

Briefing Paper on Disasters and Accountability

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Briefing Paper

Ensuring Accountability in Disaster Risk Management and Reconstruction

During the decade that followed the adoption of the Hyogo Framework for Action in 2005, calls for greater public, private and civic accountability to reduce risk and vulnerability became increasingly vocal. Among them was a declaration issued by European ministers in 2014, the year before the finalisation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, in which they urge improved accountability, transparency and governance for disaster risk management. This also provides guidance to the local point on Disaster Risk Reduction at the Central government level on how to improve leadership in risk governance, transparency, sharing of risk information, stakeholder participation and public awareness and encouraging and action on stakeholder feedback.

Accountability in disaster risk reduction is intended to enable scrutiny and understanding of actions taken at different levels and of those responsible for such actions. Article 70 of the Sendai Framework articulates the principle that disaster risk reduction depends on coordination mechanisms within and across sectors, full engagement and clear responsibilities of all State institutions and stakeholders to ensure mutual accountability.

During the consultations and negotiations that led to its finalisation, strong calls were also made to develop practical guidance to support implementation, review, engagement and ownership of action by all stakeholders, and strengthen accountability in disaster risk reduction - "Words into Action".

In contributing to this agenda a workshop on "Ensuring Accountability in Disaster Risk Management and Reconstruction" was organised as a part of a global, regional and national partnership by Social Policy Analysis and Research Centre (SPARC), University of Colombo-Sri Lanka and Global Disaster Resilience Centre (GDRC), University of Huddersfield-UK, and Essex Accounting Centre, University of Essex-UK in association with University of Moratuwa and University of Peradeniya Sri Lanka, the International Journal of Disaster Resilience in the Built Environment, Collaborative Action towards Disaster Resilience Education (CADRE), and the Federation of Sri Lankan Local Government Authorities. This was also in support of the UNISDR Making Cities Resilient campaign and Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030.

The workshop had the participation of disaster risk management experts and state and non-state stakeholders to deliberate on and develop a possible framework for social accountability to be considered for inclusion in a national disaster management plan.

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www.disaster-resilience.net/accountability

A briefing paper entitled Ensuring Accountability in Disaster Risk Management and Reconstruction, has been launched based on the International workshop on **“Ensuring Accountability in Disaster Risk Management and Reconstruction”** (<http://www.hud.ac.uk/research/researchcentres/gdrc/latestnews/workshopondisasterriskmanagementandreconstruction.php>) was organised as a part of a global, regional and national partnership by Social Policy Analysis and Research Centre (SPARC), University of Colombo-Sri Lanka and Global Disaster Resilience Centre (GDRC), University of Huddersfield-UK, and Essex Accounting Centre, University of Essex-UK in association with University of Moratuwa and University of Peradeniya Sri Lanka, the International Journal of Disaster Resilience in the Built Environment, Collaborative Action towards Disaster Resilience Education (CADRE), and the Federation of Sri Lankan Local Government Authorities. In December 2015 in Sri Lanka. This was also in support of the UNISDR Making Cities Resilient campaign and Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030.

The workshop was timed to almost coincide with the 11th anniversary of the Indian Ocean Tsunami (IOT) that devastated much of Sri Lanka’s coastline resulting in thousands of deaths, injuries, mass displacement of people and property loss. Global and local response to the unprecedented disaster was overwhelming. After ten years, almost of all of the displaced

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are resettled, mostly at a distance from the coast to reduce their vulnerability to another coastal disaster. Given the scale of the displacement, resettlement and rehabilitation that have taken place over the last ten years are remarkable. On the other hand, the aftermath of the disaster has also provided policy makers, researchers, practitioners and others many opportunities to learn from varied experiences with regard to disaster risk reduction, reconstruction, resettlement and rehabilitation. One of the most important lessons has been the lack of accountability on the part of many state and non-state institutions and agencies involved in the above processes.

The papers presented and the panel discussion conducted as part of the workshop were not confined to the IOT but covered many other natural hazards and vulnerabilities disasters in Sri Lanka such as landslides, water pollution and floods.

This briefing paper provides a summary of the key findings to emerge from the workshop. You can download a copy of the briefing paper here

(/media/universityofhuddersfield/content2013/schools/artdesignandarchitecture/images/research/gdrc/news/2015-16/Briefingpaperaccountabilityworkshop.pdf).

This was edited by GDRC's Professor Richard Haigh on behalf of the workshop partnership also with the input from Professor Siri Hettige from University of Colombo, Sri Lanka..

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