

Preliminary Conclusions regarding the National Case Studies

Both case studies outline the enormous challenges the countries face and will face in the future due to climate change and extreme weather events. Despite the national efforts of the governments of Vietnam and Indonesia to implement plans for disaster reduction and climate change adaptation, possible synergies and therefore links between both topics have not sufficiently been taken up. In contrast, both topics are mainly treated as separate fields of action and are therefore affiliated with different governmental ministries or agencies. As has been recognized with respect to most of the NAPAs, in Vietnam disaster risk reduction strategies are mostly implemented in form of technical solutions such as dykes, early warning systems and building codes. In contrast, the Indonesian Adaptation Plan is closely linked to general development activities, but it only refers to disaster risk reduction in a limited way as an appropriate tool. A particular problem in both countries is the effective coordination and cooperation between different ministries and governance levels as outlined above.

4) Local Efforts

Considering the weak efforts to integrate DRR and CCA at a national level a coherent strategy for a linkage at the local level cannot be expected soon. However, some national and international projects have been carried out to explore the advantages of linking disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation at the local level. Two of such projects will be presented here. The first project is a small-scale national project carried out by the Universidad de Chile in Agüita de la Perdiz, Chile. The second was conducted by the FAO and the Asian Disaster Preparedness Centre (ADPC), under the Comprehensive Disaster Risk Management Programme (CDMP) and in close collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture Department of Agricultural Extension (DAE) in Bangladesh. Both projects should provide an overview of the various activities at the local level.

Text Box 3

Disaster Risk Management related to heavy Rainfall: Case Study Agüita de la Perdiz, Chile

(by Paulina Aldunce)

The community "Agüita de la Perdiz" is located within the city of Concepción which is the second largest city in Chile. Due to the fact that the area is only accessible by one single road, the community is characterized by a strong sense of identity with high levels of community organization and participation. (see also Debels et al. 2008). On June 26th 2005 a precipitation event of 162.2 mm in 24 hours occurred which was an amount that had not been experienced during the last 142 years. Physical vulnerability such as settlements on high slopes exposed to high landslide risk as well as social vulnerability created through high levels of poverty, inhospitable conditions and the illegal occupation of the area led to the partial or total destruction of almost 100 homes.

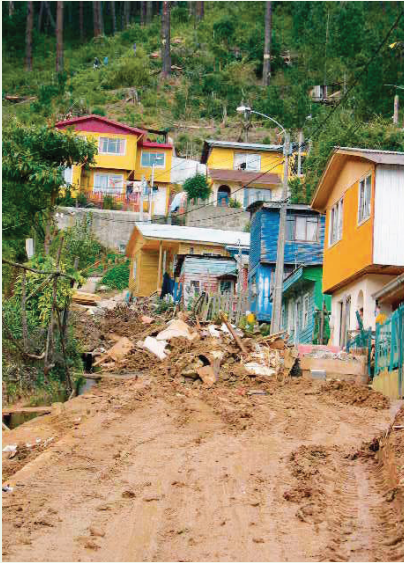


Figure 4: Landslide in Argüita de la Perdiz, Chile.
Source: P. Aldunce

Scope, main objectives and methodology

The project “Disaster Risk Management related to rainfall: Case study Agüita de la Perdiz, Chile” was carried out by the Department of Environmental Sciences and Renewable Natural Resources of the University of Chile between June 2005 and July 2007.

Disaster Risk Management (DRM) has been identified as one of the tools for effective adaptation to increased climate variability and change. In this respect, the project aimed to identify factors that promote or hinder adequate DRM. In addition, the project was designed to learn from these factors, and consider the ones that hinder DRM as opportunities for its improvement and thus an opportunity for long-term adaptation that could be used by local actors. The methodology included interviews with social actors involved in DRM in Agüita de la Perdiz as well as a semi-structured survey of the affected population. In addition, local govern-

mental documents like laws, zoning plans and official statements were reviewed. Main results are outlined in the following factors presented below.

Main results

The analysis of the interviews, the community survey and the review of documents resulted in the following findings:

Factors that promote adequate DRM and long-term adaptive capacity

- The current DRM law (passed in 2002), called the Civil Protection National Plan (CPNP), aims at decentralizing public administration, allowing appropriate planning according to the needs of each hierarchical level of public agencies. It enhances participation of social actors, defining their responsibilities, systematizing risk assessment, and standardizing the basic elements of emergency plans.
- The CPNP is the result of a learning process based on lessons from past experiences. It also promotes a better governance system leading to DRM.
- The community of Agüita de la Perdiz possesses its own zoning plans which include disaster risk assessment.
- The local community shows strong leadership, sense of belonging and autonomy resulting in pro-activeness, local knowledge of risks and the physical environment, as well as a sense of its own responsibility for disaster prevention and self-emergency-response.
- Lessons learned from frequent previous disasters have enhanced community participation and organization resulting in increased empowerment

and lower rates of apathy to disasters.

- Technical and organizational preparedness exist at multiple levels in public agencies.
- Mitigation and reconstruction efforts by public agencies and the community have been displayed in the area.

Factors that hinder adequate DRM and long-term adaptive capacity

- CPNP is supposed to provide the framework for vertical and horizontal coordination of parties but this does not always occur.
- The community seldom participates in local decision making processes.
- More capacity building is needed: e.g. through training of public servants and more time allocated to DRM activities.
- Social vulnerability forces illegal occupation of risky areas.
- Mitigation and reconstruction initiatives have not always resulted in positive outcomes: protection walls on high slopes have deteriorated rapidly which led to increased risk.