

LAO PDR

To prepare the Country DRM Note, consultations were undertaken with the National Disaster Management Office (NDMO) and members of the World Bank's Country team. Working closely with NDMO, consultations were held with Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Public Works and Transport, Ministry of Agriculture, Lao National Mekong River Commission, Department of Meteorology and Hydrology, Mekong River Commission, Asian Development Bank, JICA, UNDP and Oxfam-Australia. Consultations were also held with the Provincial Disaster Management Committees in Vientiane and Khammouane provinces; and line departments representing the committees. In Khammouane, discussions were held with Khammouane Development Project (KDP) including Department of Irrigation; authorities of Nongbok District Disaster Management Committee. Together with ADPC and KDP, flood prone areas were visited and consultations were also held with flood vulnerable people in Sokbo village. The findings were presented to the National Disaster Management Committee and the guiding principles for engagement in the country agreed upon.

1. DISASTER RISK PROFILE

Lao PDR has made significant gains in the area of disaster risk management in recent years and presents a suitable environment to grow further DRM initiatives: National institutions at various levels are making efforts to expand their roles from disaster managers to proactive disaster risk reduction planners. A Strategic Plan on Disaster Risk Management (SPDRM) was adopted in 2003 and there is considerable presence of donors willing to support Lao PDR in the field of DRM. By managing its disaster risks more systematically, Lao PDR also has an opportunity to preserve development gains, reduce poverty and improve the living standards of rural farmers, and ultimately graduate out of its status as a Least Developed Country.



Source: CIA Fact book

2. DISASTER RISK MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

Table 1. Top 5 Natural Disasters in Lao for the Period 1980-2009 (sorted by numbers of total affected population)

Disaster	Date	No Total Affected	Damage (1000s US\$)
Storm	August 1995	1,000,000	Not available
Drought	Dec-88	73,0000	Not available
Flood	Aug-01	45,3000	Not available
Flood	Sep-00	450000	Not available
Flood	15/08/1996	42,0000	Not available

Created on: May-25-2009 - Data version: v12.07; Source: EM-DAT: The OFDA/CRED International Disaster Database; www.em-dat.net - Université Catholique de Louvain - Brussels - Belgium.

The major natural disasters Lao PDR faces are floods and droughts: Most flooding occurs during May to September when Monsoon rains accumulate in the upper Mekong river basin. In

addition to river basin flooding, flashfloods in the northern mountainous region are also common. It is estimated that the south and central regions, where about two thirds of the country's population live, face on an average of 1.5 serious floods or droughts every year. Lao PDR is also susceptible to landslides, pest infestations and fire due to slash and burn agriculture. Most recently, the floods of August 2008 are estimated to have affected about 204,000 people, damaged an estimated 50,000 Ha of arable land and caused a damage and loss of over US\$ 9 million.

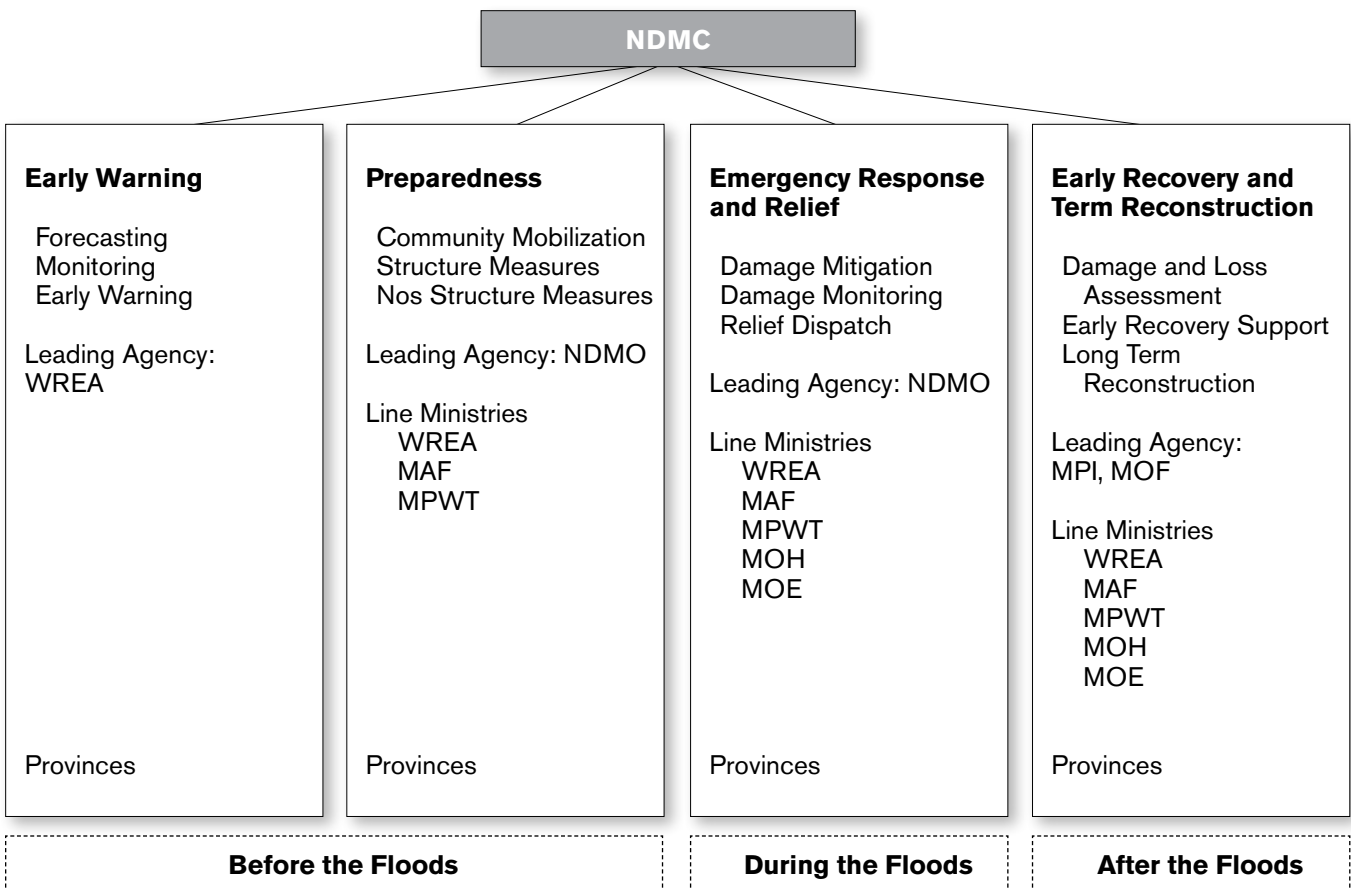
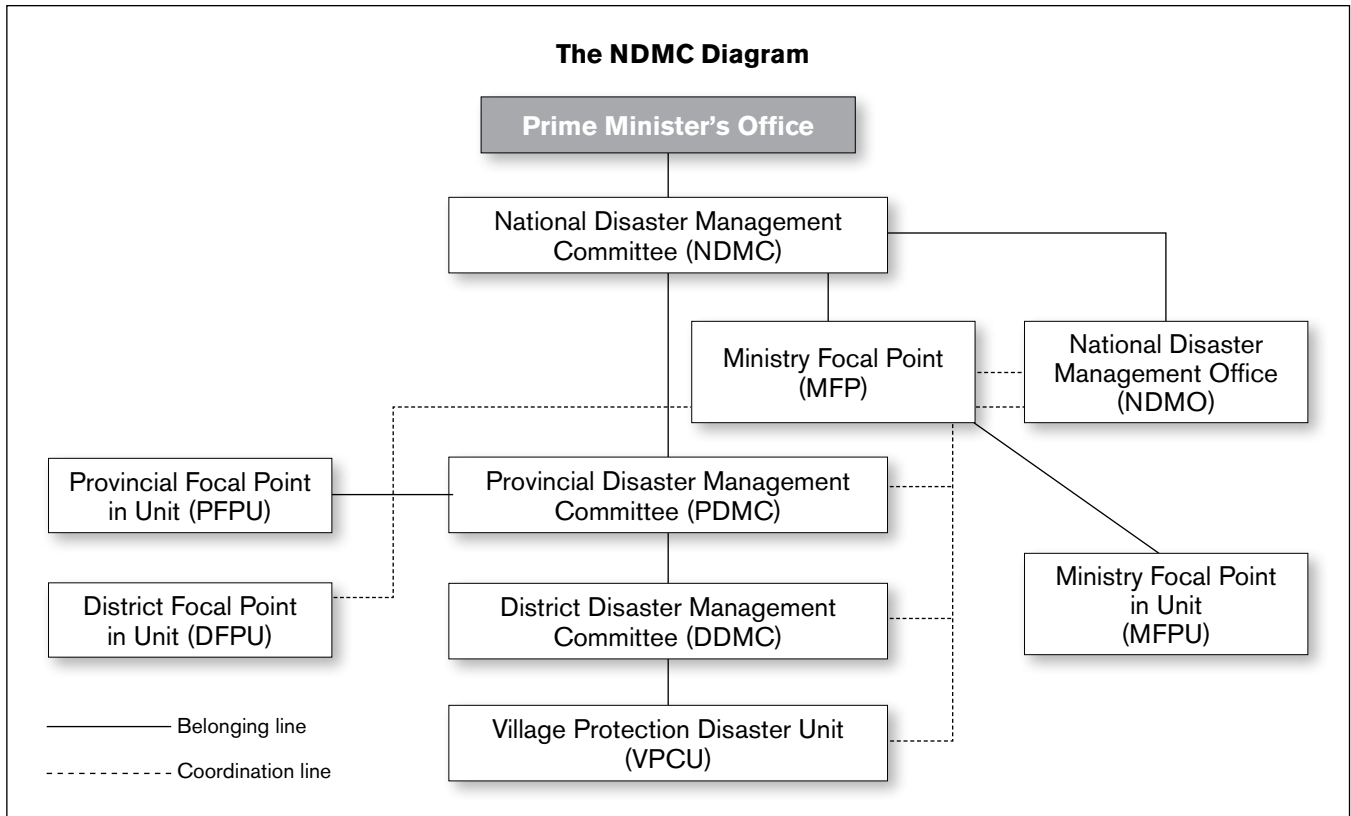
High degree of poverty in the rural areas means even low intensity natural disasters increase the vulnerability of rural farmers: Agriculture is mostly dependent on rainfall, and a modest drought could increase food insecurity.

On the other side of the spectrum, the capital Vientiane is urbanizing rapidly: As newer infrastructures are built with inadequate land use planning and loosely enforced building codes, newer vulnerabilities are fast accumulating with typical urban trademarks in the capital Vientiane.

3. ACTIVITIES UNDER THE HYOGO FRAMEWORK OF ACTION

HFA Priority # 1: Ensure that disaster risk reduction is a national and local priority with a strong institutional basis for implementation

- National Disaster Management Committee (NDMC), an inter-ministerial committee, is the apex body with responsibilities for developing policies and coordinating DRM activities in the country. NDMC was established through a prime ministerial Decree No. 158/PM in August 1999. National Disaster Management Office (NDMO) is the secretariat of NDMC and is located in the Ministry of Labor and Social Welfare (MLSW). Roles and responsibilities of the NDMO and each member of NDMC have been defined by the internal MLSW decree No. 097/MLSW of June 2000. Under this decree, disaster management committees are established at the Provincial, District and Village levels.
- As a result of directions by NDMC, the Provincial Disaster Management Committees (PDMC) are now chaired by the provincial governor instead of the vice-governor which gives them more authority to act on DRM issues. Also, more and more line departments are being represented in the PDMCs.
- NDMC is currently represented by several important sectors such as health, education, public works, transport, etc. A proposal is under consideration for expanding the membership of the NDMC to include additional important sectors such as energy and mining, planning and investment, water resources and environment, science and technology and agencies such as Lao PDR Women Union, and Lao Youth Union.
- A Ministry of Labor and Social Welfare decree (1139/MLSW) of April 2003 defined the Strategic Plan on Disaster Risk Management (SPDRM) corresponding to three different periods 2003-2005, 2005-2010 and 2010–2020.) The SPDRM emphasizes sustainable development through DRR, risk reduction through environmental protection, more preparedness than relief. The Strategic Plan also aims to share the disaster risk management responsibility between the communities and the government.
- Disaster risk management is integrated into the Lao PDR's Sixth National Socio Economic Development Plan NESDP (2006-2010) and the National Growth & Poverty Eradication Strategy (NGPES). The United Nations Development Assistance Framework lists DRM as a key area for cooperation and one of the critical components of poverty reduction framework.
- National Disaster Management Office, with UNDP support, is planning to prepare a Strategic National Action Plan for DRM by 2010. The draft is planned for December 2009. The Action Plan will focus on getting more ownership by various sector ministries in advancing DRM in the country.



HFA Priority # 2: Identify, assess and monitor disaster risks and enhance early warning

- Limited risk mapping in selected communes and districts have been funded under donor projects, but no comprehensive or composite country-wide hazard or risk mapping exists.
- Department of Meteorology and Hydrology (Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry) is the main agency that produces the early warning information and disseminates to disaster management organizations, mainly to the National Disaster Management Office (NDMO). The NDMO then sends this information to the local disaster management organizations to take appropriate actions and disseminate early warnings to communities at risk.
- When disaster occurs, information from the local level to the national level is slow. The capacity and the resources available with the local Disaster Management Committees for data collection and dissemination is extremely weak.
- Flood Vulnerability Assessment and Mapping Project (FVAMP) of the Mekong River Commission (MRC) is working to provide flood vulnerability indices to better manage flood and drought indices.
- Hazard, Vulnerability and Capacity Assessment is being carried out under Lao Red Cross project 'Community Based Disaster Preparedness Program (2007–2011) in 5 flood and drought prone villages in Khammoaune and Savannakhet province.
- The World Bank's GFDRR pipeline project will fund risk mapping in two to three provinces.

HFA Priority # 3: Use knowledge, innovation and education to build a culture of safety and resilience at all levels

- There is lack of comprehensive disaster information management system. The National Disaster Management Office is responsible to carry out the function but it lacks human and information management capacities. A project with Save the Children Australia and Asian Disaster Preparedness Center (ADPC) aims to strengthen the information management system, currently being piloted in Sayaboury province.
- Phase II of the Mainstreaming DRR in the Education Sector in Lao PDR project between Ministry of Education MOE, NDMO, Asian Disaster Preparedness Centre, ADCP, and UNDP (with Support from ECHO), is taking up further activities to mainstream disaster risk reduction in the education sector such as supporting institutionalization of the disaster risk reduction module of phase I in the national curriculum and in the teachers training system; pilot testing of disaster risk reduction teaching aid materials in six schools; developing a framework curriculum plan to aid in the future integration of disaster risk reduction in Lao PDR and identifying specific opportunities for integrating hazard resilience school construction features in one pipeline project.
- A comprehensive national action plan for disaster resilient school systems is lacking. Further the following needs were identified by Ministry of Environment: Building more trainers at all levels; sensitizing (for better understanding of DRR) high ranking officials in the ministry, heads of local education departments, head of schools and primary school children; experience sharing with other countries; and expansion of curriculum across all technical sectors.
- Under the Laos-Australia NGO Cooperation Agreement (LANGCOCA), a project Tools for Disaster Risk Assessments (TDRA) is being conducted by NDMO and Save the Children Australia with the support of ADPC. The project will support the development of a risk assessment system for use in Sayaboury district and will support the provincial and district capacities in hazard and risk identification, assessment, and financing.
- The national government has no specific disaster risk management public awareness and education programs in place. However activities under donor programs such as (i) Flood Preparedness Project (ADPC-MRC) (ii) Mainstreaming in education Sector (ADPC) and (iii) DRR Project (Oxfam/Save the Children Australia) have awareness and education programs.

HFA Priority # 4: Reduce the underlying risk factors

- Most recently the National Action Plan for Adaptation (NAPA) for Climate Change has been approved by the government. The NAPA has identified 45 priority project proposals to implement adaptation activities in four main sectors: agriculture, forestry, water and water resources, and public health. 12 of these projects have been prioritized as primary while remaining 33 as of secondary priority. There is a greater need for NDMO and Climate Change Office to work closely to advance DRR components of the NAPA.
- Some limited efforts in agriculture sector such as river embankment, protection of dams, seed stocking during floods, maintenance and rehabilitation of irrigation canals have been carried out.
- JICA is supporting the update of Urban Development Master Plan for Vientiane capital which has a component of improving building codes. Similarly Component 5 of the Mekong River Commission project on Flood Mitigation and Management Program has a land management component.
- Capacity building for Damage and Loss Assessment is being carried out by National Disaster Management Office and Ministry of Planning and Investment (MPI) with support of World Bank. This capacity building effort aims to prepare a cadre of local experts for damage and loss assessment who can be readily deployed in the event of a major natural disaster.

HFA Priority # 5: Strengthen disaster preparedness for effective response at all levels

- Practically, there is very limited budget for disaster risk management or recovery activities. Funds are mobilized from the national and local budgets in the event of a disaster. One Billion kip, about US \$120,000 through the Ministry of Labor and Social Welfare (MLSW) for emergency response per year is earmarked by government. The government does not have a national disaster relief reserve fund that provides funding for emergency response and recovery activities when a disaster strikes. Some departments have their own funds albeit limited such as agriculture (seed, water pump repair), public works (road repair), social welfare and labor (relief) etc.
- Department of Social Welfare compiles from provincial departments the loss/damage and need for assistance, then the department makes request to Minister for use of funds.
- NDMO is inadequately mandated (resource poor) and its mandate for risk reduction is yet to be understood by other line ministries.
- No contingency plan for natural disaster events is prepared by the NDMC. However every year NDMC meets prior to the disaster season, collects preparedness plan from line ministries. NDMC notifies Provincial Disaster Management Committees suggesting them to prepare response plans. Some province do well; those provinces without disaster history have difficulty in planning. However planning is poor and there is need to strengthen the process. Information from line ministries may or may not become available in a timely fashion. There is need to have better intra governmental cooperation and inter agency-cooperation.
- There is a need for a uniform methodology for making post disaster damage and needs assessments for consistency and coming up with nationally agreed upon damage and loss figures. Also, there is need to have a disaster information centre at NDMO.

4. KEY DONOR ENGAGEMENTS

REGIONAL INITIATIVES

1. The ARPDM (ASEAN Regional Program on Disaster Management (2004-2010) and subsequent AADMER (ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response) signed by member states in 2005, Standard Operating Procedure for Regional Standby Arrangements and Coordination of Joint Disaster Relief and Emergency Response Operations (SASOP).
2. The Regional Consultative Committee on Disaster Management (RCC) RCC Program on Mainstreaming Disaster Risk Reduction into Development (MDRD) Phase I (2004-2007) and Phase II (2008-2012). Lao PDR is an active member.
3. ASEAN, UNISDR and WB 5 year Memorandum of Cooperation (2009-2014).
4. (Forthcoming) Memorandum of Understanding (2009) between Asian Disaster Preparedness Center (ADPC), and World Bank, sets forth the framework for a collaborative alliance between the two organizations.
5. Mekong River Commission: Created as an intergovernmental body by the countries of the Mekong Basin, MRC is supporting member countries in the following five areas: Flood Management and Mitigation programme, including Establishment of Regional Flood Management and Mitigation Centre (RFMMC); Structural Measures and Flood Proofing; Enhancing Cooperation in Trans-boundary Flood Issues; Flood Emergency Management Strengthening; and Land Management.
6. Asian Disaster Preparedness Centre: The Asian Disaster Preparedness Center (ADPC) is a regional non profit resource center based in Bangkok, with substantial experience in implementing disaster risk management projects in countries of the region including Lao PDR.

DONORS/IFIS

- Laos-Australia NGO Cooperation Agreement (LANGOCA), a consortium between Australian NGOs and Lao government, funded by AusAid is strengthening community level preparedness and response to natural disasters. LANGOCA works closely with National Disaster Management Office.
- National Disaster Management Office, with UNDP support, is planning to prepare a Strategic National Action Plan for DRM by 2010. The draft is planned for December 2009. The Action Plan will focus on getting more ownership by various sector ministries in advancing DRM in the country. UNDP is also working with NDMO to enhance capacity at all levels of government disaster management for preparedness, response and rehabilitation.
- Lao National Mekong Commission, Asian Disaster Preparedness Center and National Disaster Management Office are continuing to prepare and improve Flood Preparedness Plans for Khammouane and Savannakhet province with financial support from the Gesellschaft fur Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ) and ECHO.
- Emergency Relief for the 2008 Floods has been provided by most major UN Agencies (FAO, WHO, UNICEF) and NGOs and bilateral donors (ECHO, USAID, Japan, Singapore, Sweden, Canada and Germany).
- Mekong River Commission (MRC) is currently implementing Flood Mitigation and Management Program (FMMP) with the support of donors such as Japan and Denmark. Asian Development Bank is preparing a TA for flood management project.
- A Priority Investment Plan was developed for mainstreaming disaster risk reduction into Agriculture sector by NDMO and Ministry of Agriculture with technical support from ADPC and GTZ.
- Japanese International Cooperation Agency (JICA) is supporting pilot works in riverbank protection in Vientiane Municipality.
- Most recently the World Bank is working with NDMO, Water Resources and Environment Administration (WREA)

and Ministry of Planning and Investment (MPI) to support the operationalization of the Strategic Plan for Disaster Risk management (SPDRM). This includes funding a US \$1 million project assisting the Government to design an implementation plan for its disaster risk management strategy and strengthen the hydromet, early warning and river basin management. It is also helping strengthen the Government's capacity in carrying out damage and loss national assessment (DALNA) to measure impact of natural disasters.

Guiding Principles for GFDRR/WB interventions

The main objective of the GFDRR/WB support will be to safeguard livelihoods of rural poor against floods and drought risks and help address persistent poverty and maintain sustainable economic development. Following will be the guiding principles for WB engagement in DRM in Lao PDR for 2010-2012:

- Consolidate current GFDRR activities and tie in with existing World Bank and bi-lateral operations where possible (Education SWAp, Transportation Sector Project, Khammoune Development Project, Integrated Water Resources Management Project);
- *Focus on rural poverty*: The focus will be on flood and drought risk management that is directly linked to the rural poverty;
- *Promote national strategies*: Advancing priorities as set out in the Strategic PDM and the DRR components of the National Adaptation Plan of Action (NAPA);
- *Incorporate disaster risk reduction elements into investment planning* (Priority Investment Plan and National Economic and Social Development Plan);
- Engage with the provinces in implementing the DRR on the ground;
- *Focus on people and livelihoods*: Taking a people centered approach to safeguard their livelihoods from disaster;
- *Engage in a multi-sector approach*: Engaging the provinces in implementing the DRR on the ground to enable a multi-sector approach (education, transport, agriculture, water resources and health) to mainstream the DRR into the sector policy and plan; build a cadre of disaster risk reduction champions across sectors;
- *Assess emerging urban risks*: While the priority is on rural, begin actions towards identifying and assessing emerging urban risks;
- *Researching risk financing*: Begin actions towards disaster risk financing (private sector engagement, agricultural insurance, credit schemes, etc);
- *Expand partnerships*: NDMO will be the coordinating partner at the national level and line ministries will be focal points; PDMO/DDMO will be partners at implementation level. Where possible we will rely on respective comparative advantages of other stakeholders;
- Strengthen overall capacity of NDMO and support to establish a broader engagement framework for the donors (ADB, UNDP, LANGOCA, JICA);
- *Include regional consideration*: Engaging riparian countries and MRC to address the flood and drought risk management from a regional view;

- Promote organizations with regional expertise on disaster risk management;
- Explore implementation of existing DRR plans (such as Flood Preparedness Plans in Khammouane, JICA work on Urban Strategic Dev Plan) and capitalize on existing DRM experience (from pilots) such as in education sector.

5. GLOBAL FACILITY FOR DISASTER REDUCTION AND RECOVERY (GFDRR): ACTION PLAN

Program Targets

- DRR elements are integrated into the national and sector planning and implemented on the ground;
- Key structure and non-structural measures are implemented in the high priority areas;
- Adequate capacity for disaster management is built from the national, provincial, district, and the community level.

Indicative Program for GFDRR Funding (Projects and engagement areas)	Partners	Indicative Budget (US\$)	HFA Activity Area(s)
Capacity building of Hydmet agency for early warning and weather forecast systems	DMH, WREA, NDMO	US \$200,000	4
Develop DRM components within Sector Wide Approach (SWAp) in Education, Health and Transport Sector	Various relying on comparative advantages; MOE, MOH, MPWT, NDMO	US \$2,000,000	1–5
Incorporating DRM component in Mekong Water Resources Management Project	Various, MRC, ADB, WREA	US \$2,000,000	1–5
Incorporating DRM component in Khammouane (Province) Development Project, and Second Province Development Project	Various	US \$1,000,000	1–5
Strengthening existing technical standards and design specifications in different sectors (transport, school)	MPWT, MOE, NDMO	Part of Sector SWAps	4
<u>Emerging urban risks</u> Identifying and assessing emerging urban risks for Vientiane Capital	JICA, MPWT, NDMO	US \$300,000	2, 4
Issue paper on disaster risk financing (agriculture insurance, private sector participation, etc)	MAF, MRD, NDMO	US \$50,000	4
Strengthening capacity for DRM (3 years)		US \$100,000	
Total Indicative Budget		US \$5,450,000	

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