BUILDING RESILIENCE
through inclusive and climate-adaptive
DISASTER RISK REDUCTION
(BRDR) program

Summary of the inception-phase findings and options

November 2018

BRDR Program Partners

Asian Disaster Preparedness Center (ADPC)

Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency (MSB)

Stockholm Environment Institute (SEI)

Raoul Wallenberg Institute (RWI)

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Foreword

Building resilience through inclusive and climate-adaptive disaster risk reduction in Asia-Pacific (BRDR) is a five-year program which aims to improve regional cooperation in disaster risk reduction and climate resilience by sharing of best practices and tested approaches among countries in the region.

Started in early 2018 through a partnership between Asian Disaster Preparedness Center (ADPC), the Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency (MSB), the Stockholm Environment Institute (SEI), and the Raoul Wallenberg Institute (RWI), BRDR is an innovative program in many ways. Firstly, it puts gender equality, rights-based, and pro-poor approaches at the forefront of improving disaster risk reduction; secondly, it seeks to promote regional cooperation in a pragmatic way by enhancing existing and tested tools and approaches to be shared and discussed at regional platforms; and finally, it actively supports follow up actions to develop practical south-south cooperation in Asia and the Pacific.

BRDR is an ambitious program that requires dedicated efforts from all our regional and national partners. To ensure that the program delivers, it is anchored in activities and results achieved at the national and local level focusing the regional interaction on "things that work" and solutions that are less theoretical and more practical.

This report describes the overall approach and strategy of the BRDR program by highlighting the foundation on which future work will be built upon, followed by a brief description of the findings of research related to gender equality and human rights, which itself works as a rationale for the design of the program. Planned outcomes and workstreams are then summarized, followed by a chapter discussing the monitoring and evaluation framework.

We encourage our readers to engage with us or use this report as an inspiration and point of reference for new initiatives in disaster risk reduction and climate resilience.

My deep appreciation goes out to our partners who have put in great efforts in completing the inception activities and we look forward to working together to implement this program over the next four years. We are equally grateful to the Swedish Government for providing generous support for this initiative.

Hans Guttman
Executive Director
Asian Disaster Preparedness Center

BRDR STEERING GROUP MEETING

2 October 2018

Bangkok, Thailand

Photo by Rattakorn / ADPC

1. Summary

Disasters and climate change risks threaten the social and economic development of countries in Asia and the Pacific, with increasing socio-economic inequalities often affecting the ability of populations to prepare for and cope with disasters. The five-year (2018-2022) program Building resilience through inclusive and climate-adaptive disaster risk reduction (BRDR) aims to strengthen regional capacity for cooperation on disaster risk reduction (DRR) and climate resilience (CR).

The overall goal of the program is to strengthen regional cooperation to protect development gains and to build the resilience of communities, in Asia and the Pacific, to disasters and climate risks through inclusive and gender-equal risk reduction measures.

The BRDR aims to achieve three primary outcomes:

- • **Outcome 1:** Strengthened capacity for regional cooperation to build resilience to future climate and disaster risks: This will be achieved by enhancing the role of the Regional Consultative Committee on Disaster Management (RCC) to support member countries in implementing global frameworks and to serve as a conduit for south-south learning, risk reduction and knowledge sharing.

- **Outcome 2:** Increased uptake of risk-informed approaches to development and social protection to reduce disaster and climate vulnerability: This will be achieved by establishing an evidence-base of tested and country-owned methods to tangibly operationalize different aspects of global frameworks to guarantee their impact.

- **Outcome 3:** Enhanced gender equality and rights-based approaches in disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation in the region: This will be achieved by analyzing the social implications of gender and human rights and building ADPC's internal capacity for integrating gender-equal and rights-based approaches in DRR and CR.

The outcomes will be achieved by developing and establishing evidence-based methods, tools and practices in three pilot countries: Nepal, the Philippines, and Papua New Guinea. Best practices, knowledge and lessons learned will be shared at regional forums for replication in other countries.

The program aims to develop and support the implementation of innovative and inclusive measures that link stakeholders working in areas of development, DRR, CR, and emergency preparedness. The inception phase involved desk-based research, scoping exercises, and situational analyses carried out over a period of six months. The scoping reports assess needs, map current initiatives; analyze strengths and weaknesses in existing practices, examine stakeholders' roles; and define the intervention logic.

To guarantee an inclusive, gender-equal, rights-based, and pro-poor approach across the program, ADPC has fostered partnership with MSB, SEI, and RWI to bring together required expertise to achieve the outcomes of the program. While identifying different activities for the implementation phase, we remained aware of the importance of not only addressing the gaps through this program but also building on and investigating further the best practices created by several organizations through their work on DRR in the region.

2. Approach

Sustainability →	1. Continuity and ownership through building on existing work		
Methods →	2. Partnership working	3. Regional cooperation	4. Capacity development
Principles →	5. Rights-based approach		6. Global frameworks

Figure 1. Approach

The BRDR program's implementation approach (Figure 1.) rests on six core pillars, which provide a flexible approach for enhancing partnerships with key regional and national stakeholders, building on existing best practices, as well as for strengthening technical capacities of government institutions and civil society organizations to integrate gender equality and human rights in DRR. A brief description of the six core pillars is given in the following section:

Continuity and ownership by building on existing work

The importance of social aspects, such as ethnicity, gender, age or other socio-economic factors in the context of disasters and climate change will be emphasized. Through this perspective, the program is built upon existing knowledge and expertise of diverse agencies and partners working at the regional, national and local levels.

Working in partnerships

The BRDR program requires innovative thinking, technical and organizational skillsets, and critical oversight to ensure that every objective and activity is designed in consideration of gender-equality and human rights. The consortium partners will seek to contribute and add value to the existing body of knowledge in partnership with local organizations and agencies to ensure national and local level participation and ownership.

Regional cooperation

Some of the regional platforms and mechanisms that will be utilized to disseminate shared learning, knowledge and good practices include the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN), the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC), and the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC). The RCC, established in 2000, will be strengthened and utilized as a platform for enhancing cooperation among the 26 member countries. Furthermore, UN agencies and other development partners with programs pursuing similar aims will be engaged at the regional and national levels.

Capacity development

Capacity development works to ensure ownership over the process of change for all the involved partners through participation, and by addressing specific needs at all levels. All initiatives will be customized to guarantee people-centered and participatory learning, as well as skill-building relevant to gender-equal, pro-poor, and rights-based approaches.

Rights-based approach

To ensure that no-one is left behind, rights-based approaches will be integrated into deliverables, outputs and outcomes of the program in line with international standards, which provide helpful guidance to meet the DRR and CR needs of children, persons with disabilities, ethnic minorities, and other groups. Rights-based approaches, including those grounded in international human rights law and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), facilitate a whole-of-society perspective on contemporary DRR and CR challenges, whilst providing a framework for designing, exchanging and developing effective practices.

Global frameworks

The BRDR program is designed to support regional and national commitments for enhancing DRR and building resilience as mandated by the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (SFDRR) and the SDGs. Links between the SFDRR, SDGs and the Paris Agreement on Climate Change will be supported by building on current understanding of gender equality, vulnerability, and rights in the context of disasters and climate change.

Photo by ADPC

3. Gender, rights, and resilience

Asia and the Pacific frequently experiences large and small-scale disasters, which trap many countries into a persevering state of "building back." This cycle of disaster recurrence leaves countries with little resources for building resilience or supporting sustainable development. It is, therefore, essential to focus on reducing inequalities within societies, and strengthening people's resilience.

Global frameworks on gender equality, rights, and resilience

Globally faced challenges related to discrimination, poverty, exposure and social vulnerability share gendered aspects, especially in times of disasters, and affect women disproportionately. Along with many other international mandates that address reducing inequalities as a method for building resilience, SDGs recognize enhancing gender equality as a core function. The SDG's Goal 5–achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls–strives towards reducing gender inequalities as a prerequisite for "peaceful, prosperous and sustainable world". Achieving this goal is guided by indicators such as eliminating gender-based violence (GBV), ending trafficking, preventing harmful practices, and ensuring women's participation, all of which will be reflected in the BRDR workstreams.

The SFDRR highlights that "women and their participation is critical to effectively manage disaster risk," and that "empowering women ... to publicly lead and promote gender equitable and universally accessible response, recovery, rehabilitation and reconstruction approaches is key," to resilience.

Governments in the region have shown a strong commitment to these agreements. In 2018, this gained further momentum through the General Recommendation No. 37 of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). This General Recommendation on gender-related dimensions of DRR in the context of climate change highlights gender equality as a factor that will reinforce the resilience of individuals and communities. The BRDR program takes this into account and aims to support ongoing work by the governments of the pilot countries: Nepal, Papua New Guinea and the Philippines.

Rights-based approach

The rights-based approach of the BRDR program puts equality at the centre of DRR and CR initiatives. It draws attention to the differential exposure and vulnerability of people in society, which is caused by factors such as gender inequality, disability, poverty, age and so forth. The need to focus on marginalized groups is highlighted in the SFDRR.

Rights-based approaches to DRR and CR go further than simply calling attention to the specific experience of different groups in society. Informed by international human rights law and the SDGs, the BRDR's rights-based approach draws on international standards relating to poverty reduction, the right to life, food, shelter, health, and other key factors that determine the safety and security of people against disasters.

Women, girls, and the victims versus agent paradigm

Current policies for DRR and CR addressing women are often about conceptualizing their identities as "fixed, centered and uniform – and tied to nature[1]" which contribute to singling women and girls as victims of disasters and climate change. A popular counterargument for this approach highlights women's presumably specialized knowledge about natural resources, or emphasizes their ability to adjust to seasonal constraints, often addressing women as agents of change to achieve inclusion, participation and equality. However, this perspective often fails to consider existing, underlying gender hierarchies or the continuing pattern of inequalities for female participation.

Reshaping gender roles and responsibilities must take place a household level. To achieve this, an alteration in social infrastructure is needed to create an enabling environment for women to operate equally, where they are neither treated as victims of disasters nor as the sole drivers for change.

Intersectionality in the context of gender inequality

Policies, documents and legislations that address marginalized groups such as women, the elderly, or individuals with disabilities may inadvertently characterize them as a homogenous unit for convenience, or due to a limited understanding of vulnerability. To avoid such oversight, the concept of intersectionality will be utilized as a tool to capture dynamics of power, and to depict identities of individuals as a diverse entity, varying in nature. Intersectionality considers how gendered biases are formed and affected by ethnicity, class, race, age, place, and various axes of marginalization and oppression. This multi-level analysis is conducted to contest the traditional "one-size-fits-all" approach, and, on a policy-level to acknowledge multiple identities within groups to holistically address vulnerability.

Challenges of integrating gender and rights

Policies for DRR and CR often pursue an understanding of disasters as an external risk. This approach to disasters as an uncontrollable event, shapes the policies and solutions, which often fail to address the underlying causes behind disasters such as power dynamics, uneven and inequitable socio-economic processes of development, and political dynamics that create different vulnerabilities, capacities, and exposure.

However, according to the results of the scoping report, no single approach or a comprehensive document is available that could be used to integrate equality and rights-based approaches in DRR and CR. Relevant language in policies and frameworks lacks substantial content, and often fall short of covering themes such as discrimination or inequality, which are inherent elements contributing to vulnerability and exposure.

Gender and rights-based approaches in DRR & CR

Due to the challenges, the conundrum of comprehensively and tangibly integrating gender-equal and rights-based approaches in DRR and CR remains unanswered. One proposed approach, under the BRDR program, suggests considering the fields of DRR, development, humanitarian law and gender equality holistically to identify overlaps from existing research in individual practices. To comprehensively address the issue, the program seeks to combine current knowledge, form an integrated approach through innovation and investigation, and find a sustainable solution for utilizing gender and rights-based approaches in DRR and CR.

Most of the current research on gender, rights and resilience in the context of disasters supports some form of transformation or empowerment of individuals, communities, cities or social systems to reduce vulnerability, exposure, and to mitigate disaster risk. This is because, more often than not, existing social norms, practices, governance or physical infrastructure contribute to amplifying risks due to

inadequate integration of inclusive DRR and CR, or due to lack of capacity, resources, and knowledge.

These elements enhance vulnerability and exposure the marginalized groups, as their position is already fragile due to a variety of factors including race, ethnicity, political views, gender, disability, age, religion or sexual orientation. The BRDR program aims to contest the underlying social causes of vulnerability by applying gender-equal, rights-based and pro-poor perspectives while planning and implementing actions under different outcomes.

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4. BRDR Program outcomes: An overview

Outcome 1: Strengthened capacity for regional cooperation to build resilience to future climate and disaster risks in Asia-Pacific

Outcome 1 aims to act as a catalyst for capacity development and collaboration at the regional level. To achieve this, the program aims to develop a sustainable, member-owned platform for regional cooperation to share learnings and knowledge related to inclusive DRR and CR. This will be instigated through consultations and participative approaches to guarantee ownership and ensure that the most relevant knowledge from within countries is utilized to create a holistic understanding of the social context.

The RCC can be considered as a useful mechanism to strengthen connections between countries, organizations and UN agencies working to implement global frameworks and inclusive approaches. It can be used further as a podium to share knowledge and learn from other initiatives. However, the RCC's mechanism needs to be improved to make it more useful and to guarantee sustainability of the BRDR initiative. According to the initial organizational assessments, countries' interest to

participate in the mechanism varies, may be due to a lack of clarity over the structure of annual meetings. The reinforcement of the mechanism will be achieved by involving the RCC members in the planning process, by renewing the membership structure, and by clarifying the role of the RCC.

To promote gender equality in DRR, e-learning modules will be developed and offered through ADPC and partners' e-learning platforms. A better understanding of gender-equal and rights-based approaches to be promoted through the BRDR program is expected to support the deliverance of protection of rights and enhanced genderequality in DRR.

Outcome 2: Increased uptake of risk-informed approaches to development and social protection to reduce disaster and climate vulnerability
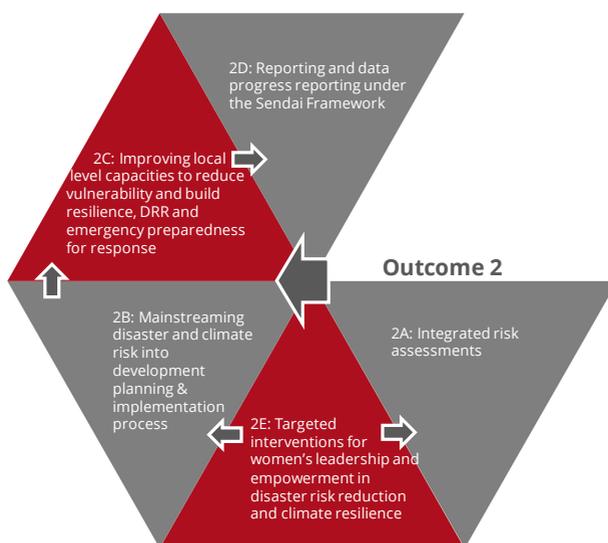

Figure 2. Interlinkages of the workstreams under Outcome 2.

Outcome 2 is designed to build an evidence-base of tested and nationally-owned methods and tools to tangibly operationalize different aspects of global frameworks at regional and local level. It is further divided into five interlinked workstreams (figure 3) which strive towards resilient development through building an understanding of disaster risks and future climate scenarios, and how they interact within various social groups, communities and economic sectors to reduce vulnerability and enhance resilience. Gender-equal risk information is sought to be integrated into

national and sub-national public planning frameworks across sectors. In addition, women's role in DRR is highlighted to support women's empowerment, leadership, and inclusion.

Workstream 2A aims to create and test an adaptable methodology for inclusive, gender equal and rights-based risk assessments to contribute to the overall goal of promoting risk-informed and inclusive DRR and CR in the region.

Workstream 2B aims towards achieving adequate mainstreaming of DRR and CR into development planning across selected sectors. This works to support the BRDR program's efforts to establish methods for supporting the mainstreaming of inclusive DRR and CR in all fields of development.

Workstream 2C aims towards understanding the needs for capacity development to achieve improved competence for preparedness and response initiatives. By building on current programs and projects, the workstream will analyze opportunities for enhancing gender, rights-based and pro-poor perspectives through the delivery of protection and response services tailored to the needs of the vulnerable groups.

Workstream 2D aims to understand country-specific needs to support the processes of collecting, analysing and using disaster-related data, and to support disaggregation in a manner which makes risk-informed, context-specific, and gender-sensitive information readily available when building and assessing people's resilience against disasters, and when aiming to reduce the vulnerability of marginalized people. The intention is to support countries in their efforts to transform databases into coherent, holistic Disaster Information Management Systems (DIMS), and explore the needs for data utilization and analysis to identify best approaches for support.

Workstream 2E aims to complement the gender equality approach of the program with targeted interventions to enhance women's agency by promoting enabling environments for substantive participation and leadership. The objective is to support the roles of women and girls as resourceful actors whose knowledge and experience can improve climate change and DRR measures when included in decision-making.

To achieve Outcome 2, the program aims to support improvements in policies, plans, social services and budgets to enhance gender equality, rights-based, and risk-informed DRR and CR based on the needs and priorities of partners. All of the work conducted under the aforementioned workstreams will be shared through various regional platforms to support the exchange of knowledge and expertise. Furthermore, they will contribute to the e-learning platform as mentioned under Outcome 1, and the information gathered can be used as learning material for member countries and other relevant parties during and after the completion of the BRDR program.

Outcome 3: Enhanced gender equality and rights-based approaches in DRR and CR in the region

Outcome 3 is focused on increasing ADPC's capacity to effectively promote gender-equal DRR and CR. This will be achieved on three fronts: through gender-equal organizational processes and practices; by enhancing capacity for gender-equal and rights-based programs; and more effective participation and coordination with other actors in gender and DRR. This, in turn, is envisaged to increase ADPC's institutional capacity to conduct DRR and CR programs and projects in the region with an enhanced gender equality, pro-poor, and rights-based approach.

5. Research Findings

Outcome 1: Strengthened capacity for regional cooperation to build resilience to future climate and disaster risks in Asia-Pacific

Findings

The research on gender and rights found that while underlying causes of risk, unequal power structures and dynamics are recognized, a greater understanding as well as methods for identifying and addressing them are required in the context of DRR and CR.

Language of gender and rights used in policies does not necessarily translate into greater gender equality at the local levels. Therefore, complexities of local socio-economic realities and resilience building processes need to be analyzed with a special focus on national as well as local level policies. In addition, it is important to generate more resources to implement policies, carryout capacity needs assessment to identify gaps, and develop methods for interventions.

At regional and sub-regional levels, references to gender equality and inclusive approaches are relatively common, but they are largely used without addressing

the social context. Inadequate integration of gender-equal and human rights-based perspectives persists, which will be addressed through the BRDR program.

Challenges

In Nepal and the Philippines, consultations helped to identify a number of challenges relating to policy formulation and implementation processes at the national level, including:

- Inadequate implementation of policies
- Limited local level capacity and governance
- Limited engagement of the private sector
- Lack of coordination between officials, Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs)
- Lack of capacity for gender analysis in vulnerability assessments
- Inadequate data on disabilities
- Limited gender mainstreaming
- Incomprehensive definition of "vulnerable groups"

Further research, information exchange, and capacity building in the region is required to address the complexities in local socio-economic realities and to strengthen regional cooperation and policy implementation. It is envisaged that facilitation of information exchange and knowledge sharing through the RCC, combined with a regional online training course on gender-equal, pro-poor, and rights-based DRR and CR, will be efficient and effective methods to begin addressing some of these issues.

Areas of action

Ownership: Giving attention to multidimensional aspects of vulnerability and exposure for risk reduction can be a sensitive topic due to underlying social infrastructure or other normative practices which may increase inequality. Due to the cultural bearing of the aforementioned social complexities, many of these issues may often be left unaddressed. Hence, regional ownership over the initiatives is required to achieve the full intended impact through social change, which cannot be carried out externally.

Capacity: At the regional level, capacity development is required to facilitate the progress towards resilience for the marginalized groups. It consists of instigating collective momentum and providing guidance and tools for countries to fully understand and appreciate the linkages between rights and gender in risk reduction and resilience. The process needs to be participative and should take place on a high-level platform where gender equality and rights-based approaches can be discussed and experiences shared through constructive dialogue.

Additionally, participation in capacity building activities is not directed only to the governmental level; local groups advocating equality, rights and women's

empowerment may provide crucial information about the local needs, and could contribute to the sustainability of the program in terms of continuity. Inclusion of women's governance machinery, women's networks and organizations in the DRR and CR infrastructure at the local level could be a way to leverage equality and rights-based approaches into the regional legislation, policies and frameworks.

Language of Gender and Rights: Stronger gendered language will be suggested as a key to shifting focus towards changing the roles of women instead of merely addressing them as victims of disasters. The BRDR program aims to address "women and other vulnerable groups" through focusing on the underlying causes of vulnerability, and this approach should ideally be mirrored in country-level policies and frameworks. However, the approach will also include recognizing the roles of men and boys in the context of disasters and climate change to ensure that all work is done by addressing societal system as a whole. Changing normative practices or roles of women towards gender equality always requires the contribution from all members of a society to guarantee sustainability and empowerment of women and girls.

Outcome 2: Increased uptake of risk-informed approaches to development and social protection to reduce disaster and climate vulnerability

To achieve the increased uptake of risk-informed approaches to development and social protection, Outcome 2 is divided into five interlinked workstreams which all strive towards this end goal. All the work will also support the efforts to achieve the overall aim of the BRDR program by design, which is rooted into global mandates such as the SFDRR, International Human Rights agreements, and the SDGs. The following sections (Workstreams 2A-2E) will discuss the findings, challenges and areas of action which have been identified in the pilot countries.

Workstream 2A: Integrated risk assessments

During the inception phase, existing tools, methods and practices for disaster and climate risk assessments were explored to identify gaps, needs, and the use of sex, age, and disability disaggregated (SADD) data to determine the requirements for the future work.

Findings

Different methodologies for assessing disaster risks are currently being utilized, including climate risk, multi-hazard, and hazard-specific risk assessments focused on the general population, infrastructure or vulnerable people. However, there is still a knowledge gap in how to integrate and operationalize gender-equal and rights-based approaches while carrying out risk assessments. The research findings suggest that while most of the documents assessed include references to gender and rights, they are largely without contextual substance. Many of the

globally recognized frameworks and guidelines lack adequate references to human rights, even though they are technically built on rights-based approaches. This reinforces the need to support the development of inclusive risk assessments and methodologies and an evidence base which the future work can draw from.

By contrasting risk assessments to standards as set by international human rights declarations, it is possible to determine whether frameworks actually serve their purpose from a rights-based perspective. For example, principles of transparency and participation require "active, free and meaningful" participation from all relevant stakeholders, thus indicating that within this context, knowledge, perceptions, beliefs and priorities of the people living in the assessed region are considered as an elemental part of risk assessments. Furthermore, right to equality and non-discrimination emphasizes the importance of addressing gender, age, ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation or gender identity within the context of risk assessments; and it is the obligation of the conducting party to pay attention to the needs and capabilities of marginalized groups who are often overlooked due to their status. However, many current methodologies are often created by external experts who do not include the contribution of local people with specific knowledge of the contextual challenges. In addition, approaches are rarely tailored to address risks faced by marginalized individuals within diverse communities.

Challenges

- Substantive human rights standards are not fully integrated in existing risk assessment methodologies
- Rights are not addressed systematically or comprehensively
- Existing risk assessments often do not address structural causes of exposure and vulnerability of women and girls (such as laws, norms or other cultural practices)
- Use of SADD data to support risk assessments is limited and tends to take place only at the local level

If one progresses further into the intersections between rights and disasters, it should be noted that an individual's fundamental rights are affected by catastrophic events in an inestimable number of ways. For example, loss of identity documents may create issues to access education, healthcare and other social rights, or may lead to statelessness. However, similar instances are not considered as "risks" nor are they addressed in the context of DRR or CR, let alone risk assessments. Thus, it could be argued that seemingly human rights-based approaches are not de facto rights-based.

Areas of action

A solution as proposed in this workstream is to review and evaluate international human rights laws and existing guidelines to develop a comprehensive checklist for rights-based considerations when conducting risk assessment. Furthermore, a gender-equal risk assessment would capture norms and practices in risk assessment

as opposed to current practices that are more focused on women's capacities and vulnerabilities, rather than the power dynamics, or normative structures which uphold inequality.

A substantive risk assessment should not only be inclusive, but it should draw attention to human rights at risk during disasters. International humanitarian law instruments could be used to develop a comprehensive set of risk indicators to link risks directly into loss of rights.

Workstream 2B: Mainstreaming disaster and climate risk into development planning and implementation processes

During the inception phase, different existing mechanisms and initiatives for mainstreaming DRR and CR in Nepal and the Philippines were explored to establish the needs and gaps for future work. The extent of the integration of gender-equal and rights-based approaches was evaluated during the process to determine best approaches for mainstreaming inclusive DRR and CR into relevant sectors.

Disasters and climate-related events often impact development, and they can obstruct, or even reverse the development gains. Furthermore, increasingly frequent weather anomalies and disasters impact societies and their economies negatively at national, sub-national and regional levels. In such context, the lack of, or poorly planned development results in increased vulnerability of critical infrastructures and people. Mainstreaming DRR and CR should take place at all levels of relevant development sectors, which the BRDR program aims to achieve by addressing the growing issue of inadequately integrated DRR and CR in development planning.

Findings

There are existing frameworks and guidelines for mainstreaming DRR and CR, conducted by multiple different organizations, and some of them have included gender-equal and rights-based approaches, as well as defined the methods for monitoring and evaluation. In the context of Asia and the Pacific, the governments have understood the importance of mainstreaming due to mandates as set in the Sendai Framework, in which it is suggested that risk reduction measures should be addressed holistically as a wider development issue on a societal level.

Nepal: While mainstreaming DRR and CR into development has been recognized as imperative, our research suggests that there are still persisting challenges when it comes to risk-informed, gender-equal and rights-based development planning. The newly drafted Constitution of Nepal highlights risk management as a necessity, clear allocation of responsibilities exists, and initiatives for mainstreaming DRR into planning are in place. However, responsibility over these efforts remains scattered across different ministries. Due to the nature of these stand-alone projects and dispersed responsibilities, DRR and CR in development tends to be sector-specific and only relevant to some fields. Furthermore, lack of local

capacity, coordination, and resources at the district levels often hinder the effective implementation of risk-informed development.

The Philippines: The Philippines Climate Change Act, National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Plan, National Climate Change Action Plan, Framework Strategy for Climate Change and Development Plan, all mark the process towards sustainability and resilience. Plans include cross-cutting elements for risk-informed sectoral planning, and often mention gender and rights-based approaches. However, local stakeholder consultations revealed that local level implementation of both, DRR and CR remain unsuccessful due to vague understanding of the interlinkages between the concepts. Additionally, similar to Nepal, local level capacity and lack of resources often prevent the successful integration of DRR and CR into development planning, and considerations for gender-equality and human-rights remains limited.

Challenges

- Budgetary limitations at the sub-national and local levels
- Limited capacity among the local human resources
- Absence of methods for measuring outcomes of the past initiatives
- No method for assessing risk and the lack of risk information to support choosing of appropriate, consistent mechanisms to address project designs and development contextually
- Major gap remains among the key stakeholders in the understanding of the benefits of mainstreaming DRR and CR in development
- Gender-equal and rights-based approaches are addressed in policies and documents, but they do not translate into ground reality

Areas of action

Sub-national and local levels require national and sectoral capacity of key personnel to enhance the incentive to adapt risk-informed planning in their respective fields. Risk information should be easily available and usable, and a coherent under-standing as to why DRR and CR needs to be integrated. It is suggested that development through inclusive, risk-based approaches should not be seen as a burden, but rather as an investment to achieve resilient development for all. Integrated risk information, and an understanding of how vulnerability is shaped by intersectional inequality needs to be considered to establish an enabling environment for rights-based, gender-equal resilient development.

The scoping report also suggests that the planners and administrators at the local-level are overburdened with drafting various plans including the Local Adaptation Plan of Action & Local Disaster Risk Management Plans (LDCRP), Nepal. UNDP is currently leading this initiative aimed at drafting guidelines for the LDCRP's, but since the initiative is still in its inception phase, this workstream aims to provide technical support to ensure the LDCRP integrates a gender-equal and rights- based approach from the very beginning.

Workstream 2C: Improving local level capacities to reduce vulnerability and build resilience in DRR and Emergency Preparedness for Response

Within the context of localization of humanitarian aid, in which the local actors are recognized as key centers of operations, this workstream aims to strengthen local capacity for better preparedness for response.

Most humanitarian aid distributed in the aftermath of natural or man-made catastrophic events is delivered by local actors. Even international operators often rely on local contextual knowledge and the skills to reach isolated regions. These local operators may vary from NGOs, CBOs, religious institutions and local governments to loosely organize self-help groups or volunteers. However, the diverse characteristics do not remove their relevance as the most effective emergency responders and aid deliverers in various situations. Thus, localization and capacity building are crucial at the localities to guarantee effective, immediate response and risk-informed preparedness initiatives.

Findings

The global localization agenda, as set out in the Grand Bargain of 2016, Charter for Change, and the ASEAN Vision for 2025, emphasize the need for coordination, cooperation and the engagement of local stakeholders as strategic imperatives. Furthermore, gender-related and rights-based aspects are often integrated within these frameworks. Addressing the specific needs of women, girls, and other potentially more vulnerable groups is required, for example, in the form of providing sexual and reproductive health services, women-friendly water and sanitation facilities, prevention of GBV, among other initiatives. However, limited understanding of how different gender and rights issues could be adequately addressed during emergency response is still widely prevalent. Also, synergies of action among the range of parties in emergency response could be hindered due to lack of common and contextual understanding, and standard procedures on gender equality and protection. With the support of aforementioned international strategies and frameworks, the BRDR program seeks to address these issues in response and preparedness activities.

Challenges

- It is still a challenge to translate gender-equal and human-rights based policies into concrete actions
- Lack of guidelines, tools or minimum requirements for inclusive emergency response and preparedness
- Citizen registration is not entitled to women or marginalized groups in some countries
- Property ownership is not always granted for women or people from lower castes

- Limited understanding of gender and rights in this context
- Lack of qualified senior women staff to take leadership positions
- No country-specific or shared interpretation of inclusive approaches, and limited representation of the marginalized people
- Limited participation of women-led organizations

Areas of action

This workstream aims to support, facilitate, and amplify regional and country-level efforts towards enhancing gender-equal and rights-inclusive emergency preparedness for response. It does this by focusing on: (a) protection in emergency preparedness for response through capacity development of the local actors; (b) exploring practical and locally-owned options to increase inclusion and participation in local risk governance and crisis intervention; and (c) building a way towards equitable and inclusive emergency response services that consider gender and rights of the most vulnerable. This will be achieved through the following steps:

Advocacy and sensitization on gender-equal and rights-based emergency preparedness and response.

Supporting the Asian Preparedness Partnership (APP) program on its localization initiative to fully integrate gender-equal and rights-based approaches. The pilot countries, the Philippines and Nepal are members of the APP, and thus the BRDR program will continue to link its interventions with the APP.

Coordination is crucial for achieving well delivered operations and services, especially during phases of response. In major events, influx of resources or uncontrolled operations will only enhance the negative effects on affected populations, or to the systems as a whole. Thus, localization initiatives should recognize the roles of governments and official systems as a facilitator to enhance operations with local level organisations, self-help groups, CBOs and communities (see figure 7). Public Private Partnerships are also imperative to protect the realization of adequate preparedness and response, especially in a context where critical infrastructures are controlled by the private sector.

Participation: Turning humanitarian standards, protection, dignity and equality into relevant, contextual and practical reality for ground level actors often remain as an enigma in response and preparedness. Various vulnerabilities associated with rights and gender may be intensified in rural context or among the groups marginalized due to caste, class or religion. Thus promoting gender-equal and human-rights approaches in the context of localized emergency response is required to reduce their vulnerability. Women-led groups, associations, NGOs and CSOs can be a major source of resources for local governments in emergencies, hence providing participation should be considered as an opportunity to improve local disaster management.

Strategic planning is required from the government levels to activate and upkeep an effective incident command and coordination system which includes NGOs, CSOs and other actors in the field. To bridge these gaps between multi-tier actors, knowledge sharing, and south-south learning is required to support an effective implementation of initiatives with best approaches.
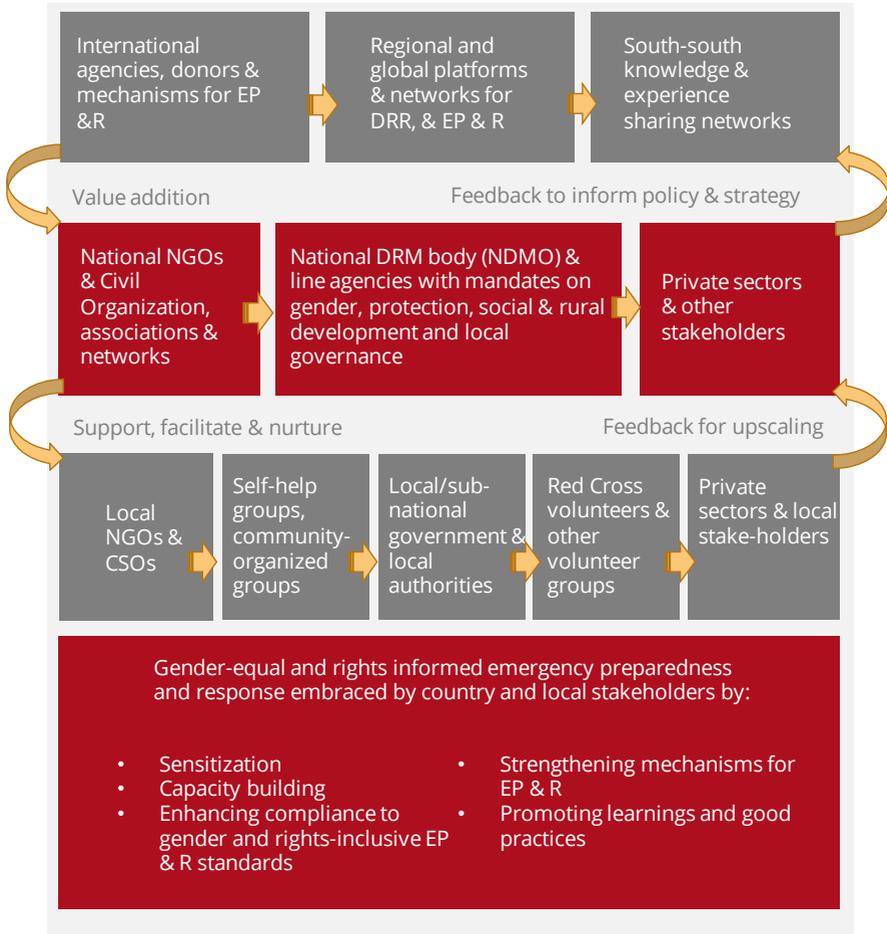

Figure 3. Conceptual framework & key interventions for the workstreams as proposed under workstream 2C

Workstream 2D: Reporting and data

This workstream focuses on supporting countries to report under the SFDRR, which is aligned with the SDGs Progress Framework and utilizes gender equality and rights-based approaches. During the inception phase, status of the global Sendai monitoring approach, existing regional initiatives for supporting the Sendai Framework Monitoring, and the status of non-compliant Disaster Information Management Systems was explored in Nepal and the Philippines.

In 2016, a technical session was conducted during the Asian Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (AMCDRR), in which several recommendations and solutions were proposed to establish a Sendai Monitoring System to track progress during the SFDRR implementation. Emphasis was given to indicators being realistic and practical, and it was recognized that capacity issues need resolving in terms of data collection, collation and analysis at the national and sub-national levels.

Again, as it has been recognized to be a common theme across the BRDR program, citizen participation and ownership is also required to support awareness-raising and understanding of risk through self-assessments. This would further enhance the collection of loss data from local levels, covering even small scale and "silent" disasters, such as droughts. However, it was suggested that data analysis and storage should be centralized for effective dissemination and access.

In 2018, The Sendai Framework Monitor was launched to track progress of the implementation of Sendai targets, and to help countries develop DRR strategies, make risk-informed policy decisions and to guide in the allocation of resources. The Sendai Data Readiness Review was developed to assess countries' capacity to collect, analyze, and disseminate data, and it focuses on four key findings:

- Data availability to report each of the indicators
- Data quality to guarantee risk-informed decision making
- Data accessibility, which evaluates databases, protocols and mechanisms
- Application of disaster-related data into policy and investment decision-making

According to the Readiness review[2], collated from 25 countries in the Asia and the Pacific, data is more so available on physical damage and human impact, and less on economic losses, specific asset losses and infrastructure, cultural heritage or disruptions to basic services. Resources required to address the gaps in the data collection are often stated to be financial resources, technology transfer and capacity building. Out of the 25 nations, no country currently has all the data required.

The Asia Regional Plan and the biennial Action Plan are currently being utilized to guide the implementation of the SFDRR in Asia and the Pacific. Recommendations can be extracted from the action plan to strengthen and sustain data ecosystems required now, and in the future.

Findings

It was observed that synergies exist between the reporting of SFDRR and SDGs through the Sendai Framework Monitoring System which has been established by the UNISDR. However, an online training system, maintained by ISDR, which supports the countries in the process of monitoring is yet to be customized to be context-specific at the country level. Thus, the findings indicate that support for countries to establish internal-governmental mechanisms to coordinate data collection and input is needed. Capacity building support is also required in the BRDR pilot countries to set up and establish a standardized disaster statistics system that complies with the Sendai Framework Monitoring System.

Challenges

Nepal: The country has experienced delays to meet the requirements as set in the Sendai Framework due to having no means to centralize, collect, store, utilize or disaggregate disaster data. Recurring disasters contribute to the slow-paced progress. Multiple agencies and committees are responsible for collecting and analysing data, however the portals in which data is presented are not comprehensive Disaster Information Management Systems (DIMS), and the information is not often linked to other relevant databases, such as meteorological information.

The Philippines: A national database for collecting disaster loss data does exist. It is disaggregated by event, hazard, geography, and records at all scales, including small-scale disasters. However, lack of capacity and/or resources and training prevents the full collection, analysis and application of disaster data. Not all actors have the required resources or expertise to conduct gender analysis or to understand the complex dimensions of vulnerability to utilize SADD data, even when it is available.

Areas of action

The BRDR program aims to support the pilot countries in their efforts to strive towards Sendai compliance, but with added elements of defining what the progress is for. Collecting data for the sake of accountability and reporting does not result in positive changes; the BRDR seeks to establish and support methods so that the data can be utilized and disseminated to produce strongly evidenced, and tangible change at the ground level. Supporting the creation of adequate databases with knowledge of disaster losses, and how the diverseness of vulnerability is represented in them is imperative to evaluate the needs for future work. Additional recommendations, in-line with the SFDRR and other workstreams include:

- Develop sustainable, transparent data systems
- Capacity development for parties responsible for data collection analysis, and dissemination
- Support for developing and maintaining technical resources such as databases
- Shared understanding for countries to establish baseline and methodology to collect and monitor data

- Ensuring that all indicators are available by 2019 and that minimum standards are met
- Coordinating with in-country stakeholders
- Ensuring that indicators address specific aspects such as participation, women's leadership, livelihoods, access to information, etc.
- Evaluate the adaptability of existing Disaster Information Management System for retrofitting (Nepal)
- Identify capacity building strategies (the Philippines)
- Identify customized indicators to cover small-scale disasters (the Philippines)

Workstream 2E: Targeted interventions for women's leadership and empowerment in DRR and CR

This workstream focuses on supporting gender mainstreaming in other workstreams as well as targeted interventions to upkeep gender and protection in DRR and CR in pilot countries. The scoping exercise analyzed specific disaster-related gender and protection concerns, and suggested options for taking these concerns forward through a set of key activities.

Women's leadership and empowerment in DRR and CR, must be founded on a contextual understanding of the current situation in the respective countries. The approach was built around key research questions which aid in the assessment of social contexts.
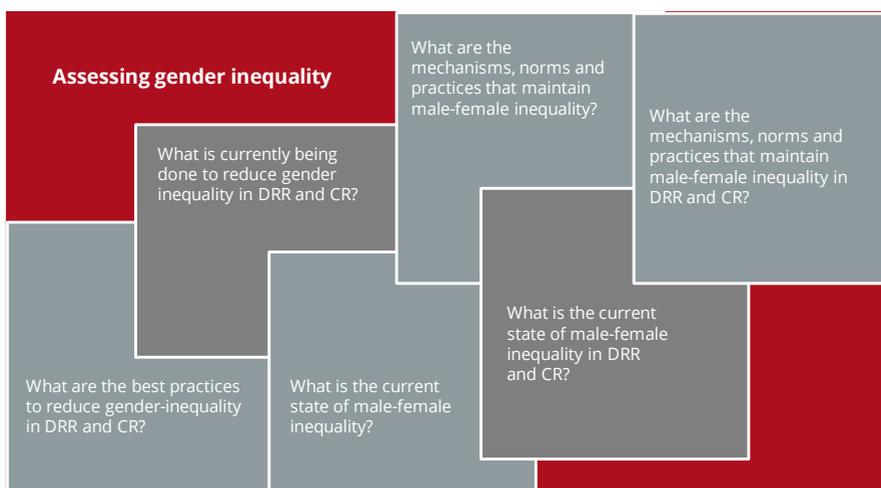

Figure 4. Research framework for assessing the dimensions of gender inequality in the context of DRR and CR

Findings

The under-representation of women is a global phenomenon. Gender norms often discourage women from seeking positions of power or decision-making. The price women pay when they break those norms by participating in a male-dominated environment is commonly overlooked. In many social environments, "leadership" and the associated traits are often perceived to be masculine characteristics not appropriate for women.

Furthermore, women are often categorized as "vulnerable groups" with focus on the needs and vulnerabilities rather than participation or leadership that could provide opportunities for women and girls to improve their position in a social setting, inherently opposing such change. The work that women are doing to reduce the negative impact of disasters is often not recognized as such.

Challenges

Women's leadership in DRR and CR is sometimes inhibited by social norms and practices in their immediate communities as well as the unequal distribution of unpaid household work. Even where these do not prevent the nominal participation of women in decision-making bodies, they hinder their substantial participation. Where institutional barriers to women's leadership are addressed but social norms and practices are not, women pay a heavy price for leadership. Nevertheless, women's substantial participation in DRR and CR decision-making is an important step towards ensuring DRR and CR issues, that affect women more than men, receive adequate attention and resources.

The workstream will also amplify the power and voice of women already working on women-specific disaster concerns in the preparedness phase. Violence often plays a key role in the dynamics in which whereby disasters bring the strongest setbacks to the most vulnerable.

Women's groups are currently doing important pre-disaster work on preventing post-disaster occurrences of GBV and forced prostitution or early marriages. The BRDR program will work alongside these women's groups to analyze and identify what works in preventing these forms of GBV in the pre-disaster phase. Generating, documenting and sharing of best practices will recognize and amplify not only women's leadership and agency but also the knowledge generated and used by women activists in DRR. Reducing the violence and exploitation that women and girls face during disasters also increases women's agency.

Areas of action

The main contribution of this workstream is to enhance women's agency in DRR and CR by recognizing and amplifying women's de facto leadership on pre-disaster prevention of disaster-related violence against women; and strengthening efforts to include women in DRR and CR decision making.

The workstream is aiming to give a voice for women affected by disasters, to women addressing issues that affect women and girls, as well as to design interventions to include women in decision-making entities to have an impact on the social environment in hopes of providing substantial and sustainable participation.

Outcome 3: Enhanced gender-equality and rights-based approaches in disaster risk management and climate resilience in the region

To achieve Outcome 3, the program aims to strengthen ADPC's institutional capacity to integrate gender equality and rights-based approaches to DRR. In particular, this enhanced capacity will be used to ensure that gender-equal and rights-based approaches are integrated into each workstream carried out to achieve Outcome 2.

Findings

Since 2014, ADPC has strived to integrate gender equality and right-based approaches across the institutional structure, organization and mandates; to strengthen institutional capacity, integrate gender equal and rights-based approaches across our DRR thematic focus, and enhance the DRR services we deliver. However, to ensure the success of the BRDR program, ADPC's internal capacity needed reinforcing to adequately integrate gender-equal and rights-based approaches into all outcomes, activities and workstreams, and to further support their integration into DRR and CR. This will be supported by the knowledge and expertise of ADPC's partners, SEI, MSB and RWI as well as other specialists and advisors.

Areas of action

An institutional framework needs to be established to guarantee that gender-equality, accountability and transparency govern ADPC's operations. It is often seen how gender and inclusion are addressed with no means to measure success or to evaluate what achieving equality requires. ADPC aims to avoid this with a gender programming strategy which institutionalizes gender equality into its core goals and mission statement, and establishes minimum standards and guidelines tailored for each department.

However, understanding the interrelatedness of gender-equal and rights–based approaches is still a global concern. It is hoped that the work conducted under the BRDR program will significantly contribute to transforming the current approaches towards substantial and sustainable, inclusive and DRR and CR.

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6. Monitoring and evaluation

DRR and CR projects need to be systematically monitored and evaluated to track progress, verify the achievement of intended results and to assess their relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability.

The research conducted under different workstreams suggests that while a lot of good work has been planned and carried out, not much is known about the actual impact or effectiveness of this work. To avoid this common pitfall, a monitoring and evaluation framework has been designed to enable measurement of success in the future, and for monitoring progress during the next five years.

The framework is intended to fulfil three primary objectives:

1. Facilitate responsive results-based management
2. Ensure accountability and transparency to program stakeholders
3. Provide credible evidence on program effectiveness

The framework will be further guided by following design principles:

Credibility	Evidence is generated and analysed using rigorous and defensible approaches, methods and tools.
Flexibility	Measurement approaches are sufficiently flexible to ensure learning can be incorporated into program design and subsequent monitoring and evaluation.
Timeliness	Relevant data is available at the right stages in the program management cycle to facilitate program improvement and to assess program effectiveness.
Utility	Data generated through monitoring and evaluation activities is linked to a clearly defined use.
Holism	Monitoring requirements are designed to complement the evaluation approach, and both quantitative and qualitative data are used and valued in each.

Program design and challenges

Despite the seeming simplicity of the BRDR program, the structure belies a complicated reality which poses a number of challenges for monitoring and evaluation.

· **Understanding policy change:** The program aims to affect change within what can broadly be defined as a 'policy sphere.' Policy spheres (which include both policy formulation and implementation) are complex and contested arenas of action where change is difficult to predict and does not operate in a mechanistic or linear manner. Rather, the program will be one of many contributors to a policy dialogue in which any number of factors may influence the form and substance of any changes that occur.

· **Operational complexity:** The fact that the program itself is diverse and multifaceted adds further complexity. The program incorporates seven distinct workstreams with varying degrees of interdependence and interconnectedness at sub-national, national and regional levels. Each of these workstreams further involves a diversity of locations, stakeholders and target groups. Any impacts and longer-term outcomes will, therefore, be the result of a complex interplay between many influencing factors operating within a multiplicity of work streams, target groups, stakeholders, locations and levels of change.

- **Emergent design and understanding:** Given that the program is designed to produce and apply new knowledge, the program logic (and therefore how we measure and understand change) is to an extent emergent. Put simply, this means that the exact form of some expected outcomes will emerge during program implementation. For example, we do not yet know what it looks like to have various DRR practices strengthened with gender, rights and pro poor approaches; indeed, this is the very gap in knowledge and practice that the programme aims to address. This means that baseline/endline measures of change (before and after calculations) are not appropriate for the impact and many higher-level outcomes.

- **Problem of causality:** Combined, the issues above pose some challenges to how we measure change and determine causality. Even if it were possible and appropriate, unless we can control for the many and complex factors that may have contributed to bringing a change about, baseline/endline measures tell us nothing about what has caused an observable change. Controlling for these factors using experimental or quasi-experimental approaches is not possible given the heterogeneity of target groups and breadth and scope of programming. The M&E approach therefore needs to contend as much with understanding the process of change as with identifying any changes themselves.

Approach and rationale

To meet these challenges and to achieve the M&E objectives above, the M&E approach centers on investigating and understanding the casual mechanisms that contribute to producing an outcome or impact.

Referred to here as 'contribution mapping and analysis[3] this approach makes use of a combination of quantitative and qualitative data and methods to build evidence on the process of change. The credibility of evidence is then assessed to establish the extent to which each 'contribution claim[4]' can be attributed to the programme intervention. Collectively, this builds a picture of how change occurs, and the contribution made by the BRDR program.

In this approach, output and outcome monitoring and the mid-term evaluation aim to progressively 'evidence' their way up the intervention logic, establishing step-by-step each causal link. In the process, valuable information on barriers and enablers of change is identified, which is fed back into program design and implementation. Program design is ,therefore, iterative and dynamic rather than a one-time 'set and forget' process.

At the end of the program, the final evaluation aims to fill in any gaps in understanding the process of change, with a particular focus on evidencing causal pathways to higher-level outcomes and assessing alternative explanations for any observed changes. This is then assessed to draw conclusions about the program's contribution to change.

The approach is carried out according to four broad stages:

- The intervention is designed according to a reasoned and detailed theory of change (ToC). The chain of results and causal assumptions therein are plausible, sound, informed by existing research and literature, and supported by key stakeholders.

- Output monitoring takes place to ensure that the outputs are provided as outlined in the ToC. A record of these, who they have been delivered to, their intended target groups and intended use is kept. This forms the basis for subsequent outcome monitoring and evaluation. Any deviation from the ToC is documented and should be reflected in modifications to the ToC.

- Outcome monitoring together with mid-term and final evaluations are used to verify the ToC. The ToC is verified by gathering evidence on the chain of expected results and assessing whether each causal assumption holds true. Information should also be collected on other potential reasons for the observed changes that go beyond the program intervention. It is important to note, that the ToCs are intended to be iterative and should be adapted throughout implementation as evidence emerges on what is working and what is not. Any changes to the ToCs should be explained, documented and accompanied by supporting evidence.

- Evaluation and analysis is used to account for other influencing factors. Context and other factors influencing the intervention are assessed and are either shown not to have made a significant contribution or, if they did, their relative contribution is recognised. This can be achieved, for example, by practical application of Bayesian logic .

Practical implications

The success of this approach requires that monitoring and evaluation be seen as integral component of responsive and adaptive program management. M&E is not synonymous with reporting, and data requirements cannot simply be forgotten about until there is a requirement to report to program stakeholders. Rather, program staff need to collect and analyse data throughout program implementation and ensure any learning is used to improve program design and execution.

Key practical considerations required to ensure the success of the approach include:

- **Centrality of the intervention logic:** At the core of this approach lies the intervention logic (defined in the form of program theories of change). The theories of change express the assumed causal logic leading from the provision of program outputs to long-term change, and in so doing form the basis for monitoring and evaluation. Recognizing that the process of change is both complex and dynamic, the theories of change and associated evidence requirements should be reviewed and, if necessary, modified as our under-standing of the process of changes evolves. Any changes should be documented with a clear rationale and reference to associated evidence justifying the change.

- **Output monitoring:** Output monitoring evidences the provision of goods and services to program recipients. Usually, this means that data is generated from administrative records rather than through separate data collection methods and tools. It is important to ensure that administrative records capture details of output delivery required for follow-up through outcome monitoring and evaluation. This includes details of the specific good or service provided, contact details of the recipients, date of delivery and the intended use, target groups, and location.

- **Outcome monitoring:** Outcome monitoring focuses on immediate causal assumptions first (immediate outcomes) and then explores outward from this according to the theory of change. Immediate outcomes usually aim to establish if and how program outputs have been used and any changes in knowledge and attitudes resulting from program outputs. From there changes in practice among recipients and influence beyond program recipients is explored. This can involve a range of methods with each outcome considered on a case-by-case basis.

- **Regular program review:** Regular review of data against the program theories of change is required to ensure learning is integrated into further imple-mentation and that the intervention logic is maintained. Program reviews should be used to assess progress against the theory of change and to identify evidence gaps requiring further exploration. Evidence gaps can be addressed through further monitoring or by inclusion in program evaluations.

- **Mid-term evaluation:** The Terms of Reference for mid-term evaluation should be developed after a regular program review. The evaluation should focus on filling in evidence gaps in the theory of change, exploring key causal mechanisms and assessing alternative explanations for observed changes. The methodology for the evaluation should respond to the specific questions outlined in the Terms of Reference.

- **Final evaluation:** The Terms of Reference for the final evaluation should focus on evidencing remaining causal links and establishing an unbroken causal pathway from outputs to higher-level outcomes/impact. It should also establish a structure for weighing of evidence to assess the program's contribution to change in a transparent and credible manner. The strength of the final evaluation will depend on the quality and quantity of evidence produced during monitoring and mid-term evaluation.

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7. Conclusion

The objective of the BRDR program is to achieve inclusive and climate-adaptive DRR in Asia and the Pacific. By utilizing the RCC and other regional platforms, the BRDR program will contribute tangibly to a safer, sustainable and resilient future for all peoples in the region. While the initial focus of the program is on the pilot countries, best practices and knowledge gathered over the life of the program will be disseminated throughout the region.

The inception phase has established a solid foundation for the program to make sure the implementation phase is guided by approaches such as sustainability and measurability. The program will also contribute to global research on the integration of rights and gender into DRR and CR as these topics still need to be explored at a greater length.

This report has summarized the current situation, challenges and areas of future actions under each outcome. The BRDR is a forward-looking program and will continue to remain dynamic by conducting research studies, forging partnerships, delivering new knowledge products, and enhancing capacities of a range of actors over the next four years.

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BRDR program partners:

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MSB — Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency

SEI — Stockholm Environment Institute

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