Country Programme is developed or until the government develops a comprehensive strategy.

An appropriate short-term requirement which could be met by UNDP with existing resources in most disaster-prone countries would be the funding of studies designed to fill gaps in the information base. Especially useful would be research that emphasised aspects of

traditional mitigation strategies and local initiatives -- areas which are often overlooked -- and the examination of various methods for calculating the costs and benefits of mitigation alternatives.

In order to ensure the institutionalisation of the knowledge base in this field, UNDP should support the incorporation of risk assessment and hazard and vulnerability analysis into long-term training of future planners and technicians in international agencies, NGOs, national universities and training institutes. One way it could do this would be to work with Ministries of Education or similar agencies to identify the national institutions where most planners and technicians currently study, and support the incorporation of such measures into their curricula.

UNDP also needs to develop reserve funding mechanisms for assisting governments in implementing off-the-shelf early disaster-containment measures for use when long-term mitigation strategies fail, such as the famine prevention measures for which India is well-known. It should also encourage governments to develop their own reserve for this purpose.

In large, highly disaster-prone countries, UNDP should designate one of its Deputy Resident Representatives to oversee mitigation concerns. Designation of such a person, in addition to the disaster focal point, is based on the same logic as that for taking mitigation out of the context of relief in government institutions. The disaster focal point usually has sectoral duties within the UNDP office, and is more concerned with activities that take place just prior to or immediately following a disaster; the focal point is also less likely to be involved in high-level discussions during the country programming process than a Deputy. Assignment of mitigation concerns to a Deputy Resrep will also serve to sensitise future representatives for this field, and serve to institutionalise the consideration of these measures within the organisation.

HYPOTHETICAL CASE STUDY 4 - ENVIRONMENTAL DEGRADATION IN LATIN AMERICA

Country D is a middle-income nation in Latin America. Its recent economic achievements have been accomplished in part through a disregard for the environment. Population pressures on ecologically-vulnerable lands in the eastern part of the country mean that development targets for that area, set in the last national plan and in the current UNDP country programme, are not being met. The mid-term review of the programme revealed that previous agriculture and animal husbandry projects supported by UNDP and major donors did not take into account how delicate the balance between land and population (both human and animal) was, and thus have accelerated the process of environmental degradation.

This situation came about because the projects were seen as sectoral, and were reviewed only within the context of increasing agricultural production. In part, this was due to a lack of information exchange between different government sectors. Thus, the government official in charge of natural resources, who had some information about the environmental problems in the area, was unaware of the development of these projects, and the limited information he had was not passed on to the official who worked with donors on drawing up and implementing the projects. The Natural Resources Ministry is fairly new, and does not have much stature. Ministries and donors would not think it appropriate to submit projects of this nature, although related to disaster issues, to the National Defence Committee, which has responsibility for emergencies. Within the Planning Ministry, which is well-respected and on a level with the other line ministries, there is a project review unit. Normally, this unit reviews projects primarily to see whether they are within the scope of the national development plan and whether there is sufficient budget to pay for them, and/or counterpart funds to support donor inputs. However, within this unit there is no one with particular expertise on environmental issues, or with the mandate to look at projects in this context.

In a situation similar to this, UNDP, as part of the mid-term review recommendations, suggested to the government that all projects in ecologically-delicate regions have an extra step built into the normal review process. The problem was to identify where this additional step should take place, and what the nature of it should be. UNDP provided technical assistance in identifying the criteria for environmental review, the kind(s) of expertise required, and the place within government where the review should most logically occur. Once this information was determined, UNDP encouraged the government to make any necessary personnel changes, such as secondment of a technical person to the planning ministry, and assisted this process through small inputs, such as office equipment.

UNDP showed its support for the new office by ensuring that all projects in which it was involved in areas designated as environmentally-vulnerable were reviewed by this office, and by agreeing to modify them if necessary. UNDP used its coordination role to help explain to other donors the need for this process and to encourage them to support it. UNDP also provided technical assistance and/or funding for background studies and vulnerability mapping of the area to give the office further information on which to act, and to justify its decisions to the various sectors which submit projects to it.

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ANNEX 1: TERMS OF REFERENCE OF STUDY

STUDY DESIGN

DISASTER AND DEVELOPMENT A STUDY IN INSTITUTION-BUILDING

A. BACKGROUND

In recent years, the world public has become increasingly alarmed by natural disasters such as earthquakes, floods, highwinds, volcanic eruptions, prolonged drought, and the like, mostly as a result of media coverage and faster communication. The response of many countries has been focused primarily on relief actions. The necessity of including disaster-related considerations in development planning and implementation becomes increasingly recognized at national level. Accordingly, the need for formulating development policies which are more responsive to disaster prevention and mitigation is gaining recognition in many disaster-prone countries. In such countries the need for inclusion of disaster prevention considerations in national planning and resource management is required.

UNDP has long been involved in relief type of activities. Under the provisions of the 1983 guidelines for disaster relief, rehabilitation, prevention and mitigation, UNDP has assisted governments in addressing the effects of disaster. UNDP has generally done so by helping in time of emergency, providing its experience as well as that from the UN system at large to alleviate human suffering.

In 1988, the recommendations of a joint UNDP/UNDRO Taskforce report on improved co-operation between the two organizations were endorsed by the General Assembly. In these recommendations, UNDP was urged to include more systematically disaster management and disaster mitigation activities within its programme and project cycle.

A conceptual thread running through the report was that preparedness and management measures for many types of disaster are better undertaken as part of the general development process.

In 1989, the Central Evaluation Office of UNDP undertook an evaluation of the process of co-operation between UNDP and UNDRO. The evaluation, which was based upon an examination of disaster-related preparedness and response activities in five countries, focused heavily upon disaster preparedness and disaster relief activities, and less upon longer-term responses.

While the evaluation endorsed the conceptual approach of linking disaster-related activities to the ongoing development process, it did not specifically address the options for government in constructing these links, conceptually

and institutionally. This applies particularly to long term "creeping" or "endemic" disasters whose impact is national and which can last for years at a time.

B. THE STUDY

1. Purpose

UNDP, to help in the process of developing the integration of disasters and its effects within its development strategy, is undertaking a study to learn from the experience shared by selected disaster-prone countries faced by prolonged, "creeping" disasters and, in turn, assist other governments in promoting national development strategies to mitigate the adverse effects of natural hazards.

The study's objective is a set of findings and lessons on the manner in which governments of such countries are addressing the effects of such disasters and, conversely, recommendations for UNDP, through its programme and projects interventions, on how best it could cooperate with governments to mitigate the effects of the disasters they are suffering from.

To achieve that dual objective, the following activities are contemplated:

1. review documentation dealing with disasters and the national development planning process. Sources for such documentation will include selected governments, the UN system, other donors and academic and research institutions;
2. review current approaches and practices for promoting disaster mitigation in the context of development planning management;
3. investigate the ways in which development planning can contribute to disaster prevention and mitigation;
4. delineate the policy issues, as well as prospective strategies, for creating communities which are more resilient to disasters;
5. analyze the institutional issues as they relate to the overall disaster management process;
6. discuss future alternative approaches to development planning that will incorporate the need for comprehensive national resource management and disaster prevention.

The study will focus on creeping or endemic natural disasters which impact upon the entire development process in the affected country and for which the response has to be drawn from substantial parts of the national development infrastructure.

2. Scope and Analytical Framework

National development plans will be examined, together with the methodologies employed to link disaster planning and response mechanisms and needs to "mainstream" development efforts. Institutional links between national planning bodies, dedicated disaster institutions, line ministries, NGOs and the private sector will be reviewed. Appropriate projects, whenever existing, will be examined. Reports relevant to the subject matter, particularly evaluations by UNDP, other agencies and governments, will be consulted where appropriate and considered useful and practical.

The study will take into account the experience other organizations and institutions share in this field.

The study will investigate how, in some selected countries, governments are tackling the issues raised by creeping disasters.

Ultimately, the study should recommend a course of action for UNDP to assist disaster-prone countries in dealing with the effects of such disasters in a non-structural, institutional manner. It is expected that some priorities for future technical co-operation will emerge that will guide UNDP in developing specific methodologies for integrating disaster preparedness and response within development planning and implementation.

3. Guidelines on basic issues to be investigated

The following should be considered as guidelines which will be considered by the study both in the course of the desk study and the field missions.

Basic Issues

a. The role of national policies

To what extent have disasters contributed to promoting establishment of national policies to prepare for the effects of such disasters?;

Have existing national policies significantly contributed to lessening the effects of disasters?;

Have changes in national policies taken place which are attributable to the experience learnt from disasters?;

In the absence of national policies, what are the factors which inhibit Governments from adopting such policies?

b. National objectives

Are national objectives assigned within the National Plan for alleviating of the effects of disasters?;

What is the nature of those national objectives?;

Have such national objectives generally been supported by commensurate financial resources?;

What has been the effect of such national objectives on structural and non-structural preventive measures?;

Were those national objectives translated into the need for institutional support?;

If yes, how was it realized? If not, what are the problems?;

c. Commitment

To what extent are Governments actually committed to integrating disaster preparedness measures within their economic and social policies?

Did such commitment result in greater coordination within government structure?

Was such commitment reflected by specific measures (including financial ones) to link disaster planning to sectoral and intersectoral plans and objectives; to formulate development activities with specific disaster hazards in mind; and to orient development activities toward the contribution they can make in responding to disasters?

Did the UNDP country programming and project identification and formulation process in the countries concerned encourage and/or respond to the approach outlined above?

d. Institutional framework

Which is the most likely institutional framework for the national policies for disaster preparedness?

To what extent has success or failure of disaster preparedness measures been determined by the type of institutional framework?

What is the level of entry or focus of disaster prevention and preparedness policies?. Was it at the national policy-making level, at the institutional level (national, regional, community-based)?

Who have been the direct beneficiaries of national policies in disaster preparedness? Were they essentially planners and administrators, development staff, technical staff, community people?

e. External factors

Which external factors have had a bearing on the effects of national policies for disaster preparedness?

What means have been developed to overcome the problems encountered?

To what extent are trends in the development of preparedness measures attributable to factors other than national policies?

f. Lessons Learned

What are the findings of the study which are particularly relevant for the future development of disaster preparedness measures within a development context?

g. Recommendations

On the basis of the findings of the study, other studies, authoritative literature and current thinking, what recommendations can be made for the future involvement of UNDP in the field of disaster preparedness?

4. Implementation of the Study

The study will be divided into three phases.

Phase One : Preparatory Desk Study (February-April 1990).

The preparatory desk study will work out a methodologically sound framework starting with the initial list of basic issues which should be progressively enlarged to cover all the issues directly relevant to the purpose of the study.

The preparatory desk study will review the documentation available and, in the light of current thinking in the field, will develop a framework for the conduct of the study as a whole. In doing so, the suitability and fulness of the basic issues will be checked and, if necessary, improved, or corrected.

The preparatory desk study will finalize a design for the field studies which should constitute the core of the UNDP efforts to gather lessons to be learned for the future of its activities in disaster preparedness from the findings on actual policies, performance and effectivity.

The preparatory desk study will draw up proposals for terms of reference for the field teams, which will rely on experience gained by national institutions (academic, technical or otherwise).

The preparatory desk study will prepare a report on the findings and recommendations. Such report, which will be produced three months after commencement, will concern itself with:

- o an overview of the general nature of disaster preparedness in a perspective of national development planning and implementation;
- o the issues which can be identified in the subject-matter area;
- o identify the role of UNDP in support to "regular development" projects contributing to disaster preparedness;
- o identify the reasons for success or failure in fulfilling the objectives of such projects;
- o summarize the findings of the desk study;
- o select countries and institutions to be visited;
- o prepare terms of reference for these visits.

A consultant will be recruited for a period of three months to implement this phase. For the duration of the study, the consultant will act as Team Leader and UNDP Representative.

Phase Two : Field studies/visits (July-September 1990)

Field studies in three countries, likely to be Bangladesh, Ethiopia and Colombia, will be undertaken under the leadership of the UNDP consultant. The Team Leader will be assisted in the task by nationals whose services will be hired by UNDP to study how and under which conditions disaster prepa-

redness is been addressed in the country visited.

Each field visit will take place over a period of four weeks, including the drafting of a country study. The draft country report will be discussed with the Government of the country concerned as well as with the UNDP office prior to the Team Leader departing the country.

The mission reports will be finalized before their distribution to all the parties concerned for comments, if appropriate.

Phase Three : Synthesis Report (November 1990- January 1991)

A Synthesis Report merging the Phase One report and the Country Reports will be prepared by the Team Leader.

The purpose of the Synthesis Report will be to provide UNDP and disaster-prone countries with practical and effective proposals on how to assist both the Programme and those Governments concerned in promoting disaster preparedness through normal development processes, including activities of technical co-operation.

A period of two months will be allowed for the production of the Synthesis Report.

C. SUMMARY ACTION PLAN FOR THE STUDY

Phase One : Desk Study

1. UNDP to draft Terms of Reference for the UNDP consultant and Team Leader.
2. Initiation of selection of Team Leader
3. Finalization of the Study Design
4. Recruiement of the Team Leader and briefing in New York.
5. Desk study
6. Finalization of an in-depth, analytical paper on basic issues in the area and a conceptual approach under which UNDP can provide assistance in this field. Also selection of the countries to be visited and issues to be raised.

Phase Two : Country Studies

1. UNDP to approach countries selected for their approval on the conduct of the study;
2. On the basis of the Terms of Reference designed under Phase One, obtain agreement of local institution to conduct the study of national mechanisms for disaster preparedness;
3. The study itself is conducted over a period of three months (one month in each of the three countries selected), by the nationals selected;
4. A report on findings and recommendations for each country visited is submitted for comments to the parties concerned.

Phase Three : Synthesis Report

1. The Team Leader will, over a period of two months, draft a report which will encompass the experience, findings, recommendations and proposals deriving from the two first phases of the Study.
2. The report is submitted to the parties concerned for comments and recommendations.
3. The report is finalized
4. The report is distributed to all concerned.

ANNEX 2: TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR COUNTRY-LEVEL CASE STUDIES

[excerpted from Phase I: Preparatory Desk Study]

7.2 Terms of Reference for Field Studies

7.2.1 Objectives of field studies

The objective of the field studies is to document in detail attitudes and practical lessons learned from a cross-section of national government policies on disaster mitigation as they relate to the development planning process. In order to do so, the studies will gather information on the issues identified in Section 7.2.4 below, which should include a description of the current situation within each of the selected countries, assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of disaster mitigation efforts, and identification of directions for UNDP assistance in this field.

The present study will lead to a general policy formulation for UNDP on how to attain governments' commitment and assist governments to implement development-linked mitigation, rather than providing specific recommendations for use in each selected country. The data collected during the field visits will assess which combination of methodologies has been associated with successful implementation of projects integrating disaster and development considerations, which would point to an appropriate role for UNDP.

7.2.2 Qualifications of researchers

The primary qualification of the national researchers selected to carry out the studies should be their recognised prestige as development planners. However, previous experience or knowledge of disaster mitigation would clearly be useful. The researchers should have good relationships with government officials, especially in the planning sector, but they should not be directly involved in disaster management within the government in the selected country at the present time, in order to ensure impartiality of the research work. Where possible, the researchers should be connected with an established local institution, in order that the experience they gain may be shared with their peers.

7.2.3 Methodology

The information required for the field studies will be gathered through interviews with national and local government officials, community leaders, university researchers and UNDP staff in the selected countries. The officials to be contacted will vary from country to country, but should include representatives of both government planning agencies and organisations involved in disaster mitigation and relief. In some countries, representatives of major donors to disaster-related projects, NGOs, other international organisations such as the World Bank or the OAS, and the private sector will also be interviewed. Documents related to relevant disaster projects will be reviewed.

The purpose of the interviews will be to gather the information described below in Section 7.2.4. Some questions will need to be asked of various people representing different levels of government and/or involvement and experience with disasters in order to gain a balanced perspective of the situation.

In order to ensure standardisation among the studies, the team leader will visit each selected country before the work commences. The purposes of these visits will be: to explain to the selected researchers and to the UNDP staff member who will manage study implementation the precise meaning of the questions; to determine exactly who, within the government, donor and community structures, should be interviewed; to ensure the relevance of the questions to the particular country situation; and to set a timetable for the research to be completed.

7.2.4 Data collection

The following sections of the Terms of Reference illustrate the types of questions that could be asked in order to discover the strengths and weaknesses of present mitigation strategies in the selected countries, and to draw out the lessons learned from these experiences. Additional questions will probably be necessary, and not all of the ones listed may be appropriate for a particular country. Within each topic, UNDP's actual or potential role in strengthening governmental capacity to resolve problems should be documented.

7.2.4.1 General background on the country

The purpose of this section is to collect background information to categorise the country as to the magnitude of the disaster problem it faces related to its socio-economic condition. Suggested information needed:

- Basic statistics on the country including demographics and economic indicators.
- Types of natural hazards to which the country is vulnerable.
- List of recent disasters, and a summary of their human and economic consequences.
- Description of current hazards the country is facing, and their direct and indirect effects.

7.2.4.2 Government perceptions of disasters, disaster preparedness, and the relationship between disasters and development

These questions are designed to test the hypothesis that a government's perceptions about disasters and the source of these perceptions will influence its commitment to mitigation and the type of institutional framework it adopts. Suggested information needed:

- How does the government perceive the relationship between disasters and development, as manifested in preparedness plans, long-term development plans and other policy documents?
- Have other agencies and individuals influenced the government's perceptions? In what way?

7.2.4.3 Government commitment

Governments committed to mitigation may demonstrate that commitment in a variety of ways. It is assumed that those who demonstrate more tangible commitment will be more effective in their efforts. Suggested guidelines for questions:

- Has the government shown commitment to disaster mitigation through the development process by official statements, allocation of resources, requests for technical assistance, or in any other tangible fashion?
- Has such commitment resulted in greater coordination within the government structure?
- Was such commitment reflected in specific measures (including financial ones) to link disaster planning to sectoral and intersectoral plans and objectives, to formulate development activities with specific disaster hazards in mind, and to orient development activities toward the contribution they can make in responding to disasters?

7.2.4.4 Government institutional framework for disaster mitigation and planning

The four basic institutional models for disaster preparedness agencies were discussed in Section 5.5 above [Figure 5 of this report]. Through the following questions, the researchers should be able to classify the national structure into one of these models, determine whether it seems appropriate in the circumstances, and establish how it relates to the development planning sector.

- Is there an agency specifically responsible for disaster-related activities including mitigation? If so, what is the institutional structure in which it is located? If not, where does responsibility for these activities lie?
- When was this disaster agency set up? If it was in response to a particular disaster, what was it? Has the agency been modified or moved organisationally in response to subsequent events, such as a major disaster or a change in government?
- Who is the head of the disaster mitigation agency? What is his/her background? What has been his/her preparation for this position?

- What agency is responsible for development planning?
- What, if any, formal or informal linkages exist between those responsible for disaster mitigation and the development planning agency?
- What line ministries with sectoral responsibilities (for example, housing, public works, agriculture or health) have been involved in disaster preparedness work, and what has been their role?
- Who is responsible for specialised functions that need to be carried out for preparedness (such as early warning and epidemiology)?
- Are there recent examples of positive or negative effects of the existing organisational framework in linking development with mitigation activities? Are any institutional changes proposed or in progress in response to experience?

7.2.4.5 Government policies

It has been theorised that governments that have explicit policies relating disasters and development will practice mitigation activities in a more coherent fashion than other governments. The following questions should elicit information to test this assumption.

- In the government's national development plan, is there any stated or implied reference to the linkages between disasters and development? Does the plan mention any recent major disaster occurrences?
- To what extent have disasters contributed to promoting the establishment of national policies to prepare for the effects of such disasters?
- Have existing national policies significantly contributed to lessening the effects of disasters?
- Have disaster prevention and preparedness policies derived from central level, regional or community-level policy-makers?
- Who have been the direct beneficiaries of national policies in disaster mitigation? Were they essentially planners and administrators, development staff, technical staff or community residents?
- Is any aspect of government policies in general or in a particular sectoral area (such as agriculture, transportation or regional development policy) directly or indirectly encouraging the occupation of disaster-prone areas?

- Are any government policies or practices directly or indirectly exacerbating the vulnerability of communities occupying disaster-prone areas?
- What policy shifts are needed to reduce any vulnerability-increasing effects of existing government policies?

7.2.4.6 National objectives

Governments which have formulated disaster-related national objectives would be expected to take mitigation measures more seriously than other governments. The following questions should help establish whether the government has such objectives and has taken measures to achieve them:

- Do national objectives relating to alleviating the effects of disasters exist within the national plan?
- What is the nature of those national objectives?
- Have such national objectives generally been supported by commensurate financial resources?
- What has been the effect of such national objectives on structural and non-structural mitigation measures?
- Are the objectives quantifiable, and has progress toward them been measured? If so, how and by whom?
- Were those national objectives translated into the need for institutional support?
- If so, how was it realised? If not, what are the problems?

7.2.4.7 UNDP's current activities

There is general agreement that UNDP should play a role in encouraging disaster mitigation activities. The extent to which UNDP has guided or supported mitigation in a particular country, and the appropriateness of its input, should be answered by the following questions. The government's capacity for mitigation should be greater in those countries in which UNDP has been more active.

- What is the timing of the current country programming cycle?
- Did the UNDP position paper that was prepared for the current programme specifically address needs and options for disaster mitigation in the country?

- Is there any mention of disaster vulnerability, hazard assessment or mitigation in other country programme documents?
- Is there any evidence that UNDP addressed vulnerability of activities envisioned in the country programme in terms of hazards?
- In what disaster-related projects is UNDP involved? Do project documents mention linkages with development?
- What was the source of funding for these projects: Special Programme Resources; Indicative Planning Figure; another donor; another source?
- What was the time required for disaster-related project approval? Did the length of the approval process in any way hamper planned project start-up time?
- Who is the focal point for disaster mitigation in the UNDP country office? What is his/her background? What has been his/her preparation for this position?
- In what ways have UNDP's policies and technical expertise assisted in creating linkages between disaster mitigation activities and development planning? Have any UNDP actions been perceived as being negative toward this linkage? Do the government and other involved organisations perceive that UNDP has expertise to offer in this field?

7.2.4.8 Involvement of other organisations

It is hypothesised that mitigation efforts will be stronger in countries where a variety of organisations encourage them and where good coordination exists. The following questions attempt to establish the role of other key organisations:

- Are there any major NGOs involved in disaster mitigation? What is their relationship with UNDP? With the government? Are the NGOs perceived as being cooperative or combative? How are these projects linked to the normal development activities of the government and of particular NGOs?
- What has been the involvement of UNDRO? Has its technical assistance been requested to review development-related aspects of the UNDP programme? Did UNDRO's input prove useful and adequate?
- Has there been any involvement of the private sector in disaster mitigation activities? If so, who and in what way? Did they become involved because of any special government initiatives in this field?

- What other key organizations participate in disaster preparedness in the country?
What do they do?

7.2.4.9 External forces

Some experts feel that one of the reasons relief and reconstruction projects circumvent the developmental process is pressure on the government from outside forces. Examples of questions to test this assumption include:

- What external forces -- such as the media, donor demands, civil disturbances or private sector initiatives -- may have influenced the government's attitudes and practices with regard to disaster mitigation?
- Have these influences promoted a developmental approach? If not, could anything have been done by government and/or UNDP to modify the situation?

7.2.4.10 Community involvement (including the village, municipal and city government level)

One of the most important factors in the success of mitigation efforts, but one of the most frequently overlooked, is the level of community participation. The answers to the following questions should help to determine whether communities have been consulted.

- What formal communication mechanisms exist between responsible ministries or agencies and local authorities?
- How is consultation with communities in the planning process carried out?
- What community-based approaches have been used?
- How are national policies and programmes translated into action at the municipal and village level?
- What traditional structures have been involved in mitigation activities, with or without central-level instigation?

7.2.4.11 Costs of mitigation

It has been assumed that the added expense of incorporating mitigation principles into development projects may discourage this practice, and that the funds available for mitigation are limited. This study should determine whether this is in fact the case, through the following questions.

- Approximately how much does the government spend on mitigation activities at the national, regional and local levels? From where do these funds derive? Does each sector of the government budget for this type of activity?
- What methods have been used to determine whether planned mitigation efforts are economical: cost-benefit or cost-effectiveness analysis, or another formula? Are there country examples of development projects ignoring mitigation because of the costs involved?

7.2.4.12 Information

The following questions are designed to establish whether an effective information base exists, on the assumption that more data available to planners will mean that more effective efforts will take place:

- Do development planners have access to adequate information on risks and vulnerability? Is this information appropriate and useful? For example, are the planners able to calculate cost-benefit from it? Is the system for gathering this information institutionalised?
- Do disaster preparedness workers have information on development projects in areas at risk? Is the information adequate and timely enough to use as a base for mitigation strategies?
- Does a relevant data base exist at the local, regional and/or national level? Does it include such information as population, employment, economic and climate statistics?

7.2.4.13 Examples of country endeavours

Documentation of specific examples of non-relief responses to disasters will be related to the questions in the other sections to derive the lessons learned from the country study.

- Considering the most recent or current slow-onset or recurrent disaster, what non-relief programmes or projects have been formulated by the government to address these, with or without UNDP assistance?
- Who is assisting these projects and who will implement them?
- Were these projects developed through the normal government channels for development programmes?
- Did project formulation follow a planning process similar to the one outlined by UNDRO or the Natural Hazards Project of the OAS?