
Urban Earthquake Management Challenges in Bangladesh: A Case Study

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Outline of the presentation

- Why this study?
- What “Total Disaster Risk Management (TDRM) Approach” is leading toward?
- The case and objectives
- Methodology
- Results
- Conclusion

Why this study?

- Trend of high settlement rate of world population in urban setting
- Trend of high settlement rate of Bangladeshi people in urban setting
- Around 250,000 buildings in the three major cities of Bangladesh—Dhaka, Chittagong and Sylhet—are extremely vulnerable to earthquakes
- If an earthquake with a 7.0 magnitude occur in large cities of Bangladesh, there would be a major human tragedy due to the structural failure of many buildings

Why this study?

- Almost no comprehensive approach to deal with earthquake risks in Bangladesh
- There are practically very few attempts to look into the earthquake risk and vulnerability beyond the narrow view of approaches seeking mere technical input oriented solutions
- Unfortunately initiatives aimed at reducing social and economic vulnerability are few, poorly funded, and insignificant in comparison with money spent by donors and development banks on humanitarian assistance and relief, as well as on post-disaster reconstruction

What “Total Disaster Risk Management (TDRM) Approach” is leading toward?

- “Total Disaster Risk Management (TDRM) Approach”
- Most countries, especially developing countries, remain unfamiliar with this approach
- It has three distinct but interrelated components: hazard assessment, vulnerability analysis, and enhancement of management capacity, and is more closely integrated with the ongoing development processes

The case and objectives

- The project “Establishing Partnership for Disaster Preparedness” aimed to establish a collective effort for reducing risk and vulnerability of these earthquake prone communities through developing partnership among the communities and NGOs, Civil Society Organisations, Business Groups and the Government to improve the level of disaster preparedness of most vulnerable families, schools, and hospitals.
- The present study attempted to identify the existing challenges in urban earthquake disaster management using the case of community based earthquake disaster management initiative which was a part of a one-year pilot project on “Establishing Partnership for Disaster Preparedness” undertaken by ActionAid Bangladesh that took the ‘disaster risk management approach’ for actions

Method

- Four wards (Alkaran, Patharghata, Pahartali and Uttarkattuli) at the urban context of Chittagong district
- Secondary data analyses
- Qualitative techniques that included key informant interviews, informal discussions, and household level discussions

Results

The study revealed the following major challenges:

- minimising/overcoming gaps in urban planning to reduce the increasing risks
- effectively utilizing educational institutes to reduce the impacts of the urban risks
- establishing functional linkages with all different stakeholders;
- Strengthening the capacity of all the stakeholders along with mainstreaming of risk reduction activity
- Ensuring more effective resource allocation and
- Making risk reduction an integral part of all relevant areas of concern
- Ensuring regular updated training/orientation programmes at the implementation level to enhance knowledge and raise awareness on vulnerability and management process.

Conclusion

Urban contexts are unique in different ways and all the findings led to the realization that disaster discourses need to be contextualized for urban earthquake risk management & responses.



Thank you