

GFDRR in Vietnam: Country Snapshot

Vietnam is one of the most disaster prone countries in the world. With a coastline stretching 3,200 km, an estimated 70 percent of the population living in the low lying Red River and Mekong Deltas and its precarious location on the Pacific Ring of Fire, this rapidly developing country has a lot at stake. Susceptible to typhoons, tropical storms, floods, drought, sea water intrusion, landslides, forest fires and occasional earthquakes, the country faces a constant barrage of natural hazards, many of which may increase as global warming continues. With a grant of about \$1 million from the GFDRR, the World Bank is working with the Government of Vietnam to (i) integrate disaster risk reduction into ongoing development initiatives in the Northern Highlands, (ii) improve drainage models for low-lying coastal cities, (iii) provide city managers with a tool to assess and improve their cities' disaster preparedness, (iv) increase communities' awareness of and resilience to natural hazards, and (v) provide an overview of current tools to finance disaster losses.

Mainstreaming Disaster Risk Reduction into Development Programming

In the Northern Provinces, where flash floods caused heavy damage in August 2008, disaster risk reduction is being incorporated into all components of a major World Bank development project aimed at poverty reduction and livelihood development. Activities include community awareness-raising events, disaster risk mitigation training, and the inclusion of disaster risk considerations in investment management and infrastructure. To support overall risk finance structures GFDRR has funded several risk finance reports to assist the Government in reviewing available risk financing options for future natural disaster losses, including reserve funds, contingent credit, and insurance. The study is a first step toward adoption of risk transfer mechanisms that have been successfully used in other countries to cope with the economic impacts of major disasters.

Strengthening Capacity for Disaster Risk Reduction

Given the interconnected nature of climate change adaptation and disaster risk GFDRR resources have been allocated for analytical and advisory works on the issue of climate change adaptation. The support includes assessing the impact of climate change on existing urban drainage systems and developing advanced system designs with sufficient capacity to handle more frequent storms, increased rainfall, and sea level rise. Under the Climate Resilient Cities Technical Assistance project, local officials in Hanoi, Dong Hoi, and Can Tho have partnered with the World Bank to develop Local Resilience Action Plans (LRAP). These LRAPs are developed through a systematic and participatory process of collecting existing data and information -- on land use and infrastructure, people and the economy, hazard profile and potential climate impacts, and future growth -- which is used for spatial analysis at the city and ward levels in order to identify vulnerabilities for which adaptation options are then framed and evaluated.

With GFDRR support, a consortium of government agencies, donors, and NGOs working in the field of disaster risk management have been involved in a communication program on Community Based Disaster Risk Reduction (CBDRM). The program includes a documentary video produced which highlights effective local risk management solutions and lessons learned and a TV panel discussion on how to effectively implement CBDRM in Vietnam. Both of the documentary and the panel discussion were broadcast on Vietnam Television, in support of the Government's new CBDRM program which aims to reach over 10,000 communes nation-wide over the next decade. The program will also support a national photo competition highlighting disaster preparedness and response.