

PLEASE SEND ALL COMMENTS TO:

Dewald.VanNiekerk@nwu.ac.za

AND

Per.Becker@lucram.lu.se

CONCEPT PAPER:

**DISASTER RISK REDUCTION CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT
IN THE SADC REGION**

(June 2010)

Compiled by:

**Prof. Dewald van Niekerk
African Centre for Disaster Studies
North-West University
South Africa**

**Per Becker
Lund University
Centre for Risk Analysis and Management
Sweden**

1. AIM

The aim of this concept paper is to discuss an integrated and multi-stakeholder capacity development initiative for the SADC region. The paper focuses on four key aspects that need to be addressed in order to ensure sustainable capacity in disaster risk reduction (DRR) and climate change adaptation (CCA) within the SADC region, for the short-term and long-term.

2. BACKGROUND

The African Centre for Disaster Studies (ACDS) at North-West University and the Lund University Centre for Risk Analysis and Management (LUCRAM) has fostered a network relationship with funding from the Swedish government for the past two years. The pillars of our cooperation are research, education and capacity development, specifically in the SADC region. The HFA as well as the African Regional Strategy for DRR and its revised Programme for Implementation places a premium on establishing and maintaining institutional capacity. Yet, governments mostly neglect this crucial success factor for DRR/CCA. Retaining the necessary knowledge and skills in this area is also a major challenge. This is evident in the staff turnover in governments, NGOs and international organisations. Besides the need for in-country knowledge and skills for the member states of SADC, the current skills in the SADC Secretariat for DRR/CCA are also severely stressed. Many of the problems in SADC relating to creating and maintaining institutional capacity is under-researched and solutions to these problems remains short-sighted, theoretical and untested.

3. FOUR TIER APPROACH

To address the capacity development needs in the SADC region we suggest an integrated four-tier approach. **Firstly**, we need to focus on supporting and assisting in the development of SADC Secretariat's capacities for fulfilling their mandate in supporting their member states in DRR/CCA. **Secondly**, priority countries in the SADC region need urgent support in developing their capacities for DRR/CCA, including establishing national platforms as integrated parts in their overall structure. **Thirdly**, in order to achieve the above it is necessary to ensure a sustainable flow of knowledgeable and skilful individuals to drive and maintain vital institutions for DRR/CCA on all administrative levels in the region. As it is unfeasible to assume that "outside" training and education providers would be in a position to ensure this, it is imperative to support existing institutions for higher education and research, such as universities or other research based organisations, in the SADC countries to establish education and training programmes in DRR/CCA. **Lastly**, closely linked to the latter is the need to ensure that these institutions for higher education and research address challenges in the region and aim to answer crucial questions through research. This is not only important for providing the necessary knowledge base for their academic programmes, but also for being able to take active part in the DRR/CCA advocacy and continuously support governments and other stakeholders in their efforts to facilitate sustainable development by reducing disaster risk. It is thus also imperative to support the development of in-house capacities for research and collaboration with non-research stakeholders. It is important to note that these four tiers are closely linked, i.e. as the capacities of the SADC Secretariat develop (first tier), it should be increasingly involved in the DRR/CCA programmes in member states (second tier); as the universities develop their knowledge base through research (fourth tier), they should be increasingly involved in the capacity development on both regional and national level (first and second tiers); when academic programmes start producing graduates (third tier), they will be able to support activities in all tiers. The next sections will aim to allude to what the possible interventions could be and how various stakeholders can become involved.

3.1 Supporting the SADC DRR Unit

It is widely known that the SADC DRR Unit is lagging behind other regional counterparts. This is not necessarily linked to the inability of the Unit to perform but should rather be seen as an institutional issue that enjoys limited support from the member countries. However, the SADC DRR Unit has a critical role to fulfil in the region and one should not assume that this would occur spontaneously. The success in making DRR/CCA a priority in member states will largely depend on the future activities of the SADC DRR Unit. The Unit will also drive the revised DRR strategy for SADC and the need for more and appropriate skills and competencies are thus evident.

Partners that can be involved in this aspect of the capacity development initiative could include:

- The Global Facility for Disaster Risk Reduction at the World Bank (GFDRR);
- UNDP-BCPR;
- UNISDR;
- Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency (MSB); and
- Other donors and implementing partners.

All of the partners mentioned above have a mandate and interest to support the SADC regional office. The support can take on the following embodiments (not mentioned in order of importance or chronological order):

- Activities to support the legal and institutional framework for SADC Secretariat's role in DRR/CCA in the region:
 - Advise through dialogue with SADC Secretariat's senior management on potential roles that the organisation could have in DRR/CCA in the region; and
 - Support advocacy for DRR/CCA and for the SADC Secretariat's role in it for the executive and legislative branches of member state governments.
- Activities to assist in the organisational development of the SADC DRR Unit:
 - Advocate for the importance of DRR/CCA for senior management and for making it a priority of the organisation; and
 - Assist in strengthening internal organisational structures and processes to facilitate effective DRR/CCA programming.
- Activities to support the resource base for the SADC DRR Unit:
 - Assist with internal training of SADC staff, spanning over technical and organisational issues, as well as training of trainers;
 - Secondment of expertise, with gradual phasing out as the SADC DRR Unit's own capacities develop;
 - Assist in building up a human resource system for developing and maintaining a roster with field staff for future DRR/CCA programmes in the region;
 - Assist in recruiting and training roster personnel;
 - Assist in developing modules for capacity development activities in member states, including guidelines for organisational development, training material, etc;
 - Monetary support for specific DRR/CCA activities in member countries. Initially for SADC involvement in joint capacity development activities, gradually shifting to funding SADC DRR Unit activities with limited external involvement; and
 - Advocate internally the need for allocating sufficient monetary resources for DRR/CCA programmes, phasing out external monetary support slowly and gradually.

The ACDS and LUCRAM are more than willing to assist in the skills transfer initiatives but do not see this as their core competency within the capacity development initiative.

3.2 Assisting National Platforms

The second important aspect that needs direct capacity development support is national governments, specifically national disaster risk reduction platforms. The history of national platforms in the SADC region has shown that their success almost always hinges on one champion in government driving the process. This is obviously a very unsustainable route to follow. In-country capacities should therefore also be developed. It is important to note that in all cases when working with national governments, the focus should be on demand driven rather than supply driven training and education. In order to understand the demand driven side of training one should first build internal capacities, support the establishment of national platforms, advocate and partner with national platforms. Only when a clear understanding of disaster risk reduction is gained will the national governments be able to identify their

capacity development needs. We also do realise that some supply driven initiatives must be present to kick-start the process. This should, however, not be the main focus.

We also suggest that a number of priority countries without any form of national platform be identified first and that we also try to use the experiences of other countries to assist in the establishment of such platforms. The role of the SADC DRR Unit is therefore ever important in this tier as well.

Partners that can be involved in this aspect of the capacity development initiative could include:

- The Global Facility for Disaster Risk Reduction at the World Bank (GFDRR);
- UNDP-BCPR;
- UNISDR;
- Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency (MSB); and
- Other donors and implementing partners.

All of the partners mentioned above have a mandate and interest to support the national governments. The support can take on the following embodiments (not mentioned in order of importance or chronological order):

- Activities to support the development of the legal and institutional framework for DRR/CCA in each selected country:
 - Support advocacy for DRR/CCA for the executive and legislative branches of member state governments;
 - Advise and support governments and governmental authorities in developing and implementing laws, regulations and policies for DRR/CCA; and
 - Assist the development of national platforms for DRR/CCA with broad inclusion of stakeholders in the countries.
- Activities to assist in the organisational development of authorities central to DRR/CCA in the institutional set-up of each selected country:
 - Advocate for the importance of DRR/CCA for senior management of the organisations, thus making it a priority of the organisation; and
 - Assist in strengthening internal organisational structures and processes to facilitate effective DRR/CCA.
- Activities to support the resource base for selected organisations:
 - Assist with internal training of staff, spanning over technical and organisational issues, as well as training of trainers, with increasing responsibilities for SADC DRR Unit and universities as the programme goes on;
 - Secondment of expertise to key organisations, with gradual phase-out as the capacity of the organisation increases;
 - Monetary support for specific DRR/CCA activities, with increasing responsibilities for SADC DRR Unit and universities as the programme goes on; and
 - Advocate internally in the country and organisation for the need for allocating sufficient monetary resources for DRR/CCA programmes, phasing out external monetary support slowly and gradually.

The ACDS and LUCRAM are more than willing to assist here as well but do not see this as their core competency within the capacity development initiative.

3.3 Support to Higher Education Institutions

Thirdly, and **most importantly** in this initiative, is the direct support to institutions for higher education and research, mainly universities, in the SADC countries. The need to support the development of capacities in universities is crucial for the long-term sustainability of disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation in the region. It is vital that countries have their own resource base with knowledge and skills for DRR/CCA and their own universities are the only stakeholders that can provide this over time. Currently there is only a hand-full of African universities with a clear disaster risk reduction focus, catering for an ever-increasing demand. In countries where there is a strong disaster risk reduction agenda in the university sector, one also finds a fairly well functioning national platform. In many instances, universities form an integral part of the national platform and also provide the national platform with scientific and research-based advice on disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation (e.g. Mozambique, South Africa, Madagascar and Tanzania). Hence, developing and continuously delivering academic education in DRR/CCA is vital for most countries in the region.

Where necessary knowledge and skills for setting up and running such educational programmes do not exist, the internal knowledge and skills base must first be developed. Most of the relevant staff of these universities is highly educated individuals, predominantly with expertise in disciplines relevant for DRR/CCA already. This limits the necessary knowledge transfer for DRR/CCA, but demands trans-disciplinary collaboration within each university for making the sought after academic programmes possible. It necessitates academic “champions” to drive the process, but we have no preference which academic disciplines these champions represent, e.g. Geography, Public Management, Health or Engineering. The key factor is to create critical mass of knowledge and skills in each university in order for them to sustain disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation education and training in the future. The capacity development of the universities could be in the form of post-graduate qualifications for existing staff, mentoring programmes, seconded experts, short courses, skills transfer through research support, inter university exchange programmes etc. Even universities with advanced knowledge and skills in different aspects of DRR/CCA may have challenges to mobilise the necessary organisational parts for jointly delivering academic programmes in DRR/CCA, and could need assistance in doing so.

When a university has developed or mobilised a sufficient knowledge and skills base in DRR/CCA, the next step of this initiative is to support the development and initial implementation of curriculum and academic courses for disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation. In particular our focus will be to assist universities in implementing Master’s degree programmes, but selected part of these can easily be adapted and delivered as free standing courses for other programmes and with somewhat more work as professional short courses. Both African Centre for Disaster Studies (ACDS) at North-West University and Lund University Centre for Risk Analysis and Management (LUCRAM) have extensive experience in setting up such programmes and of working in developing capacities for DRR/CCA. The focus on the post-graduate level is also in line with other international thinking in this regard, such as the Peri Peri U initiative funded by the USAID through the University of Cape Town. The reason for supporting Masters degree programme is that disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation is a higher order skill. One cannot adequately address these issues if one does not have a holistic and systems perspective on reality. As indicated before, it is quite effortless to build professional short courses from a Masters level course in order to address short-term skills gaps. The current project within the ACDS funded by the USAID: “The USAID DRR

Training Course for South and Southern Africa” will be used as the vehicle to provide materials and multi-media to this portion of the initiative. Free, updated and world-class materials will be available to all universities to use, adapt and implement.

Research is a core component for both developing the necessary knowledge and skills base of universities and for developing and delivering their academic education, which is why the forth tier of this initiative is crucial for its success.

Potential universities

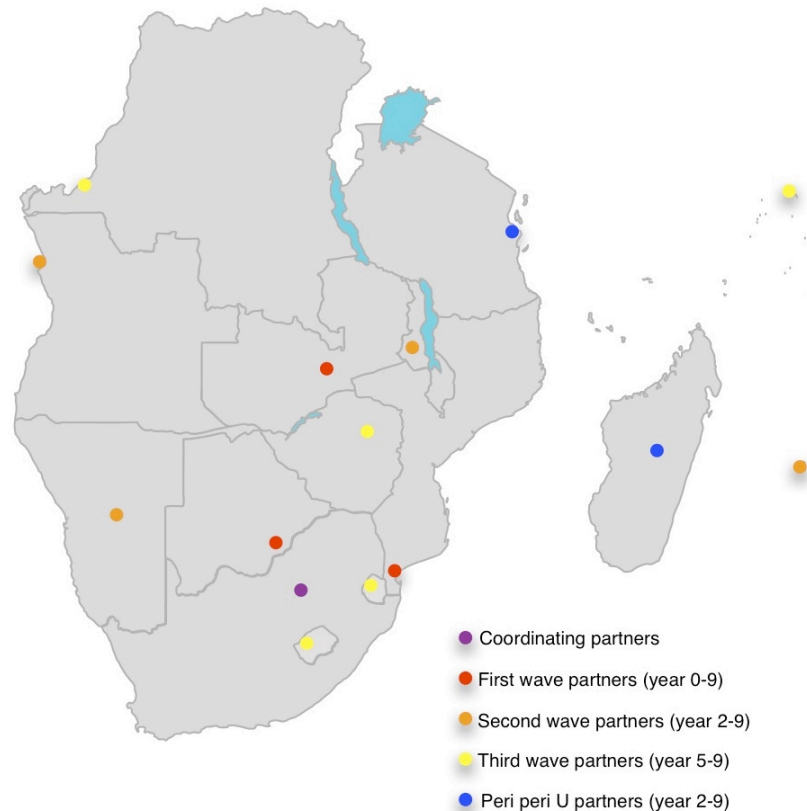


Figure 1: Location of potential partner universities

To achieve the above entails a long-term process, and we have divided this process into three “waves” (see Figure 1 and 2). Where the first wave partners, after the initial years of collaboration with ACDS and LUCRAM, support the second wave partners together with ACDS and LUCRAM, before finally teaming up with their second wave partner to support the third wave partners with only marginal support from ACDS and LUCRAM (see Figure 2). This way we scale up the support, allow the universities to develop their network in the region and facilitate for the vast pool of knowledge and experience to be shared between partners.

The ACDS-NWU and LUCRAM has already identified and is in contact with the University of Botswana (Botswana), Mulungushi University (Zambia) and Universidade Eduardo Mondlane (Mozambique). These universities will form the “first wave”. The ACDS-NWU and LUCRAM will thus be directly involved in supporting these universities. Following on the first wave, is a gradual reduction of the involvement of the ACDS-NWU and LUCRAM. The current Peri Peri U partners can also be used within the second-year of the initiative, as they have vital knowledge and experience to share with us and with other universities in the region. Figure 2 below provides a possible timeline for the support to universities in SADC over the

next nine years. Some of the universities are tentative, as we do not want to approach all of them with this initiative before knowing if we have backing of crucial partners and donors.

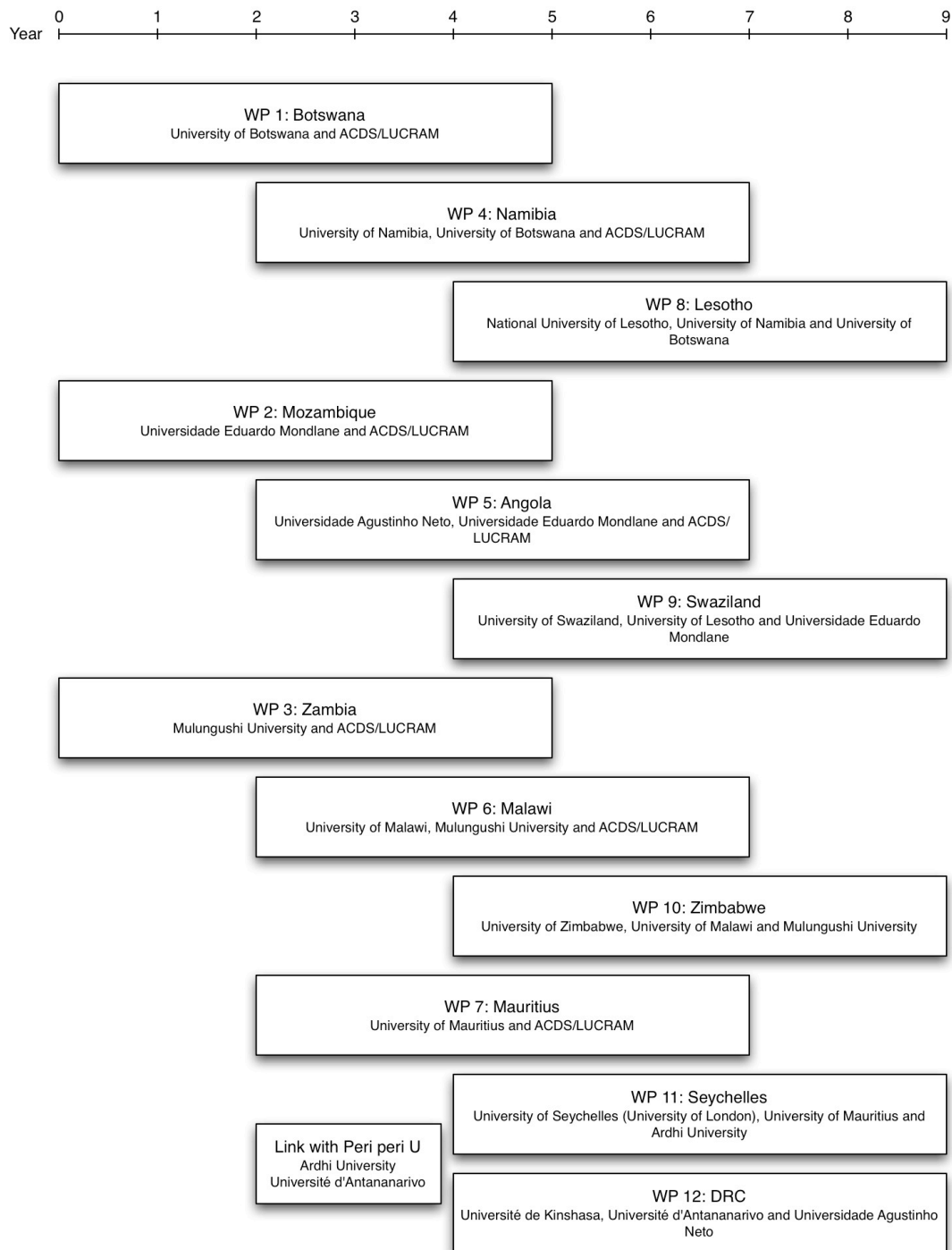


Figure 2: Timeline of university support

The support from ACDS and LUCRAM, as well as from the other partners involved, will be varied over the years planned for each university. After an initial period of low intensity support, mainly focused on learning what resources that are available, what support is needed, etc, as well as to advocate for the university management that DRR/CCA is something to focus on, the intensity will rapidly increase as the collaboration reaches more substantial matters. This support will then gradually fade out as the capacities of the universities increase and for the last year each work

package (WP) the external support will be marginal and mostly done through more or less normal collegial support from a distance.

Partners that can be involved in this aspect of the capacity development initiative could include:

- The Global Facility for Disaster Risk Reduction at the World Bank (GFDRR);
- ACDS-NWU;
- LUCRAM;
- Identified universities from the SADC region; and
- National Departments of Education.

The support can take on the following embodiments:

- Assistance to develop the knowledge and skills resource base in each selected university:
 - Offering post-graduate qualifications for existing staff, including monetary support in the form of travel costs and living allowances during their studies;
 - Assistance through mentoring programmes;
 - Seconded experts to the universities;
 - Giving short courses for existing staff;
 - Facilitating knowledge transfer through research support and collaboration; and
 - Inter university exchange programmes.
- Assisting the development and initial implementation of masters programmes in DRR/CCA:
 - Facilitating the sharing of curriculum and courses between partners, through visits, educational workshops, sharing of material, etc;
 - Assistance through mentoring programmes; and
 - Seconded experts to the universities.
- Supporting the active involvement of university staff and graduates in DRR/CCA activities in their country:
 - Assistance through mentoring programmes; and
 - Seconded experts to the universities.

The ACDS and LUCRAM see this third tier as our core competency within the capacity development initiative.

3.4 Research support

The last of the four tiers involves the direct support of research. Although closely linked to 3.3 above, research in this regard must be dealt with separately. Research provides us with answers to key questions for disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation. Thus, we will also engage in joint research initiatives with our partner universities, both to support the development of their own research capacities and for generating new knowledge. As in any given higher education environment, research will be used as a tool not only to investigate phenomena, but also as a tool to enhance knowledge and skills and to identify and solve critical problems. The focus on research is enhanced by the fact that this will be linked to Masters programmes. Research will in other words provide the vehicle for the SADC region to understand their own risk profile and possibly provide solutions. Research will form an integral part of the knowledge and skills development in the universities, but once these have been build and transferred, then one must sustain the involvement of the universities in national platforms though providing advice grounded in research.

Research, should thus be seen as the element which closes the loop in universities' involvement in national platforms and in SADC.

Partners that can be involved in this aspect of the capacity development initiative could include:

- The Global Facility for Disaster Risk Reduction at the World Bank (GFDRR);
- UNDP-BCPR;
- UNISDR;
- ACDS-NWU;
- LUCRAM;
- Identified universities from the SADC region;
- National Departments of Education; and
- Research foundations and other research funding organisations.

The support can take on the following embodiments:

- Assistance to develop the resource base for planning, implementing, evaluating and disseminating research in each selected university:
 - Assistance through mentoring programmes;
 - Seconded experts to the universities;
 - Inter university exchange programmes; and
 - Joint research projects.
- Assisting the development of new knowledge regarding DRR/CCA in the SADC region:
 - Joint research projects.
- Facilitating an active involvement researchers in policy formulation and practical planning, implementation and evaluation of DRR/CCA activities in their country:
 - Assistance through mentoring programmes; and
 - Seconded experts to the universities.

The ACDS and LUCRAM see also this forth tier as our core competency within the capacity development initiative.