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Consultancy Service for the Development of an Inundation, Flooding and Landslide National Risk Profile, Strategic Framework and Action Plans for Disaster Risk Management for the Republic of Mauritius

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Drafting the DRR Strategy for RoM

Tools and methods, results,
critical assumptions

Part I: Tools and Methods

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Setting the institutional framework

The starting point: the international strategic framework

The starting point at international level for the development of the DRR Strategy is represented by the *Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015-Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters* (HFA).

The HFA 5 priorities for action are:

- 1) Ensure that disaster risk reduction is a national and a local priority with a strong institutional basis for implementation;
- 2) Identify, assess and monitor disaster risks and enhance early warning;
- 3) Use knowledge, innovation and education to build a culture of safety and resilience at all levels;
- 4) Reduce the underlying risk factors;
- 5) Strengthen disaster preparedness for effective response at all levels.

A two-fold goal for the DRR Strategy

The DRR Strategy aims at supporting the RoM in its process of policy and decision-making aiming at ensuring DRR and at achieving the following two-fold goal:

- 1) Building more resilient and adaptive ecosystems and communities, capable to reduce their vulnerability to disasters;
- 2) Contribute to improving environmental management sustainable development and climate change adaptation through DRR.

A two-step working methodology

The development of the DRR Strategy consisted in two main steps:

- 1) Critically analyse the RoM gaps and needs for DRR;
- 2) Propose and formulate the improvements and related actions required, with the view to successfully envisage an appropriate institutional framework for DRR in RoM.

The two main guiding principles for the DRR Strategy

There are two main guiding principles upon which the DRR Strategy for RoM is based:

- 1) The implementation of an holistic approach to DRR shall be ensured, in order not to make DRR a separate policy area;
- 2) To this effect, DRR shall be regarded as part of sustainable development and climate change policies and shall therefore be treated as a multi-sectoral issue, which interplays with several policy sectors.

A new model of governance for DRR

The DRR Strategy promotes an improved model of governance for DRR, through the following main steps:

- 1) Establishment of a DRR National Platform;
- 2) Creation of an effective institutional, policy and legislative framework to ensure that DRR is a national priority;
- 3) Identification of the policy and legislative tools for ensuring an effective DRR management at national and local level.

Drafting the DRR strategy for RoM

The DRR Strategy for RoM was drafted along the following **5 key objectives**, which were identified on the basis of HFA priorities for action:

- 1) Defining the DRR Priority Actions;
- 2) Building a strong institutional basis;
- 3) Integrate risk reduction into national planning policies;
- 4) Enable and support risk reduction through improved national legislation;
- 5) Empower relevant stakeholders and local communities.

Part II: Results

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Establishing the National Platform for DRR

Establishing the DRR National Platform

- The first and foremost priority related to the development of the DRR Strategy for RoM relates to the establishment of the DRR National Platform, as required by the Hyogo Framework of Action.
- The National Platform should be based on the “two goals-two levels” governance model.
- The establishment of the DRR National Platform for RoM should consider and build up, as far as possible, on the already existing institutions.

The governance model: two goals

- The National Platform for DRR should be properly organised in order to fulfill two main goals:
 - **Emergency Response management;**
 - **Prevention and Preparedness management.**

The governance model: two levels

- The National Platform for DRR should be structured along two integrated and coordinated levels:
 - **Coordination and Supervision level;**
 - **Prevention and Preparedness level.**

Building up on the existing institutions

- Starting from the premise that the establishment of the DRR National Platform for RoM should build up, as far as possible, on the already existing institutions, it seems that the **Cyclone & Other Natural Disasters Committee**, with the assistance of the National Disaster and Operations Coordination Centre (NDOCC), could be the right basis for the establishment of the National Platform for DRR in RoM.
- However, the Cyclone Committee and the NDOCC are presently too much focused on Emergency Response management only.
- In addition to that, the National Platform should also deal with Prevention and Preparedness to disasters.

The National Platform for DRR in RoM (I)

- On basis of the above premises, the National Platform for DRR in RoM should be based on the two goals identified above and be structured along the following two levels:
 - **Coordination and Supervision level**, under the responsibility of the Cyclone & Other Natural Disasters Committee, placed under the responsibility of the PMO;
 - **Prevention and Preparedness level**, under the responsibility of NDOCC, placed under the responsibility of the Police Commissioner.

The National Platform for DRR in RoM (II)

- According to the proposed model, the Cyclone Committee would play a coordination and supervision role, whereas the NDOCC would play a more executive role.
- Under this model, however, the NDOCC structure should be improved. It should consist not only in a coordination committee, but should rely on a permanent office, composed of an adequate staff, belonging not only to the police, but also to other relevant authorities, which should be dedicated to the daily management of disasters, both in terms of prevention and preparedness and of emergency response.

The National Platform for DRR: the case of Rodrigues (I)

- Rodrigues is a constituency of the Republic of Mauritius.
- However, as a result of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly Act, it holds its Regional Assembly and Executive Council.
- In general terms, the DRR Strategy devised for the Republic of Mauritius will apply to all the RoM territory, including Rodrigues.
- However, in the exercise of their powers, the Rodrigues Regional Assembly and the Executive Council should integrate DRR concerns into the development of all the policies and legislation falling under their responsibility.

The National Platform for DRR: the case of Rodrigues (II)

- In the framework of the DRR Strategy for RoM, the proposed structure for the National Platform for DRR in Rodrigues will be based on the two-levels approach and build up on the existing institutions.
- Currently, Rodrigues has in place a disaster emergency system, which is based Rodrigues Cyclone & Other Natural Disasters Committee, supported by the Police at operational and executive level.
- In order to operate as the National Platform of DRR in Rodrigues, the current disaster management system, which is mostly focused on emergency response, should be improved in terms of preparedness and prevention.

Part III: Critical assumptions

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**Recommendable measures to make the DRR Strategy
working in practice**

Recommendable measures to be taken

- The DRR Strategy for RoM is supplemented by an Executive Annex, which summarizes its findings and provides a list of recommendable measures to be taken.
- The recommendable measures, which are meant to make the DRR Strategy working in practice, are grouped under the 5 key objectives identified as a basis for the DRR Strategy for RoM.

Key objective 1: recommendable measures to be taken (I)

- Identifying and implementing the HFA 5 priorities of action and related key activities according to the RoM needs and priorities;
- Recognizing that DRR is a sustainable development issue to be mainstreamed into all policy and legislative sectors and decision-making processes;
- Recognizing that DRR is a cross cutting issue that needs to be tackled with a holistic approach, by integrating it into policies, plans and programmes of all ministries and departments and at all levels of government;
- Recognizing that DRR is closely linked to climate change and needs to be addressed in an integrated way with climate change adaptation policies and actions;

Key objective 1: recommendable measures to be taken (II)

- Establishing a strong governance framework for DRR, providing effective, integrated policies and legislation, as well as a clear institutional framework ensuring a reliable accountability system;
- Improving national legislation and policies to reduce RoM risks and vulnerability to disasters;
- Ensuring protection from disasters not only to ecosystems as a whole (flora and fauna) but also to human health and cultural heritage assets;
- Ensuring an adequate management for DRR by developing responses based on the prevention principle;
- Recognizing that DRR is under the responsibility of the entire Country and requires the active participation of local communities, NGOs and the private sector;
- Empowering communities by providing appropriate and timely information on DRR and ensuring an adequate capacity building;

Key objective 2: recommendable measures to be taken (I)

- Establishing a DRR National Platform for RoM ;
- Ensuring effective coordination among the Authorities involved in the National Platform;
- Using the already existing structures to the maximum possible extent;
- Ensuring multi-sectoral expertise in the National Platform;
- Ensuring a holistic and integrated approach to DRR by the National Platform;
- Adopting the legislative acts needed to establish the DRR national platform, appoint its members and confer them precise tasks and responsibilities, in order to create a proper legal and institutional basis for the work of the DRR National Platform in RoM;

Key objective 2: recommendable measures to be taken (II)

- Organizing the National Platform in order to fulfill two goals, deriving straightforward from the HFA principles:
 - 1) Emergency response management;
 - 2) Prevention and Preparedness management;
- Structuring the RoM DRR National Platform along two levels:
 - 1) Coordination and Supervision level;
 - 2) Prevention and Preparedness level;
- Ensuring that the DRR national platform perform guidance and planning activities with regard to disaster prevention and preparedness, as well as disaster risk emergency response;
- Ensuring that the National Platform is based on the Cyclone Committee and the NDOCC, building up on the existing institutions;

Key objective 2: recommendable measures to be taken (III)

- Ensuring that the Cyclone Committee performs the following tasks:
 - Developing and proposing national policies, plans and programs aiming at improving DRR and management, especially through enhanced preparedness and prevention;
 - Ensuring that DRR is integrated into other policies and measures;
 - Ensuring enhanced resources allocation to DRR and management;
 - Encouraging capacity building on DRR and management;
 - Encouraging public involvement in DRR and management;
 - Coordinating and supervising DRR and management activities performed by the NDOCC;
 - Supervising DRR and management activities at all levels.

Key objective 2: recommendable measures to be taken (IV)

- Ensuring that the NDOCC has the following duties:
 - Supporting and advising the Cyclone Committee in developing the national plans and programs on DRR and management policies;
 - Setting up concrete contingency, response and relief plans under the guidance of the Cyclone Committee;
 - Ensuring the implementation of the national plans and programs on DRR as envisaged by the Cyclone Committee;
 - Contributing to capacity building and in enhancing DRR preparedness;
 - Performing all the operational activities required by the DRR management plans and by the DRR contingency plans;
 - Attending to the relief and rescue operational activities in the aftermath of a disaster.

Key objective 3: recommendable measures to be taken (I)

- Adjusting the national policies in order to effectively tackle DRR and management;
- Mainstreaming and integration of DRR into national policies and programmes:
 - Integrating DRR into national planning policies in order to satisfy the principle of better regulation and achieve more effectively the two goals of preparedness and prevention and of emergency response management;
 - Using the DRR Strategy as a horizontal general strategic planning tool to be integrated into all the other relevant strategic planning policies of RoM and related documents and acts;
 - Ensuring that RoM decision-making Authorities take into account DRR concerns and key objectives when developing all national policies and assess the practicability and effectiveness of those policies against DRR principles and goals;

Key objective 3: recommendable measures to be taken (II)

- Understanding the link between DRR and climate change adaptation and the need to address the two issues in a more comprehensive and integrated way at the national level, in particular by:
 - Developing national coordination mechanisms to link disaster risk reduction and adaptation;
 - Conducting a baseline assessment on the status of disaster risk reduction and adaptation efforts;
 - Preparing adaptation plans drawing on the Hyogo Framework;
 - Interconnecting DRR and climate change adaptation policies with national development planning and investment policies;

Key objective 3: recommendable measures to be taken (III)

- Ensuring the integration of DRR concerns into the following topic areas:
 - Strategic integrated planning and land use planning; Sustainable energy production and consumption patterns; Building codes; Sustainable water use for drinking, agriculture and industrial processes; Protection of biodiversity and natural resources, including protected areas and Environmental Sensitive Areas (ESAs); Agriculture; Environmental resources and coastal management; Tourism; Industry; Transport; Education; Social services; Food security; Health care and services; Communication.

Key objective 4: recommendable measures to be taken

- Enabling DRR to act as a driver for improving legislation in all the relevant sectors;
- Adopting or modifying, where necessary, national legislation in order to enable and support the full development and implementation of risk reduction policies and activities;
- Applying principles of better regulation to ensure that DRR and sustainable development concerns are integrated into the legislation;
- Regulating the Climate Change sector so as to include DRR;
- Amending, in particular, the following acts in order to fully incorporate DRR concerns and principles into the existing national legislation:
 - 1) Planning and Development Act (for land and planning permits);
 - 2) Building Act (for building permits)
 - 3) ESAs Act (for ESAs permits);
 - 4) Environment Protection Act (including PER and EIA procedures).

Key objective 5: recommendable measures to be taken (I)

- Ensuring a successful enforcement of DRR related national measures, by empowering stakeholders and local communities;
- Ensuring a better informed decision-making process;
- Giving the public concerned the power to take part to DRR decision making process by means of the public comments mechanism;
- Building the capacities on DRR within the public authorities at all levels;
- Enhancing education and awareness raising;
- Ensuring awareness raising on DRR by promoting DRR education courses at compulsory schools;
- Promoting awareness raising events, initiatives, courses and publications addressed to pupils and citizens;

Key objective 5: recommendable measures to be taken (II)

- Encouraging research on DRR;
- Promoting the exchange of best practices, dialogue and information within the scientific community;
- Promoting the establishment of forums of discussion on DRR a scientific and community levels;
- Encouraging the spreading of information on DRR from the scientific community to the public and the stakeholders;
- Engaging media and stakeholders in order to facilitate awareness raising on DRR;
- Spreading information on DRR by means of periodical reports, bulletins, brochures and advertising materials.

Thank you for your
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