

Can disaster impact assessment systems help mainstream disaster risk reduction into development process?

Press release
11th February 2009

Disasters are not destined but designed by conscious and unconscious human interventions adversarial to the course of ecology and natural environment. The development interventions that ignore the subsequent emergence of related risks in social and environmental domains play a critical role in creating frequent disasters.

In order to ensure that a particular development intervention is not posing any threats to the environment Environmental impact assessments (EIA) have been introduced in Sri Lanka in the 1980s. However, when the recent disaster situations are reviewed, it is increasingly obvious that the existing EIA process have to be strengthened to identify and assess the disaster risks of development interventions. It is also noted that the development projects which do not require EIA would also induce disasters. Therefore, there is a need to consider disaster risk for any development project in disaster prone areas irrespective of its size and magnitude. Disaster Management Center of Sri Lanka and Practical Action initiated a dialog on Disaster Impact Assessment (DIA) system to be developed in addressing these issues and mainstreaming disaster risk reduction (DRR) into development process.

The proposed DIA system argues that the potential disaster risk of any development intervention should be assessed in the planning/designing stage and necessary mitigation measures need to be incorporated into the design to minimize the future risk. This in turn will benefit the investor too.

The Disaster Management Centre and Practical Action have organized a workshop to discuss on “Mainstreaming Disaster Risk Reduction into Development Process”. Key objectives of the workshop are:

- To assess the importance of disaster risk sensitivity in development planning process
- To assess and draw the gaps in policies and practices to incorporate disaster risks
- To derive a mechanism to develop guidelines / tools to develop Disaster Impact Assessment systems

Date : 17th February 2009
Time : 8.30 a.m to 3.30 p.m
Venue : Mount Lavinia Hotel Regency Room, No 100 Hotel Road, Mount Lavinia

We welcome you for this workshop and will be much thankful if you can provide media coverage for same.

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