

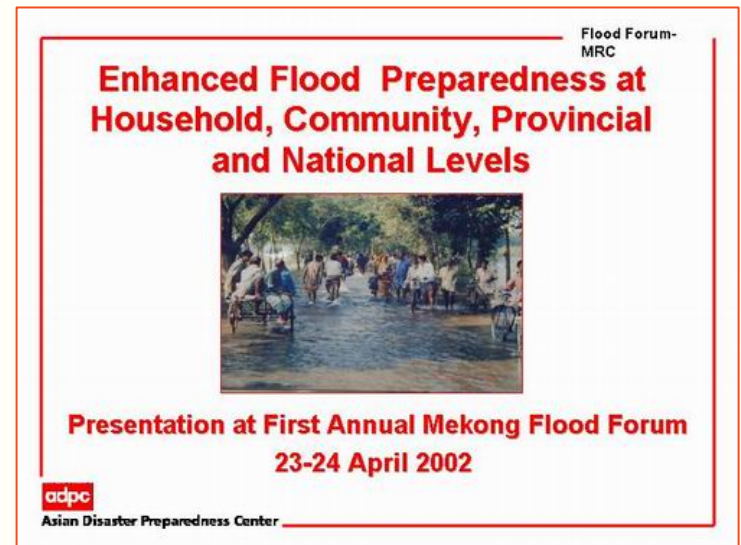
# Proposed Mekong Flood Management & Mitigation Newsletter & Awareness Materials: First Steps towards a Mekong FMM Partnership

A presentation by  
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At  
3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Mekong Flood Forum, Vientiane, Lao PDR  
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## Where We Were at 1<sup>st</sup> Annual Mekong Flood Forum on Preparedness (April '02)

- FMM strategy approved Program yet to be launched
- Discussions on regional activities v/s national and local action
- Recognizing “benefits” of flooding
- Stakeholders stated expectations from FMMP but expressed concerns on MRC’s role in emergency management
- Clear sense of having taken important first step & optimism



ADPC Presentation at 1<sup>st</sup> Flood Forum

## 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Mekong Flood Forum (October '03) "Information Flow, Networking & Partnership"

- Importance of other hazards in riparian countries, i.e flash floods and droughts
- Calls for National FMM Task Forces & National Flood Forums
- Improved communications between forums & reporting on action taken
- Linking with Typhoon Committee, ACDM and ASEAN Regional Program on Disaster Management
- Recognition that "we stakeholders present place these demands on ourselves & must be catalysts for action within our countries and organizations"



ADPC Presentation at 2<sup>nd</sup> Flood Forum

# Where Do We Stand Today

- A fully funded MRC FMMP, with three components under implementation since 2004.
- An energetic Secretariat, a soon to be operational Regional Flood Center.
- A range of other active local level programmes in the riparian countries on early warning, flood preparedness, flood proofing and mitigation, and building community resilience, being implemented by a range of stakeholders.
- Continued high expectations on tangible outcomes, both from our political leaders as well the people of the basin in whose name we act.

# Unmet Needs & Continuing Challenges

- Improving dissemination of the flood forecasts
- Operationalising improved flood preparedness programs at village, commune, district province and national levels
- Enhancing capacity in responsible institutions at all levels
- Integrating these subjects in University curriculum and research programs in institutions in the basin
- Responding to the expectations of comprehensive programs on flash floods and droughts
- Improving communication and coordination at national level and across countries, particularly between bordering provinces
- Achieving synergies for the FMMP with other national and regional programs implemented by various stakeholders

# Future Directions for FMM (Oct 2003)

- First step of a long journey
- First year of a six year programme
- In transition - the road from Phnom Penh to Vientiane
- Consolidating achievements and assessing impacts and results
- Upscaling pilots
- Deepening implementation and quality
- Meeting enormous expectations of stakeholders and river basin citizens and communities
- “The eyes of the world are on us”
- Answering a key question: Is the FMMP a
  - MRC Flood Management & Mitigation Program or
  - Mekong Flood Management & Mitigation Partnership

## Towards A Mekong FMM Partnership

- Perhaps the time has come to seriously consider a more formal Mekong FMM Partnership.
- Such a mechanism would attempt to promote dialogue, networking and collaborative activities, while recognizing that each agency with its core competence and area of interest would continue to “manage” their respective program.
- Such a mechanism could serve initially as a loose network that is aimed at information exchange, development of synergies, and active bilateral and trilateral partnerships among its “members”.

## Possible Models

- Natural Disaster Mitigation Partnership (NDM Partnership) in Central Vietnam
- Greater Mekong Sub-region Academic and Research Network (GMSARN)
- International Flood Network (IFNet)
- Provention Consortium.



## Key Roles of MRC in the Proposed Partnership

- MRC as a dedicated, intergovernmental river basin organization with its distinguished record of flood forecasting and mapping capacities, and a core FMM Program makes it eminently logical to be the lead agency in such a partnership.
- The interest of all Disaster Management stakeholders (NDMOs, Red Cross Societies, UN Agencies, technical institutions) and their keenness to be associated in the implementation, gives legitimacy to the FMMP with a significance and impact far beyond the traditional MRC set of institutions.
- This expectation of leadership, and the core role MRC plays in organizing and convening these forums that well equips it to play a nodal role in the proposed partnership.

## Key Partners

- National Disaster Management Offices
- National Mekong Committees
- Provincial and District Disaster Management Committees
- Red Cross Societies and IFRC
- Non-Government Organizations working on Flood Management
- Mass organizations working on Flood Management
- Mekong River Commission
- UN ESCAP, UNDP, UNOCHA, WHO, WFP
- Asian Development Bank
- Asian Disaster Preparedness Center
- Universities in the Basin working on Flood Management
- Donors interested in the Basin working on FMM

## Proposed Initial Activities for A Mekong FMM Partnership

- National FMM Forums in Mekong Provinces
- Mekong FMM Newsletters
- FMM Awareness Materials
- Mekong FMM Website



## National FMM Forums in Mekong Provinces

- The forum would be an opportunity to learn about and learn from the work done by
  - Provincial and District DM Committees and commune DM teams
  - Red Cross activities on Flood Management
  - Provincial, District and commune units of peoples organizations
  - NGOs and CBOs in innovative programs
- Participants - practitioners working in these institutions from the Mekong provinces
- Venue - in one of the provinces (move by rotation to other provinces)
- To be held in the language of the country and region



# Mekong FMM Newsletters

## Regional Newsletters

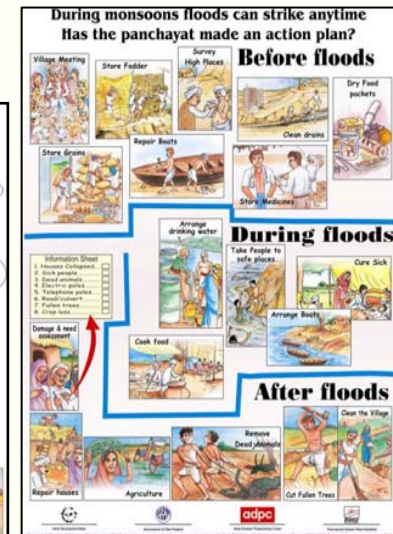
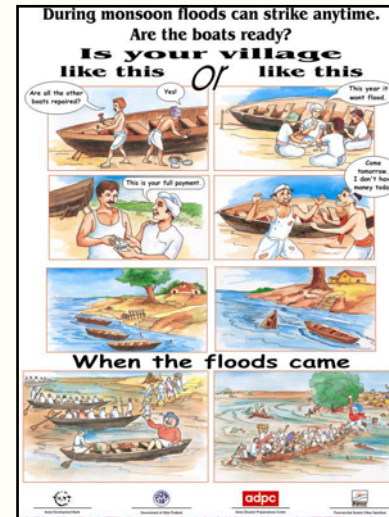
- Focus on the work done at provincial, district and commune levels
- The target readership of the newsletters - DM and development practitioners working at the provincial, district and commune levels and the stakeholder institutions at the national and regional level
- Possible regional initiators (MRC, IFRC and ADPC)
- First step - Plan a initial issue

## National Newsletters in the National Languages

- Possible initiators - NDMO, National Mekong Committees & National Red Cross Societies
- Need not be mere translation of regional newsletter but a shared content of 30-50%
- Start with 2 countries on first come basis

# FMM Awareness Materials

- Re-production of existing materials developed by IFRC, National Red Cross Societies and NGOs
- Engagement with the National Mekong and DM Committees to maximize their involvement and leverage their connections with the state owned and private media
- Launch harmonized basin wide or national FMM campaigns possibly in the month before the flood season





## Mekong FMM Website

- A companion site showcasing the work on FMM
- Drawing from the work of various stakeholders and from the material that would be gathered while preparing the newsletters
- In each of the 4 riparian languages to develop a widely accessible source of information on the subject for use by a variety of stakeholders

## Looking Ahead - Next Steps

- Inputs, comments and suggestions from the AFF3 Participants and other interested persons over the next few weeks
- Discussions and Informal consultations with stakeholders
- Fine tuning of initial activities
- Identifying resources and volunteer commitments, while piggybacking on ongoing activities
- “If this is an idea whose time has come, lets work together to make it happen”.



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*Thank You*

