

Integrated Strategic Environmental Assessments in Post-Crisis Countries

A GUIDANCE NOTE FOR INTEGRATING DISASTER RISK REDUCTION AND CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION IN SUSTAINABLE RECONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT PLANNING





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Executive Summary

In the early period after conflicts or disasters, it is crucial to guide the initial stages of recovery and reconstruction so that new developments minimize environmental impacts and build resilience to disaster, climate and conflict risks. Post-Crisis Integrated Strategic Environmental Assessment (Post-Crisis Integrated SEA) is an approach that emerged from the post-crisis and development process of the Northern Province of Sri Lanka, after 33 years of conflict. There was an urgent need to facilitate a process to 'build back better' and an opportunity to ensure its environmental sustainability, as well as reduce disaster and climate risks, through an information-led multi-stakeholder dialogue. This process was led by the UN Development Programme (UNDP) (2009 - 2013) and was subsequently carried forward by UN Environment through a two-year program (2016-2017). The program focused on capacity-building and documenting lessons learned in two additional countries, Nepal and Côte d'Ivoire. In Nepal, the project enhanced capacities to address post-earthquake reconstruction efforts. In post-conflict Côte d'Ivoire, the project focused on sustainable development planning efforts. In Sri Lanka, the main outcomes included an 'Opportunity Map', which led to collective decision-making to reduce potential land and resource use conflicts, disaster risks and ultimately to the declaration of new protected areas. In all three project countries, the data collection process built trust, consensus, databases on key environmental sensitivities, hazards and enhanced planning capacities to implement the Integrated SEA recommendations.

This Guidance Note was drafted to document lessons learned in the three project countries and in doing so, it provides a step-by-step practical guide for countries in post-crisis situations to undertake Integrated SEAs. The Integrated SEA approach builds upon current SEA practices, while placing greater emphasis on integrating disaster risk and climate change impacts into a participatory data collection, mapping and planning process. This publication provides practical guidance on how to manage the process of assembling data and obtaining consensus from a wide range of actors to produce robust and widely accepted 'Opportunity Maps' for sustainable reconstruction and development. Recommendations from Integrated SEA processes should aim to be institutionalized into formal land-use planning processes. As such, Post-Crisis Integrated SEAs can be considered a bridge between post-crisis humanitarian action and sustainable development planning.

This Guidance Note is intended for decision-makers, policy-makers and practitioners who support the post-crisis recovery, reconstruction and development planning processes in developing countries, such as Post Disaster Recovery Frameworks:

- Reconstruction authorities;
- Planning and environmental authorities;
- Development partners, development banks and environmental and humanitarian agencies supporting the transition to development planning.

This Guidance Note covers basic principles and reasons for conducting Integrated SEA in postcrisis contexts, namely:

- Provides an initial screening tool of potential projects for fast-tracking decision-making;
- Guides resources in order to collect more relevant data for sustainable reconstruction and development;
- Gives an overview of key environmental and hazard-related issues;
- Directs attention to areas or projects requiring more detailed study and Environmental Impact Assessments (EIAs), rather than conducting EIAs piecemeal;
- Leads to greater protection of valued environmental assets while safeguarding against potential hazards and climate change impacts;
- Creates ownership of the planning process in order to ensure longer-term sustainability of Integrated SEA recommendations and outcomes;
- Provides a platform for inter-sectoral dialogue and builds trust to reduce potential conflicts over development projects;
- Turns the impetus of post-crisis situations into opportunities for more resilient and sustainable planning processes.

Above all, this Guidance Note is intended as a practical, step-by-step document, illustrated with lessons learned on applying Post-Conflict Integrated SEAs in Sri Lanka, Nepal and Côte d'Ivoire. For more information and to access the country-specific reports, see: www.unenvironment.org/drr

ACRONYMS

ANDE Agency for the Environment (Côte d'Ivoire)

ARSO Autorité pour l'Aménagement de la région du Sud-Ouest / South-Western

Planning Authority (Côte d'Ivoire)

BCPR Bureau of Crisis Prevention and Recovery

CNTIG Comité National de Télédétection / National Committee for Remote

Sensing (Côte d'Ivoire)

CSO Civil Society Organization

DOLIDAR Department of Local Infrastructure Development and Agricultural

Roads (Nepal)

DRR Disaster Risk Reduction

EHI Environment and Hazard Indicators

EIA Environmental Impact Assessment

GIS Geographic Information System

IAIA International Association of Impact Assessments

ICIMOD International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development

IEE Initial Environmental Examination (Nepal)

INS Institut National Statistique / National Institute of Statistics (Côte d'Ivoire)

ISEA Integrated Strategic Environmental Assessment

IUCN International Union for the Conservation of Nature

JEU Joint Unit of UN Environment and the UN Office for the Coordination

of Humanitarian Affairs

Landslide Susceptibility

NCEA Netherlands Commission for Environmental Assessment

NGO Non-Governmental Organization

OCHA United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs

OECD Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development

OECD DAC Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development –

Development Assistance Committee

PDRF Post Disaster Recovery Framework

SEA Strategic Environmental Assessment

UNDA United Nations Development Account

UNDP United Nations Development Programme

UNHCR United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
USAID United States Agency for International Development

WWF World Wide Fund for Nature

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