

A Window of Opportunity

Disaster Risk Reduction in the Immediate Post-Disaster Context

How appropriate are disaster risk reduction (DRR) interventions in the immediate post-disaster context? And what are elements that increase their effectiveness and sustainability?

These are questions that not only implementing organisations are asking themselves, but also donors with a

humanitarian mandate who want to know whether their funds invested in DRR at the humanitarian-development nexus have an impact.

To shed light on these issues, Swiss NGOs granted insights into 25 finalized projects in four post-disaster contexts, with the following findings:

CONTEXT

Success Factors For Effectiveness

- 1. Applying a multi-stakeholder approach:** involvement of key actors at government and community levels in the entire project cycle.
- 2. Working with multipliers:** e.g. working with school children was a very effective entry point for targeting community members.
- 3. Integrated programming:** combining WASH, shelter, livelihoods and DRR increases effectiveness, addresses cross-cutting concerns and builds overall local capacity and resilience.
- 4. Good rapport building with local authorities:** established relationship with local authorities helps for the acceptance of project efforts and smoothes the way for active involvement of local actors.
- 5. Working with and through government:** the involvement of local authorities from the beginning is key for government ownership and institutionalisation of DRR.

Evidence For Sustainability

- 1. Ensured maintenance of structural work:** 'hardware' needs to build on locally available and affordable materials and be coupled with 'software' i.e. investment in management capacities of communities.
- 2. Early hand-over of responsibilities:** committing communities and authorities from the beginning, having them in charge as early as possible is crucial for the institutionalisation of project efforts.
- 3. Build on available assessments and governmental frameworks:** strengthen local structures to ensure that they are linked to all community segments ('last mile') and integrated into the national system.
- 4. Continued presence towards development:** a long enough project duration is important as DRR activities require time, e.g. for mobilising stakeholders, establishing relationships, building up structures and mechanisms.



Communities contribute to an evacuation route in Léogâne, Haiti
 (Swiss Red Cross © Remo Nägeli)



First aid training with communities during the recovery programme, Pakistan
 (Helvetas)

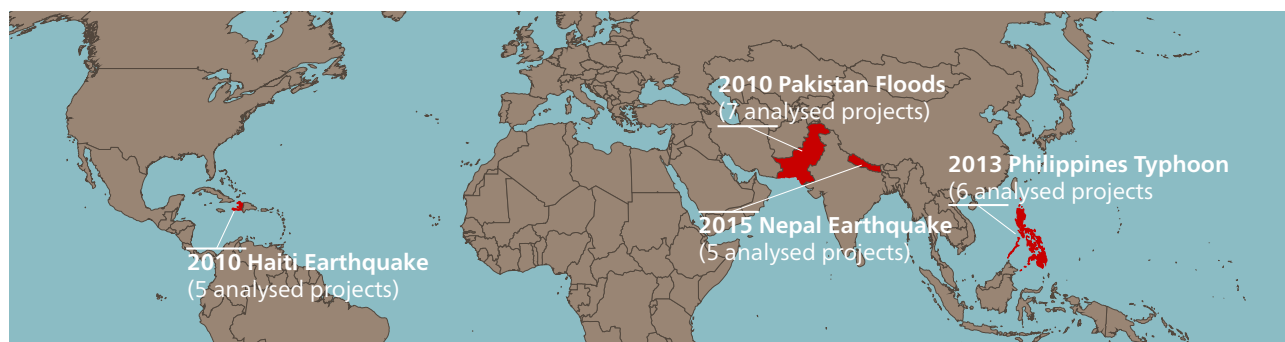
CONTEXT

In the past, member organisations of the Swiss NGO DRR Platform engaged in discussions with Swiss Solidarity on its scope of humanitarian mandate towards disaster risk reduction.

While the general “build-back-better approach” in form of integrated DRR into recovery outcomes remained undisputed, Swiss Solidarity raised questions on the success and sustainability of more targeted DRR interventions, i.e. with a primary focus on DRR outcomes, in the frame of its

humanitarian mandate. To get a clearer picture of the role of DRR in recovery that goes beyond integrated DRR, the Swiss NGO DRR Platform commissioned an evaluation synthesis.

The purpose of the evaluation was to provide documented evidence on good practices in DRR in the reconstruction and recovery phase. It thereby focused on four past major disasters: the 2010 Haiti Earthquake, 2010 Pakistan Floods, 2013 Philippines Typhoon and the 2015 Nepal Earthquake.



APPROACH

The methodology included a desk study of key documents coupled with a workshop with member organisations of the Swiss NGO DRR Platform.

The desk study consisted in the collection and screening of more than 70 evaluations, mid-term reviews, final project reports and specific studies. The screening resulted in nine key documents from seven member organisations that underwent an in-depth analysis along key questions

touching effectiveness and sustainability criteria. Additionally, the Swiss Solidarity commissioned external evaluation of projects in Haiti (2017) and the Platform commissioned **post-Matthew evaluation** (2017) were examined to support the conclusions.

If you want to know more, please download the evaluation report **Synthesis of evaluations – DRR in a post-disaster context**.



Risk education and school drills at the Bharatoli Secondary School in Doti, Nepal (World Vision)



Awareness on building back safer during shelter kit distribution, Philippines (Swiss Red Cross)

Swiss NGO DRR Platform

The Swiss NGO DRR Platform is a network of NGO professionals dedicated to increasing the resilience of women and men, communities and governments to all aspects of disaster risk reduction (DRR) and climate change adaptation (CCA). The Platform is open to organisations who are based in Switzerland or implementing partners of Swiss-based

organisations, working on not-for-profit basis and active or interested in DRR and CCA.

Please consult www.drrplatform.org for further information.