

CONTINGENCY PLANNING AND MONITORING TOOL



INTRODUCTION

Cities experience serious incidents that prevent them from continuing their normal functioning. Such incidences can range from flood or fire to severe outbreaks of epidemics. During such emergencies, the affected cities are saddled with increased risks, mainly when the disaster management team is not well prepared to anticipate, cope with, respond to, and help in the recovery of the affected communities. City authorities have a constitutional responsibility to recover from such incidents in the minimum amount of time, with minimum disruption and at minimum cost. The ability of Metropolitan Municipal and District Assemblies (MMDAs) to adequately meet such unexpected challenges, requires careful preparation and planning.

To this end, within the project “Developing Risk Management Approaches for Climate Risks”, the Public-Private Partnership between Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH and Allianz Reinsurance has supported three MMDAs in the Greater Accra Metropolitan Area (GAMA), Ghana in building capacity to develop contingency plans and an associated monitoring tool.

Contingency planning aims at minimising the potential direct and indirect impact of a disaster and involves measures and strategies on how an assembly/city ultimately can resume normal daily life as soon as possible after a disaster, as well as evaluate and learn from the event to avoid same mistakes in the management of future catastrophes. They also determine the needs and abilities through various stakeholders to become active in Disaster Risk Management (DRM). A plan coherently brings together the totality of the discussions, analyses and decisions that will enable quick response to emergencies. Monitoring tools help city officials to regularly evaluate the evolution of contingency planning, based on components and indicators, with the aim of strengthening the overall response planning capacities.

On behalf of



STEPS / PROCESS OF PREPARING AND MONITORING A CONTINGENCY PLAN

The following processes should be adhered to in developing or preparing and monitoring a contingency plan for a specific hazard.

Formation of a Working Group

A working group should be formed to facilitate and coordinate the planning process from the beginning to the end. The group must include all relevant stakeholders incl. critical infrastructure, NGOs and MSME and focus on ensuring that all needs and capacities identified are considered during the planning phase.

Analyzing Issues and Building Scenarios

Identifying Hazards

Assessing the level of risk is a need for proper evaluation and analysis. Hazard identification is used to determine the level or nature of risks confronting a particular community.

Building Scenarios

Technically, each prioritized hazard needs its own contingency plan based on a flexible and realistic scenario. Scenario development provides a basis for planning and generates consensus on the nature of the potential crisis and the response.

COMPONENT	INDICATORS FOR MONITORING
Hazard identification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hazard Monitoring Focal Points are appointed Guidelines for local hazard assessment are available Local hazards are identified
Scenarios and planning assumptions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Problem tree analysis for each potential hazard Each scenario includes description of the event, early warning indicators and triggers, geographical location, attributes of risk to be considered, impact, duration of emergency phase and gaps & constraints Assumptions are setting the baseline for each plan

Example

Indicator: Hazard Monitoring Focal Points are appointed

Indicator Definition: Hazard Monitoring Focal Points are responsible to acknowledge changes to the environment and monitor specific hazards to the area in question

Methods / Sources: The focal point can be chosen from a unit or department with crosscutting responsibilities

Indicator development / Monitoring Responsible: KWA department

Frequency: Once every other year

Assessment of Vulnerability and Capacity

Hazards are natural and man-made events, occurring frequently and of a greater or lesser magnitude. Disasters are due to risk-blind development. What makes hazards become disasters depend on the way societies develop, build and construct. This includes how well people assess these risks, the extent to which they inform themselves of what could happen, and the measures they take, whether in policy, legal or construction terms, to reduce those risks.

Understanding the current situation

Understanding the current situation is a literature review to assess what already exists within the local environment. This is to help avoid duplication of efforts, and build on existing information, resources and capacities to facilitate the risk identification process. It must be guided by the following:

- Having a detailed vulnerability analysis (the level of detail depends on the time and resources available)
- Updating the vulnerabilities and capabilities regularly, based on up-to-date, qualitative information
- Decisions to plan for a specific hazard must be based on a broad macro-analysis or profiling of all hazards faced by a particular community
- Prioritizing high-risk areas in the planning process
- Making a needs estimation, based on the possible risks (requirements) and the mapped capabilities

Mapping Community capacities

In designing a contingency plan, the working group must also assess capacities within the communities at risk (the issue of local resources) and identify opportunities, needs and methods for strengthening and drawing on these capacities – in both planning and disaster response activities. The vulnerability and capacity assessments primarily help the assemblies to engage in disaster mitigation and preparedness. It can be a good source of data to identify which communities and groups are most vulnerable to the identified hazard (such as flood), and the types of capacities they might draw on in responding.

COMPONENT	INDICATORS FOR MONITORING
Human resource capacity development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The human resource management (HRM), administration for security, medical, search and recovery, and firefighting capacities are identified as well as the capacities for support functions like finance, ICT, and communication Capacities related to risk information, communication and coordination are identified and regularly updated List of legal and policy frameworks and operational procedures relevant for contingency are compiled DRM financing capacities are identified A list of city transport and logistic suppliers that have capacity to contribute during response to an emergency is compiled



Risk Assessment

Risk Assessment involves analyzing potential hazards, exposure, vulnerabilities, and risk targeting, as well as evaluating existing capacity. It is used to determine the level or nature of risks confronting a particular community. Risk assessment does not only evaluate the magnitude and likelihood of losses, but it also seeks to understand the causes. It is an integral part of the decision-making process and requires close collaboration among all stakeholders. The results must be revised periodically to reflect socio-economic and other changes.

Risk Analysis in Practice

The concept of 'risk analysis' is useful in contingency planning. Understanding the interaction between hazards, exposure and vulnerability is crucial for effective disaster prevention. At its simplest, the equation (**risk = hazard x vulnerability**) expresses the concept that the impact of the disaster depends on both the type of hazard and the level of vulnerability. A good risk analysis is useful when deciding which hazard is worth planning for.

Choosing a Risk for Contingency Plan

The decision on which risk should attract a contingency plan must be based on the previous steps i.e., hazard identification, vulnerability, and capacity assessment. Thus, a contingency plan should be developed for the identified highest risks. For example, in Ghana, Accra is confronted with both flood and earthquake risk scenario, but the probability of an earthquake is much lower than floods. Thus, the frequency of flooding and its impact in terms of potential loss of life and property makes it prudent to have a contingency plan in place for flooding instead of an earthquake.

COMPONENT	INDICATORS FOR MONITORING
Risk Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local/area hazard maps and charts are prepared and regularly updated Vulnerability maps exist addressing single and multiple vulnerabilities at the local level Assets-at-risk analysis is conducted and regularly updated (including risk characteristics) Local risk profiles across sectors are prepared and regularly updated Criteria for levels of alert are established for different types of risks

Developing a Response Plan

The response plan is aimed at preparing for the risks previously assessed, based on the existing capacities and with great consideration to the vulnerabilities identified. At this stage, defining the functions and responsibilities of each stakeholder becomes one of the main pre-occupations of the working group. Thus, roles and responsibilities of key stakeholders must be clearly identified, and this information should be shared with all involved. The objectives of this stage include:

- Among all stakeholders, fostering common understanding of the risk identified, all possible related needs, and the nature and scope of the planned operational response
- Explaining key stakeholders' response strategy to address the needs of the affected population
- Reflecting specific challenges/gaps in the potential response in order to communicate anticipated funding requirements
- Supporting the timely drafting of a resource mobilization document: e.g., a flash appeal in the event of an emergency

COMPONENT	INDICATORS FOR MONITORING
Damage assessment procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Damage assessment teams are available at city level Damage assessment teams are consulted with community representatives Damage assessments include vulnerability and livelihood profiles The assessment includes activities to determine the cause of the disaster, its potential to turn into an emergency, the affected physical area and status of physical infrastructure Sectoral and cross-sectoral team members are designated and trained for loss estimation, using city instruments, standards and processes Reporting formats and analysis methods are available





Coordination and Communication Strategy

Coordination of information is essential during emergencies. Good coordination means fewer gaps and overlaps in the assistance delivered by all parties. This requires the working group to develop a coordination and communication strategy for all identified stakeholders and partners. Sharing and exchanging information with stakeholders and their representatives is crucial during emergencies. The plan should specify how communication will take place and by which form of media (e.g., e-mail, radio, fax, telephone, in-person, etc.). There is the need for the working group to prepare a communication flow chart and emergency contact details to facilitate the communication among stakeholders at the preparedness and response phase.

COMPONENT	INDICATORS FOR MONITORING
Coordination and management arrangements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Institutional mechanisms for coordination and collaboration exist at assembly level • Humanitarian partners and other key stakeholders are familiarized with the assembly's coordination structures for emergency response • Lead agency for each cluster/shared action is decided upon • Cross-cluster/shared action coordination structures are established • Infographic of the assembly's coordination structures are prepared and regularly updated • A list of contacts of assembly's key stakeholders, donors and technical focal points to be contacted is compiled and regularly updated • Common services which are likely to be needed are established, such as logistics, transportation, communication etc.
Communication network	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Target groups are identified • A functioning communication structure is in place with NGOs and civil society, including organisations for vulnerable groups, to ensure the timely flow of information • Mechanism for awareness-raising at assembly level are operational • Dissemination of risk information in local languages to the public by specialized media, networks etc. is established • Focal Point for communication and spokesperson is appointed • Communication channels and back-up channels are in place • Information monitoring tools to avoid misinformation are established • Statistical data on the population is available

Resource Mobilization & Budget Preparation

The activities that must be carried out under a contingency plan and the cost involved must all be clearly stated. In preparing a budget for implementing a contingency plan activity, the central questions that must guide the working group include the following:

- How much will it cost to respond to the anticipated disasters?
- How much of the amount needed can be generated/mobilised internally?
- Where will the other funds come from?
- Who and how will the funds be managed?
- What are the most efficient mechanisms that can be put in place to ensure the immediate release of funds for disaster response?
- What non-monetary resources are needed, and how will they be accessed, managed and deployed?

The working group must integrate the budget into the assembly's financial architecture. The resources mobilization activities also involve securing new funding resources internally and externally. At the assembly level, allocating part of internally generated funds to implement a contingency plan is encouraged.

COMPONENT	INDICATORS FOR MONITORING
Resource Mobilization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adequate equipment resources are available to the respective organisations • Lists of available resources including detailed information about quantities, location, specifications, and how to obtain these resources are compiled • Resource mobilization strategy is developed, including potential funding sources, steps to mobilize rapid response resources, steps to be taken for a specific appeal for an operation • List of private companies and partner response organisations contributing to response efforts is compiled



CONCLUSION

Generally, contingency planning is about being proactive and prepared. The process/steps enable MMDAs to think about what to be prepared for, and how to plan so that a possible response can be more effective. It is equally relevant for city authorities to develop preparedness actions in a contingency plan before an emergency, to strengthen and speed up the response. All this minimizes the adverse effects of a hazard including loss of life and property and the disruption of livelihoods.

The activities to be implemented are often based on the result of a “gap analysis or assessment” or “preparedness gap analysis”. Significantly, most local societies have much of the capacity needed yet to be exploited.

Practical actions such as standard operation procedure (SOP) and early alert system should be undertaken as soon as there is notification of a disaster. Standard operation procedure operationalizes the contingency plan when it is triggered. They are the link between plans and the actual operational response. The early alert system has a close link to SOPs. It involves the processes through which timely information about an incidence of disaster quickly gets to disaster managers.

A good contingency planning process should always determine how the population in the vulnerable community is to be warned of emergencies and identify those responsible for notifying others.

A contingency plan is good to the extent that it achieves its objectives. The success is also highly dependent on whether those who provide response services and those who receive assistance (the service beneficiaries) know what to do and what to expect before, during and after an emergency.

Theoretically, a contingency plan is an organic document and therefore may become outdated due to changes in the social, economic and organizational situation. It is therefore important to determine whether the structure and contents are best suited to actual response capabilities particularly after a disaster-response has been completed.



Activity name

Contingency planning and monitoring tool

Focus area

Greater Accra Metropolitan Area (GAMA), Ghana

Local partners

- Administration of GA East, GA West and AMA
- The Ghana Meteorological Agency (GMet)
- The National Disaster Management Organisation (NADMO), Ghana

Target group

Metropolitan, Municipal and District Assemblies

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Disclaimer

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For more information on the monitoring tool for contingency planning, please refer to:

GIZ/NADMO (2021). Monitoring tool for Metropolitan, Municipal and District Assembly Contingency Planning in Ghana.

For more information on the project please refer to the factsheet “Developing Disaster Risk Management Approaches for Climate Risks in Ghana”.

