



regard

rebuilding after displacement

Issue 2 - November 2019

Welcome

to the second
newsletter of the
REGARD Project

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Photograph: Representatives from REGARD project consortium, at the 1st Steering Committee meeting in Estonia on September 2019

REGARD Stakeholder Seminar disseminated findings of Output 1; Community Needs Analysis

The stakeholder seminar was held in the Estonian capital Tallinn on the 13th September 2019 to disseminate the findings of first Output of the project which is a Community Needs Analysis of displaced and host communities in the perspective of the built environment. The event was organized by the Tallinn University of Technology, Estonia. There were 32 participants including representatives of built environment professional bodies, disaster management practitioners, academics, policy-makers, built environment professionals in Estonia and the representatives from the project consortium. The stakeholder seminar was conducted to achieve three main objectives as follows.

1. To disseminate the findings of Community Need Analysis of Displaced and Host Communities in the perspective of the built environment,
2. To obtain the suggestions and recommendations of the stakeholders on the importance, relevance and applicability of the findings
3. To refine and validate the findings of Community Need Analysis.

The event was featured with a keynote presentation from Mr Tiit Meren, Hospital of reconstructive Surgery, Estonia.

Prof. Richards Haigh, University of Huddersfield, UK introduced the REGARD project to the stakeholders. Prof. Champika Liyanage, University of Central Lancashire, UK and Dr Nishara Fernando, University of Colombo, Sri Lanka presented the findings of Community Need Analysis. Subsequently, Dr Emlyn Witt, Tallinn University of Technology, Estonia chaired the discussion and feedback session involving all the participants. Accordingly, delegates valued the key knowledge uncovered by the project and discussed practicality, ways and means to incorporate the findings to the context.



Photographs: Stakeholders giving feedback in the REGARD Stakeholder seminar in Estonia, September 2019

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Project's 1st Steering Committee Meeting in Tallin, Estonia



REGARD project's 1st steering committee meeting was held between 12th -13th September 2019 in Tallinn University of Technology, Estonia. The meeting was attended by representatives from each of the REGARD project consortium member institutions.

Project partners from each consortium member country presented the preliminary findings of the Output 1; Community Need analysis representing Sri Lanka, United Kingdom, Estonia and Sweden. Through the comparison and contrast between the community needs in different contexts of the world, community needs were analysed and categorised into common themes. Together with the findings of Output 1, the plan for the Output 2 and 3 was discussed and agreed by the steering committee. One and half days long steering committee meeting was successfully concluded with overall project work plan till interim report submission, finalised quality plan, Dissemination plan and plan for future meetings and events.

The Importance of considering the subjective interpretation of displaced communities with regards to the Housing Satisfaction: A case study from Sri Lanka

Disaster-induced displacement and relocation is a frequently occurring phenomenon in the Sri Lankan context. This paper investigates the relationship between disaster-induced relocation processes and policy frameworks that the said relocation process is executed upon. The study revolves around the objectives of investigating various needs of victims during different stages of displacement and how relocation has altered the social, cultural and livelihood dimensions of the victims. The victims of the Aranayake landslide, residing in the Kegalle district and who has been resettled mainly in a donor-driven relocation site were selected for the study. A mixed sampling technique was implemented in two phases. In the first phase, in-depth interviews were conducted with the officials and focus group interviews were carried out with community members using purposive sampling. Subsequently, a community need analysis was conducted with the participation of both the community and officials. The study successfully employs Michael Cernea's Impoverishment Risks and Reconstruction Model for resettling displaced population (2000), and Thayer Scudder's stress and settlement process (2005).

The results of the study have been arranged based on the various needs highlighted by the respondents during data collection, how they have changed due to relocation and finally the role of the built environment in the relocation process. Out of the various needs identified, the following sections discuss the housing needs and the role of the built environment in the relocation process.

Housing Needs

Housing needs can be recognized as one of the most crucial needs which are affected in the relocation process. Relocation is usually focused on providing new housing units to those who are displaced.

Soon after Displacement

It is evident from the interviews conducted with the relocated community members that they lived for almost 2 years in temporary camps which they found to be satisfying. IMO, Dialog, Red Cross and various other NGOs have assisted them and they still acknowledge such institutions with gratitude.

Planning the Relocation Process

When considering the relocation process, it is important to understand the role played by various stakeholders. The selected donor-driven relocation site has been implemented by the District Secretariat. However, National Building Research Organization (NBRO) has coordinated the process by contributing to the selection of a suitable site for construction. On the other hand, the overall monetary allocations were made by the Chinese Government to improve Sri Lanka- China mutual relationship. Hence, the name of the setting is China-Lanka friendship village.



Photograph: China-Lanka friendship village, Sri Lanka

The plan, infrastructure and all other necessities were built according to the plan provided by the Chinese government. Both the community members and officials mentioned a major concern of not been involved when designing the housing units.

Further, there is a concern of not having sufficient land for resettlement in the Kegalle district. Also, due to politicization of the process, politicians do not like to send voters away from their jurisdiction due to the tendency of losing votes. Another problem that officials face is the lack of reporting and accurate data. Back in the 1980s and 1990s, similar disasters occurred and the victims have received housing but after a few generations pass people come back to their original settlement and keep the plot of land they have received as well. This is a problem which occurs as a result of not having enough information and data regarding previous resettlements.

The situation of the Original Land

It was mentioned that settlers are allowed to go to the original setting to continue their cultivation activities. However, the issue of thefts and animal threats are holding them back from doing so. It was also pointed out that the government is in the process of acquiring plots of land in their original setting as a security measure to prevent further constructions on the said lands. However, the people will still be allowed to use their gardens for agricultural activities and they still have the ownership of such gardens. On the other hand, it was also emphasized that for the owner-driven option, displaced communities were encouraged to demolish the original setting and use the material of the said house to build new housing units.

The Present situation of the housing units

None of the respondents was satisfied with the present condition of the houses. The concerns raised are discussed along the following thematic orientations:

Housing unit as a whole

A typical housing unit of the selected setting is 600 square feet and consists of 2-bed rooms, a living room, a kitchen and a washroom. As it has been already mentioned that most of the respondents tend to live in housing units which were bigger than the present housing unit, this tends to affect the level of housing satisfaction of the respondents. They also pointed out that the structure of the houses are such as that they have not been made to accommodate household, small scale entrepreneurial initiatives due to the lack of space. One of the other concerns was that the deeds of the housing units have not been provided yet and this has a major impact on their sense of ownership in the new setting. However, the officials had a contrasting idea:

“I personally don't believe we should give them a deed; we can give them a license instead. Otherwise, people will start selling these places and will leave the site” (Informant C6 – Community Leader, 35 years old). According to them, China guarantees the quality of the house for three years and if there are complaints they come and do the reconstruction free of charge. However, they are not so confident about the Chinese government abiding by the promise as they are yet to provide the above-mentioned facilities to the site.

Architectural fallacies

As per the respondents, the given housing units have various architectural fallacies which make them regret selecting this relocation option. Some of the said fallacies can be explained under the following themes:

Plan of the housing unit

As per the respondents, these houses are made for the air-conditioning purpose. Hence, there is a major concern in terms of ventilation. They mentioned the inability to sleep without fans which have made an escalation of electricity bills. Other than these issues, they also faced a problem of not having a garden to dump their garbage. Space which was given to them belongs to the government and they can only grow what they like in the garden but are not allowed to do any other changes to it.

Another problem was evident as a garbage dump is located around 500m away from their resettled area. This has caused massive issues due to flies. They had met government officials several times to find solutions to the problem (fumigated). PHIs had arrived the day before the focus group discussion took place and that was the first time that the PHIs had visited them for the whole year. They also mentioned problems of sanitation as the washroom is built inside houses. The respondents prefer having it outside since the two rooms inside the house are attached to the bathroom. Major concerns were also raised regarding the space of the kitchen and since it has been built for the usage of gas cookers. Most of the respondents have been using firewood for cooking purposes and they are reluctant to switch to gas cookers due to the lack of understanding of how to use such appliances which creates a security issue and the inability to spend a considerable amount of money on gas.

Materials used to build the housing unit

The community further raised concerns about the materials which have been used to build the housing unit. They highlighted concerns related to doors decaying with time and the quality of the wood e.g. using Dooriyan wood, mushrooms growing on the bathroom doors,-



Photograph: Relocation housing in Construction, Sri Lanka

-tiles not being properly fixed in the washroom which affects the safety of the residents and the ceiling been made of low-quality material which tends to get damaged during heavy wind. As per the above information, it is evident that the respondents are experiencing impoverishment risks of homelessness and landlessness due to emergent issues related to the housing unit, original land and the concern of legal ownership.

Conclusion

The action plan with regard to the given disaster-induced displacement setting has been formulated swiftly to offer quick relief to the displaced communities. Therefore, the officials accepted the shortcoming of not having a sound action plan in this regard. However, with regard to the housing structure, there is a clear resilient housing policy in place. Concerns arise when it comes to the operationalization of the said policy frameworks. One of the major drawbacks of the given relocation process is the lack of consultation of the displaced communities in the relocation process. On the other hand, most of the policy decisions are restricted to the planning stage of the housing setting and has not focused on the long term impact of relocation such as the economic, social and cultural needs.

When considering the above-mentioned facts, what is evident is that the programme has only given importance to the physical housing structure, neglecting the subjective interpretations of the residents with regard to their housing satisfaction. The concerns related to the relocation programme are closely related to the mismatch between the needs of the displaced community and what has been already delivered. Apart from that, not perceiving relocation as a long term process has a major negative impact on the project as the needs of the residents tend to change with time. In terms of Thayer Scudder's stress and settlement process (2005), the programme has only focused on the planning and recruitment stage creating a lacuna in the sustainability in the impact of the project.

Accordingly, the study suggests that there is a clear lacuna in the written policy frameworks and its practical implementation when satisfying the needs of the displaced communities. By restricting themselves only to understand the social and economic details of displaced groups, policy planners tend to neglect the necessity of conducting a needs analysis. The main reason for this is the failure of perceiving relocation as a long term process. The data further suggests that satisfaction of a relocation process is based on the needs of the displaced such as their physical, social, economic and psychological needs. Out of the said needs, the respondents tend to prioritize needs related to the built environment ahead of others, which is more of a physical need. The respondents seem to be dissatisfied with the housing unit as a whole, including its structure, facilities and the materials used to build the house. In conclusion, the study suggests the need of a model which addresses the need of a holistic institutional arrangement with further disaster risk management strategies to address the adverse impact on those who are displaced due to disasters.

REGARD poster presentation at a meeting of the European Science & Technology Advisory Group (E-STAG), University of Huddersfield



On the 30th and 31st October 2019, the Global Disaster Resilience Centre (GDRC) of the University of Huddersfield, UK hosted a meeting of the European Science & Technology Advisory Group (E-STAG). E-STAG was established in April 2018, with the aim to address the need for better inclusion of the science and technology communities in disaster risk reduction (DRR) efforts, and as called by the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030.

The objective of the E-STAG is to tackle emerging challenges in disaster risk reduction, focusing in particular on improving risk knowledge in 55 countries across Europe and Central Asia. The E-STAG experts aim to contribute to a research-informed and evidence-based implementation of the Sendai Framework, especially in assessing gaps and challenges for formulating recommendations.

In this context, Global disaster resilience centre, University of Huddersfield exhibited their work by means of posters including the REGARD project poster which was displayed during the whole meeting (5 days) in order to ensure the maximum exposure. Accordingly, REGARD project's aim, objectives, Project partners, Research process and the 10 intellectual outputs were displayed within the poster for the target audience including members of E-STAG which was composed of experts nominated by Member States (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belgium, Croatia, Germany, Israel, Italy, Montenegro, The Netherlands, Russian Federation, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, and The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland) and the staff and the students of University of Huddersfield, United Kingdom.

Project Milestones and Future Activities

Figure 1 illustrates the project milestones from the project start to end where the grey colour highlighted milestones have already been achieved and brown coloured milestones will be achieved in the future through the project process.

Accordingly, the project is designed around 10 intellectual outputs and 1 multiplier events. Intellectual output 1 of the REGARD project which is in the completion stage, investigated the needs of the communities following a disaster and conflict-induced mass displacements in the perspective of built environment. The finding of output 1 was disseminated at the stakeholder seminar which was held in Estonia on the 13th September 2019.

The project is now approaching Output 2 which develop a synthesis report on the role of the built environment in enhancing social cohesion between host and displaced communities and Output 3 focuses on developing a guidance notes with recommendations on best practices of rebuilding host and displaced communities following disaster and conflict-induced mass displacements from the standpoint of the built environment.

The work plan for these two outputs was discussed and agreed at the steering committee meeting which was held between 12th -13th September 2019 in Estonia. As an outcome, the next stakeholder seminar will be held in Colombo Sri Lanka on 23rd and 24th March 2020 to disseminate the findings of intellectual output 2 and 3.

The Launch of REGARD Project Website

We are pleased to announce the launch of REGARD project website! The new site went live on 1st August 2019 and can be accessed using the following link.

<http://regardproject.com/portal/>

The website is creative, interactive and gives better access to find useful information about the REGARD Project. The project website is open to public and provides the details and progress of the project and disseminates the project results to the wider community. In addition, it gives access to all the project marketing materials such as E-newsletters, project posters and project brochures.

Further, the project web site gives access to publications, working papers, news, events, non-technical summaries and links designed to address both the general public and the scientific community.

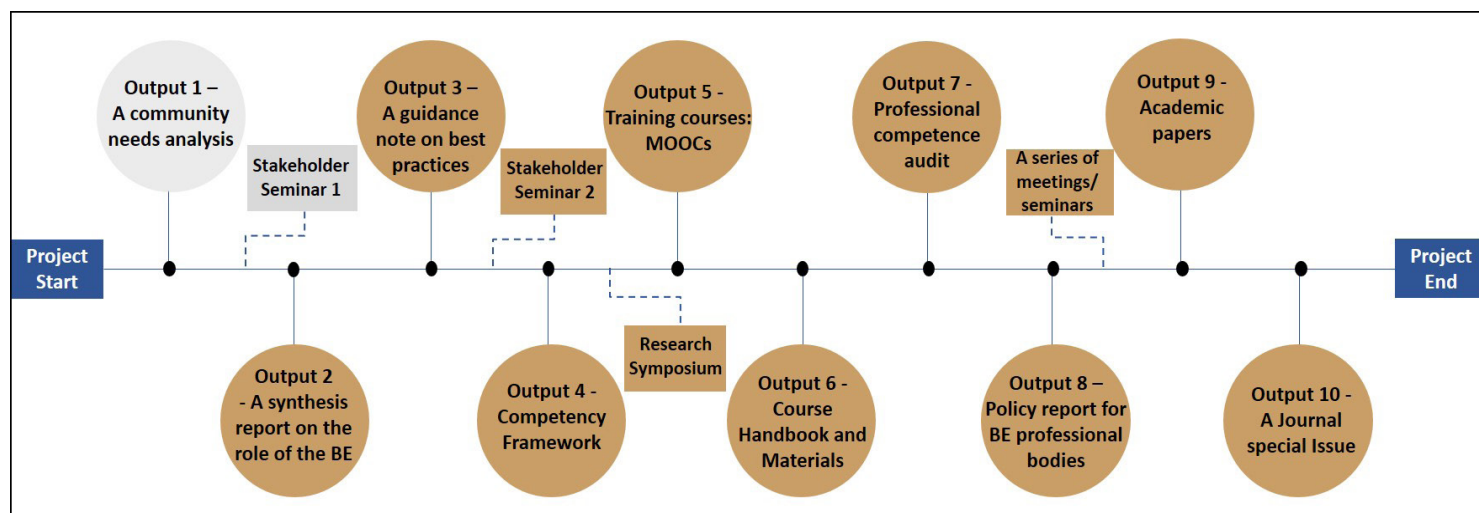


Figure 1: REGARD Project Milestones

Upcoming Conferences



The 9th International Conference on Building Resilience, Bali, Indonesia

The 9th International Conference on Building Resilience will be held in Indonesia, which is widely recognised as one of the world's most natural hazard-prone areas and is at risk to multiple hazards, including flooding, earthquakes, landslides, tsunamis, volcanos and cyclones. Over the last 30 years, there have been an average of 289 significant natural disasters per year and an average annual death toll of approximately 8,000. Like many other countries, climate change is also recognised as a key threat to Indonesia's development, especially for lower-income groups. Rising sea levels and changing weather patterns may lead to increased uncertainty in water availability, food production, and disruptions to transport, commerce, and urban development.

One of the greatest challenges faced by governments is in creating institutional convergence that integrates global goals emanating from the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (SFDRR), the Paris Agreement on Climate Change (PACC) and the World Humanitarian Summit. Disaster risk reduction (DRR) and climate change adaptation (CCA) are part of key agendas being considered in all these recent global agreements.

The conference will culminate in identifying approaches that could help achieve better synergies in the implementation of these frameworks on the ground via programmatic integration, collaboration, capacity, and innovation.

The 9th Building Resilience Conference (ICBR09) is co-organized by the Research Centre for Disaster Mitigation (RCDM), the School of Architecture, Planning and Policy Development (SAPPK) – ITB (Indonesia) and the Global Resilience Centre at the University of Huddersfield (UK) in association with the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR). ICBR09 will also be jointly conducted with the ITB Centennial 3rd International Conference on Disaster Management (ITB IC03 P100) as part of the First Centennial Commemoration of ITB as the First Higher Technical Education in Indonesia.

General information at icbritb@gmail.com
Conference Website: <https://icbr09itb100.itb.ac.id/>



International Symposium on Multi-Hazard Early Warning and Disaster Risk Reduction, Colombo, Sri Lanka

International Symposium on Tsunami and Multi-Hazard Early Warning and Disaster Risk Reduction will be held in 19th – 20th March 2020 in Cinnamon Grand, Colombo, Sri Lanka, to promote and support the availability and application of research, science and technology to support implementation of Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030.

Experience over recent years of the impacts of tsunamis has shown that inadequate preparation for, and response to, emergency situations have contributed to widespread damage and the avoidable loss of lives and livelihoods. A 2015 UN report estimates that each year, an additional 60,000 people and \$4 billion (US\$) in assets are exposed to the threat of tsunami hazard. As demonstrated by recent events in the Sunda Strait and in Palu, Indonesia, tsunamis inflict death and damage through violent, powerful flooding along the world's coastline. These events also highlighted the potential for cascading hazards and the importance of a multi-hazard approach to early warning.

This high-level, international symposium, which will be organised in collaboration with Disaster Management Centre, Sri Lanka; Global Disaster Resilience Centre, University of Huddersfield, UK; IOC-UNESCO IOTWMS, WG 1 on Tsunami Risk, Community Awareness and Preparedness, and other partners will be held to recognise achievements, and to highlight work that still needs to be done. It will promote collaboration among academia, research institutions and disaster management offices, and encourage multidisciplinary and multi sectoral interaction.

For more information on the event, please contact:
Prof Dilanthi Amarunga, Prof Richard Haigh & Dr. Nuwan Dias
Global Disaster Resilience Centre, University of Huddersfield, UK

Dr Nuwan Dias, Email: n.dias@hud.ac.uk
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Mr W.A. Dharmasiri (Director General) & Mr Sunil Jayaweera (Director, Preparedness and Planning) Disaster Management Centre, dg@dmc.gov.lk / jayaweera_s@yahoo.com

Write for REGARD Newsletter

The REGARD project provides an opportunity for people to share knowledge and experience. This newsletter is written by the REGARD membership for the REGARD membership, and also for other readers working with built environment professional bodies, national and international NGOs, UN agencies, government and donor institutions, academics, and independent consultants.

We, the Editors of REGARD newsletter, welcome contributions from REGARD partners and associate partners. We are also pleased to consider articles submitted by anyone involved in research rebuilding communities after disaster -induced and conflict-induced displacement. If you have knowledge and experience to share, please consider making a contribution.

- The scope of contributions should be consistent with the aims of REGARD. Typically, we welcome contributions in the following categories (word counts are advisory):
- News and reports from activities and events linked to the project (100 - 500 words)
- Reports on developments in the field / projects that are being investigated by partners – these do not have to be activities directly linked to the project, but should be relevant to project partner institutions (100 - 500 words)
- Useful Resources – relevant publications, websites (up to 20 - 40 words)
- Upcoming events (20 words)

We welcome suggestions for alternative types / styles of contribution. If you have an idea for an article that you would like to develop, the Editors would be pleased to discuss it with you - send an email to Ms Chathuranganee Jayakody (C.Jayakody2@hud.ac.uk)

The Editors reserve the right to edit any contribution.

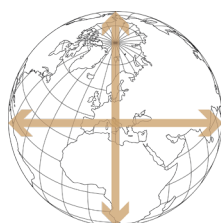
For further information on the REGARD project, Please contact:

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or visit the website at
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