

Strategy Note

ESCAP Multi-Donor Trust Fund for Tsunami, Disaster and Climate Preparedness in Indian Ocean and South East Asia

November 2011

Background

The ESCAP Multi-Donor Trust Fund for Tsunami, Disaster and Climate Preparedness in Indian Ocean and South East Asia Countries (the Fund) was established in 2005 through a US\$10 million contribution from the Thailand¹ with the overall objective of building and enhancing tsunami early warning capacities at various levels responding to the needs of the Indian Ocean and South East Asian countries.² More specifically, the Fund was expected to contribute to the development of an integrated regional early warning system based on adequate resources, and comprising a network of collaborative centres connected to sub-regional and regional centres. While focusing on tsunami early warning, the Fund applied a multi-hazard approach in line with the principles of effective and people centred end-to-end early warning systems. The new strategy for the Fund³ approved in 2009, included climate and disaster preparedness within the Fund's core areas of support, while retaining the focus on early warning for coastal hazards.

An evaluation⁴ in 2011 concluded that the Fund had made a significant contribution to the establishment of an Indian Ocean tsunami early warning system. It also confirmed the relevance of focusing on early warning for coastal hazards and recommended actions to strengthen the Fund based on the comparative advantages of ESCAP.

This purpose of this note is to clarify the purpose, objective, strategic approaches, principles and priority areas for support that will guide future rounds of funding.

Purpose and objectives

The purpose of the Fund is to contribute to more **resilient coastal communities**, and ultimately contribute to **save lives and reduce loss and damage**. The objective of the Fund is to build and enhance tsunami, disaster and climate preparedness capacities for **early warning for coastal hazards** at various levels, in accordance with the needs of the Indian Ocean and Southeast Asian countries.

Strategic approaches

The Fund is one of many actors contributing to strengthening end-to-end early warning for coastal hazards. First and foremost, advancements are driven by countries and communities themselves. Secondly, a number of international organizations, bilateral agencies and non-governmental organizations and private enterprises support the development of capacities for end-to-end early warning. The Fund will focus on strategic approaches which build on

¹ The other donors to the Fund are: Sweden, Turkey, Philippines, Bangladesh and Nepal.

² The countries covered by the Fund are: Australia, Bangladesh, Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, China, India, Indonesia, Islamic Republic of Iran, Lao PDR, Maldives, Malaysia, Myanmar, Pakistan, the Philippines, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Timor Leste and Viet Nam.

³ *ESCAP Trust Fund for Tsunami, Disaster and Climate Preparedness, Strategic Plan, ST/ESCAP/2547*, New York, 2009.

⁴ *Evaluative Review of the ESCAP Trust Fund for Tsunami, Disaster and Climate Preparedness*, Yasemin Aysan, September 2011.

ESCAP's comparative advantage as a convener of **regional cooperation** for its member States. In line with the roles of ESCAP, the Fund will support projects and activities that can facilitate:

- Strengthening of regional institutions dealing with early warning;
- Enhancing regional cooperation for early warning through data sharing, joint standards, resource sharing arrangements and effective networks; and
- Sharing of knowledge and practices.

Mechanisms facilitated by ESCAP will be utilized, including the Panel on Tropical Cyclones, Typhoon Committee, Disaster Risk Reduction Committee, Regional Cooperative Mechanism on Disaster Monitoring and Early Warning, Particularly Drought and the ESCAP Commission.

As for support to the **national level**, the Fund will focus on policy and institutional strengthening in resource poor countries. In projects targeting specific national capacities, the Fund should aim to apply South-South approaches to enhance cooperation between countries covered by the Fund, and tap on the capacities that have been developed in the region.

Priority areas for regional and national level support are:

- Develop standardized multi-hazard risk mapping and vulnerability assessments.
- Develop standardized information storage, data accessibility and their use for disaster risk reduction.
- Support real-time, timely, free and open access to data, analysis, and other information products for warning purposes.
- Network-wide review of effectiveness and geographic coverage.
- Promotion of long-term financial and in-kind support to ensure sustainability of seismic and sea level instrumentation networks and their maintenance.
- Strengthen dissemination and response to warnings through the development of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for a range of hazards and link the regional and national levels.
- Strengthen channels of communication for warning messages, including policy support to communications networks.
- Improve the effectiveness of warning messages, e.g. through regular user feedback.
- Support policies for simulations and drills, standards for evaluation and procedures covering each hazard.

The following **principles** will guide the project selection:

Ownership. Governments and other organizations should develop proposals matching their priorities within the scope of the Fund. Resource sharing arrangements are encouraged.

Quality assurance. The proposals should respond favourably to an ex-ante evaluation of relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, sustainability and impact.

Coordination and harmonization. Implementing organizations are required to take a total picture of related initiatives and support in mind when designing and implementing activities to avoid duplication and build synergies.

Millennium Development Goals (MDG). In line with the overall international effort to support the achievement of MDGs, the Fund will focus on Least Developed Countries (LDCs) and low capacity / high-risk countries, and as such the most vulnerable coastal communities, which in turn will contribute positively to the attainment of a number of the MDGs. The Fund should pay particular attention to improving resilience of the poor, women and children as appropriate within the projects supported by the Fund.