

List of abbreviations

AGRITEX	Agricultural Technical and Extension Services
ALNAP	Active Learning Network for Accountability and Performance in Humanitarian Action
CBDRR	Community Based Disaster Risk Reduce Risk R

fed agriculture is not profitable and is often not an option in many locales. The situation is further compounded by the fact that there are few water reservoirs. Many people have therefore

*Paradzai Bongo, Challenging Dominant Ideology and Practice in Disaster Management: Partnership Dynamics in
Community-based Disaster Risk Reduction in a Zimbabwean Context
Aon Benfield UCL Hazard Research Centre, Disaster Studies Working Paper 23, February 2009*

- Opportunities for improved accountability during project and programme implementation.
(Gumbo, 2007)

Stages in CBDRM planning

1. The first step was to conduct community leadership briefing meetings in the 12 wards.
The meetings were held a week or two before

actual planning week and pooled together at the beginning of the planning week so that it could be validated and updated in the planning sessions or any gaps in it could be identified and filled. Examples of information collected included:

- Basic statistics on the people who live in the community (number of people, number of households, number of people in different age groups, different ethnic groups).
- Infrastructural information: number and location of boreholes, number of houses with and without pit latrines, etc.
- Health records: disease patterns, understanding the main diseases/illnesses that people suffered from and when (e.g. malaria risk factors, pattern of infection, morbidity patterns in the rainy season and the health of the under 5s)
- Understanding soils and land capacities, understanding the main crops and varieties that people grow and the diseases they suffer from.
- Information on the service providers in the ward (government and non governmental organizations), their future focus, their direct community investment and finding out whether they would be present at the intensive planning .

4. The next step was the intensive community-based planning process. Crucial at this juncture was to present the findings of the pre-planning meeting concerning the different socio-economic groups identified by in the community. These were discussed and amended to develop a final list.



Community hazard risk mapping,
Madabe Ward, Mangwe District

Community hazard risk mapping, Natane
Ward, Bulilima District.

Paradzai Bongo, Challenging Dominant Ideology and Practice in Disaster Management: Partnership Dynamics in Community

4. agency to community/beneficiaries
5. community-level partnerships (community to community; household to community; household to household)

Several lessons have been learnt about partnership dynamics.

One of the key partnership issues arising from implementing the project has been the variance in core values, mission and vision of partners especially with regard to core partner business. For instance, NUST appears to be placing more emphasis on staff and curriculum development in DRR, Practical Action on action research, practical demonstrations and testing of DRR theories, whilst Northumbria University focuses more on staff development, outreach and academic research partnership with NUST. RDCs also appear to place emphasis on resource leveraging, community improvement and gaining mileage in implementing successful, innovative livelihood enhancement initiatives. Practical Action is well known for promoting self-reliance and community empowerment (rather than giving out handouts, which in some cases arguably promotes dependency).

Some partners are more relief and emergency response oriented, and this makes joint planning problematic, particularly with regard to choosing and prioritizing disaster management initiatives. When the project was launched, communities were heard asking what Practical Action would give them in the project, as was happening with other agencies. Project and partner staff capacity has been a major challenge and this applies even to RDCs and government departments' staff. It has

By at the end of November 2008, various community groups had already started working on the livelihood initiatives identified in the community-based plans. Engagement in such livelihoods is also set to bring in varied forms of partnerships, at both community and meso levels. In this project, Practical Action and partners simply drove the DRR visioning and planning process; implementation support is open to any interested agency that is concerned with increasing the resilience of at-

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mitigation strategies, which, when juxtaposed against responses to the rapid-onset disasters in other countries, may not capture donor attention and media coverage.

The conducting of DRR competitions in schools was part of the disaster risk communication strategies that were open to the project. In most conventional or mainstream disaster risk management, disaster risk communication continues to be confined to formally recognized institutional arrangements like the mass media. This state of affairs therefore justifies the project's approach to attempt to establish DRR partnerships with schools, thereby enhancing disaster risk communication. Perhaps more interesting in the schools competition was the way in which other players were trying to decipher the relationship between disasters and schools. An interesting outcome of competitions brainstorming by school heads was their realization that prizes for winning schools had to be DRR related, like integrated nutrition and herbal gardens in schools, gulley reclamation initiatives, rehabilitation of water points, and drilling of boreholes. The awarding of such prizes will bring many and newer partners into the whole DRR intervention arena, such as those who drill boreholes, health (for nutrition and herbal gardens) and EMA (gulley reclamation). When a natural hazard strikes, children are among the most vulnerable population group, especially those attending school in times of disaster.

In all societies, children represent hope for the future. Schools instil cultural values and pass on both traditional and conventional knowledge to the younger generation. Protecting children from natural hazards requires two distinct yet inseparable priorities for action: disaster risk education and school safety. Making disaster risk education part of national primary and secondary school curricula, which is one of the targets for this project, fosters awareness and better understanding of the immediate environment in which children and their families live and work. For instance, on a beach in Thailand, when the December 2004 Tsunami struck, British schoolgirl Tilly Smith saved many lives by urging people to flee the shore: her geography class in Britain had enabled her to recognize the first signs of a tsunami. At the same time, Anto, a young boy on the Indonesian island of Simeulue had learned from his grandfather what to do when an earthquake strikes. He and all the other islanders ran to higher ground before the tsunami struck, sparing all

A major issue with this project has to do with results. As Smillie (2001) also asserts, many donor agencies today are, quite rightly, placing much more emphasis on results than on inputs and outputs. For example, reducing child mortality in a camp is more important than the means used to do it. Old emphases on measuring, for example, management of an inoculation program have

also a need to further explore how to maintain and/or build disaster management partnerships in an environment of shrinking democratic space at all levels. There is a need to determine the extent to which NGOs can involve themselves in purely humanitarian work‘ that does not directly or indirectly touch on human rights‘, which has been a hot spot with many regimes that become uncomfortable when it comes to addressing man-made hazard events and situations that contribute immensely to vulnerability, at the same time lowering community resilience to hazards.

The transboundary nature of climate change hazard risks has already started to incite a lot of actors around the notions of ‘climate change and DRR justice‘, in as much as there is ‘ecological justice‘ with its concomitant shifting of blame between North and South, developed and developing, industrialized and industrializing, heavy polluters and light polluters, etc. As Rajae(2000) states, in disaster management, we need the realization that our global village will not survive if we do not learn to live together and break the barriers that our particular imagined communities have created around us. What is positive about globalization is that it has made the notion of living and working together imperative and therefore unavoidable.

