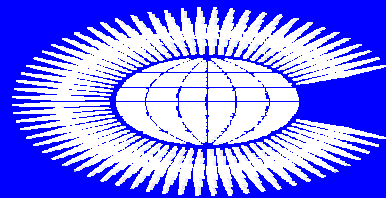


Supporting Member Countries in Disaster Risk Reduction and Disaster Management

by

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COMMONWEALTH

SECRETARIAT

Our Vision is

Every Commonwealth country will have
institutional capacities for effective
democratic governance and sustainable
development

Governance & Institutional Development Division

Programmes are mostly demand-led, with an emphasis on South–South cooperation;

- The work programme fits within the framework of the Commonwealth Secretariat's current 4-year Strategic Plan and is developed in consultation with the national Principal Contact Points as well as the Divisional Points of Contact;
- It responds to requests from governments for technical assistance through:
 - Advisory services provided by in-house experts;
 - Provision of experts to fill specific development needs in the short or long term;
 - Knowledge networks;
 - Training and capacity enhancement;

How we deliver our programmes

Technical assistance & capacity building :

- Technical assistance & placing of experts that range from a few days to two years;
- Public service development and public sector management;
- Designs and implements strategies for improving governance systems, administrative restructuring, integrated public policy management and legal frameworks;
- Assists governments in building the capacity for sustained public sector reform;
- Integrated packages of policy advice and training focus on improving performance in the public sector, restructuring public enterprises, promoting public-private sector partnerships for infrastructure and service delivery;
- Public expenditure management;

Background -

CHOGM 2005 Mandate on Disaster Risk Reduction & Management

- Heads of Government noted with concern the devastating and increasing impact of natural and man-made disasters on human lives, infrastructure and economies. They called for action at the national, regional and international levels to strengthen disaster management through increased capacity for disaster preparedness, early warning systems, risk mitigation and post-disaster recovery and reconstruction. In this context, they welcomed the proposal to develop a Commonwealth Programme for Natural Disaster Management, through which member countries could cooperate in capacity building for disaster risk reduction and disaster response management. They requested the Secretary General to develop a mechanism for establishing and operationalising the proposed initiative in consultation with member states.

- **Heads of Government emphasised the critical importance of effective, timely and equitable humanitarian action in support of disaster affected populations. In this regard, they called on member countries to support efforts to further strengthen the international humanitarian response system, including the proposed extension of the UN Central Emergency Revolving Fund and the strengthening of the UN humanitarian coordination system. They noted that international strategies for disaster reduction should take due cognisance of national policies and establish partnerships upon the request of countries concerned so as to support and complement the national programmes of affected countries.**

CHOGM 2007

Climate Change

- Heads of Government adopted the Lake Victoria Commonwealth Climate Change Action Plan.

Challenges Facing Small States

- Heads of Government reaffirmed the enduring and new challenges facing small states as set out in the 2005 Gozo Statement on Vulnerable Small States. They expressed concern at the recent increase in frequency and intensity of natural disasters and their often devastating social, economic and environmental impact, particularly on Small Island Developing States. Heads of Government encouraged small states to continue to implement outward-oriented development strategies that would assist them to overcome their vulnerabilities and requested Comsec to continue providing TA as necessary.

Building blocks of the Comsec programme

- Complimenting existing international efforts;
- Strengthening government institutional capacities for mainstreaming risk reduction & disaster management;
- Knowledge networking and sharing of best practices, which may include using ICT's in disaster management;
- Priority needs of least developed countries and small states, who are members of the Commonwealth;
- Health sector support during recovery and reconstruction phase;
- Mainstreaming & integration within Comsec existing initiatives;
- Leveraging funding & support from other actors;

Mainstreaming and Integration

- Long and short term experts to provide technical assistance through a range of modalities to strengthen capacity at all levels;
- Advocacy at international and national levels to raise awareness and encourage consensus for integration of disaster risk reduction and national development planning;
- Advisory services in assessment of needs and specialist thematic areas to support DRR & DM;
- Training at national, regional and pan-Commonwealth levels;

Recent Comsec supported projects on Disaster Risk Reduction & Management

Preparedness: Capacity building through regional activities

- **Asia Regional Programme:**

Training for Senior Public Planning Official from Commonwealth Countries in the Asia region aimed at providing exposure to the elements of disaster management and strengthening of disaster risk reduction related activities;

- **'Mobilising People in Emergencies: The Role of Non-Governmental, Private and Public Sectors in Africa':**

Supported a training workshop to provide technical inputs to encourage an integrated approach for collaboration and deployment of human resources from all sectors in times of emergency;

The workshop addressed the gaps in the mobilisation of skills and people in Preparation for and in response to emergencies in Africa and identified lessons learnt and possible solutions;

- **Commonwealth Connects: 'Rebuilding after the Tsunami: Using ICT's for Change':**

This project was delivered in India and Sri Lanka over a 12 month period with the objective of building websites, improved e-mail services and e-communication training for NGO's involved in tsunami reconstruction work;





Commonwealth volunteer roles in providing medical support to Tsunami affected communities in the Maldives and Earthquake populations in Pakistan.



The Maldives following the December 2004 Tsunami:

- Support in assessing reconstruction requirements and provide inputs into national reconstruction
- Technical assistance to the health sector through recruitment and secondment of CSAP volunteers (24 medical professionals);
- Ongoing assistance in rehabilitation and reconstruction in the health sector;
- Capacity building for the agriculture and environmental sector;



Islamic Republic of Pakistan following the earthquake in October 2005:

- Assessment by Secretariat staff on the immediate needs for deployment of volunteer doctors to the country;
- Technical assistance providing general medical care and surgical procedures through the deployment of 17 medical professionals recruited from Commonwealth countries;



Reconstruction: An integrated approach to recovery planning and reconstruction

Grenada:

- Technical assistance in reconstruction efforts in planning for schools, public and historic buildings, and roads;
- Assistance in planning for redevelopment of nutmeg-based products;
- A two year programme of planned assistance to the Agency for Reconstruction and Development (ARD);



Guyana:

- Technical assistance provided to assess the water management systems, repair systems, train staff and put emergency disaster systems in place.

Sierra Leone:

- Technical assistance in the development of policy for delivery of Dental and Oral Health Care Services for the Ministry of Health and Sanitation in the country.

Uganda:

- Project Hope, Northern Uganda Youth Development Centre.

Conclusion

- **Building on the past and current activities, the Secretariat will continue to develop this programme of work in collaboration with all key stakeholders within the Commonwealth;**
- **Through the Commonwealth Service Abroad Programme (CSAP) and CTFC regional technical assistance, emphasis will be placed on developing an integrated programme linked to regional and national priorities, to strengthen institutional capacities for mainstreaming disaster risk reduction and disaster management while responding to requests from member countries.**



THANK YOU