

# Bangladesh: Coping with Natural Disasters

A Focus on Preparedness:  
Good Practices and Lesson Learned

Presentation by

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# Introduction

- Geography puts Bangladesh at the mercy of nature
- Himalayas in the north, 57 rivers and the funnel shape of the Bay of Bengal increase vulnerability
- Risk from recurring floods, cyclones, storm surges, draught, tornado, river bank erosion
- Global warming and climate change aggravate risk

# High Occurrence

- World Bank statistics show Bangladesh has 6.14 natural disasters per year, the highest in the world
- One meter sea level rise can make 50 million environmental refugees

# Cyclone Sidr

- Cyclone Sidr struck Bangladesh on 15 November 2007
- Wind speed up to 240km/hr (category IV tropical cyclone)
- Extensive damage in southern districts
- Third major disaster in 2007 (two floods earlier in the year)





# Damage and Destruction

- 5.5 million affected (about the same as the population of Denmark)
- 30 (out of 66 districts) affected (12 severely)
- Over 3,000 deaths
- Widespread damage to property, crops, livestock, shrimp farms
- Infrastructure destroyed (roads, bridges, embankments, power stations, schools)
- 25% of the Sundarbans, largest mangrove forest and a World Heritage Site, damaged



Similar cyclones in the past have caused greater loss of lives and wider destruction.

Preparedness, continuous upgrading of disaster management policy and framework in cooperation with the stakeholders minimize risk

Natural disasters cannot be prevented, but the damage can be reduced through adequate planning and mitigation

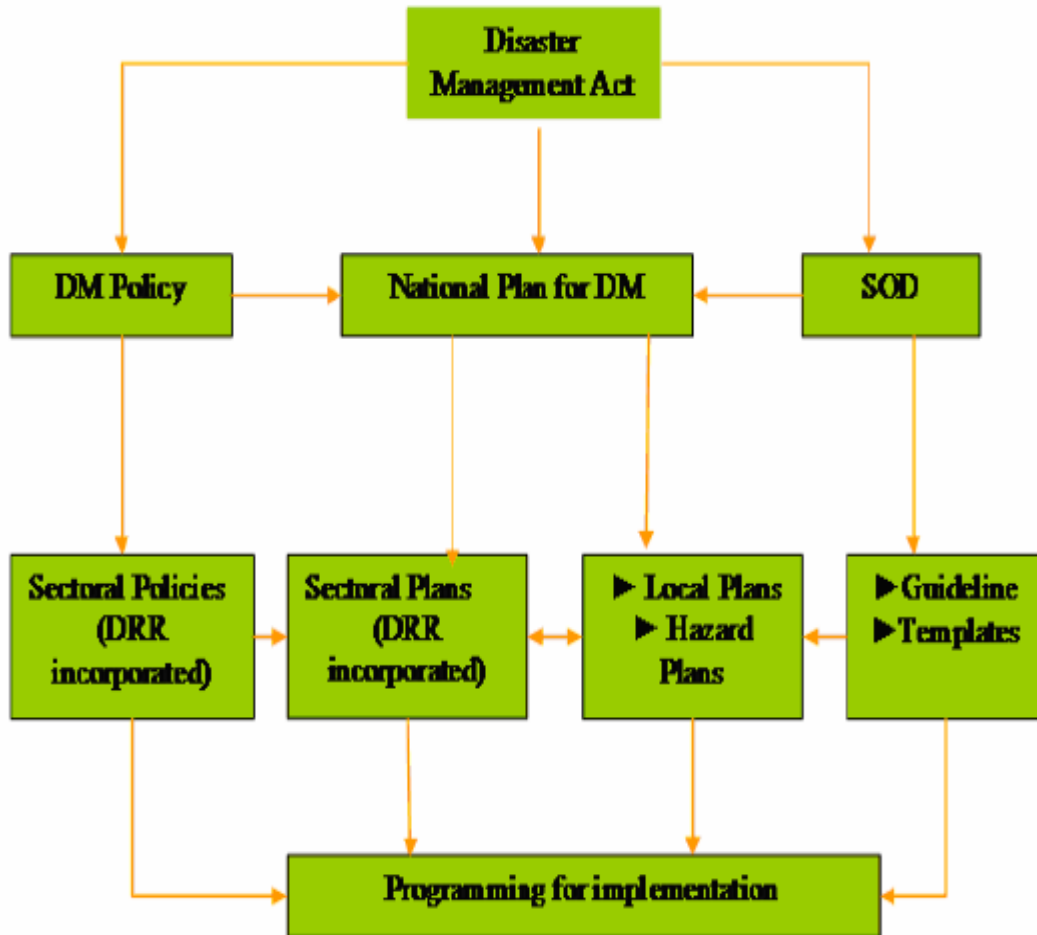
# Disaster Management in Bangladesh

- Bangladesh faces challenge of recurring natural disasters
- Nationally owned approach to disaster management
- Constant up gradation of disaster prevention and response capacity
- Effective partnerships among Government, civil society, affected communities
- Support from UN agencies and development partners strengthen the national efforts

# Disaster Management Policy

- Provides framework for prevention, preparedness, response and recovery activities
- Recognizes the role of various stakeholders
- New Regulatory framework under consideration: Draft Disaster Management Act 2008 and Draft Disaster Management Plan

## Disaster Management Regulative Framework



# Institutional Set-up

- Multi layered institutional set up for disaster management and preparedness
- Pre-defined responsibilities
- Involving partners
- Empowering the affected communities

# Disaster Management Institutions

- National Disaster Management Council
- National Disaster Management Advisory Council
- Inter-Ministerial Coordination Committee
- Disaster Management Committees at the District, Municipal, Upazila and Union levels

# Institutional Set-up for Preparedness

- Well-defined institutional set-up for preparedness activities
- Cyclone Preparedness Implementation Board in the Ministry of Food and Disaster Management
- Links with DM Committees at various levels, going down to the village level



# Partnership Among Stakeholders

- Among Government agencies
- GOB-civil society partnership
- GOB-development partners
- Partnerships with the private sector

# Activation in Three Stages

- Preparedness
- Early Warning
- Early Recovery Efforts

# Key Lessons Learned

- National Ownership
- Sound Risk Analysis
- Effective Legal and Institutional Framework
- Contingency Planning
- Empowering Communities
- Permanent Framework for Rapid Response

# Key Lessons Learned

- Effective Early Warning System
- Information Management and Communication Capacities
- Functioning Coordination Mechanism
- Partnership with and Involvement of Civil Society and Stakeholders

# Preparedness Matters

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