

Abstract

Climate change and disasters are among today's most pressing issues. The damage caused by the worldwide increase in disasters is staggering, with the urban poor being most at risk. Disasters make their already precarious living conditions worse, creating a vicious circle of poverty. More and more attention has thus been given to the need to address changing climatic conditions and disaster risk through development work, in order to bring about sustainable poverty reduction. Despite related efforts, aid organisations (including donor and implementing organisations), as well as national and municipal authorities still struggle to effectively reduce risk in the course of their everyday work. This is, not least, due to a lack of related operational tools.

Based on more than six years of research in the field of disaster risk reduction (RR) and climate change adaptation (CCA), this Operational Framework has been designed with the objective of counteracting the situation described, and thus assisting in sustainably integrating RR&CCA into the work of development organisations. It offers a comprehensive set of potential integration strategies and complementary programme measures to tackle risk (to be considered within each of the integration strategies), thus providing a comprehensive extension of existing RR and CCA models and concepts. Elaborated for both operational and management staff, it illustrates how development organisations can, step by step, initiate and pursue the integration of RR&CCA into their development programming in order to adopt a more pro-active approach towards RR&CCA. To be more specific, the framework supports organisations with concrete tools and guidance in:

- Evaluating the relevance of integrating RR&CCA within their organisation,
- Identifying and prioritising the various possible strategies for integrating RR&CCA into their work,
- Formulating activities and measures to take in the implementation of the selected strategies,
- Evaluating the possibilities of financing these, and
- Defining a step-by-step implementation plan.

In respect of the formulation of the activities and measures required for the integration of RR&CCA, the framework provides matrixes, which include:

- Input and process indicators to get the integration process started,
- Input and process indicators in the form of benchmarks (i.e. the operational state that an organisation should seek to achieve), and
- Output indicators.

Furthermore, it offers a list of sector-specific reference activities and recommendations for organisations working in urban development. During the course of the research, additional analytical, conceptual and strategic frameworks were also developed, all of which complement this Operational Framework and assist in a better interfacing of development planning and RR&CCA. Related literature sources are notated in the annexes.

Importantly, the Operational Framework at hand is applicable to a variety of cultural and geographic contexts, as well as to all types of 'natural' hazards and disasters (both climate-related and non-climate related). Although originally developed for urban development actors, it can be applied within all types of development sectors, and also within the context of relief, rehabilitation and reconstruction programmes (i.e. in both the pre- and post-disaster context).