



International Strategy for
Disaster Reduction

Announcements

Call for contributions: Mapping initiatives for Hospitals Safe from Disaster

What is being done and where to make hospitals, health facilities and systems, and health workers safe from disasters? Does your organization have a project or initiative? To fill out the questionnaire online, please visit: http://safehospitals.info/form_June08/questionnaire.htm or contact Ms Tze Ming Mok (mokt@un.org), by 15 August 2008.

Disaster Preparedness for Effective Response

This Guidance and Indicator Tool is designed to provide guidance on how to meet the challenge of being prepared to respond as set out in Priority Five of the Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA). This tool aims primarily to assist governments, local authorities, and other stakeholders concerned with natural hazards in potentially vulnerable settings.



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To submit an article or inform us of a new publication, web resource or event, please send your input to: isdrhighlights@un.org by the 20th day of each month.

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Highlights

July 2008

G8+5 adopt GLOBE Climate Change Adaptation paper

A GLOBE paper on climate change adaptation that called for the mainstreaming of disaster risk reduction into development work, was formally agreed by legislators from the G8+5 countries in Tokyo on 28-29 June. The paper was presented at a private meeting between the Japanese Permanent Mission and the Heads of the GLOBE country delegations on 30 June, just before the G8 Summit. Disaster risk reduction is a recurrent theme in the document, which recommends that “[a]daptation strategies should build on the established international disaster risk reduction framework - the Hyogo Framework for Action”. All GLOBE G8+5 delegations have made a commitment to take this paper into their national level parliamentary committee work and to promote it in their dealings with business and civil society groups.

For more information, please contact Terry Townshend, townshend@googlemail.com

El Salvador launches National Platform for DRR

The official launching of the El Salvador’s National Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction took place in San Salvador on 16 July, 2008. This National Platform is intended to serve as an inter-sectoral mechanism for the coordination and promotion of disaster risk reduction activities at the national level, in line with the Priority 1 of the Hyogo Framework for Action. El Salvador is one of the first three countries in Central America to establish a National Platform.

For more information, please contact Unidad de Comunicación Social, comunicacionessnet@snet.gob.sv

WHO team investigates earthquake-affected hospitals in China

A five-member WHO team, including Sasakawa Award for Disaster Risk Reduction Laureate Tony Gibbs, visited health facilities at the Chinese earthquake’s epicentre in Sichuan province over the last few months. Many hospitals were damaged and destroyed, forcing thousands of patients to be transferred to other areas. While numerous structures were beyond repair, some remained standing due to proper design and building standards. The team advised Chinese authorities on whether to vacate damaged health facilities, strengthen or retrofit existing ones and to design and construct new healthcare structures. “This was an opportunity for WHO to cooperate with China on key issues regarding the safe hospitals initiative, [Hospitals Safe from Disasters]” says Dr Eric Laroche, Assistant Director-General for WHO’s Health Action in Crises. “I am positive about the Chinese commitment to rebuilding its health infrastructure with the safe hospitals concept in mind.”

For more information, please contact Jonathan Abrahams, abrahamsj@who.int

CPN week highlights city resilience to disasters

The 2008 China Planning Network (CPN) week was organized from the 14-19 July in Beijing. It highlighted the city resilience in the context of the on-going Wenchuan earthquake recovery effort among other issues discussed. M. John Holmes, the United Nations Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs opened the roundtable by emphasizing that disaster risk reduction much be translated into political commitment at many levels and supported by financial resources for reducing risk and vulnerabilities. The statement was followed by 13 presentations from scholars and professors from different key universities around the world. Mr. Richard Stone from the American Association for the Advancement of Science summarised three main lessons learned after the Wenchuan earthquake: 1) The earthquake was unexpected for two reasons: a) More eastwards movement of the Anninghe Fault to the south of Longmenshan, and b) Earthquakes of that magnitude occur on Longmenshan once every 2,000 to 10,000 years, on average. 2) Earthquake like Wenchuan cannot be predicted given the current knowledge and 3) Reconstruction must be based on an updated seismic risk map. The scholars and the Director of UN/ISDR secretariat visited part of the earthquake affected area and were received by the local government of Chengdu, the provincial capital of the earthquake affected province – Sichuan.

For detailed information please contact Mr. Jinhua Zhao, Executive Commissioner, China Planning Network or check <http://www.ChinaPlanningNetwork.org>

ECOSOC emphasizes DRR for climate change adaptation

Mainstreaming climate change adaptation and preparing for increased disaster risk was a common call during a panel discussion of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) humanitarian segment in New York on 16 July. During the panel discussion on "Disaster risk reduction and preparedness: addressing the humanitarian consequences of natural disasters, including the impact of climate change", the session called for climate change adaptation mechanisms that draw on existing risk-reduction measures, and for increased synergies between the climate change and humanitarian agendas. Barbara Carby from Cayman Islands Hazard Management Centre presented the Comprehensive Disaster Management Programme, which helped the Caribbean countries integrate risk reduction into national programmes, planning and legislation. She emphasized that many expected and present effects of climate change could be managed within the Hyogo Framework.

For more information, please contact Elina Palm, palm@un.org

DRR economics study keenly awaited

Representatives from Bangladesh, Jamaica and South Africa, and Under-Secretary-General John Holmes emphasised the need for significantly increased resources to disaster risk reduction at an ISDR side event gathering over a hundred participants from 15 organizations and over 50 Permanent Mission to the UN, on 15 July at the UN Headquarters in New York. Panelists acknowledged that despite progress, the message about the urgency of investing in disaster risk reduction was not getting through. They all emphasized the need to provide a solid evidence base for the economic benefits of disaster risk reduction – and the cost of not investing in prevention.

WEB RESOURCES**IFRC Hurricane Season 2008 site**

http://www.ifrc.org/what/disasters/response/hurricane_season/index.asp

The Atlantic hurricane season officially started on 1 June. The number of hurricanes forecast continues to rise every year. It is predicted that there will be 15 named storms in 2008, four of which are expected to be severe - that is, category 3, 4 or 5. The Red Cross is working to identify challenges and analyse operational constraints that could affect the hurricane response, as a follow-up to a 2007 meeting that focused on the analysis of contingency plans and coordination.

**MunichRe's Topics Geo natural catastrophe reports**

<http://www.munichre.com/en/publications/default.aspx?id=1060>

For the past 14 years, MunichRe has presented the results of their annual worldwide survey of disasters in Topics Geo. The report for 2007 has been released, with a slightly different approach. The new format, starting with the subtitle, Analyses – Assessments – Positions, reflects this change of emphasis. Instead of constituting an essentially statistical study of natural catastrophes, the focus is now on providing background analyses that are of practical application.

**PreventionWeb podcasts**

<http://www.preventionweb.net/english/podcast/?pid:50&pf:3>

Features eight interviews with DRR experts. Latest addition: Ronald Jackson, Director of ODPEM Jamaica, on the challenges of moving from a culture of response to a culture of prevention.

**WMO El Niño/La Niña Update**

http://www.wmo.int/pages/prog/wcp/wcasp/enso_update_latest.html

The World Meteorological Organization (WMO) presents a forecast for El Niño and La Niña activity through the rest of this year. Available in English, French and Spanish.



Convincing governments and other donors by “shocking” them with the cost of not investing in disaster risk reduction was seen as a key lever. In this context, the prospect of the joint World Bank- UN study on the economics of disaster risk reduction was strongly welcomed. The event was co-hosted by Japan and Ecuador, in cooperation with the UN/ISDR secretariat, and was entitled ‘Disaster risk reduction as an essential element for climate change adaptation: Progress made in the implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action’.

For more information, please contact Elina Palm, palm@un.org

ASEAN supporting ISDR in mapping out DRR Education activities in Asia Pacific

Lao PDR, as the Chair of the ASEAN Committee on Public Awareness and Education, is cooperating closely with the UN/ISDR to identify education-related contributions from all ASEAN countries to the Bangkok Action Agenda Implementation Plan. The UN/ISDR, ASEAN and UNESCO plan to produce an analysis of the activities that are taking place in education in Asia Pacific, which are consistent with the four priorities identified by the Bangkok Action Agenda adopted at the 2007 Asia Pacific Workshop on School Education and Disaster Risk. This analysis will be complemented by a similar exercise for the whole Asia and Pacific region and disseminated as a regional contribution from Asia Pacific at the International Conference on Education, to be held in November 2008, in Geneva, Switzerland.

For more information, please contact Christel Rose, rosec@un.org

Arab States move on climate change adaptation and DRR

The League of Arab States is finalizing the Arab Regional Framework Plan for Climate Change, which is focusing on adaptation to reduce vulnerabilities of communities in the region. The Framework aims to set out multisector methodologies to bring community-level actors together, and then integrate local ideas and initiatives into the process. The plan of action included components for regional cooperation, as well as national and local implementation. The League of Arab States had presented the Arab Ministerial Declaration

on Climate Change at the United Nations Conference in Bali last year. As a result, a working expert group had been established and, over the past year, various stakeholders and experts -- including representatives from the disaster risk reduction community -- have been meeting to develop the framework. The Arab States recognize disaster risk reduction as an important methodology for climate change adaptation because it established links between different relevant sectors, including those focusing on the socio-economic aspects of climate change. The final draft of the Framework will be adopted in a few months.

For more information, please contact Mostafa Mohaghegh mostafa.mohaghegh@unisdr-wana.org

Safe Hospitals Campaign consolidates in Middle East

World Health Organization’s Eastern Mediterranean Regional Office (WHO/EMRO) and UN/ISDR secretariat for West Asia and North Africa jointly arranged the last month the first expert regional consultation on the World Disaster Reduction Campaign: Hospitals Safe from Disasters. The Regional Expert Consultation was the formal launched for the regional working group for safe hospitals in the Eastern Mediterranean Region, aiming at finalizing the regional framework for the Safe Hospitals and the Hospital Safety Index for the region. The participants attending the consultation will by 1 August finalize the regional framework as well as the Safety Index. The two outcome products from the consultation will lay the foundations for short and medium term goals, objectives and activities undertaken by the working group in the coming 18 months of the Campaign. Attendees included 35 regional experts, governmental officials, WHO and UN/ISDR staff. For more information, please contact Tine Ramstad, tine.ramstad@unisdr-wana.org

Middle East NGOs held the Regional DRR consultation

UN/ISDR secretariat for West Asia and North Africa, in cooperation with the IFRC Middle East and North Africa, conducted the first Regional Consultation for community based organizations working in disaster risk reduction in Cairo, Egypt, 23-24 June, 2008. The meeting aimed to create a clear understanding of needs and capacities amongst the stakeholders, and how to utilize existing recourses to scale-up community based Disaster Risk Reduction in the region. 32 participants represented local and international NGOs, NGO networks and the Red Cross/Red Crescent family.

For more information, please contact Tine Ramstad, tine.ramstad@unisdr-wana.org

REGIONAL NEWS

For more information about disaster risk reduction activities at the regional level please visit these weblinks:

- Africa: www.unisdr.org/africa
- Asia & the Pacific: www.unisdr.org/asiapacific
- Europe: www.unisdr.org/europe
- Latin America & the Caribbean: www.eird.org
- West Asia and North Africa: www.unisdr-wana.org

MARK YOUR CALENDAR:

Conferences, Trainings and Events
August 2008 - September 2008

DATE	LOCATION	EVENT
August		
04 - 08	California, USA	International user conference Environmental Systems Research Institute, ESRI
17 - 23	Stockholm , Sweden	World Water Week Stockholm International Water Institute
21 - 27	Accra, Ghana	Accra Climate Change Talks 2008 United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, UNFCCC
24 - 28	Umeå, Sweden	Adaptation of forests and forest management to changing climate with emphasis on forest health: a review of science, policies, and practices International Union of Forest Research Organizations
25 - 29	Davos, Switzerland	International Disaster and Risk Conference: IDRC Davos 2008
26 - 27	Davos, Switzerland	International Conference on Critical Infrastructure Protection and Resilience (ICCR) 2008 Federal Office for Civil Protection
September		
15 - 17	Coventry, UK	Health Protection 2008
16 - 19	Suva, Fiji	United Nations regional UN-SPIDER workshop: building upon regional space-based solutions for disaster management and emergency response for the Pacific region
17 - 19	Paraguana, Venezuela	III Seminario internacional: Involucrando a la comunidad en los programas de reducción de riesgos Centro de Investigación de Riesgos
17 - 19	Toledo, Spain	International conference on modelling, monitoring and management of forest fires Wessex Institute of Technology
18 - 19	Graz, Austria	Climate Change in South Eastern European countries III: causes, impacts, solutions Joanneum Research
21 - 27	British Columbia, Canada	International Snow Science Workshop, Whistler 2008
26 - 30	Vorarlberg, Austria	11th Interpraevent congress : protecting living space from flooding, debris flow, avalanches and mass movements Interpraevent Research Association and the Forest Technical Service for Torrent and Avalanche Control

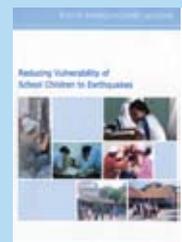
Source: PreventionWeb.net
www.preventionweb.net/english/professional/trainings-events/events

Library Corner

Reducing Vulnerability of School Children to Earthquakes

School Earthquake Safety Initiatives
United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs
United Nations Centre for Regional Development (UNCRD)
Disaster Management Planning Hyogo Office
2008, 35 pages

This publication summarizes the activities under the ongoing School Earthquake Safety Initiative (SESI) project and includes an introduction and some background information about the project together with country reports from the four project countries: Fiji, India, Indonesia and Uzbekistan. As components of the project is the dissemination and sharing of knowledge, experience and information from the project countries to a wider audience throughout the region. This report is expected to disseminate good practices from the project countries to other countries in the region.



Global Symposium +5

Information for Humanitarian Action
Bringing together a community of practice on humanitarian information and knowledge
Final Report
ReliefWeb/United Nations Office for the Coordination of humanitarian Affairs (OCHA)
2008, 75 pages

The Global Symposium +5 on Information for Humanitarian Action was held in Geneva at the Palais des Nations on 22-26 October 2007. It brought together more than 300 humanitarian professionals to build upon a community of practice on humanitarian information and knowledge to strengthen humanitarian response through timely and reliable information. Preparedness in the context of humanitarian information refers mainly to have tools and systems with agreed standards and methodologies for data collection established well in advance of an emergency.

