



Disaster
Reduction in

Asia & Pacific

ISDR INFORMS

Issue 3, 2007



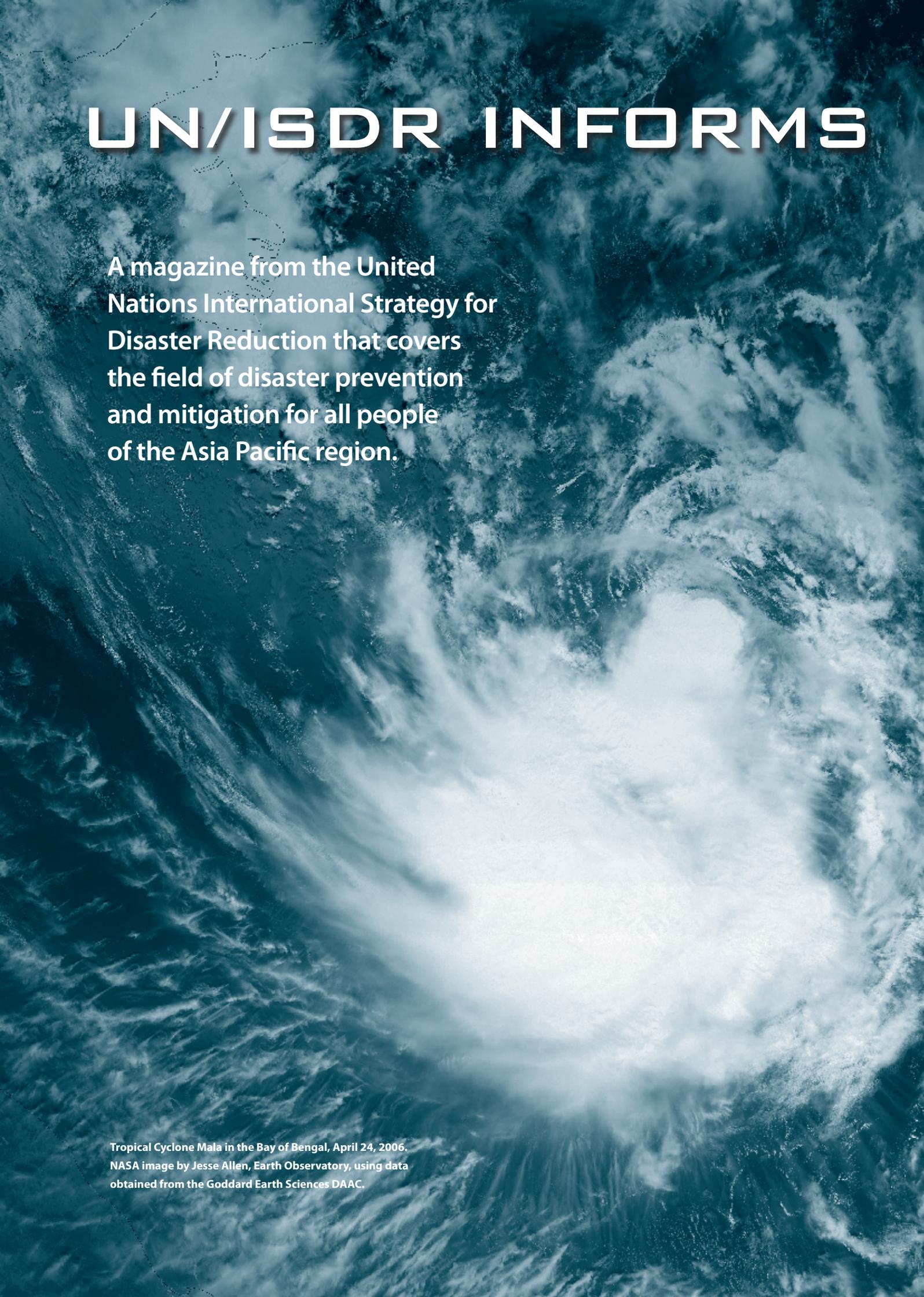
Education Issue



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A satellite image of a tropical cyclone, Tropical Cyclone Mala, in the Bay of Bengal. The image shows a large, bright, circular cloud structure with a distinct eye in the center, surrounded by dense, swirling clouds. The background is a dark blue, textured surface representing the ocean.

A magazine from the United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction that covers the field of disaster prevention and mitigation for all people of the Asia Pacific region.

Tropical Cyclone Mala in the Bay of Bengal, April 24, 2006.
NASA image by Jesse Allen, Earth Observatory, using data
obtained from the Goddard Earth Sciences DAAC.

Joint message from UNESCO & UN/ISDR Regional Offices for Asia and the Pacific

Education and knowledge have the power to save lives. This is one of the most important lessons learnt from devastating disasters that took place over the past decade worldwide. In the wake of the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami, one of the most tragic trans-border natural events the world ever experienced, the conclusions of assessment missions is indeed appalling: a better education and awareness of local communities on natural hazards and their devastating impact could have contributed to reduce and mitigate the tragic human losses caused by the tsunami. In the same vein, the Gujarat earthquake, one of the most devastating earthquakes in India's history, directly affected an estimated three million school children, thousands of which were killed in schools that were unable to withstand the force of the quake. In the hardest hit districts, 55 per cent of all schools were destroyed, leaving 317,000 without access to education. Similar patterns have been observed in a number of equally devastating and smaller-size earthquakes occurred in numerous countries in recent years, including the Bam earthquake in 2003. In a recent study commissioned by ISDR's Thematic Platform on Knowledge and Education - Let Our Children Teach Us! - it was estimated that roughly one billion children aged 1-14 live in countries with high seismic risk, which puts several hundred million children at risk while they are attending schools. And this is only in the event of an earthquake. Schools are equally vulnerable to damage or destruction during other natural hazards such as strong winds, tsunamis, landslides and floods. As informal community centres and evacuation areas at the time of disasters, it is a moral imperative for Governments, local authorities and local community leaders to ensure the safety of school environments as well as school children and teachers by building disaster resistant schools and education infrastructures so that the school buildings themselves do not represent additional threats to school children and teachers' life.

On 3 January 2005, Koichiro Matsuura, Director General of UNESCO highlighted that "anticipating, educating and informing are the keys to reducing the deadly effect of such natural disasters" but regretted that such activities were not given priority. When adopting the "Hyogo Framework for Action: Building the Resilience of Communities and Nations to Disasters, 2005-2015" as the international blueprint to guide the implementation of disaster risk reduction over the next 10 years, the 168 Member States committed to implement the five priorities recommended by HFA as top priority actions to facilitate an effective implementation of disaster risk reduction. Fostering the "Use of knowledge, innovation and education to build a culture of safety and resilience at all levels" is one of them and contributes to initiating a shift in mentalities and perceptions as well as a behavioural change towards a more proactive preventative approach to disasters. Children, as "tomorrow's leaders" and key agents for change, are recognized as the primary targets of these efforts.

The 2006-2007 World Campaign on Disaster Reduction led by UN/ISDR was developed around the theme "Disaster risk reduction begins at school" to engage and mobilize key stakeholders at the local, national, regional and international levels in promoting the integration of disaster risk reduction as part of school curricula and in facilitating the development of disaster-resilient schools and retrofitting of school building to withstand natural hazards through school safety programmes at all levels. Education for disaster risk reduction also contributes to world efforts in achieving Target 2 of the Millennium Development Goals on "Achieving Universal Primary Education" as well as the goals of the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (2005-2014) led by UNESCO which aims at the development of the concept of "Education for Natural Disaster Preparedness" (ENDP) and the overall integration of ENDP into sustainable development strategies.

This Fourth Edition of "Disaster Risk Reduction in Asia and Pacific - ISDR Informs" is a first step in documenting a few lessons learned and good practices identified throughout Asian and Pacific countries on school education and disaster risk reduction on the occasion of the 2006 International Day for Disaster Reduction celebrations. Promising initiatives such as the Asia Pacific Regional Workshop on School Education and Disaster Risk Reduction, scheduled in October 2007 in Bangkok, Thailand, shall represent new opportunities to obtain a more formal commitment by Governments and practitioners from the education sector to facilitate the integration of disaster risk reduction and school safety programmes into school curricula in the Asia and Pacific region and at a more global level.

Looking forward to your continued fruitful support in making education for disaster risk reduction a reality and fundamental human right for all in our search for equitable protection for all from disasters.

- from Dr. Sheldon Shaeffer, Director, UNESCO Asia & Pacific Regional Bureau for Education and Mr. German Velasquez, Senior Regional Coordinator, UN/ISDR Asia & Pacific

This fourth issue of "Disaster Risk Reduction in Asia Pacific - ISDR Informs" represents an opportunity to carry out a mid-term review of the impact of the 2006-2007 World Campaign on Disaster Reduction focusing on "Disaster Risk Reduction Begins at School". The latter aims at mobilizing efforts and political commitment towards the systematic integration of disaster risk reduction and school safety programmes into school curricula so as to promote a better understanding and awareness of disaster mechanisms and how to build the resilience of individuals, communities and nations to future disasters

A Special Report is included as part of this edition compiling the multiple initiatives developed on the occasion of the 2006 joint celebrations of the ISDR-led International Day for Disaster Reduction and the ASEAN Day for Disaster Management throughout the Asia and Pacific region. The report was developed in cooperation with the ASEAN Secretariat and other key regional partners so as to provide an overview of the richness of the Asia Pacific region's innovative approaches to education and awareness-raising on disaster risk reduction. The UN/ISDR invites you to a pleasant educational trip, with the ultimate objective of encouraging you not just to learn from other countries and communities' experiences in the area of education and school safety, but also to adapt and replicate those successful activities that could match your own country / community's requirements and specificity.

The UN/ISDR takes the opportunity to express appreciation to partners who provided substantive contributions and photos. We look forward to pursuing fruitful cooperation with all of you to make sure that the wealth of expertise and knowledge of the Asia and Pacific region in disaster risk reduction and disaster management is well reflected at the regional and global levels, as well as fully preserved and enhanced, for an increased protection and resilience of the vulnerable communities of our precious region to future disasters.

- The UN/ISDR Asia Pacific Team

UN/ISDR INFORMS

Disaster Reduction in Asia & Pacific -

UN/ISDR Informs is a collaborative effort of the Asian Disaster Preparedness Centre (ADPC), Asian Disaster Reduction Centre (ADRC), United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP), UN Development Programme (UNDP) Regional Centre Bangkok, UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs Regional Office for Asia Pacific (UNOCHA-ROAP) and the UN International Strategy for Disaster Reduction for Asia & Pacific (UN/ISDR Asia & Pacific) who, together, represent the ISDR Asia Partnership.

Disaster Reduction in Asia & Pacific -

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Further information on the ISDR Asia Partnership is available at www.unisdr.org/asiapacific

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• **United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific (UNOCHA-ROAP)**
www.ochaonline.un.org/roap

• **United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UN/ISDR) Asia & Pacific**
www.unisdr.org/asiapacific

Disclaimer: The information and opinion expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect the policies of the UN/ISDR

Contents

EDITORIAL	2
UN/ISDR GLOBAL NEWS	4
Online game <i>Stop Disasters</i> to teach children <i>Words into Action</i> ; Implementing Hyogo Framework for Action <i>Global Facility for Disaster Reduction & Recovery</i> – World Bank, UN/ISDR Partnership UN/ISDR Field Library	
UN/ISDR REGIONAL NEWS	8
<i>Indian Ocean Consortium</i> initiative <i>Building Resilience to Tsunamis in the Indian Ocean</i> initiative <i>Strategic National Action Plans, (SNAPs)</i> – tool for implementing the Hyogo Framework for Action Education & Disaster Risk Reduction	
PARTNERS IN ACTION	12
REGIONAL – 4th DIPECHO Action Plan for South Asia DIPECHO, World Vision funding community-based Disaster Risk Management 39th session, Typhoon Committee IFRC, 5th Regional Disaster Response Team training Environmental partnerships in DRR Integrating ecosystems & long-term livelihood concerns Regional safety conference & training for journalists Enhancing capacity, UNDP Regional Centre UNDP Regional Centre builds risk knowledge Disaster Risk Management in Local Governance <i>Living with Risks</i> – Disaster Preparedness in the Himalayan Region ASEAN in action NATIONAL – Disaster Management Information at Maldives National Library Drill tests island response of Meemu Atoll Muli, Maldives Queen Sofia of Spain visits post-tsunami project in Indonesia Toward effective early warning system, Sri Lanka Community-based programs in Timor Leste & Laos Communities trained on mitigation & planning, Thailand Thailand initiatives; best community plan Seminar on GLIDE-associated disaster database, Philippines Harnessing multi-sectoral partnership in India	
THEMATIC AREAS OF FOCUS	25
IPCC, cost-effective policies and technologies could greatly reduce global warming Satellite rainfall estimates in Hindu Kush-Himalayas Early warning system, Cuddalore, India <i>Against The Tide</i> – Challenging stereotypes reduces vulnerability Early warning systems & village communication networks, India	
EDUCATION	30
Asian youth forum ADRC's cooperative project with Armenia Disaster education in Galle, Sri Lanka School program on disaster preparedness: <i>Children today are the world tomorrow</i> , Vietnam A new action plan for school safety, India	
INTERNATIONAL DAY FOR DISASTER REDUCTION	36
REGIONAL NATIONAL – Bangladesh, Brunei Darussalam, China, Fiji, India, Indonesia, Japan, Lao PDR, Nepal, Niue, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Singapore, Tajikistan, Thailand, Tuvalu	
THE HYOGO FRAMEWORK FOR ACTION	50
Indonesia's National Action Plan for Disaster Risk Reduction Bhutan's National Disaster Risk Management Framework Disaster management policy in Malaysia International Forum on Tsunami & Earthquake Sri Lanka's Roadmap for DRR Advocacy, pilot project in education sector <i>A Framework for Action</i> , Bangladesh Indonesian version of the Hyogo Framework for Action	
DEBATE	54
Disaster Diplomacy in Asia-Pacific Region Can preparedness pay? Recovery & mitigation expenditure as political investment	
TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES	59
Teachers' training course on disaster management Post-graduate program: Disaster Preparedness, Mitigation & Management	
PUBLICATIONS & MULTIMEDIA	60

UN/ISDR Global News

The online game *Stop Disasters* to engage and teach children

The International Strategy for Disaster Reduction produced the online game *'Stop Disasters'* to engage and teach children, ages 13-18, how to protect cities and villages against natural hazards through disaster risk planning and management as part of its advocacy tsunami activities. It includes five natural hazard scenarios (flooding, tsunami, wildfire, hurricane and earthquake) with different levels of difficulty that require critical decision-making and strategic planning. The player assesses risk, builds and houses the local population, and assigns roles and systems. A natural hazard then strikes, after which the player assesses damage and receives his/her score. The player who has protected the most people and their livelihoods (property and resources) wins the game. The game can be accessed for free from either the United Nation's own web servers or those of a third party: www.stopdisastersgame.org. It will be accessible by children all over the world with limited computer access and limited bandwidth. The game has been developed by Playerthree Limited, a UK production company. Currently, the game will be translated into several languages with the support of additional donors. In collaboration with IFRC, ACTION AID, UK PLAN INTERNATIONAL, EMA, USAID, and SEEDS schools in Jamaica, Australia, India, Vietnam and Africa have tested the on-line game. The game has also been tested by experts from the *Conseil en Communication Ludo-éducative* in Paris. ■

Words into Action, Implementing the Hyogo Framework for Action

The initial consultation process to develop a guideline document for the implementation of the Hyogo Framework has been supported by the Flash Appeal Funds. This guideline is being developed to support national and local authorities as well as other stakeholders implement the priorities for action agreed in Hyogo towards building the resilience of nations and communities to disasters. The guidelines are designed as a 'getting started' package focusing on a step-by-step 'how-to', illustrated through examples, case studies and lessons learned. After the initial consultation process the guidelines have been further developed into the consultative document *'Words Into Action'* in November 2006. The document will be presented and discussed at the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction held 5 - 7 June 2007 in Geneva, Switzerland. ■

www.unisdr.org/eng/hfa/docs/words-into-action-consultation-draft.pdf



Photo by Chiho Ochiai, UN/ISDR



Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery – a World Bank, UN/ISDR Partnership

Disaster reduction is a critical dimension of the global poverty reduction agenda as disasters impact poor the most. With this in view, the World Bank is developing various instruments to support its client governments to integrate risk reduction strategies in development processes at the country and local levels, especially in countries where risks are high. In consultation with different stakeholders, the World Bank Board has approved a new partnership, the Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery (GFDRR), based on three key guiding principles:

The new United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR) system provides coherent and coordinated approach among all global stakeholders for disaster reduction and recovery.

The ongoing ISDR processes, particularly joint work programs, strengthen global advocacy, knowledge sharing, and partnerships in disaster reduction.

The focus of the Facility is on building capacities at the local and national levels to disaster proof the MDGs.

OPERATIONS

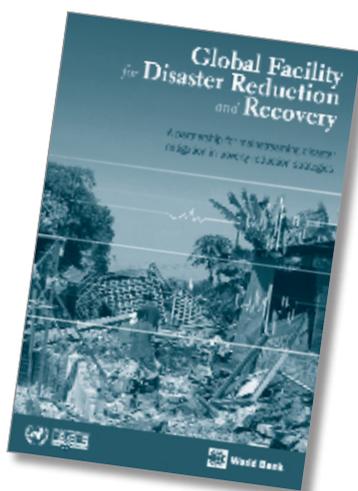
The Global Facility has three-track operations to achieve its development objectives at the global, regional and country levels. These include the following key deliverables under each track, in order of increasing financial importance:

Under TRACK 1:

Global and Regional Deliverables

This track will support ISDR's global and regional processes to enable leveraging country resources for ex-ante investment in prevention, mitigation and preparedness activities, particularly in low and middle-income countries. The key deliverables are:

- Enhancing global and regional advocacy, partnerships and knowledge management facilitated through the ISDR secretariat for mainstreaming disaster risk reduction (DRR) in low and middle income countries at risk (e.g. strengthening ISDR platform and its outreach in different regions; regional and sub-regional initiatives in benchmarking of risks and resilience; regional/ sub-regional plan of action for DRR; regional/ sub-regional early warning strategies; global/regional/ sub-regional catastrophic risk financing initiatives; promoting/ strengthening partnerships in disaster risk reduction particularly with universities, scientific and technical institutions, private sector, research organizations and professional bodies etc; establishing a virtual clearinghouse for disaster risk reduction)



- Standardizing hazard risk management tools, methodologies and practices (e.g. reporting on national good practices in disaster reduction and recovery; developing country-driven and country-owned risk assessment methodologies, country-based damage and needs assessment techniques, environmentally sustainable disaster reduction and recovery practices; promoting and supporting global disaster reduction research forum to highlight ongoing national research in DRR and gaps)

Under TRACK 2:

Country level deliverables

This track will provide technical assistance to assist low and middle income countries to mainstream disaster risk reduction in strategic planning, particularly the Poverty Reduction Strategies (PRS) and various sectoral development policies. The key deliverables are:

- Ex-ante risk management strategy and institutional development including early warning systems and emergency preparedness in low and middle income countries (e.g. National Strategies for Risk Reduction, Institutional framework for risk management, including policy, legal, and organizational elements, national plans for multi-hazard early warning systems, national incident management system for emergency response, etc)



Image from World Bank/GFDRR.

- Supporting innovative projects to demonstrate cost-effective hazard mitigation to reduce risks associated with critical infrastructure (e.g. strengthening education and health infrastructure in hazard prone areas through community-based initiatives in hazard-prone areas, promoting use of traditional construction techniques for disaster-resilient housing, etc)
- Learning, research, and knowledge management for current and future risks (e.g. documenting lessons from national experiences in disaster recovery and dissemination; research in management of current and emerging risks; documenting traditional coping mechanism; scientific research in climate change management and adaptation; managing the risks due to sea level rise, etc)
- Developing frameworks to catalyze investment in hazard prevention, mitigation and preparedness (e.g. National Hurricane Risk Mitigation Programme, National Earthquake Risk Mitigation Programme, National Catastrophic Risk Financing Programme, National Disaster Risk Communication Programme, etc).
- Ex-ante disaster recovery financing mechanism established in middle income countries (e.g. insurance and reinsurance, catastrophe bonds, weather derivatives, Contingent credit, reserve fund, etc).

Under TRACK 3:

Accelerated Disaster Recovery in Low Income Countries

(In pipeline)

This Standby Recovery Financing track, proposed to be operated through a mechanism linked to IDA, is to support disaster-stricken countries' immediate recovery needs before medium and long term recovery programs are formulated and launched. However a low income country would be eligible for this only if pre-disaster preparedness and mitigation instruments (Track 2) have been institutionalized in the country, measured in terms of investments in risk reduction as a percentage of GDP or such other measures agreed by the partners of the Global Facility. This is being developed in close collaboration with World Bank's IDA team and a position paper on this will be available soon for wider consultation. ■

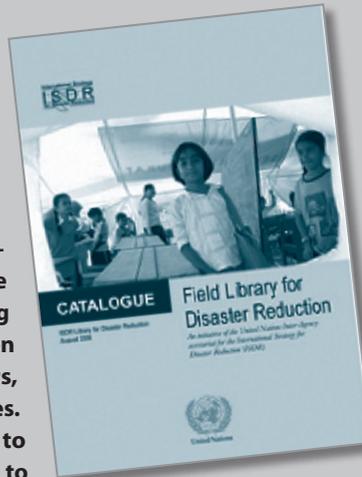
www.unisdr.org/eng/partner-netw/wb-isdr/wb-isdr.htm



Image from World Bank/GFDRR.

UN/ISDR Field Library

The Disaster Reduction Field Library initiative has been coordinated by the ISDR secretariat to enhance basic knowledge on tsunami, early warning and disaster risk reduction. This initiative, built on the model of the 'Blue Trunk Library' of the World Health Organization, initially aimed at supporting communities most affected by the Indian Ocean disaster, by providing existing books and practical, technical information on disaster risk reduction to practitioners, researchers, local leaders and communities. Three sets of libraries were handed over to Indonesia and India in October 2005 and to UNESCAP, the National Disaster Warning Centre (NDWC) and the Asian Disaster Preparedness Centre (ADPC) in Thailand in October 2006. By June 2006, a total of 35 Field Libraries were dispatched to Indian Ocean countries. Now that all Indian Ocean countries have been covered with a field library, the concept of this initiative is being reviewed on the basis of the outcome of the user survey the ISDR secretariat has been undertaking



with the recipients of the 35 libraries. The idea now is to disseminate Inter-agency Field Libraries in different regions such as Africa, Central Asia and the Pacific, Latin America and the Caribbean, and identify additional interested partners within Indian Ocean countries and non-tsunami affected countries in Asia and Pacific. To that end, the ISDR secretariat calls on sponsors to support and contribute to the development of this initiative to cover a broader geographical network of

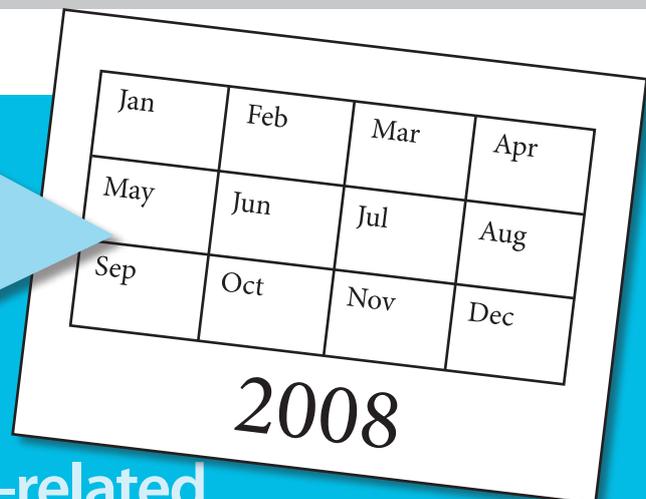
interested practitioners, thereby advancing education and knowledge on disaster risk reduction and enhancing the capacity of communities and nations to withstand the adverse impacts of disasters.

For more information, please visit UN/ISDR's website
www.unisdr.org/eng/library/field-lib/fl-introduction.htm &
www.unisdr.org/eng/library/field-lib/field-library-catalogue.htm

For the latest information on Disaster Reduction-related events throughout Asia, visit

www.unisdr.org/asiapacific

Events are constantly happening so please assist us in updating the calendar by sending information to isdr-bkk@un.org



UN/ISDR Regional News

As a follow-up to the Indian Ocean Tsunami Flash Appeal, various initiatives have been developed at the international level to maintain the momentum and awareness on tsunami-related activities with a direct influence of action at the regional level in Asia and the Pacific.

UN/ISDR-coordinated multi-partner, multi-donor *Indian Ocean Consortium* initiative, supported by Canada, UK

The Indian Ocean Consortium was established during the Third International Conference on Early Warning, which was organized in Bonn, March 2006. In connection to this event eight international partners; UNESCO/IOC, UNDP, WMO, UNEP, IFRC, UNOCHA and the World Bank met with former US President Bill Clinton, then the United Nations Special Envoy for Tsunami Recovery, to agree on the establish-

ment of a consortium that would support the development of national components of the Indian Ocean Tsunami Warning and Mitigation System (IOTWS).

As part of the members' commitment to support coherent implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA) the UN/ISDR-coordinated IO consortium aims to support:

- Establishment of national coordination mechanisms among governments and UN/ISDR system partners in tsunami early warning systems.
- Implementation of national action plans on tsunami early warning.
- Linking ongoing regional tsunami early warning activities.

Through the submission of National Plans for establishment of tsunami early warning systems to the consortium 10 countries were selected to be part of this supporting mechanism. In the Asian region

of the Indian Ocean the Governments of Maldives, Sri Lanka, Pakistan and Thailand became part of the consortium activities. Primarily because of shortages of financial contributions the process has been rather slow to date.

During 2007 the seven consortium members have undertaken measures to strengthen the regional and in-country coordination of ongoing and planned partner activities. In addition, this work has also been developed in close collaboration with UNESCAP and other key regional partners. Through continuous resource mobilisation efforts the IO consortium has received support from the Government of Canada and the UK, while further dialogue is being held with other potential donors. With the help of these generous contributions the consortium members, led by UN/ISDR secretariat on regional level and UNDP country offices on national level, are currently reviewing the national plans and identifying critical areas of need that require urgent support by the IO consortium.

As part of this process the Governments of Maldives and Sri Lanka have organized national consultation meetings, involving the disaster management centres, Government departments, in-country stakeholders and IO consortium partners. In close dialogue with various Government departments and UNDP Country Offices, the National Disaster Management Centres (NDMC) has identified the national priorities for enhanced tsunami early warning sys-



UN/ISDR-coordinated multi-partner *Building Resilience to Tsunamis in the Indian Ocean* initiative, supported by the European Commission

tems, focusing on support for specific areas of the system. The project documents are in the process of being drafted and the implementation, coordinated by UNDP country offices, will be initiated early 2008.

In addition, the national consultation meetings decided to establish multi-stakeholder Government-led National Platforms for Disaster Reduction to strengthen national coherence among disaster risk reduction initiatives and ensure in-country coordination of the consortium activities. The next steps in planning and organising the National Platforms are coordinated by the NDMCs in close cooperation with the UNDP country offices as well as UN/ISDR regional support.

The outcomes of these in-country processes as well as the IO consortium support to the implementation and coordination of the national plans for tsunami early warning systems will be further illustrated in an updated detailed interim progress report which will be submitted for the next IOTWS/ICG meeting that is planned to take place in April 2008 in Malaysia. ■

For further information, please visit UN/ISDR Asia & Pacific website www.unisdr.org/asiapacific/ or contact Mr. Patrick Kratt, UN/ISDR Asia & Pacific, kratt@un.org

The UN/ISDR-coordinated initiative 'Building Resilience to Tsunamis in the Indian Ocean' is part of UN/ISDR secretariat's support to enhance the implementation of Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015 (HFA). The overarching objective of this initiative is to build the resilience of communities and nations to disasters by strengthening national and local institutions, mechanisms and capacities for disaster risk reduction. The initiative addresses identified gaps and needs on national and community level in India, Indonesia, Maldives and Sri Lanka and targets the following five core areas:

1 *Strengthening national capacities for disaster risk reduction*, targeting national focal points responsible for disaster management and early warning as well as national platforms for disaster risk reduction. It is expected that the activities will lead to greater regional coordination, information sharing, exchange of knowledge and experiences among countries in the Indian Ocean.

2 *Increasing public awareness and knowledge* on tsunami risk and disaster risk reduction through targeted awareness-raising campaigns, engagement of media and development of public information material that is tailored to local cultures and languages. The various projects include specific activities on strengthening the role of schools and education sector in early warning and disaster risk reduction.

3 *Strengthening local community capacities* in preparedness, mitigation, and response to tsunamis and other related hazards. For these purposes, the initiative is mainly targeting communities in coastal zones and engaging community-based organisations and NGOs. Community tools and methods for effective disaster risk reduction are being developed and effective chains of communication between the community and local authorities are strengthened.

4 *Advancing research and analysis on risk and impact of disasters*, including development of methodology and carrying out comparative risk and vulnerability assessments as well as analysing the socio-economic impact, including gender aspects, of disasters. The research findings are expected to enhance well-informed decision-making among Governments and other stakeholders on tsunami early warning systems and disaster risk reduction in the Indian Ocean region.

5 *Strengthening coherence and partnership-building*. The UN/ISDR secretariat for Asia and the Pacific in Bangkok is overseeing the implementation of this initiative as well as other UN/ISDR-coordinated efforts for early warning system establishments in Asia and the Pacific. Building on strong collaboration with UN/ISDR system partners and exploring synergies with ongoing and planned disaster risk reduction activities in the region, these UN/ISDR-coordinated initiatives aim at enhancing regional and national capacities for coordination and partnership-building. This includes strengthened government capacities to coordinate the national implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action through the establishment and enhancement of National Platforms for Disaster Risk Reduction as well as seeking regional coherence and sharing of best practices in support of tsunami early warning system developments. ■

For further information, please visit UN/ISDR Asia & Pacific website www.unisdr.org/asiapacific/ or contact Mr. Patrick Kratt, UN/ISDR Asia & Pacific, kratt@un.org

Strategic National Action Plans, (SNAPs) – a tool for implementing the Hyogo Framework for Action

The Secretariat of the United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UN/ISDR) in Asia and Pacific is currently undertaking the regional programme 'Development of Comprehensive Strategic National Action Plans (SNAP) to implement disaster reduction on the context of the Hyogo Framework for Action' with funding support from the Disaster Preparedness Program of the European Commission for Humanitarian Aid Department (DiPECHO). The regional SNAP initiative commenced in March 2007, and is expected to finish in a 12 months period.

The programme is focusing on three pilot countries in Southeast Asia, namely Cambodia, the Philippines and Vietnam. The implementing partners of UN/ISDR include regional and in-country organizations such as ADPC, UNDP, the Natural Disaster Mitigation Partnership, and the respective in-country focal points for disaster risk management. Also countries that are not participating in the regional programme have gained experiences with national action planning, i.e. Indonesia, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Vanuatu to name just a few. Countries in Southeast Asia are at many levels of social and economic development and capacity to manage and reduce disaster risks. Therefore there is no 'one-size fits all' in developing national action plans. Efforts to reduce disaster risks must start with the existing governance arrangements in each disaster-prone country and must be integrated into ongoing development efforts. Thus, in the SNAP development process, key sectors will agree to mainstream priority DRR activities as part of their ongoing programme, with policy and legislation development. Another important aspect of developing SNAPs is the intimate knowledge of the capacity a country has to deal with disasters when they occur and the ability to

manage disaster reduction – the prerequisite for coming up with a realistic plan.

The multi-stakeholder process required to prepare the SNAP is considered more important than the final product and comprises the following generic steps, although these can be adapted to the respective country context:

- Establish/strengthen national mechanisms/platforms for DRR and task forces to develop the SNAP
- Carry out extensive consultations with key stakeholders in-country to develop the SNAP and reach consensus on the country's DRR priorities
- Select the main sectors to mainstream DRR into sectoral development plans, policies and budgets and implement the SNAP
- Assess the capacity needs of key line ministries and other stakeholders and include the respective capacity development priorities into the overall.

The range of stakeholders that is expected to get involved, include members of national platforms for disaster reduction or equivalent coordinating mechanisms, the Ministry/Departments responsible for Disaster Risk Reduction/Disaster Management (DRR/DM) at all levels, key government ministries such as planning and finance, the core members of the UN Country Team, the National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, international and national non-government organizations (NGOs), bilateral donors which are committed to DRR/DM, as well as at the regional level the members of the ISDR Asia Partnership and the UN/ISDR Secretariat for Asia and Pacific. ■

For more information, please visit UN/ISDR Asia & Pacific website, www.unisdr.org/asiapacific/ or contact Ms. Angelika Planitz, UN/ISDR Asia & Pacific, planitz@un.org

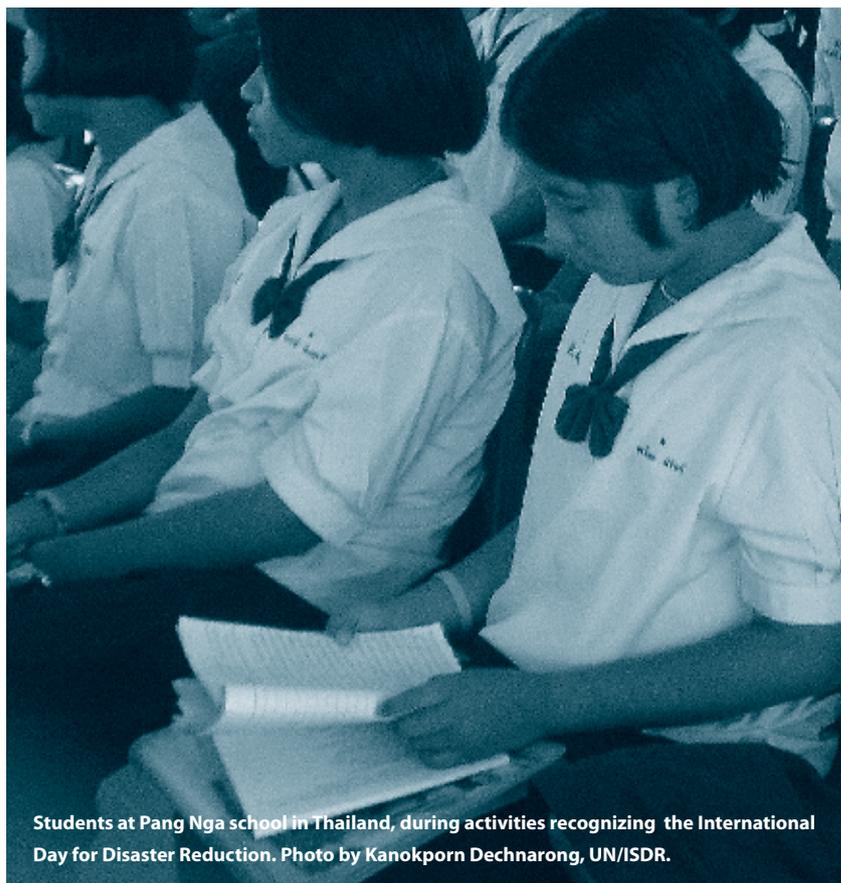


Photo from UNDP

Education and Disaster Risk Reduction

In the wake of the increasing number of sudden on-set large scale disasters that have occurred in the Asia and Pacific region over the past few years such as, in particular, the 2004 Indian Ocean and the 2007 Solomons Island tsunamis, the Pakistan earthquake in 2005 followed by the Yogyakarta one in 2006 and landslides in the Philippines, there has been unanimous consensus from humanitarian agencies and the development community that a better education and awareness of local communities on natural hazards could have contributed to reduce and mitigate the tragic human losses caused by these events. Sustainable development is severely undermined by the occurrence and threat of disasters, especially in developing countries, where decades of development efforts are wiped out in a few seconds. On 3 January 2005, Koichiro Matsuura, Director General of UNESCO highlighted that 'anticipating, educating and informing are the keys to reducing the deadly effect of such natural disasters' but regretted that 'such activities have not been given priority'.

Education and knowledge for disaster risk reduction are gradually recognized as priority areas of focus of world development processes. Priority 3 of the 'Hyogo Framework for Action: Building the Resilience of Communities and Nations to Disasters, 2005-2015' (HFA) focuses on the use of 'Knowledge, innovation and education to build a culture of safety and resilience at all levels.' The UN/ISDR launched and led the '2006-2007 World Campaign on Disaster Reduction' developed around the theme 'Disaster risk Reduction begins at school'. Through this campaign, the UN/ISDR aims to engage and mobilize key stakeholders at the local, national, regional and international levels in promoting the integration of disaster risk reduction as part of school curricula and in facilitating the development of disaster-resilient schools and retrofitting of school building to withstand natural hazards through school safety programmes at all levels. Education for disaster risk reduction builds on world efforts in achieving Target 2 of the Millennium Development



Students at Pang Nga school in Thailand, during activities recognizing the International Day for Disaster Reduction. Photo by Kanokporn Dechnarong, UN/ISDR.

Goals on 'Achieving Universal Primary Education' as well as the goals of the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (2005-2014) led by UNESCO aiming at the development of the concept of 'Education for Natural Disaster Preparedness' (ENDP) and the overall integration of ENDP into sustainable development strategies.

At the regional level, as of January 2007, the UN/ISDR set up and led the development of an Education Task Force (ETF) comprising initially of UNESCO, UNICEF and UN/ISDR, and joined later on by UNCRD, IFRC and ADPC. The ETF aims at developing a joint long-term regional strategy to promote and implement Disaster Risk Reduction Education along the lines of the Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA) and in the context of the UNESCO-led Decade on Education for Sustainable Development (DESD). A first step in the regional strategy will be the organization of a three-day Asia Pacific Regional Workshop on School Education and Disaster Risk Reduction on 8-10 October 2007 in Bangkok, that will highlight the celebrations of the International Day for Disaster Reduction (IDDR) and the conclusion of the above two-year campaign on education. The workshop will contribute to

review the progress made in the Asia and Pacific region in advancing the Disaster Risk Reduction Education component of HFA and to promote a political commitment to facilitate the effective integration of disaster risk reduction and safer school construction programmes into school curricula. Ministers of Education as well as senior representatives from the Education sectors and from the disaster risk reduction community, the civil society, academic and technical institutions, schools, UN partners and the media will be invited to exchange successful national and local experiences as well as to identify jointly major obstacles and challenges in integrating disaster risk reduction into school curricula so as to come up with a concrete recommendations and guidelines on how to mainstream DRR into school curricula towards an effective education and protection of future generations. ■

For further information, please visit UN/ISDR Asia & Pacific website www.unisdr.org/asia-pacific or contact Ms. Christel Rose, UN/ISDR Asia & Pacific, rosecc@un.org

Partners In Action

Regional

The 4th DIPECHO Action Plan for South Asia

The fourth Disaster Preparedness-European Community Humanitarian Office (DIPECHO) Action plan for South Asia, which promotes disaster preparedness related projects, was approved in the beginning of 2007. Its implementation phase, carried out in India, Nepal, Bangladesh and Pakistan will start from September 2007 till end of 2008. An extensive consultation process led by ECHO took place in February and March 2007 in the four South Asian countries through national consultative meetings with relevant stakeholders (NGO partners, international organizations, national authorities, European Commission delegations, donor community), to assess needs and determine strategic priorities for the next phase. ■

For further information, please visit

http://ec.europa.eu/echo/whatsnew/calls_en.htm#4c_centralasia

And for further information on DIPECHO, please visit

http://ec.europa.eu/echo/field/dipecho/index_en.htm



DIPECHO, World Vision commit funding for community-based Disaster Risk Management project

Under the Disaster Preparedness-European Community Humanitarian Office (DIPECHO)'s Action Plan for Southeast Asia, DIPECHO and World Vision agreed in mid March to jointly provide EUR264,264 (around US\$330,330) for a project to improve local capacity in preparedness and mitigation of natural disaster risks in North and Central Vietnam.

Being implemented from 1 March 2007 till 30 April 2008, this community-based disaster risk management (CBDRM) project will organize training courses and community drills to local families and authorities in a bid to help them to minimize life and property loss and promptly resume their normal livelihood activities after the disasters.

It will also raise local awareness on disaster response and mitigation by providing them with leaflets, posters, billboards, brochures, assisting them with rescue kits, first aid kits, emergency kits and installing radio networks at project communes and villages.

The project is expected to benefit more 21,000 people, who are poor farmers and are vulnerable to flood, flash flood, storm, drought, forest fire and land erosion in Tram Tau District (Yen Bai Province), Lang Chanh District (Thanh Hoa Province) and Trieu Phong District (Quang Tri Province). The three selected districts are either in remote or mountainous areas while its residents mainly live on agro-forestry production or fishing.

'When the project concludes, we target 60% of key stakeholders at hamlet, commune and district levels will have sufficient disaster preparedness capacity and 75% of people follow agreed procedures and steps in emergency situations or community drills on evacuation,' said Le Van Duong, Relief and Disaster Mitigation Coordinator of World Vision Vietnam, who is coordinating the

implementation of the project.

To date, World Vision Vietnam has implemented a number of community-based disaster risk management projects in the Central Coastal of Vietnam. The projects successfully pilot a multi-sectoral model of disaster risk reduction; disaster preparedness; training; provision of rescue equipment; relocation villages; earthworks; forestation; and agriculture, supported each other to successfully reduce vulnerabilities and enhance local capacities. ■

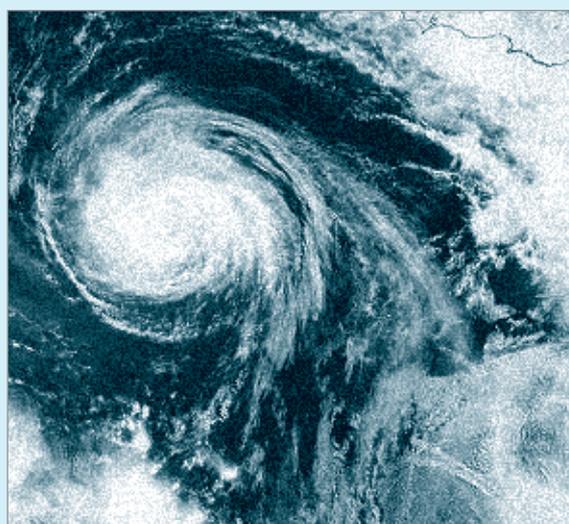
For further information, please contact Khat Quang Hung, Communications Manager, World Vision Vietnam, khat_quang_hung@wvi.org

The 39th session of the Typhoon Committee

The 39th Session of the Typhoon Committee was organized by the Typhoon Committee Secretariat, UNESCAP and WMO in cooperation with the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (PAGASA) from 4 to 9 December 2006 in Manila.

This session marks a turning page in the history of 38 years of the Typhoon Committee cooperation since its establishment in 1968. There were several important events taking place at the Session.

At this Session, the Committee adopted its first Strategic Plan, 2007-2011 with a vision to become the World's best intergovernmental, regional organization for improving the quality of life of the Members populations through integrated cooperation to mitigate impacts and risks of typhoon-related disasters. The Committee also signed a host country agreement on 6 December 2006 with China, whereby Macao, China would host the Typhoon Committee Secretariat from 2007 onward. The Committee also witnessed the handover the Typhoon Committee Secretariat to the new Secretary, Dr Olavo Rasquinho, from Dr Roman L. Kintanar, who had served the Committee for 36 years, since its first transfer to Manila from UNESCAP, Bangkok in 1971.



The inauguration of the new Typhoon Committee Secretariat is now scheduled to take place in Macao, China in conjunction with the holding of a High-level Workshop on the Implementation of the Typhoon Committee Strategic Plan on 13-14 February 2007 and the signing of the Administrative Arrangements Agreement between the Government of the Macao Special Administrative Region and the Typhoon Committee. With this administrative arrangement agreement under the framework of the host country agreement, the Typhoon Committee will be provided with a newly strengthened legal and institutional framework to work towards its Vision. Representing the Typhoon Committee at the signing of this historical agreement in February will be Dr Prisco D. Nila, Chairman for 2007. Representing UNESCAP and WMO to witness this important event will be Mr. Rae Kwon Chung, Director of Environment and Sustainable Development Division of UNESCAP and Dr. Tokiyoshi Toya, Director, Regional Office for Asia and the South-West Pacific of WMO. ■

For further information please contact LeHuu Ti, UNESCAP, ti.unescap@un.org

The International Federation of Red Cross & Red Crescent Societies, the 5th Regional Disaster Response Team training



The Regional Delegation of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) organized the 5th Regional Disaster Response Team (RDRT) Training in Kelantan, Malaysia with 28 participants, 8- 17 of December 2006.

A call for nominations was put out by the regional Disaster Risk Management unit to national societies. 76 nominations submitted from the participants were selected based on specific selection criteria. The total RDRT members trained in the region is 137 so far.

This training course is aimed in order to strengthen the Federation's regional disaster response and response preparedness capacity and assure understanding of and linkages to the Federation's global response system. Such as;

- To promote the Red Cross Movement harmonized response in natural and man-made disasters in Southeast Asia;
- To promote the application of relevant policies, principles, agreement and guidelines in Disaster Management;
- To promote the participants' skills and knowledge about technical DM tools and introduce the Federation's relief standards;
- To train participants to work as a Red Cross team with the same ideology, standards and language;
- To improve the participants' coordination skills in an international environment with a number of Red Cross partners and other players ■

For further information, please contact **Nguyen Hung Ha, Regional Disaster Management Programme Officer, International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, Southeast Asia Regional Delegation, hungha.nguyen@ifrc.org**

Environmental partnerships in Disaster Risk Reduction

Long-term partners in Asia and beyond, World Wildlife Fund for Nature (WWF), one of the world's largest and most experienced independent conservation organizations, and The World Conservation Union (IUCN), the world's largest and most important conservation network, each formed visionary alliances with the American Red Cross and CARE USA. The primary aim is to improve impacts for beneficiaries by better integrating environmental sustainability into both reconstruction efforts in tsunami affected countries, and into preparations for handling future conflicts and disasters anywhere in the world.

From another angle, Mangroves for the Future (MFF) is a joint UNDP/IUCN initiative that will harness the collective experience and expertise of key environment, development and humanitarian actors – including WWF, CARE, Wetlands International, UNEP, and FAO – to recognize ecosystem services as an essential, and productive, part of coastal development 'infrastructure', which should be maintained and improved for the economy and society to function properly.

Focusing on the most tsunami affected countries in the Indian Ocean Region (India, Indonesia, Maldives, Seychelles, Sri Lanka and Thailand), MFF will attempt to provide a regional platform which brings together the efforts of different countries, sectors, and agencies with a common goal to conserve and restore coastal ecosystems and sustain human livelihoods. The MFF initiative also has the potential to directly contribute to disaster risk reduction strategies by enhancing the resilience of coastal communities and ecosystems to cope with future disasters, including climate change.

WWF and ARC's partnership – through which the broader Red Cross/ Red Crescent Movement is accessed and influenced - hinges on ensuring that plans and projects are designed to consider and incorporate measures that have minimal impact on the environment, while meeting communities' needs for adequate water and sanitation, shelter constructed with responsibly sourced materials, sustainable livelihoods and effective disaster management.

In Indonesia for instance, WWF is advising ARC on an FAO implemented sustainable fisheries and aquaculture project that will help to ensure future generations of Acehnese are able to continue to maintain and improve economic activities. In Sri Lanka and Thailand, promotion of innovative technologies to treat wastewater and to recycle waste will help to reduce negative and cumulative impacts on communities' watercourses, drinking water sources and surrounding wetlands. Eco-sensitive health and sanitation training as well as environmental sustainability education are being designed for delivery to ARC and partners in tsunami impacted countries.

IUCN and CARE's partnership creates an opportunity to pursue a larger vision for addressing poverty and social injustice while contributing to sustainable development and environmentally-sensitive rehabilitation in a way that would be much greater than what

an individual organization would be able to achieve. Principal areas of collaboration will include climate change and water issues, natural resource management and emergencies/natural disasters. The UN/ISDR Asia & The Pacific, as well as The Asia Disaster Preparedness Center (ADPC) are also members of this partnership with the aim of fostering links between DRR and environmental aspects, including Environmental Impact Assessments (EIA). ■

For further information please contact Angie Woo,
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Five reasons why it's important to integrate ecosystems and long-term livelihood concerns into disaster risk reduction:

1 It can decrease vulnerability to natural disasters. There is mounting evidence that climate change is increasing the frequency of extreme hydro-meteorological events such as heat and cold waves, tropical hurricanes, windstorms, flooding and mudslides (IPCC 2001). Serious human consequences are escalating due to the greater number of people in high-risk areas such as floodplains, coastal areas, small islands and steep slopes. (See latest IPCC report, World Bank, DFID)

2 Natural disasters have a high cost. Natural disasters have a negative impact on economic growth and disproportionately affect the poor. They have an incommensurate impact on less developed countries and poor populations, impeding progress toward achieving Millennium Development Goals. (Stern)

3 It costs less to prevent disasters than it does to fix the damage they cause. Natural barriers are cost-effective insurance against many types of natural disasters. Preventing loss is significantly less expensive than reconstituting livelihoods, and prevention measures need to be mainstreamed into disaster risk reduction. Such measures include investing in ecosystems such as sand dunes, mangrove belts, coral reefs, wetlands and use of forested slopes as barriers. Community preparedness and reducing population vulnerability through development planning are also important.

4 At-risk populations depend on ecosystem services for their livelihoods. Poor populations are more vulnerable to natural disasters; they depend on environmental resources for protection and livelihoods. Therefore, investing in natural barriers and mainstreaming disaster risk and ecosystem management in development planning is likely to make a major contribution to the goal of achieving sustainable livelihoods for the poor.

5 Natural disasters and the responses to them have a negative impact on biodiversity. Disasters can affect biodiversity through the spread of invasive species, mass species mortality and loss of habitat. Poorly planned post-disaster response and reconstruction work often do more damage to biodiversity than the disaster itself. This in turn threatens the ecosystem services — including food and medicinal plants and animals, clean water and air and buffers from extreme natural events — that are critical to people's livelihoods (see point 4 above).

The second section provides information about the Ecosystem Approach and how its application can contribute to reducing the risk of disasters and to alleviating the impacts of disasters when they do occur.

Source: 'Ecosystems, Livelihoods and Disasters: an integrated approach to disaster risk management' (pp.5-7), Ecosystem Management Series No.4, IUCN

A regional news safety conference and training for frontline journalists

The Southeast Asia Media and Disaster Risk Management: A Regional News Safety Conference and Training for Frontline Journalists held 04-08 December 2006 in Bali, Indonesia was a unique undertaking of several media organizations and international donor agencies.

The Special Unit for South-South Cooperation for Asia and Pacific in the UNDP Regional Center-Bangkok, in collaboration with the International News Safety Institute (INSI) Southeast Asia Regional Office and the Center for Community Journalism and Development (CCJD) in the Philippines conceptualized the Training for Frontline Journalists in mid-2006 in the face of increasing natural and man-made catastrophic events in the region that impact on the work and vulnerability of journalists.

The conference and training workshop aimed to heighten regional media awareness and understanding of disaster risk management and journalists' vulnerabilities while covering human-made and natural phenomena that have disastrous consequences.

It brought together 20 frontline journalists and media executives from the Southeast Asian region to discuss disaster risk and related news safety issues, train them on safety in relation to natural and human-made disasters, identify potential safety trainers from among the participants, and lay the foundation for the formation of a Southeast Asia News Safety Network (SEANet) as a regional forum and mechanism for information exchange and resource sharing.

The participants' learning addressed two key elements: (1) covering disasters as news events for better citizen understanding and awareness; and, (2) ensuring their safety while at work so that their effectiveness will not be diminished. The journalists represented the different media – print, radio, TV and Internet – from Burma, Cambodia, East Timor, Indonesia, Philippines and Thailand. ■

For more information, contact Zenaida Delica Willison, Advisor, Disaster Risk Reduction, UNDP Regional Center in Bangkok, zenaida.willison@undp.org

Enhancing capacity for disaster recovery in Asia & Pacific, UNDP Regional Centre

The UNDP Regional Programme for Capacity Building for Sustainable Recovery and Risk Reduction (RPCB) conducted a learning event on Enhancing Capacity for Disaster Recovery in Bangkok from 6-13 March 2007. The training workshop was designed to strengthen the capacity of UNDP Country Offices to play the lead role in designing and implementing post-disaster early recovery strategies and activities.

In a highly interactive manner, the workshop drew on the experience of 27 participants, from six tsunamis affected countries in the region, and 10 international participants who shared skills and

experiences, relevant to developing capacities for early recovery in Asia. Participants included those engaged with recovery programme management, sectoral experiences in livelihood, shelter, environment and governance as well as in disaster risk reduction and in operational support.

The topics for the workshop sessions were determined during previous consultations and included exercises on operationalizing UNDP's Guiding Principles for Recovery, designing post-disaster recovery-oriented damage and needs assessments, developing recovery frameworks, formulating project plans and mobilizing recovery

resources according to UNDP's standard operating procedures (SoPs). Further, participants were trained on recovery coordination and IASC contingency planning processes. Throughout the workshop, emphasis was placed on integrating disaster risk reduction and cross-cutting issues into the recovery process (human rights, gender, local capacity, government commitment, and media).

The workshop will serve as a basis to develop regional surge capacities for recovery within UNDP. Participants recommended corporate actions that may contribute to promoting linkages with the global surge project. A resource person representing BCPR's Office in Latin America and Caribbean expressed interest in replicating this initiative in their region.



Jakarta floodwaters. Photo by Brandon Hoover.

The outcomes and gaps identified by the workshop will be followed up for discussion via the regional Community of Practice – facilitated through the DRM-Asia network. The design and output of the training workshop will also contribute to the development of a corporate UNDP-BCPR's 'training and learning facility' with specialised modules on disaster recovery and risk reduction. ■

For more information and material on the workshop's objectives and outcomes, contact Sanny Jegillos, UNDP Regional Centre in Bangkok, sanny.jegillos@undp.org

For more information on UNDP's upcoming training and learning facility contact Joanne Burke, joanne.burke@undp.org

UNDP Regional Centre assists to build risk knowledge in the tsunami-affected countries

Risk knowledge particularly at the national and sub national level in many Asian countries is generally weak. The absence of information about potential risks and their patterns with resolution at local level, lack of information about existing capacities, impact of disasters both in terms of direct damages and also in terms of economic losses, altogether affects effective and quick response, delays in accurate estimation of damages and losses and inability of governments to undertake any risk reduction efforts to promote sustainable development.

Under the Regional Programme on Capacity Building for Sustainable Recovery and Risk Reduction for Tsunami Affected Countries, the UNDP is working closely with national governments in advocating for and in establishing disaster loss databases. Significant efforts have been made by the five countries, viz. India, Indonesia, Maldives, Sri Lanka and Thailand in identifying disaster events and their impacts on human lives and properties.

Data about historical disasters have been collected and entered in the *DesInventar* tool which was developed in late 1993 by the Network for Social Studies on Disaster Prevention in Latin America. Officials from districts have been trained in using the tool, including collection and entry of disaster data and its analysis to identify risk prone areas.

It is hoped that these disaster loss databases will contribute to better understanding of risks and hence will better streamline the risk reduction efforts in risk prone communities of the five countries. ■

For more information and material on the workshop's objectives and outcomes, contact Sanny Jegillos, UNDP Regional Centre in Bangkok, sanny.jegillos@undp.org



Integrating Disaster Risk Management in Local Governance – a facilitators' guide & sourcebook for the Barangay Disaster Risk Management training workshop

The Special Unit for South-South Cooperation (SU-SSC) in United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) was tasked by the General Assembly to promote technical cooperation among developing countries. At the first regular session of its Executive Board on 20-28 January 2005, the Special Unit was mandated to include disaster risk management in the implementation of its Third Cooperation Framework.

Following this mandate, the SU-SSC has responded to the 'double' disaster of earthquake and tsunami in the four countries affected. It has recently developed and launched a programme called Global Facility for Community-Based Disaster Risk Management (GFDRM). The GFDRM is envisaged to contribute to the current innovative approaches and pilot projects, which are designed to help reduce present and future disaster risks.

The handbook, '*Integrating Disaster Risk Management in Local Governance, a Facilitators' Guide and a Sourcebook for Barangay Disaster Risk Management Training Workshop*' is a pioneering collaborative effort in disaster risk management in the Philippines. It is developed by a group of people, who take upon themselves the task of promoting disaster risk reduction/ management. The primary objective of the handbook is to provide local government units a guide so that they can push forward the agenda of reducing risks at the community or local levels. ■

For more information, contact Zenaida Delica Willison, Advisor, Disaster Risk Reduction, UNDP Regional Center in Bangkok, zenaida.willison@undp.org

Living with Risks – Sharing Knowledge on Disaster Preparedness in the Himalayan Region

Through the project 'Living with Risks - Sharing Knowledge on Disaster Preparedness in the Himalayan Region', International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD) will support key practitioners with current knowledge in the field of disaster preparedness - mainly for floods, landslides, and earthquakes - and build capacity in multi-hazard risk assessment, as well as providing a platform for interaction and exchange of experiences. The prime target countries for the project are Bangladesh, India, Nepal and Pakistan, with a focus on the mountain regions within these countries.

The project has been prepared under the 'Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015', which says that 'there is a need to enhance international and regional cooperation and assistance in the field of disaster risk reduction' through 'use of knowledge, innovation and education to build a culture of safety and resilience at all levels'. The project is supported by the European Commission Humanitarian Aid Department (DG ECHO) and will be implemented between 1 April 2006 and 30 June 2007.

Knowledge building in the field of disaster preparedness is best achieved through active and contributory participation from key practitioners, and helping people to share experiences, lessons learned, and best practices. ICIMOD will collect and synthesise a wide range of materials on disaster preparedness, including indigenous knowledge and practices. These will be shared in a web-based information system, which will be open to all for contributions and exchange of information and experience. Information sharing will be further strengthened through regional workshops, electronic discussions, and training courses. The platform will be accessible at: www.mountainhazards.icimod.org

The direct beneficiaries of the project will mainly be government institutions and non-government organizations working in the field of disaster management, and in particular individuals within these organizations involved in disaster preparedness. The ultimate beneficiaries are the population at large who will benefit from a society better prepared for disasters. ■

For further information, please contact either Dr. Mats Eriksson, meriksson@icimod.org Dr. Zbigniew Mikolajuk, zmikolaiuk@icimod.org or Mr. Vijay Khadgi, vkhadgi@icimod.org

Also visit www.icimod.org and www.mountainhazards.icimod.org

ASEAN in action

Beside maximum efforts each country spent on managing and overcoming the consequences of disasters, the year 2006 also saw effective attempts of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), as the regional association, to take action in order to accelerate co-operation and assist its member countries in dealing with the aftermath.

One of the remarkable attempts was the successful mission of the ASEAN Committee on Disaster Management (ACDM) following the earthquake in Indonesia in May 2006. Although it was its first real task on the ground, the ACDM sprang into almost immediate action by setting up its secretariat at the ASEAN Secretariat

in Indonesia and co-ordinating the joint emergency response effort within the framework of the ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response. Assisting teams from ASEAN member countries - namely Brunei, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore and Thailand - were among the first to respond to the earthquake, bringing in search and rescue teams, as well as medical and other emergency supplies. Other countries, including Cambodia, Laos and Viet Nam, sent food supplies and cash contributions to Indonesia.

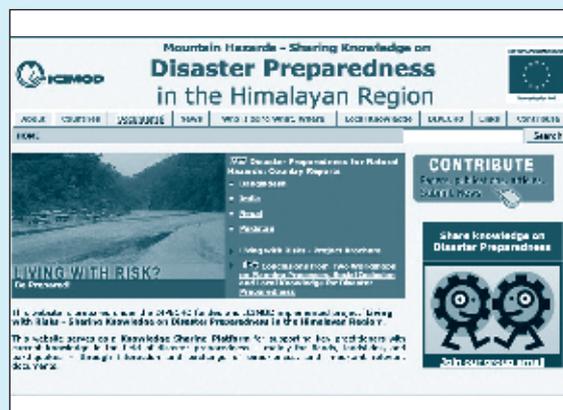
In September, the biggest-ever ASEAN Regional Disaster Emergency Response Simulation Exercise (code-named ARDEX-06) was held at the Tonle Bassac River in Cambodia with the participation of seven member countries. The exercise, organized by the ACDM and Cambodia's National Committee for Disaster Management, was a good chance for the member countries to practise co-operation and exchange experiences with each other in terms of search and rescue effort and relief operations.

Raising public awareness was part of the effort. ASEAN and the UN International Strategy for Disaster Reduction organized the joint regional celebration of the ASEAN Day for Disaster Management in conjunction with the International Day for Disaster Reduction in Bangkok, Thailand, on October 11, 2006. ASEAN member countries also took the occasion to organise their own activities to raise public awareness of disaster management through an exhibition.

To a certain extent, these various activities have effectively contributed to the blossoming ASEAN community, which has become increasingly essential in dealing with perennial problems of the region.

Such spirit should be upheld, because as ASEAN Secretary-General Ong Keng Yong said in his message on the occasion of the ASEAN Day for Disaster Management 2006: 'Disaster risk reduction is increasingly becoming a major global concern that can only be effectively addressed by co-ordinated action at the national, regional and global level!'

Now that a new year has come, with an increased burden of



natural disasters at the hands of global warming and the threat of La Nina, each country should well prepare themselves for any and all disasters. And for its part, ASEAN should further promote its effective practise to help its member countries. ■

For more information, please contact Adelina Kamal, ASEAN Secretariat, lina@aseansec.org



National

Opening of a Disaster Management Information Corner at the Maldives National Library

A Disaster Management Information Corner at the Maldives National Library was opened on the 26th of December 2006 as part of the 2004 Tsunami Commemoration activities. The ceremony was honored by the Minister of Information and Arts and senior officials from both Disaster Management and Information sector. The minister in his opening speech highlighted on the importance and benefit to the public of having access to information on Disaster Management. The initiative would help increase awareness and educate the general public about the issues relating to disasters and Disaster Risk Management and Provide easy access to publications and researched materials on the subject. It will also provide an opportunity for the local community at household levels to establish effective risk management systems and preparedness measures through means of awareness. The books and materials were donated by the UN/ISDR and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Society In Maldives. ■

For further information please contact Fathimath Thasneem, UNDP Maldives, fathimath.thasneem@undp.org



Photo from UNDP Maldives

Mock drill tests the island response plan of Meemu Atoll Muli, Rep. of Maldives

The Mock Drill was held with the aim to test the pre-developed island response plan and to orient inhabitants in the Island how to handle and manage their situation in times of disaster and improve coordination of the selected and trained Task Force groups and the Emergency Management Committee. UNDP's Disaster Risk Management program includes Community Based Disaster Preparedness (CBDP) Programme in selected most vulnerable islands of Maldives.

UNDP has been engaged in community preparedness activities in the Meemu Atoll from May - Dec 2006. This program component contributes to developing a relatively safe environment for

vulnerable communities through multi-hazard disaster response and preparedness and mitigation activities.

The simulation exercise was spearheaded by the Ministry of Defence and National Security. About 50% of the entire island community and stakeholders were mobilized and involved in the simulation exercise. The exercise was closely coordinated with Island Officials and supported by the Atoll Office. In an attempt to share learning from the CBDP exercises and replicate this in other atolls, the Muli Simulation exercise was observed by 21 Task force members from the islands of Meemu Atoll and 26 field officers from International Federation of Red Cross Societies. ■

For further information please contact Fathimath Thasneem, UNDP Maldives, fathimath.thasneem@undp.org

Queen Sofia of Spain visits post-tsunami fisheries rehabilitation project in Indonesia

2007 February, Queen Sofia of Spain visited FAO fisheries rehabilitation projects in a coastal area of the Indonesian province of Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam that was devastated by the December 2004 tsunami, leaving tens of thousands homeless with huge losses to livelihoods.

Queen Sofia inspected facilities where artisanal fishing boats are being built and ponds for aquaculture are rehabilitated. She also inaugurated a model hatchery built in the Ladong Fishing School, which will be used as a training center for sustainable fisheries techniques. Queen Sofia talked with project beneficiaries, mostly women, living in the coastal areas of Aceh Province. She visited farmers who have received materials, tools, larvae, and technical assistance to rebuild ponds. She observed

a boat-building yard used for training local boat builders to produce high-quality boats to replace those destroyed or damaged by the tsunami.

AECI is currently providing funding to the tune of €1.5 million. The project began in December 2005 and – in addition to providing support to revive aquaculture and fishing – assists the Indonesian Government and its agencies with fisheries coordination, planning and strategies.

A comprehensive post-tsunami recovery and development pro-

gramme is under way to support the fisheries-dependent people of Aceh, who total nearly 20 percent of the population. FAO was one of the first international agencies to operate in Aceh in the aftermath of the tsunami. Up to the present, more than 20 FAO agriculture, fisheries and forestry projects have supported the livelihoods of and provided food security to some 350,000 people in the province of Aceh and the nearby island of Nias.

AECI is also financing a project in Sri Lanka for the recovery of the fisheries sector affected by the tsunami. With voluntary contributions of over €25 million in 2006, mainly for projects in Latin America and Africa, Spain has now become FAO's largest bilateral donor. AECI is also cooperating with the FAO Emergency Relief and Rehabilitation Programme in other countries, including Angola, Ethiopia, Malawi, Uganda and the Palestine, and in combating desert locusts in the Sahel. ■

For further information, please contact He Changchui, Assistant Director-General & Regional Representative, FAO Regional Office for Asia & Pacific, changchui.he@fao.org

Toward an effective multi-hazard and tsunami early warning system, Sri Lanka



Early Warning sensor tower, Sri Lanka. Photo from UNESCAP.

As a part of the commemoration of 'National Safety Day' Hon. Mahinda Samarasinghe, Ministry of Disaster Management and Human Rights (MDMHR) in the presence of Dr. Kim Hak-Su, Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations and Executive Secretary of UNESCAP and His Excellency Kwon Yung-Dal, Ambassador of Republic of Korea to Sri Lanka launched the multi-hazard early warning tower at Hikkaduwa.

This is one of three towers constructed by UNESCAP and the Disaster Management Centre (DMC) of Sri Lanka with the financial support of Govern-

ment of Republic of Korea. The second tower was launched in Kalmunai and the third one will be launched soon in Jaffna. Subsequently there will be 100 more early warning towers in the country strategically positioned for providing early warning to the general public.

The towers will be directly operated by the Emergency Operations Center of the DMC head office. The messages will be given not only in the three national languages, but also in other foreign languages as necessary, especially in areas where there will be foreign visitors.

Messages from these towers can be heard within a range of 5km radius from the tower. ■

For further information, please contact Disaster Management Center, dgdmc@slt.net.lk Also visit the website, www.dmc.gov.lk and please contact LeHuu Ti, UNESCAP, ti.unescap@un.org



Timor Leste. Photo by Toby Gibson.

Community-based Disaster Risk Reduction programs in Timor Leste and Laos, supported by International Federation of Red Cross & Red Crescent Societies

TIMOR LESTE RED CROSS

With the funding support from Norwegian Red Cross, Timor Leste Red Cross is going to run a Community Based Risk Reduction (CBRR) program soon, the 5 year program will focus on:

- Facilitate a 'culture of preparedness' so 'risk reduction' becomes a natural proactive supplement to the curative response. This means CBRR will increase its bilateral cooperation with National Societies in disaster prone countries and support their efforts to establish a balanced capacity to prepare and mitigate against locally prevailing hazards as well as to respond to hazard situations,
- Advocate for the community-based approach to disaster mitigation and preparedness through bi- or multilateral collaboration,
- Support risk reduction through empowerment of local communities and advocacy towards the political/administrative

systems for the rights to safety, well being and quality of life for vulnerable populations segments.

The program will ensure that the capacity of CVTL is build up before targeting the vulnerable communities. The communities will be selected based on VCA/PRA assessments and can therefore not yet be identified.

LAO RED CROSS

The proposed 4 year CBDRP program 2007- 2010 will shift its focus on raising public awareness on issues pertinent to Disaster Management and develop organizational capacity within the Lao Red Cross (LRC) to effectively and efficiently implement future programmes in Disaster Management.

The overall Development Objective of the Programme is: To reduce the impact of disasters on the most vulnerable people affected by disasters in Lao PDR by reducing vulnerabilities through community preparedness and response. The Immediate Objective is: Knowledge and awareness on disaster preparedness and response is increased among the targeted communities, local authorities and LRC staff through grass root workshops and awareness raising campaigns.

In line with LRC commitments and strategies it has been determined that the programme will contribute to the mitigation of future human and property losses caused by disasters in disaster prone areas with pilot areas in two provinces of Savannakhet and Khammuan in the first two years then expand to other provinces. The starting point will be a regional workshop covering all 17 provinces, where gaps in existing responses to disaster management as well as the comparative advantages of LRC in addressing these, will be assessed. In addition LRC will advocate and strengthen its position on issues pertinent to DM through documentation, sharing of experiences and advocacy on best practices and lessons learned. ■

For further information please contact Nguyen Hung Ha, Regional Disaster Management Programme Officer, International Federation of Red Cross & Red Crescent Societies, Southeast Asia Regional Delegation, hungha.nguyen@ifrc.org



Laos.

Communities trained on coastal mitigation and planning, Thailand

As part of the U.S. Indian Ocean Tsunami Warning System (US IOTWS) Small Grants Program, the Asian Institute of Technology's School of Environment, Resources and Development (SERD) and School of Engineering and Technology (SET) held a training course January 16-19, 2007, for 14 participants from coastal communities in Ranong, Thailand, on coastal mitigation and planning.

Participants included local government officials, NGO representatives, and community members from youth and women's groups. The course aimed to integrate social, ecological, environmental, and technical approaches to build capacity at the local level on coastal resource management and disaster preparedness. By the end of the week, participants had prepared a coastal mitigation strategy for Muang Kluang Sub-district in Kapoe District, which they took back to Ranong to share with their communities and develop an action plan over the next two months. ■

For more information please contact Orestes Anastasia, US IOTWS Program Manager, [oanastasia@usaid.gov](mailto: oanastasia@usaid.gov)

Thailand initiatives; best community plan for effective disaster preparedness and response, with technical collaboration by UNESCO/IOC and UNOCHA

Thailand's National Disaster Warning Center (NDWC) has implemented multi-level agencies integration program to promote establishment of the end-to-end tsunami early system since September 2005. In March, 2006, the program has begun with the Tsunami Alert Rapid Notification System (TARNS) under the U.S. IOTWS technical assistance, aiming at effective communication from the national warning center to the target last miles in the tsunami prone areas of six coastal provinces in the south of Thailand.

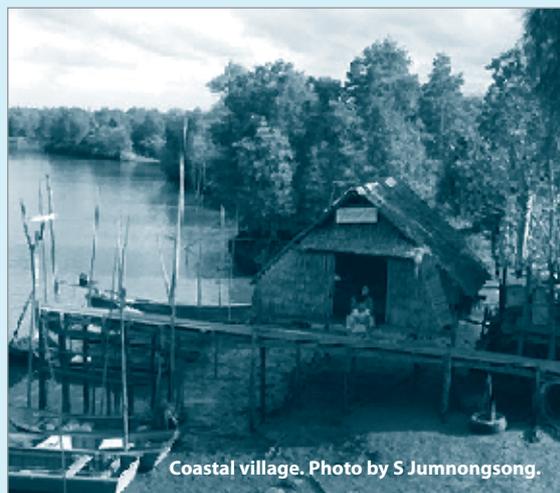
In order to build up a practical system with TARNS, NDWC initiates multi-level agencies integration including risk communication training supported by ADPC, workshops with governors, public and private sectors at provincial level on mission and tsunami early warning system of NDWC supported by ADPC, trainings on the application of early warning and multi-hazard risk assessment into local government functions level in disaster prone provinces, Thailand supported by UNDP and adaptive learning in disaster management for community awareness and resilience (ALDCAR) from February 2007-December 2008 under UNESCO/IOC support



through the Belgian Government. These projects involve provinces (governors, provincial chiefs, private sectors), districts and sub-districts (district and sub-district chiefs, Local Administrative Organizations, municipalities), communities (village leaders, teachers, school administrators, religion teachers) and other stakeholders (TV, radio, media).

Now, NDWC, Department of Disaster Prevention and Mitigation (DDPM), Department of Fisheries (DOF), Office of the Basic Education Commission (OBEC) and International Ocean Institute of Thailand (IOI-Thailand) is gearing up on Local Initiations in Development of the Best Community Work Plan for Effective and Durable Disaster Preparedness and Response Project (DBCWP) under the Technical Collaboration with UNOCHA.

The Project has been initiated for promotion of local designing and implementing work plan for disaster preparedness and response by using 24 villages/schools as pilot project. While the ALDCAR project under UNESCO/IOC is carrying out to build up knowledge at the community level, the DBCWP is focusing on building up champion to promote the best community work plan for effective and durable disaster preparedness and response with ability to demonstrate practical community evacuation. A number of 24 villages/schools are selected in the pilot project. A working Group at each village/school will be established to be responsible for development of the best work plan for effective and durable disaster preparedness and response at the local level and presentation of work plan with community evacuation demonstration.



Coastal village. Photo by S Jumnongsong.

The final work plans will be presented to the Committees formulated from NDWC (national experts), DDPM, OBEC, DOF and IOI-Thailand. Award will be given in August 2007 for winners from each school able to present a concrete work plan to meet criteria set up by the committees. These criteria will include learning ability on multi-hazard early warning system, strategic work plan, effective, durable and comprehensive disaster preparedness and response at the village/schools level, ability to expand adaptive management practices and learning to the nearby villages/schools, production of local trainers, and demonstration of effective community evacuation in July 2007. ■

For more information, contact Chersak Virapat, NDWC, cvirapat@hotmail.com

Seminar for the development of the GLIDE-associated disaster database, Philippines

The Office of Civil Defence (OCD), Department of National Defence of the Philippines and the Asian Disaster Reduction Center (ADRC) co-organized a seminar on 17 October 2006 in Quezon City, the Philippines. The seminar was conducted as part of co-operative project on the 'development of a web-based GLIDE-associated CALAMIDAT. PH national disaster event database' being carried out by the above two organizations.

The purposes of the project are to:

- Develop a database and a website of disaster events in the Philippines over the past 35 years,
- Adopt GLIDE (GLObal unique disaster IDentifier) numbers into this database so that information can be shared internationally,
- Achieve quick and efficient natural disaster response through the use of the database, and
- Contribute to and facilitate the promotion of GLIDE around the world, an effort being undertaken by ADRC and supported by UN agencies including UNDP and other relevant international organizations.

Forty officials from the OCD participated in the seminar. From the



Local leaders at a tsunami training session.

ADRC, Mr. Hajime Nakano, Senior Researcher, and Ms. Miki Kodama, Researcher, participated in the seminar and gave lectures on GLIDE including general information about the system, its applications, and how to use GLIDE and GLIDE-number.net. Active discussions were held following the lectures, allowing the participants to gain a thorough understanding of the GLIDE system and its applications.

After the seminar, the OCD began compiling past disaster data and applying GLIDE numbering. The disaster data website (CALAMIDAT.PH) will be

open to the public once it has been reviewed by the ADRC. A second seminar is planned to be held in February 2007 for National Disaster Coordinating Council (NDCC) members, which will demonstrate and explain the GLIDE-compliant database, CALAMIDAT.PH. ■

For more information on this project, please contact, Hajime Nakano, ADRC Senior Researcher, nakano@adrc.or.jp

Harnessing the potential of multi-sectoral partnership in India

UNDP has been supporting its 'partners' in India to establish their own approaches in the field of community based disaster preparedness and management. In retrospect of India's unique vulnerability profile and challenges to natural disasters, UNDP in India has supported various initiatives of the Central and State Governments to strengthen the disaster management capacities for nearly a decade. The Government of India-UNDP partnership in the area of vulnerability reduction and disaster management was amplified further in the aftermath of the two major disasters in 1999 and 2001, which initiated the process of building the capacities of communities in multi-hazard prone regions of India. However with a changing scenario of paradigm approaches in disaster management and a proactive National Disaster Management Framework adopted by the Government of India, it emphasized the need for strengthening preparedness, prevention, mitigation activities and capacities of institutions and community. This framework also translates the scope for multi-sectoral partnerships in areas of community based disaster preparedness planning and management of its institutional capacities.

UNDP playing the role of a facilitator is supporting the implementation of the Disaster Risk Management Programme (DRM) [2002-2007] in India. This is a joint initiative by the Government of

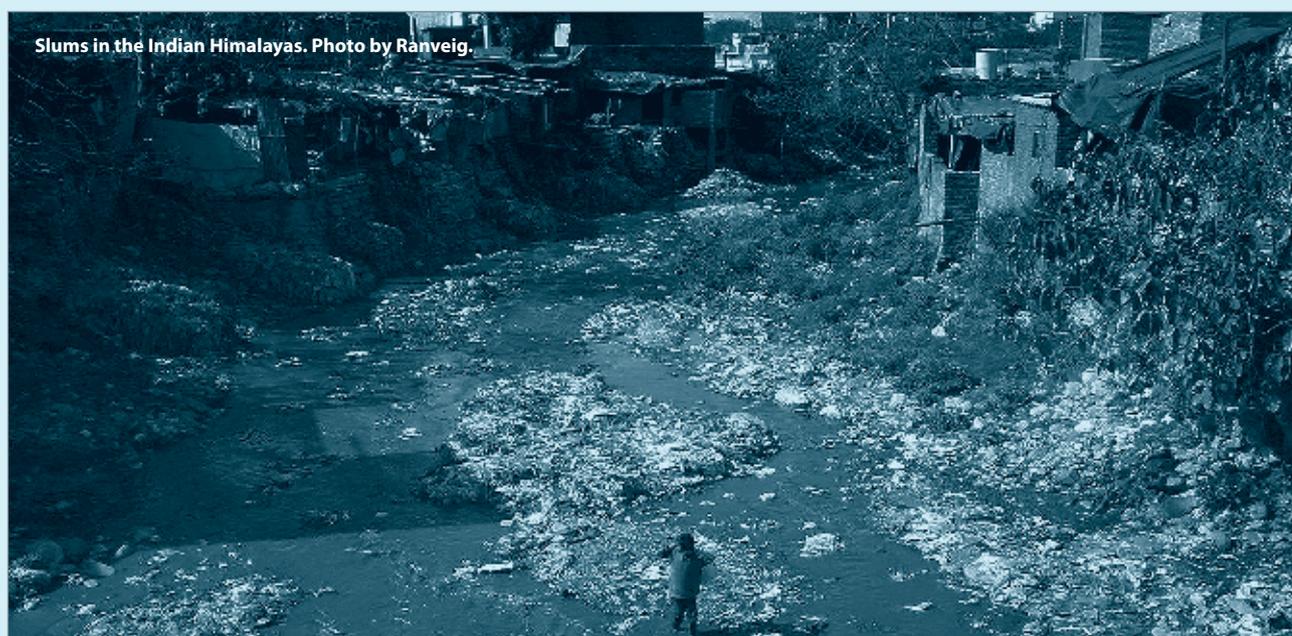
India and UNDP. The programme has a multi-sectoral partnership approach for initiating its activities in selected 169 districts spread across 17 states. One of the four programme objectives, intent's to establish networks of partnerships for effective knowledge sharing through a coalition of multi-sectoral partners. The expression of 'partnership' is being established amongst local-self government (Panchayati Raj Institutions), government institutions, NGO's and corporate sector through the DRM programme activities for developing capacities of institutions, educating communities on multi-hazard preparedness and also to create prospective associations with community based multi-sectoral networks. Further more, 'partnership' as a catalyst has strengthened the DM institutional mechanism at the local level. The capacity of DM committees at District, Block, and Gram Panchayat and village levels is being strengthened through trainings. The elected representatives from the local-self government institutions do represent and actively participate in the community's disaster preparedness planning process under the guidance of the District administration. The role DMCs and DMTs is being recognized as an integral part of the local-self government institutional mechanism for response and early recovery. City municipalities and development authorities are the key stakeholders in piloting DRM initiating in the context of urban risks to earthquakes. This form of local level partnership has paved the way for integrating the disaster risk reduction agenda within the local level planning process and development initiatives.

In addition, capitalizing upon partner networks expertise, they are being involved in developing community's capacities through DRM training programmes that are being conducted in the programme states. Significant involvement of state owned Administrative Training Institutes (ATI's) for conducting trainings for DMCs and elected community representatives and government officers. Technical experts and resource persons from Red Cross society of India, Civil Defence, District's Fire departments, St. John's Ambulance, Apollo Hospital, and HAM-radio networks are being apart of the skill oriented trainings that focuses on aspects of early

warning, search and rescue operations, and first aid etc. Through associated professionals, institutions and forums in construction sector are being instrumental in providing specialized technical support for conducting trainings on multi-hazard resistant housing construction practices amongst masons, construction workers and professional engineers & architects. The strength of grass-root based civil societies including CBOs and NGOs, women Self Help Groups (SHGs) is being ventured to develop concrete assistance in mobilizing community volunteers with emphasis on women's participation and in augmenting the formation of DMTs/Task Forces at all levels. The community volunteers are actively involved in helping communities to prepare multi-hazard Disaster Management Plans. Education on DM is imparted through collaboration with Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) initiated to introduce Disaster Management as a frontline curriculum in all the schools and train teachers. Lastly, seeking innovative public-private cooperation in DRM, Confederation of Indian Industries (CII) and Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) are involved in trainings of companies and firms on risk management, contingency planning and appropriate structural and non-structural disaster prevention and mitigation measures that matches with their interests for creating their own solutions to risks from natural disaster events.

Through this integrated package of partnership, it has helped put together the DRM programme efforts in achieving progress as well as incorporating DRM activities into an opportunity for further mainstreaming and promotion of newer collaborations in the field of disaster risk reduction. ■

For more information contact Mr. Sushil Kumar, Assistant Resident Representative, DRM Programme, sushil.kumar@undp.org and Mr. G. Padmanabhan Emergency Analyst, UNDP, g.padmanabhan@undp.org



Slums in the Indian Himalayas. Photo by Ranveig.

Thematic areas of focus

IPCC confirms that cost-effective policies and technologies could greatly reduce global warming

BANGKOK, 4 MAY 2007

A new assessment by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) concludes that the world community could slow and then reduce global emissions of greenhouse gases (GHGs) over the next several decades by exploiting cost-effective policies and current and emerging technologies.

Based on the most up-to-date, peer-reviewed literature on emissions modelling, economics, policies and technologies, today's report reveals how governments, industry and the general public could together reduce the energy and carbon intensity of the global economy despite growing incomes and population levels.

'Climate change will touch every corner and every community on this planet but equally, overcoming climate change can touch on every facet of the global economy in a wealth of positive ways. Measures to reduce emissions can, in the main, be achieved at starkly low costs especially when compared with the costs of inaction. Indeed some, such as reducing emissions by 30 per cent from buildings by 2020, actually contribute positively to GDP,' said Executive Director Achim Steiner of the UN Environment Programme (UNEP) which, together with the World Meteorological Organization, established the IPCC.

'It is now up to governments to introduce the mechanisms and incentives to unleash the ingenuity and creativity of the financial and technological markets in order to realize these economic, social and environmental gains,' he said.

Overcoming climate change can touch on every facet of the global economy in a wealth of positive ways

UNEP Executive Director, Achim Steiner

According to 'Climate Change 2007: Mitigation of Climate Change', without additional action by governments the emissions from the basket of six greenhouse gases covered by the Kyoto Protocol will rise by 25 to 90% by 2030 compared to 2000. (The six gases are carbon dioxide, methane, nitrous oxide, sulphur hexafluoride, PFCs and HFCs.)

By adopting stronger climate change policies, however, governments could slow and reverse these emissions trends and ultimately stabilize the level of greenhouse gases remaining in the atmosphere. For example, stabilizing GHG levels at 445 - 490ppm (parts per million) - the most ambitious target that was assessed - would require global CO₂ emissions to peak by 2015 and to fall to 50 - 85% of 2000 levels by 2050. This could limit global mean temperature increases to 2 - 2AOC above pre-industrial levels.

Stabilizing GHG levels at 535 - 590ppm would require global CO₂ emissions to peak by 2010 - 2030 and return to -30% to +5% of 2000 levels by around 2050. This could limit the temperature increase to 2.8-3.2°C. If emissions peak later, more warming can be expected. By way of comparison, the current (2005) level of GHGs is about 379ppm.

The report's Summary for Policymakers (SPM) was finalized and adopted this week by representatives from 105 countries. The full set of underlying chapters, written by 168 authors (some 40% of whom are from developing and transition countries) and reviewed by hundreds of other experts, will be available shortly. ■

Please visit www.ipcc.ch, www.wmo.int, or www.unep.org

For more information please contact Michael Williams on +66-8-1250-0373 (Friday only), or +41-79-4091528, michael.williams@unep.ch, or Satwant Kaur on +66-2-2882127, kaur@unep.org, or Nick Nuttall, UNEP Spokesperson on +254-2-623084, nick.nuttall@unep.org

Satellite rainfall estimates in the Hindu Kush-Himalayan region

Floods and droughts are common natural hazards in the Hindu Kush-Himalayan (HKH) region. Accurate estimates of rainfall are needed in order to minimise the impacts of floods and droughts. Until recently, the main method used to estimate the amount of rain falling in an area was interpolation of measurements from a network of hydro-meteorological stations.

The closer the spacing between the stations, the more accurate the total rainfall estimate. In mountainous areas, however, measuring stations are often sparse, and the rainfall information is too unreliable for predicting floods with any certainty. In the Himalayan region, which contains the headwaters of eight major Asian rivers, this is a major obstacle to accurate flood forecasting.

Recently it has become possible to make more accurate estimates of rainfall using satellite-enhanced rainfall estimation, in which precipitation information derived from an array of spaceborne meteorological sensors is used to enhance rainfall measurements from surface-based conventional rain gauges. The conventional gauge data is first used to calibrate the satellite-based information, which increases the accuracy. Once calibrated, this is one of the easiest ways to estimate total rainfall over a large region or watershed. Satellite-enhanced rainfall estimation is especially appropriate for areas like the Himalayas, with few rain gauges and difficult access. Improved satellite-based rainfall estimates for the HKH delivered in a timely fashion will enable the operation and use of regional flood forecasting systems. The satellite data can also be used in weather prediction models to estimate future rainfall.

The 'Application of Satellite Rainfall Estimates in the Hindu Kush-Himalayan Region' project aims to develop a satellite rainfall estimate model specifically for the Himalayan region by refining a system developed by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Climate Prediction Center, and to test a streamflow model (GeoSFM) developed by the United States Geological Survey (USGS) for flood hazard monitoring. The CPC RFE-2.0 produces an automatic daily rainfall analysis for southern and western Asia using satellite images. The results are updated three times daily and cover a 24 hour period of accumulated rainfall. The model has been expanded to cover the HKH region, but needs to be validated to improve its accuracy and usability. The software will be made available to all HKH countries. The GeoSFM is a spatially distributed, physically-based hydrological model used for wide-area flood risk monitoring that employs remote sensing data together with parameters related to topography, soils, and land cover.

The project has been designed to support country implementa-



Fertile valley in central Nepal. Photo by Toby Gibson

tion plans developed during a regional workshop on satellite rainfall estimation organized by ICIMOD in 2005. It will use archived rain gauge data to validate selected satellite rainfall estimates made at the same time as the gauge measurements were taken. The results will be used to strengthen and improve the RFE-2.0 algorithm so that the satellite rainfall estimates prepared for the region can be used with confidence in streamflow models and flood forecasting systems. The results will also be tested for use in other applications like rainfall prediction, and drought and flood monitoring in partnership with NOAA and the USGS. The overall goal of the Project is to strengthen regional cooperation in flood forecasting and information exchange and build the capacity of partner institutions for satellite rainfall estimation and its application. The project is funded by the United States Agency for International Development, Office of US Foreign Disaster Assistance (USAID/OFDA) and will run from June 2006 to June 2007. ■

For further information please contact Ms. Mandira Shrestha, mshrestha@icimod.org or Mr. Pradeep Mool, pmool@icimod.org and visit the website www.icimod.org

Early warning system in Cuddalore, India

A pilot early warning system will soon cover all coastal villages of Cuddalore district in India to help in effective dissemination of information whenever disaster strikes. Eleven of the villages already had the system and others would follow soon.

A wireless-linked public address system was being set up in 66 villages to help the district administration instruct the community on how to act during a crisis, he said during a talk on 'Natural

Disasters and Human Response for Socio-economic Development, organized by the Department of Management Studies, Indian Institute of Technology Madras.

The United Nations Development Programme had sanctioned a sum of Rs 36 lakh for the project that would include public address systems, wireless-triggered early warning and real-time communication. ■

Source from The Hindu, www.thehindu.com/2007/03/13/stories/2007031317450800.htm

Against The Tide – Challenging stereotypes can reduce vulnerability

It was observed that in The Andaman Islands, when relief was distributed, women were not benefiting. All of it went to the men-folk who owned the boats, but nothing to women who did majority of the work (i.e, processing of catch). Ownership of houses not in their names made them to be struck off the list for housing compensation. These concerns made it imperative to integrate gender into the post-tsunami Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) initiative.

The project plan was developed in conjunction with the women who were set to participate. Women were also organized into groups. The initial activity has been swimming lessons and instruction in boat sailing. After seeing the impact on the women, and on the wider community, many more women have come forward to participate.

This project was initiated in the aftermath of the Asian tsunami, 26 December 2004. The project is due for completion at the end of 2007. This project in The Andaman Islands is part of a broader recovery and rehabilitation programme across 2 states and 2 union territories of India, plus Sri Lanka, Thailand, Maldives and Somalia (Puntland). DRR activities are being carried out across 25 villages in The Andaman and Nicobar Islands, India (including Great Andaman, Little Andaman and Car Nicobar islands).

Project – ‘Disaster Risk Reduction post-tsunami in The Andaman Islands, India’

Men and women are affected differently by disasters due to their social, cultural and economic vulnerabilities. Women are often the most vulnerable to disasters. Social status positions many women out of the reach of information and education that can increase people’s ability to cope in the event of a crisis.

In The Andamans, there is the lack of recognition of the economic contribution of women through, for example, domestic labour and the informal sector, automatically puts women at a disadvantage when claiming financial compensation after the tsunami. With property and assets traditionally held in the husband’s name, women can lay claim to very little.

It is not traditionally expected for women in The Andamans to learn to swim, despite this being a major factor in reducing the risk of loss of life during flooding or tsunamis. Many women in The Andamans drowned as their saris prevented weak or non-swimmers from having a chance of survival.

As part of our three year programme in response to the tsunami in The Andamans, ActionAid has found the key to women participation in DRR planning and local advocacy is our community based vulnerability assessment tool – *Participatory Vulnerability Analysis (PVA)*.

In the Andaman Islands, this is the first time women have been able to analyse their vulnerability in this way, in a structure which motivates action, and empowers women to lobby those in power who are able to make a greater difference to the local risks faced.

The tsunami waves paralysed the confidence of women. Coupled with this, there is a strong resistance from the men-folks within their families. One concrete way that ActionAid has found has made a positive change in the lives of women in The Andamans is through swimming lessons. Teaching women to swim in the shallow waters of the islands has both improved self-confidence and reduced the legacy of fear that the disaster left.

One of the many successes of this initiative has been a girl Sanjeeta Bario (age 2) who during the tsunami was rescued from



drowning now is an able swimmer and is now teaching other women in to swim. And as confident swimmers, women are now learning to sail boats to increase income generation opportunities in the fishing industry. Apart from presently assisting in cleaning and processing, Sulekha Kundu, 41 and Namita Mandal, 35 are now able to fish by themselves.

Helping them obtain boating licences is also part of the project process. The public recognition of women, as fishing members of the community and crucially as boat owners in their own right (both socially and legally in government records, increases resilience to future hazards large and small.

Accepting the women's capabilities, the Fishery Department of the Administration has heeded this demand and issued licenses to them. As of present, five have obtained them and 27 more are in process of obtaining them.

ActionAid is implementing the project, together with partners such as Pragati Mahila Sangathan women's organization and other women's groups across the islands. The project is funded by the UK Disasters Emergency Committee Tsunami Appeal. ■

For further information, please contact Marion Khamis, Communications and Appeals Officer, ActionAid, marion.khamis@actionaid.org

Early warning systems and village communication networks, India

Prior information about disaster can save many people's lives. Tsunami waves have taught us a lesson about the importance of an advance public warning system. It is right time to develop a systematic study on Disaster Information Management (DIM). It refers to a management of information about disasters, of networking of rescue and relief operations, and of sharing news about recovery, mitigation, reconstruction. Such information needs to be disseminated to public and shared by the communities from any early warning systems or any other disaster assisting agencies. Though at international and at regional level much focus is laid on setting up early warning systems in different places, without any preparedness at grassroots communication networks the prior information will fail to reach the seashore communities that may be affected by another disaster.

Even if the early warning system is in place in Indian Ocean without networking the public warning systems of communities and the alerting centres, such disaster experience could be repeated. While the governments look for setting up early warning systems, local communication networks that would

broadcast or narrowcast the emergency warning immediately to the public before any disaster should also be developed.

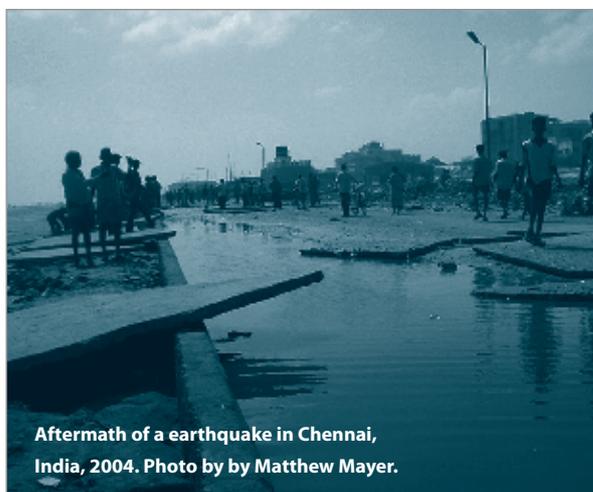
A simple breakdown of information and its non-availability has resulted in the loss of many people's lives. The main focus of this article is on how the local community communication (COMCOM) process can be strengthened in such a way that even simple authentic disaster information can be announced immediately to the public as it was done in M S Swaminathan's Centre in South India.

One needs to recognise the fact that this centre had people to inform them, people to receive the information and announce it to the public. All these persons are either related to the centre or paid by them. This is where we needed to framework Disaster Information Management in which communities' preparedness (in terms of dissemination of prior information; community's participation in evacuation); and NGOs and Government office collaboration (in rescue operation; informing the military or rescuers; rehabilitation, resettlement) are very essential elements. A systematic management of information and dissemination to the public, to the government and NGOs and to the people who are under threat of a disaster has to be set up. For this we need to start from the grassroots and community communication level. The primary question is how the emergency warning of a disaster can be announced to the public.

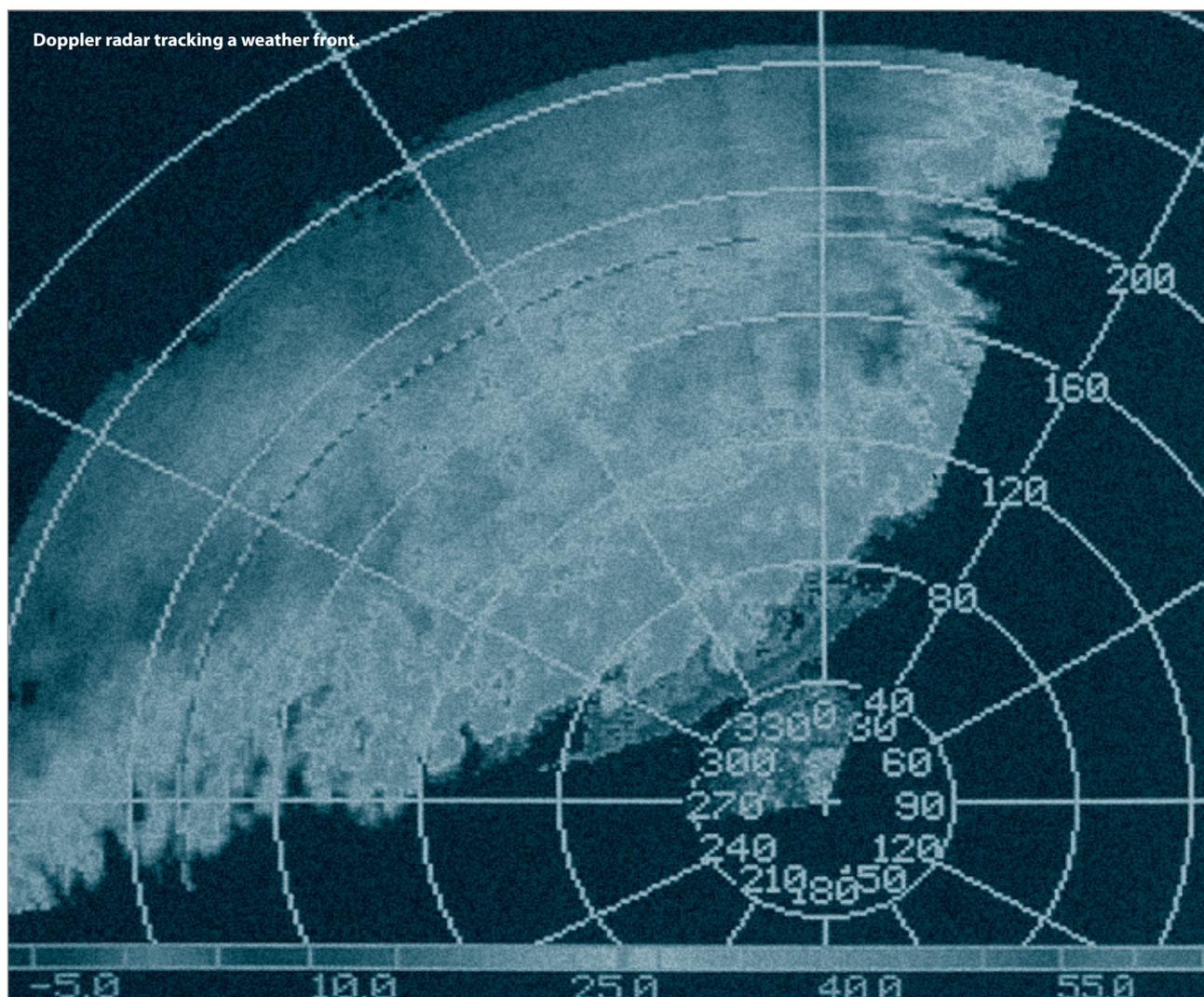
In South India, many of the seashore communities regularly listen to the songs, news and any other information through the loud speakers that are on the top of the local Panchayat centres. Panchayat centres are the center of the villages where the government has provided the people with amplifiers and loud speakers connected to a radio and tape recorders. Today, some of them have television sets and also CD players. These loud speakers are part of the communication life of these village and seashore communities. This culture of listening to loud speakers has become part and parcel of the community communication for these people. At times announcements are also made to the villages through this loud speaker but rarely done. The Panchayat Centres and also the temples, mosques and churches have loud speakers. In this sense the temples mosques and churches can also be networked with these automatic announcement systems that would disseminate the information to the public before the disaster.

In Japan the system is known as Simultaneous Announcement

Wireless System (SAWS). It is a system of transmitters and receivers installed by the local authorities for any type of messages that are placed in the government offices and in all public places. But this is a wireless system and so due to bad weather at times does not work properly. Similar systems are run by Michigan Emergency Packet Information Network (MEPIN) using network software called K-NET which is connected to VHF Meter Radios. Such systems are also used for public announcement of disasters in US. Such systems are expensive



Aftermath of a earthquake in Chennai, India, 2004. Photo by by Matthew Mayer.



compared to using a community speaker system.

The second way of announcement among the village community is using a van or car or an auto-rickshaw on which the loud speakers, amplifier and a small generator are carried. This is particularly a practice during the political elections and also for any advertisement. As this vehicle keeps on moving the information too is disseminated to many villages. This too has become part and parcel of village communication through which many political, religious and other announcements are made. If these community media systems are networked along with the early warning systems then there is a possibility of getting not only pre-disaster information but also information about mitigation, rescue and reconstruction can also be provided. These community media can also be networked among themselves so that one can share their news with the other community.

Such ways of doing the pre-disaster warning is cheaper by connecting a computer system with the loud speakers. This computer can also be used as a public booth where the internet phone calls, faxes and emails can be sent. Thus this computer with an internet connection can be maintained as a public booth. The pre-disaster warning can be made through a software networking from the

early warning centres. The whole system can run on the solar and batteries that even if there is no electricity then the announcement can still be made. Such a subsidized technology becomes sustainable as the people themselves would pay for internet and phone charges. This model brings two kinds of cultural activities of the communities together that are – people's use of loud speakers and also their use of phone booths. In this way the model incorporates the present community communication process within which the warning system is connected. One needs to recognise the fact that these loud speakers are connected in addition to radio, television, word of mouth and telephone networks that would also carry the emergency warning to the public. ■

For further information please contact Joshva Raja, Selly Oak Centre for Mission Studies, joshvajohn@yahoo.co.uk or visit the website www.interfaithinteraction.com

Painting by Kanokwan Kituguan, a Thai primary school student. Her class was assigned to create pictures about natural disasters, and most were based on the recent tsunami.



Education

Asian youth forum for disaster-reduction education

WAKAYAMA, JAPAN, 30 OCTOBER – 3 NOVEMBER 2006

The Asian Youth Forum for Disaster-Reduction Education was organized in Wakayama city and Hirogawa Town of Wakayama Prefecture in Western Japan on 1 and 2 November 2006, with pre-events starting on 30 October.

The Youth Forum was jointly held by the Organizing Committee for Asian Youth Forum for Disaster Reduction Education, the Wakayama Prefectural Board of Education, the Asia/Pacific Cultural Centre for UNESCO (ACCU), Tokyo, and the Inamura-no-hi Council, with co-operation and support from various line ministries of Japan, and others including the Asian Disaster Reduction Centre (ADRC), Japan Broadcasting Corporation (NHK), the Crisis and Environment Management Policy Institute (CeMI), Ritsumeikan Academy, Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) and the Japanese National Commission for UNESCO.

The Youth Forum's objectives were to provide a platform for sharing information and discussion on disaster preparedness among the youth of Asia.

The Youth Forum included various events as follows:

- A drama on a tsunami and response and recovery from it, put on by local students
- A nation-wide contest for a radio-drama on the same theme
- Another nation-wide contest for best practice of school-based disaster education in Japan
- A contest of picture-text message on disaster reduction from close to 400 primary-schools to high-schools in Wakayama prefecture

- Exhibitions on press photography of Indian Ocean Tsunami and other exhibitions related to Disaster Reduction or Disaster Reduction Education and risk management put up by International Organization, private corporations, NGO/NPOs, local government, schools and others.

There were up to 3,000 people in attendance for these various events of the Youth Forum which took place on 1 and 2 November.

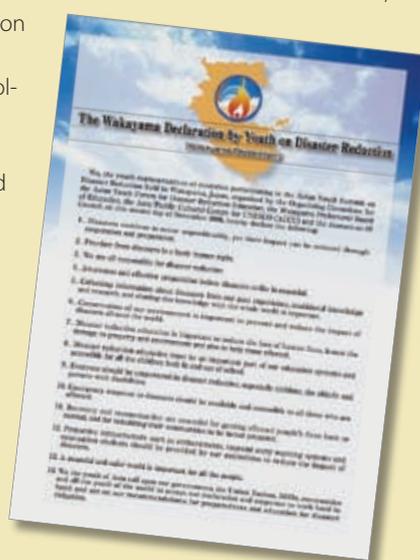
The main event of the Youth Forum was the Asian Youth Summit for Disaster Reduction and its preparatory workshops that was attended by 37 participants from eight countries.

Groups of four students (mainly upper-secondary level) from the Indian Ocean Tsunami-hit areas of India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Sri Lanka and Thailand, as well as tsunami-prone areas in Bangladesh, the Philippines and Japan. They were accompanied by their school teachers and local government officials or NGO personnel who have been engaged in disaster reduction.

Following a series of educational activities on disaster reduction, including participatory workshops and an evacuation drill, the young people worked together to produce 'The Wakayama Declaration by Youth on Disaster Reduction (Wakayama Declaration)' which consists of a preamble and fourteen articles, and a large collective mural, both expressing their hopes for youth in Asia

to work for the cause of reducing the impact of disasters together with the world citizens. The declaration was presented at the closing ceremony in nine languages of the participants with a large collective mural in front of an audience of approximately 1,500.

The whole process was facilitated by experienced staff from NGOs working at the community level in rehabilitation activities for the Indian Ocean Tsunami, respectively in India (Center for Environment Education), Indonesia (Yayasan IDEP), and Sri Lanka (Lanka Jathika Sarvodaya Shramadana Sangamaya) and from ACCU, which has been working in the field of education cooperation, especially



in non-formal education, to help achieve goals of Education for All (EFA) and Education for Sustainable Development (ESD).

Drawing upon previous initiatives including the Natural Disaster Youth Summit 2005, Hyogo, Japan, 25 – 28 March 2005 that was organized by the Japan Education and Resource Network (JEARN) and the International Education and Resource Network (iEARN) and held in conjunction with the World Conference on Disaster Reduction (Kobe, January 2005), this Youth Forum in Wakayama was particularly significant in that:

1 It addresses one of the priorities for action of the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015, Education and training, under Priority for Action 3 'Use knowledge, innovation and education to build a culture of safety and resilience at all levels', which puts emphasis on the importance of activities to promote 'the use of other formal and informal channels to reach youth and children with information; promote the integration of disaster risk reduction as an intrinsic element of the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development'

2 The location selected is home to an inspiring and well-known story and teaching resource—a tale called '*Inamura-no-hi (the burning of rice straw bundles)*', based on the heroic act by Mr. Hamaguchi of 150 years ago, who lived in the present day Hirogawa town of Wakayama Prefecture. Mr. Hamaguchi saved villagers from a gigantic tsunami by setting fire to the drying rice straw bundles to give an evacuation signal and directions to those who had been swept away by the tsunami. He worked further to save the village from economic hardship from the aftermath of the disaster, using his own fortune to give villagers immediate employment and building an embankment to safeguard the village from future tsunamis.

3 Series of preparatory Workshops and the Asian Youth Summit for Disaster Reduction were facilitated as a process to learn, share and discuss while having fun which led to adoption of the Wakayama Declaration and completion of collaborative Disaster Reduction message mural both created by youth themselves. What appreciated the most is that the Declaration is not only created by youth themselves, but also it has covered all aspects of disaster risk reduction, including importance of education and appreciation of basic human rights of freedom from disaster. The Wakayama Declaration was translated from English to participant's own languages; namely into Bengali, Hindi, Tamil, Bahasa Indonesia,

Use knowledge, innovation and education to build a culture of safety and resilience at all levels



Japanese, Malay, Tagalog, Sinhalese, Thai and French. It is expected that this important message from Asian youth will be one of the guiding principle of the issues regarding Disaster Reduction.

Follow-up events have taken place in each country, including the translation of the Declaration and sharing the Asian Youth Summit experience with the participants' peers in schools and the community, sometimes through the media.

ACCU is in the process of setting up a web-site to facilitate exchange of information on such community activities by the Youth Forum participants. ACCU's other follow-up projects include the finalization of the preliminary version of '*Tsunami Rescue! – The True Story of Hamaguchi Goryo: The Man Who Saved His Village From a Tsunami,*' which was used as preparatory reading material for the Forum participants. Other material to be produced is PLANET 4 'Disaster Preparedness,' the fourth title of PLANET (Package Learning Materials on Environment) multimedia package learning materials, consisting of different materials such as cartoon animation video, booklet, posters and facilitator's guide, to be disseminated widely both in English as well as other languages. ■

For more information, please contact ACCU Secretariat in Japan, www.accu.or.jp

ADRC's cooperative project with Armenia

On 16 November 2006, the Armenian National Survey for Seismic Protection (NSSP) and the Asian Disaster Reduction Center (ADRC) held a seminar entitled '*Knowledge, Education and Training for Earthquake Disaster Awareness and Preparedness in Public Schools in Syunik Prefecture, Armenia*' in Kapan, the capital of Syunik Prefecture. This was a cooperative project between the ADRC and the government of Armenia.

Like Japan, Armenia is prone to earthquakes. The Spitak Earthquake, which hit the northern part of the country in 1988, caused approximately 25,000 deaths and left 514,000 people homeless. Various types of recovery projects have been undertaken in Armenia since then, but very few have been conducted in the southern



Seminar in Armenia. Photo from ADRC.

part of the country, including Syunik Prefecture. Given this, a seminar targeting school teachers and public school children was held in this prefecture with the aim of raising awareness of earthquake disasters. Mr. Taisuke Matsuzaki of the Kobe City Board of Education was invited to serve as a lecturer.

Following opening remarks from Dr. Alvaro Antonian, President of the NSSP, Mr. Matsuzaki gave a series of lectures on disaster prevention education. He described the mechanisms of earthquake and lessons learnt from the Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake. His target audience was about 50 school children of 13-15 years old. Mr. Matsuzaki used a simulation exercise to teach 25 school teachers about earthquake response measures.

The participants were highly interested in these lectures, as they were being given by a Japanese expert who had experienced a major earthquake. They explained that the people of Armenia are not often directly injured by earthquakes, but that deaths tend to be caused by buildings that collapse as a result of earthquakes. When thinking about earthquake prevention for Armenia, the Japanese model of using schools as evacuation sites may not be applicable. It is important to consider the specific needs of the country.

The ADRC would like to further improve and promote knowledge about earthquake disaster risk reduction in Armenia by working closely with the NSSP. ■

For more information on this cooperative project, please contact Mr. Makoto Ikeda, ADRC Researcher, ikeda@adrc.or.jp

Disaster education project in Galle, Sri Lanka

The District Workshop on Disaster Education in Schools was held in Galle, Sri Lanka from 6 to 8 December 2006, as part of a cooperative project between the US Agency for International Development (USAID) and the ADRC entitled 'Enhancing Natural Disaster Education in Schools in Galle District, Sri Lanka.' It was attended by about 50 school principals and teachers from 15 schools in Galle District, and about 15 officials from the Southern Provincial Department of Education and other relevant organizations in Sri Lanka.

The workshop aimed to:

- 1 Provide teachers with information on natural disasters and disaster prevention, and raise their awareness of the importance of teaching children about natural disasters,
- 2 Enable teachers to conduct lessons on disaster prevention at their own schools, and
- 3 Enable teachers to train other teachers in their school communities after this workshop.

Mr. Koji Kanda, from the Hyogo Prefectural Board of Education, was invited to the workshop. He introduced the fundamentals of

disaster education and how to teach school children about natural disasters and disaster prevention.

On the second day of the workshop at Hapugala School, Mr. Kanda conducted model lessons on 'Earthquakes and Tsunamis' and 'Floods, Sediment Disasters, and Thunderstorms' for eighth grade students. His lessons were observed by the workshop participants. The school children were interested in learning about natural disasters and tried to answer the questions posed by Mr. Kanda, such as 'What should you take with you when you evacuate, based on their memories of the massive 2004 tsunami?'

On the last day, the participants were divided into groups to discuss what they had learned over the course of the workshop. They were also instructed to adapt their lessons to reflect Sri Lanka's culture. After practicing, all of the groups demonstrated impressive and unique lessons in front of all the other participants, which gave us confidence in the success of this whole project.

The next pilot lessons will be conducted by these workshop participants at 15 schools in February. ■

For more information on this project, please contact Ms. Maki Yoshida, ADRC Researcher, yoshida@adrc.or.jp

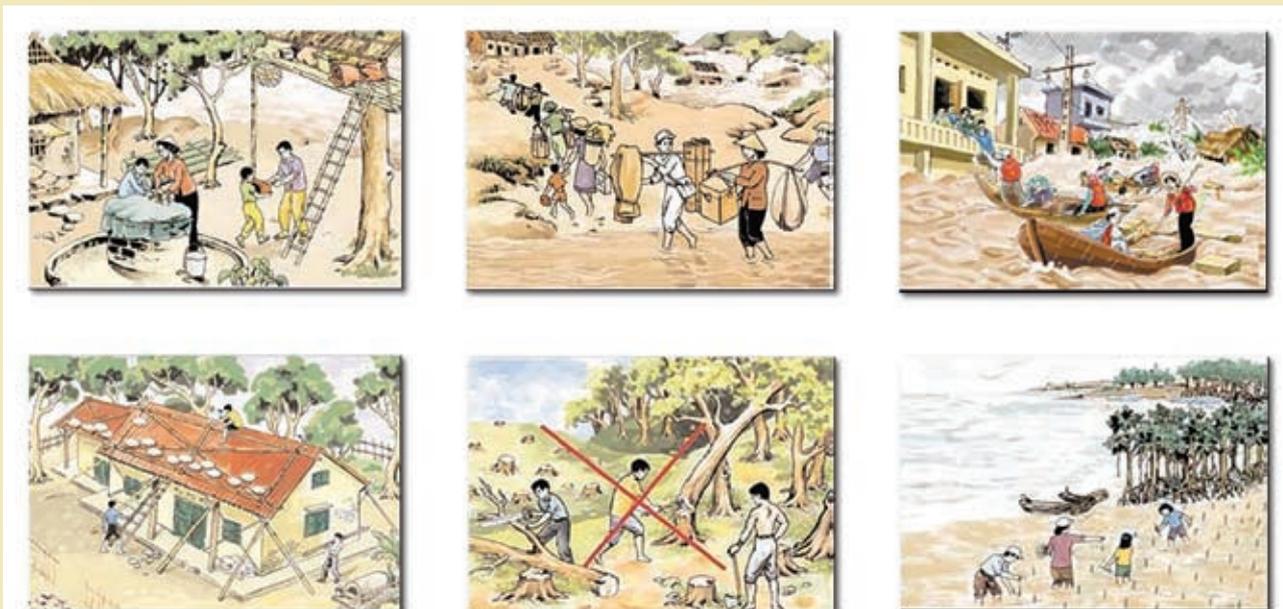
School program on disaster preparedness: *Children today are the world tomorrow, Vietnam*

It is a common assumption that traffic accidents are the number one cause of child injuries in Vietnam; however the reality is that 'Drowning is the number one cause of child injuries in Vietnam.' This severe problem of children drowning has caused much alarm in the Mekong Delta in recent years, creating the need for people, researchers and officials to find urgent solutions. Vietnam has a long tradition of providing loving care to children. It was one of the first countries to ratify the CRC. On December 27th 2001, the Prime Minister issued a Strategy for Preventing Children from Injuries in the period 2001-2010, with the purpose of 'gradually reducing child injuries in all areas of their lives'.

Understanding of its importance, Vietnam Red Cross Society (VNRC) has emphasized its focus on DP activities since late 1990s of which the 'Introduction program of Disaster Preparedness to primary school children' started in 2001 and now it has been spread in all most 21 disaster prone provinces through the country with



School in Sri Lanka. Photo from ADRC.



Above and below: special disaster preparedness materials that aim to raise the awareness of Vietnamese school children. Images from IFRC.

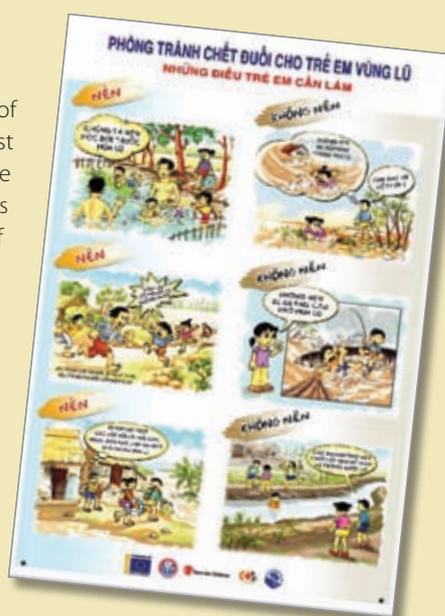
the overall aim of reducing risk for children of school age because children are the most vulnerable people when disasters occur. The fact from previous floods in Mekong provinces of Vietnam that two third of children died of drowning as they are left behind unattended by adults and not educated on life skills.

A special material for school children of grade 4 and 5 has been developed and used widely with the consultation of Ministry of Education and Training. From 2001 up to now, more than 14,800 teachers and over 537,000 school children have been trained. The great impact of the program has been visible through the recent disasters as fewer killed children.

The public awareness has become more and more important to all sectors, organizations and society as well because by reducing losses of life and properties, specific activities should be done.

VNRC continues to focus its activities on public awareness in terms of disaster preparedness, response and risk reduction in disaster prone areas especially for children at school. ■

For additional information, please contact Mr. Nguyen Hung Ha, Regional Disaster Management Programme Officer, IFRC hungha.nguyen@ifrc.org



A new action plan for school safety, India

Representatives of the public sector, civil society, and the educational sector, including teachers, parents, students and individual school safety advocates gathered at the International Conference on School Safety organized by the Indian NGO SEEDS and hosted by the Gujarat State Disaster Management Authority (GSDMA) in Ahmedabad, India. The theme for the Conference was 'Disaster Reduction Begins at School'. The 150 participants from 17 nations developed the Ahmedabad

Action Plan for School Safety, which will provide guiding principles and recommendations to further facilitate the implementation of the school safety agenda at the international and national levels.

Networks and individual advocates are encouraged to affiliate with the Coalition for Global School Safety, as well as networking through regional UN/ISDR offices. ■

For further information, please contact Manu Gupta, SEEDS India, manu@seedsindia.org

2006 International Day for Disaster Reduction

Celebrations of the International Day For Disaster Reduction on the theme 'Disaster Risk Reduction Begins At School' in conjunction with the ASEAN Day for Disaster Management, October 11, 2006

When a natural hazard strikes, children are among the most vulnerable groups, especially those attending school in times of disaster. Disasters such as the October 2005 earthquake in Pakistan where over 16,000 children died in schools that collapsed, or the recent mudslide on Leyte Island in the Philippines, where more than 200 school children were buried alive, are just a few tragic examples of why more needs to be done to protect our children during catastrophic events.

In all societies, children represent hope for the future. Because of their direct link to youths, schools are universally regarded as institutions of learning, for instilling cultural values and passing on both traditional and conventional knowledge to younger generations. Protecting our children during natural hazards, therefore, requires two distinct yet inseparable priorities for action: disaster risk education and school safety. The UN/ISDR secretariat and its partners have made disaster risk education and safer school facilities the two key themes of the 2006-2007 World Disaster Reduction Campaign. The Campaign, entitled 'Disaster Risk Reduction Begins at School' aims to inform and mobilize Governments, communities and individuals to ensure that disaster risk reduction is fully integrated into school curricula in high risk countries and that school buildings are built or retrofitted to withstand natural hazards. At

a global level the campaign's key partners include UNESCO, UNICEF, ActionAid International, the IFRC, and the UN/ISDR's thematic cluster on knowledge and education.

Education is a crucial means within local communities around the world to communicate, to motivate, and to engage, as much as it is to teach. Awareness and learning about risks and dangers needs to start in early education, continuing through generations.

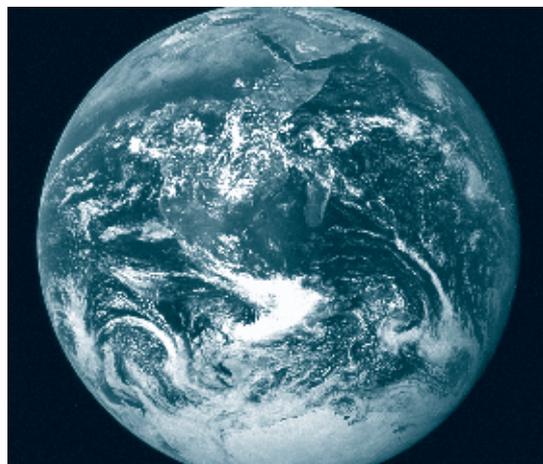
The Asia-Pacific region benefits from a wealth of knowledge and information on disaster reduction; the key is sharing and using this in a productive way through awareness-raising and educational initiatives so that people make informed decisions and take action to ensure their resilience to disasters. Reducing risk and vulnerability to disasters requires people's understanding of how they can best protect themselves, their property and their livelihoods.

[Children's]
participation
in disaster reduction
is essential to increase
the long-term resilience
of communities.

As young people grow and experience life, they absorb much about the environment in which they live, often generating interest in what part they play in ensuring a sustainable future for themselves, their children and their children's children. Their participation in disaster reduction is therefore essential to increase the long-term resilience of communities.

One of the best times to instill learning about the risks and vulnerabilities associated with hazards is at an early age. Young people represent the future; if we are to ensure that they live in disaster-resilient societies, they need to be aware of those hazards that threaten them, their families and friends, and also are familiar with what can be done to reduce their negative consequences.

When young people learn about disaster reduction at school, they are in a powerful position of shar-



ing what they are taught in class with their families and friends. As a result, the entire community can learn and benefit from the knowledge of how they can best reduce hazard impacts, potentially saving lives and property.

The Hyogo Framework For Action 2005–2015

Building the resilience of nations and communities to disasters focuses on education and training among a key activity in promoting resilient communities. The framework recommends to 'Promote the inclusion of disaster risk reduction knowledge in relevant sections of school curricula at all levels and the use of other formal and informal channels to reach youth and children with information; promote the integration of disaster risk reduction as an intrinsic element of the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (2005–2015), led by UNESCO. The Framework also calls on all to 'Promote the implementation of local risk assessment and disaster preparedness programs in schools and institutions of higher education', and also 'Promote the implementation of programs and activities in schools for learning how to minimize the effects of hazards.'

Regional

In Asia and the Pacific, the issue of education for DRR and school safety initiatives has mobilized a huge amount of partners and governments at the regional, national and local levels. This Special Report provides an overview of key initiatives undertaken.



ASEAN and UN/ISDR organized joint collaborative activities to commemorate the ASEAN Day for Disaster Management and the International Disaster Day for Disaster Reduction on 11 October 2006. The joint activities were held at UN Conference Center in Bangkok, with the support of UN/ISDR Asia Partnership (IAP) members.

An exhibition on 'Disaster Reduction in the UNESCAP region' was displayed at United Nations Conference Centre (UNCC), followed by a ceremony of hand-over of UN/ISDR Field Libraries that were donated by the United Nations Secretariat for Disaster Reduction (UN/ISDR) to the UNESCAP library, the Asian Disaster Preparedness Center (ADPC), and the National Disaster Warning Center of Thailand (NDWC).

As a main event, a Panel discussion was organized on the theme 'Education for Disaster Risk Reduction' with panelists from local and international press such as NHK, as well as representatives from the ASEAN Committee On Disaster Management (ADCM), Ministry of Education of Thailand, and NGOs.

The following events also took place.

- Launching of the UNESCAP publication 'Moving Forward Post Tsunami: Voices of the Vulnerable' by ESID, and APDC publication 'Community Based Disaster Risk Management and the Media'
- Launching of the ADPC publication 'Community Based Disaster Risk Management and the Media'.

On that day, a total of 40 young students from the International School in Bangkok were invited to observe the exhibition, and test play the Riskland boardgame jointly developed by UNICEF and UN/ISDR as well as the videogame entitled "Stop Disasters". They were requested to provide their feedback on the games through a brief questionnaire on possible changes or improvements to make the games more enjoyable and user-friendly. Their observations made by children are compiled below:



Riskland

Most of the children enjoyed playing this game and found it quite easy and educative, though they would like to be made this more challenging and interesting through the following improvements:

- The questions should be more tricky and harder,
- Putting information in to every space will make this game more educative and interesting.

Stop Disaster

Children enjoyed playing the game and provided comments on the graphic design. Other comments included the following points:

- More 'money' should be provided from the beginning,
- The level of difficulty should be increased,
- There should be training at each level,
- More options should be provided while playing the game so that children can understand what went wrong and why they didn't win,
- The disaster should automatically occur as the time goes out.

Children appreciated the educational character of the game and acknowledge having learned about disasters and risks and how to address them.

An information briefing on the UN was organized by UNIS to close the children session, and children learned about the importance of promoting education and awareness on disaster risk reduction through the video with Tilly Smith, the young British girl who contributed to save the lives of a hundred of people from the tsunami by recognizing the signals of tsunami, as she was taught by her geography Professor in the UK a few months before heading on holidays to Phuket. ■

For additional information please contact Ms. Christel Rose, rosec@un.org or Ms. Adelina Kamal, ASEAN Secretariat, lina@aseansec.org

National

Many activities and events were also organized at local and national levels in the Asia and Pacific region to commemorate both the International Day for Disaster Reduction and the ASEAN Day for Disaster Management. Here are some of the highlights of activities from different organizations from different countries.

Bangladesh

'Disaster Risk Reduction Begins at School' campaign

The Ministry of Food and Disaster Management (MoFDM) started advocacy and campaign activities through a national seminar on 'Disaster Reduction Begins at Schools: Building Disaster Resilient Communities through Education' jointly organized by the CDMP and National Academy for Educational Management (NAEM) under the Ministry of Education.

The seminar addressed the Education for Disaster Reduction as an integral part of achieving sustainable development. It was highlighted in the seminar that Education for Disaster Reduction involves three thematic areas such as Physical Infrastructure, Academic Aspects and Public Participation. As a follow-up to this seminar, the Ministry of Education took the initiative for updating and revision of curriculum on disaster management at primary and secondary level. The Ministry of Food and Disaster Management has been providing technical support to the Ministry of Education on this issue.

Over a thousand teachers, students, guardians and officials from concerned Government Departments, UN Bodies and NGOs

participated in the event. A fair on Risk Reduction materials was also organized as part of this day observation. A good number of NGOs working in the area of school based risk reduction participated in the fair.

CDMP Advocacy Program organized the awarding ceremony for Media Award on Disaster Management-2006 as a part of IDDR observation. The Media Award has been All the TV Channels in Bangladesh produced special program in line with the IDDR theme with the support of CDMP Advocacy Program.

Disaster Research Training and Management Center, University of Dhaka in Association with Islamic relief Bangladesh and JESH Foundation organized a seminar on Community and School: an essential Development link for Risk Reduction at the seminar room, Department of Geography and Environment, University of Dhaka on October 11, 2006. Dr. Abdul Baquee, Director of DRTMC. Vice-Chancellor Prof. S. M. A. Faiz of the University of Dhaka was the Chief Guest and Tajmeri S. A. Islam, Dean Faculty of Science, DU and Mr. Ian Stanford Rector, CTA, CDMP was present as special guest.

At the beginning of the day, a colourful rally was organized by the students of Dhaka University, Islamic Relief and JESH Foundation staff. The participants from different organizations with preparedness messages, banners, festoons and placards marched around the university campus. A huge number of general public observed the rally and got the preparedness messages. The A Rally with Dhaka University students. Seminar was chaired by Professor introduced for encouraging the media professionals towards the production of risk reduction reporting and programmes.

Based on the Media Award Policy of the Ministry of Food and Disaster Management, a senior reporter of the print media and three senior correspondents from electronic media including the Govt. and private channels received the award for this year. Key note paper on Community and School: an Essential Development Link for Risk Reduction was presented by AKM Mamunur Rashid, Community Risk Reduction Specialist, CDMP. In his paper, six strategic focus areas were highlighted.

For further information please contact Dr. Aslam Alam,
aslam.alam@cdmp.org.bd

Islamic Relief Bangladesh observance

Islamic Relief Bangladesh (IRB) organized Day Observance to commemorate the International Disaster Reduction Day, 11 October 2006. IRB organizes mass rally, essay competition, public discussion

and seminar. These series of activities organized in four different locations; Sylhet city, Sunamganj Sadar, Derai Upazila, and Dhaka.

In Sylhet, no less than 1,500 students, 500 teachers and 1,000 community members are involved in the activities. 'We involve students and teachers in this event as this year's theme is 'Disaster Risk Reduction begins at school.'

IRB, in cooperation with Centre for Disaster Research, Training, and Management of Dhaka University, organized a one-day seminar on Disaster Preparedness. The seminar made a strong call on the importance of more involvement of educational institutions in disseminating preparedness messages. In the program, Nurul Amin Bagmer, programme manager of emergency and disaster prepared-

ness programme of Islamic Relief Bangladesh, reiterated the need for a greater role of schools as an important actor of disaster preparedness. What are tough to students today will be preserved in their memory of several years to come. You cannot imagine how influential it will be if Disaster Risk Reduction messages can be instilled successfully to students.'

IRB plans to organize three more day observance activities until May 2007. Each day observance will feature variety of activities, ranging from mock drill, video show, distribution of first aid kits, painting competition, display of popular theatre, and drum-beating.

For further information, please contact Md. Arif, Media Officer, IRB, on +880192210673, or Surya Aslim, Programme Expert, IRB, on +8801720049007



DIPECHO partners in Bangladesh have come

together to observe the International Day for Disaster Reduction on 11 October 2006.

DIPECHO partners in Bangladesh have come together to observe the International Day for Disaster Reduction on 11 October 2006. On this day, there was a display with information, education and communication materials, a photo-gallery, projection of video material and cultural events regarding the current implementation of the projects on Disaster Preparedness, funded by the Third DIPECHO action Plan for South Asia. The event took place in LGED-RDEC Bhaban, level 12, Agargaon Road, Shere-e-Bangla Nagar, followed by the seminar promoted by the disaster management Bureau.

For further information please contact dipecho@actionaid-bd.org

Brunei Darussalam



ICS Workshop among Fire and Rescue Commanders and Emergency Officers

Brunei organized ICS Workshop among Fire and Rescue Commanders and other Emergency Officers, in conjunction with the First Meeting of Disaster Management Group under National Disaster Management Centre (NDMC) which launched of the NDMC programme 2006-2007, and reviewed SOP's of respective agencies in Brunei Darussalam in a compilation of the National Emergency Plan.

For more information, please contact Adelina Kamal, ASEAN, lina@aseansec.org

China

Symposium for Improving Integrated Disaster Capacity

A symposium for improving integrated disaster capacity was organized by State Commission of Disaster Reduction of China and an inaugural ceremony for the opening of the Academy of Disaster Reduction and Emergency Management in China's Ministry of Civil Affairs and Ministry of Education.

For more information, please contact the National Committee for Disaster Reduction, <http://www.mca.gov.cn>, tel. +86 1065235511

Fiji

Launch of the International Day for Disaster Reduction at Suva Grammar School

National Disaster Management Office director Joeli Rokovada during a press conference on 10th October 2006 said, 'Here in Fiji, the week has been dedicated to schools all over the country because we note over the years that a number of casualties or victims are school children.' 'So for International Disaster Reduction Day, the Government should recognize the importance of our young people and how the youths of Fiji have devoted themselves to risk reduction activities.'

The Minister for Provincial Development and Fijian affairs officially launched the International Day for Disaster Reduction at Suva Grammar School to educate students as well as to gain public attention.

It comprised of many activities including poster, poetry and essay competition and quizzes as well as an evacuation exercise conducted by police and fire authorities to reach out schools throughout Fiji.

For additional information please contact Emi Taginakaibure, Communications officer, SOPAC (Pacific Islands Applied Geoscience Commission) emit@sopac.org



India

School safety newsletter

Commemorating the International Day for Disaster Reduction, SEEDS launched a new monthly newsletter for schoolteachers and students titled *'Safe School Junction'*.

The SEEDS school safety programme is aimed at equipping the school management, teachers and students on the practical aspects of school safety. Successful programmes have been implemented in Gujarat and Himachal Pradesh. These have been accomplished with support from the State Governments, the European Commission, and other partners.

The school safety newsletter is a useful four-pager detailing activities being carried out in the area of Disaster Reduction at school. The first edition gives an overview of the UN/ISDR initiative at inculcating a culture of safety in schools, and includes the message by the UN Secretary-General on the International Day for Disaster Reduction. Each edition is intended to educate schoolteachers and students on a new topic, such as the recent flash floods in the north-western state of Rajasthan in India, covered in the first edition of the newsletter.

For additional information please contact Ms. Jyotika Mathur, jyotika@seedsindia.org or Mr. Manu Gupta, manu@seedsindia.org

Teachers' training on Disaster Risk Reduction, Shimla district

SEEDS also organized training for 46 teachers on Disaster Risk Reduction from 26th-28th October 2006. Teachers and principals from various schools of Shimla District (in the state of Himachal Pradesh) participated in the training. With a goal of creating a cul-



ture of disaster safety in schools, the objective of the training was to train schoolteacher trainers in disaster management in schools. It is firmly believed that through teachers, the disaster risk reduction messages will reach the parents of the students and the community at large.

The participants were provided knowledge on the basics of disaster management, and information on the causes, effects and management measures for various hazards such as earthquake, flash flood, landslide, avalanche, forest fire, and road and industrial accidents. The participants were also introduced to various methods of search and rescue, first aid, fire safety, and triage. A simulation exercise was given to the participants, in which groups of participants assumed the roles of various stakeholders and discussed the actions to be taken by each stakeholder-group in the case of an earthquake.

For additional information please contact Ms. Jyotika Mathur, jyotika@seedsindia.org or Mr. Manu Gupta, manu@seedsindia.org



UNDP India facilitated a preparedness exercise

UN Disaster Reduction Day Campaign on 11th October 2006, in India was facilitated as part of Gol-UNDP DRM programme across 17 states involving state government agencies, private sector, schools and communities in conducting 'disaster preparedness mock drills' at all administrative levels. On this day in India the main focus was to exercise and rehearse the disaster preparedness plans prepared by the community and have greater synergy in promoting and expressing a culture of Disaster Risk Reduction.

The decision to observe the World Disaster Reduction Day on 11th October was taken by the Ministry of Home Affairs and advisories were sent to all programme states to conduct disaster preparedness mock-drills. The disaster preparedness mock drills that were organized in the 17 programme states were based on specific hazard scenarios that could be anticipated in the multi-hazard prone areas. The main purpose of this exercise was to convey the underlying message of practicing disaster preparedness amongst all community members. Also it was time to rehearse and appraise community's preparedness and response actions exercised by DMT's/task forces on early warning, search and rescue, first aid, health care, food and shelter management, relief coordination which are a part of the Community's Disaster Management and Preparedness plan that also includes various stages of preparedness, response and mitigation activities.

The disaster preparedness mock drills were eventful in bring together various government departments, urban and rural communities and participants from sectors including industries, schools and health care centers who were involved in coordinating and conducting response mechanism as per the drill scenarios. Women, children, youth, ex-servicemen, NGOs and Self Help Groups actively participated in the preparations and organization of the drill as well. The participating community members showcased their skills of preparedness and response gained through trainings received under the programme with an understanding of 'being prepared' by using their own community's disaster management plans in circumstances that are inevitable during disasters.

For more information contact Mr. Sushil Kumar, Assistant Resident Representative, DRM Programme, sushil.kumar@undp.org and Mr. G. Padmanabhan Emergency Analyst, UNDP, g.padmanabhan@undp.org

Gujarat Science City celebrated the International Day for Reduction of Natural Disaster

Gujarat Science City is celebrating the International Day for Reduction of Natural Disaster (IDRND) on 11 October 2006 to increase understanding and awareness about various natural disasters and its mitigation plans. The programme has been designed in association with Gujarat State Disaster Management Authority (GSDMA) and UNDP Gujarat State Project Office, Gandhinagar.

One-day workshop on the theme 'Disaster risk reduction begins at school' was organized by the Science Advisors of District Institute

of Educational & Training (DIETs), working with the Gujarat Council on Educational Research & Training (GCERT) and the primary school teachers, science communicators on 11 October 2006, in Gujarat, India. The workshop addressed various activities on disaster risk reduction and safety aspects in school curriculum.

To promote a culture of school safety in schools, GSDMA has launched two major school safety initiatives on a pilot basis. The programs shall train teachers and students about basic of disaster management, prepare school disaster management plans, undertaking mock drills etc. UNDP Gujarat is a partner of GSDMA in supporting the program wherein teachers are being trained in all the districts of the state. GSDMA has made disaster risk reduction as a component of school curricula in Gujarat to ensure that children understand how natural hazards interact with the environment.

For additional information please contact Mr. Manoj R. Kothari, Gujarat Council of Science City, narottam@scity.org

Indonesia



2006 Jakarta's Disaster Awareness Week, September 18 – 23, 2006

To commemorate the International Day for Disaster Reduction this year, the Provincial Government of Jakarta (State Capital of Indonesia) has launched 'Disaster Awareness Week' (Pekan Sadar Bencana) in September 18-23, 2006, a yearly event of public education and awareness about disaster preparedness. It is held a month ahead of the International Day for Disaster Reduction (11 Oct 2006) because October 2006 is Ramadan in which majority of Indonesian Moslem.

The message chosen for Disaster Awareness Week was 'Together, Jakarta Provincial Government and the Community and Private Sectors will prepare to face the next disaster' to emphasize for earthquakes preparedness issues as well as flood and fire which is routinely faced in Jakarta. Other local governments surrounding the Jakarta: West Java, Banten and Lampung Province started to participate this year to discuss in national level.



The Disaster Awareness Week included:

- City Disaster Preparedness Forces Inspection (18 Sept 2006) by the Governor
- Parade of Disaster Respond Team Forces (18 Sept 2006), this parade will circle major roads of Central Jakarta.
- Drill for Earthquake evacuation on the main road (18 Sept 2006) in Bundaran HI.
- One day Seminar and Workshop (19 Sept 2006) to increase the awareness of Private Sectors about Earthquake and Terrorism.
- Evacuation Drill for High Rise Building as response for Earthquake alarm (20 Sept 2006) in Jakarta Province Gov. Building ; this will include Command-Post Drill on 5 Municipalities in DKI Jakarta, simulating disaster event to rehearse the coordination between multiple bodies / units in the command level.
- Youth Jamboree (21 Sept 2006) for disaster response actors and youth organizations to prepare and train them on responding the flood disaster that could strike DKI Jakarta.
- Fire drill for High Rise Building (22 Sept 2006) in the building of Internal Affairs Ministry.
- Exhibition and Skill Station (18-21 Sept 2006) for all actors in disaster management (Fire Brigade, Ambulance, Police, Army, Radio, NGO, industries in Emergency Equipment) to introduce the community on the procedures and resources that could be used on disaster event. During the exhibition, there will be writing contest for journalist about disaster.

The key objectives of the Disaster Awareness Week were mainly:

- To improve skill and coordination between multi-sectors internal organization of the Provincial Office with the cooperation of international and national NGOs.
- To increase the awareness of the public about the importance of disaster management.
- To inform the community to always be prepared for the next

disaster that could occur.

For more information please contact SATKORLAK PBP Jakarta Provincial Office, akhmad@cbn.net.id, or ernie_ness@gmail.com; or visit <http://crisiscenter.jakarta.go.id>

International Risk Reduction Day 2006 in Indonesia, 11-12 October, 2006

International Risk Reduction Day was celebrated with two activities, a national workshop entitled: *'Building School Resilience towards Disasters'* on the 11th of October, 2006 and a school road show to 16 elementary schools in Jakarta

The workshop and small exhibition were held in Hotel Millennium Jakarta and was attended by 140 participants from NGOs, Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, UN Bodies, and representative from the Department of Education from Jakarta, South Sulawesi, Central Java, East Nusa Tenggara, West Nusa Tenggara, and Maluku.

The workshop concluded that school based Disaster Risk Reduction programmes should be institutionalized and that the government should guarantee its continuity. DRR at school is urgently needed, especially in vulnerable areas and parental involvement should be increased. Recommendations made by the forum were follow up to the Department of Education, that the national curriculum should be must be improved. Children's' right, local wisdom and disaster risk reduction topics must be put in mind. Involvement from the media, information and other organization must be increased.

The school road show was attended by 33 facilitators from various organizations. The Indonesian Red Cross arranged to train facilitators at their Jakarta Branch Office on October 9 and on October 12, those facilitators visited to 16 elementary schools in Jakarta to teach topics of disasters and disaster preparedness.

A follow up meeting took place at UNICEF Jakarta office on October 18 with participants from the IRRD commemoration network to discuss on a framework to institutionalize disaster management at schools. Next meetings will be conducted in November 2006.

For more information please contact Ms. Lya Anggraini at the Indonesian Society for Disaster Management, MBPI, lya@mpbi.org



Japan



Public Forum 'Winning Against Disasters' held at UNU on 19 October 2006

A public forum entitled 'Winning Against Disasters: Roles of Education, Development and Community Action for Sustainable Development' was held at UNU, Tokyo on 19 October 2006, commemorating the International Day for Disaster.

The forum was jointly organized by the United Nations University (UNU), the Cabinet Office of Japan, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the World Bank, the United Nations Inter-Agency Secretariat of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UN/ISDR) and the Asian Disaster Reduction Center (ADRC). Conducted in cooperation with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, the Hyogo Prefectural Government, the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), NHK, the Japanese National Commission for UNESCO, the Asia Pacific Cultural Centre for UNESCO (ACCU), and the International Recovery Platform (IRP) Kobe, the forum attracted more than 170 participants.

The objectives of the forum were to address ways to enhance public understanding of the need to strengthen disaster reduction capacity in Japan and around the world, and to further promote international cooperation on disaster reduction.

Relevant materials used at the forum including the video message from Mr. Salvano Briceno, Director, UN/ISDR are available on the following website: www.adrc.or.jp/events/octoberforum/octoberforum_e.html

For more information please contact Ms. Etsuko Tsunozaki, tsunozaki@adrc.or.jp or Dr. Srikantha Herath, herath@hq.unu.edu



Lao PDR

Public Awareness Campaign for ASEAN Day on Disaster Management, and International Day on Disaster Reduction

The Lao PDR government carried out various activities on October 11, 2006. This included setting up banners along the main road in Vientiane Capital with the themes of 'ASEAN Day on Disaster Management and International Day on Disaster Reduction', as well as advertising through TV, Radio and Newspaper, providing information about the ASEAN Day on Disaster Management and International Day on Disaster Reduction.

For more information please contact Ms. Adelina Kamal, ASEAN, lina@aseansec.org

Nepal

Nepal celebrates International Day for Disaster Reduction

On Wednesday 11 October, 2006 Nepal marked the International Day for Natural Disaster Reduction by focusing on education of disasters in schools. Various government and non-government organizations in Nepal were set to celebrate this day up to Oct. 16 by holding discussions, seminars, interaction and mass awareness creating programs on the occasion. (Data source; People's Daily Online on October 11, 2006)

ActionAid organized several events targeting community and schools

ActionAid Nepal organized school debate, youth rally, gallery show on rescue and preparedness materials for community and schools, street dram on school and community preparedness against hazards, FM radio programmes on 11 October 2006, Sarlahi, Rupendehi and Makwanpur Districts, Nepal.

For more information please contact Mr. Shashanka Saadi, Project Manager, ActionAid Nepal, shashanka.saadi@actionaid.org

Nepal Geological Society observes International Day for Disaster Reduction

Nepal Geological Society has observed UN/ISDR-Day by organizing a one day seminar on the theme or slogan declared by UN: 'Disaster Risk Reduction begins at Schools'. In seminar, more than 14 papers



were presented and participated by over 100 participants including school teachers, community leaders, professionals, professors, students.

President of Nepal Geological Society, Mr. Ramesh M. Tuladhar presented and recommended on Disaster Risk Reduction Education at primary school in Nepal to request Government of Nepal and INGO.

For more information please contact Mr. Ramesh M. Tuladhar, President of Nepal Geological Society, r.tula1950@gmail.com

Niue

International Day for Disaster Reduction in Niue

SOPAC provided NDMOs throughout the region with public awareness materials in template format for posters, banners, handouts, media releases, public announcements, feature articles, quizzes, guidelines for poster and poetry competitions and forwarded on existing material such as UN/ISDR's RiskLand board game, all of which was well received.

Niue is taking the initiative to the next level by creating a disaster risk management curriculum for primary school. Such activities are currently under development through close cooperation with the Ministry of Education.

For additional information please contact Emi Taginakaibure, Communications officer, SOPAC (Pacific Islands Applied Geosciences Commission), emit@sopac.org



Papua New Guinea

Papua New Guinea celebrates the International Disaster Reduction Day

The International Disaster Reduction Day was celebrated on 11th October 2006 with the Theme Disaster Risk Reduction Begins at School focusing on the need for safe school facilities and the importance of Disaster Risk Reduction education at Coronation Primary School in Port Moresby.

Keynote speakers emphasized the need for incorporation of Disaster Management subject into the formal education curriculum. The message had been well taken note of by the Department of Education. Meanwhile the National Disaster Centre of Papua New Guinea is continuing its collaborations for incorporation of the subject into the formal curriculum.

Dramas and posters were displayed and children from the Special Education Centre sang using sign language to show their understanding of disaster reduction and the need for more education and awareness on all hazards in Papua New Guinea. The Special Education Centre is a school for the handicapped and is run by the Papua New Guinea Red Cross Society and funded by the Government of Papua New Guinea in East New Britain Province where the Mt. Tavurvur volcano erupted a week prior to the International Disaster Reduction Day.



Special supplementary for newspaper

A special supplementary was advertised in one of the newspapers in Papua New Guinea – The National. It is featured some assistance, awareness and education activities on the Disaster Risk Reduction and Disaster Management from National Disaster Centre of Papua New Guinea, including the Disaster Risk Reduction and Disaster Management National Framework for Action 2005 – 2015.

For more information please contact Ms. Philomena Miria Emilio, Education/Training Officer, pmiria@pngndc.gov.pg

Philippines

Disaster Risk Reduction forum, exhibit

The Center for Disaster Preparedness Foundation, Inc. organized a half-day forum/exhibit on Children’s Participation and Interactive Learning Activities in Disaster Risk Reduction last October 26, 2006, University of the Philippines, Diliman, Quezon City. One hundred four children, youth, community people, government and non-government representatives participated and the activity was carried out coupled with the aspiration of encouraging the involvement of children in disaster preparedness since they belong to the most vulnerable sector, together with women, affected when disasters strike.

Before the program proper started, various participating NGOs have arranged and set up their exhibit materials namely Balay Rehabilitation, Inc., Buklod Tao, Inc., Care Philippines, Citizens’ Disaster Response Center (CDRC), Medical Action Groups (MAGs), Plan International, and World Vision Development Foundation. Tarpaulin, pictures and posters filled the exhibit panels. Reading materials like brochure, newsletters as well as board games were given away.

The forum evolved in four themes and these are: (1) Framework of Children Participation and Protection; (2) Children Oriented Participatory Risk Assessment and Risk Reduction Planning; (3) Child-Focused Disaster Risk Management Activities and; (4) Interactive Learning Activities in Disaster Risk Reduction. To better understand the above-mentioned themes, key note speakers and presenters were invited to impart valuable knowledge and humbling experiences with regards to their field of expertise.

An evacuation programme in mock floodwaters, ‘Kids’ Life vest Drill’, was also conducted for children. The life vests as well as the evacuation bags were made with recycled materials and also made by women in the community. Youth speakers from disaster prone communities presented and played key roles in the program.

For additional information please contact Jesusa Grace J. Molina, the Center for Disaster Preparedness Foundation, Inc, jesusagrace_molina@yahoo.com



Singapore

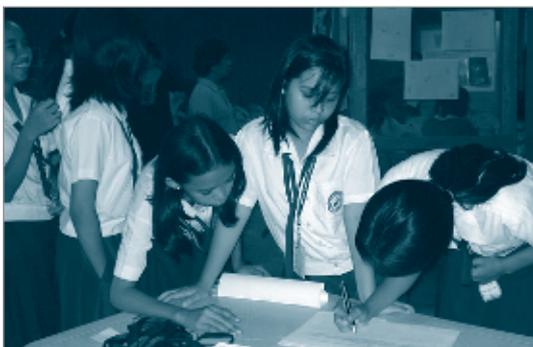


Aljunied-Hougang Emergency Preparedness Day

As part of the Singapore Civil Defence Force’s (SCDF) effort in preparing the population for emergencies, an Emergency Preparedness Day (EP Day) exercise was conducted on 14 Oct 2006 at the residential zone in Hougang. Graced by the Member of Parliament for the said locality, Mr Yeo Guat Kwang, the exercise was aimed at educating and practising the grassroots volunteers and residents on how they are expected to react to large scale emergencies within their neighbourhood. In particular, the exercise presented the participants on the challenge of reacting to a simulated terrorist attack involving the use of chemical agents. About 2000 residents participated in this event.

Faced with such a daunting scenario, the exercise provided an opportunity for the community and the authorities (SCDF, Police, National Environmental Agencies, the Housing and Development Boards etc) to act in unison to limit the damage and mitigate the effects of the chemical attack. The residents were able to practise their In-Place Protection (IPP) drills for residential premises. As part of the exercise, they had to seal of their homes to prevent the seepage of the harmful chemical agents.

Besides the exercise, the residents were presented with a public education exhibition which showcases advisory on Emergency





Preparedness (how to deal with conventional and unconventional threats), Security and Fire Safety. Hands-on training sessions on CPR, First Aid and extinguishment of incipient fires were also provided to allow the residents to familiarise themselves with useful survival skills.

The EP Day exercise served as a useful platform in engaging, educating and training the community in emergency preparedness. More importantly, such engagement helps to build a sense of partnership between the emergency authorities and the residents through their grassroots representatives. Such partnerships will continue to be the cornerstone of our strategy in combating the threat of terrorism and in preparing our population for emergencies.

For additional information please contact **J Mohd Arshad**, Planning Department, HQ Singapore Civil Defence Force, jaleel_arshad@scdf.gov.sg

Tajikistan

A TV show about disaster risk reduction

On 7 October 2006 at 6.50pm, the TV station 'Safina' broadcasted a talk show organized UN/ISDR and the Ministry of Emergency Situations and Civil Defence of Tajikistan. 30 school children from Dushanbe have been invited to raise problems and issues related to disaster risk reduction as an important course at schools. Specialists from various agencies, such as Institute of Seismology of Tajikistan; the faculty of seismic resilient construction of the Tajik Technical University; the Hydro-meteorological Agency; and MoES and UN/ISDR representatives were presented to answer the questions of the 10-11th grade students. UN/ISDR will also provide children with presents to have the day more memorable. The show was repeated on the 11th of October at 1.15pm.

On 10 October 2006, a puppet show performance took place at a local kindergarten, involving 40 children of age 5 on how to behave when disasters strike (primarily earthquakes). The event was planned to be filmed for a local news channel to be aired on 11th of October. Prizes and/or sweets will be organized and delivered by UN/ISDR.

On 11 October 2006, a Radio Marathon runs from 6am-until 6pm on the local radio station 'Vatan'. The importance of the International Day for Disaster Reduction along with major issues related

to Disaster Risk Reduction was emphasized throughout the day. Guests were invited to talk on subjects of DRR from various sectors and agencies. Contests will be conducted by the radio host, where prizes will be given out.

On 12 October 2006, the newspaper for children 'Aladdin' was published a series of articles on Earthquakes Safety Initiatives along with crosswords and puzzles on Disaster Risk Reduction subjects.

On 11 October 2006, stickers and postcards were disseminated along with flowers on the streets of Dushanbe. The postcard contains some information on how to behave during a disaster, i.e. earthquakes.

For additional information, please contact **Takhmina R. Touraeva**, Advocacy Focal Point, UN/ISDR in Central Asia, Dushanbe, Tajikistan, takhmina.touraeva@undp.org

Thailand

Local Celebration of the International Day for Disaster Reduction in Pang Nga

The Tab Lamu School in Pang Nga, southern Thailand, which was heavily hit by the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami, organized the first local celebrations of the International Day for Disaster Reduction at the school and community levels with the Ministry of Education, Department of Disaster Prevention and Mitigation (DDPM) of the Ministry of Interior of the Royal Government of Thailand with the support of the UN/ISDR Asia & The Pacific and the National Disaster Warning Center (NDWC) of Thailand. The school children were invited to present their drawings and poems, at well as the risk maps that they jointly developed with the local community and village leaders.

An intensive discussion took place among school children and the community on the evacuation routes in the village, (see box overleaf).

On 10th October, NDWC staff explained the warning systems and gave some basic recommendations (see box) to the school children in case of tsunamis, highlighting the main evacuation sites with distances and directions. Each team leader presented maps with an explanation. Completed maps will be used as learning materials in schools.

Paintings titled 'Tsunami in my heart'

Before the International Day, children were assigned the responsibility to make drawings about any kind of disasters. Most of the drawings compiled dealt with the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami. This "Tsunami in my Heart" drawing collection highlighted the tragic experience students, their family and community lived through and the long-lasting trauma caused by the disaster. A few drawings addressed the issues of floods and landslides, which are recurrent in Thailand and which, despite their small scale, do represent significant obstacles to local development.

Riskland Game

Riskland Game was translated into the Thai context by the National Disaster Warning Centre (NDWC) and was presented to the school children on the occasion of the International Day for Disaster Reduction celebrations. Children played with it and were very positive about the lessons learned on disaster risk reduction from the exercise.

Poems

School teachers finally invited school girls to compose poems about the tsunami. Thai verses were produced and presented to the classrooms with living emotions. Stories from tsunami experiences were also written on the occasion of the Princess's visit to Tab Lamu School soon after the tsunami and presented on the International Day. They reflect the living experience and tragedy faced by children on the tsunami day.

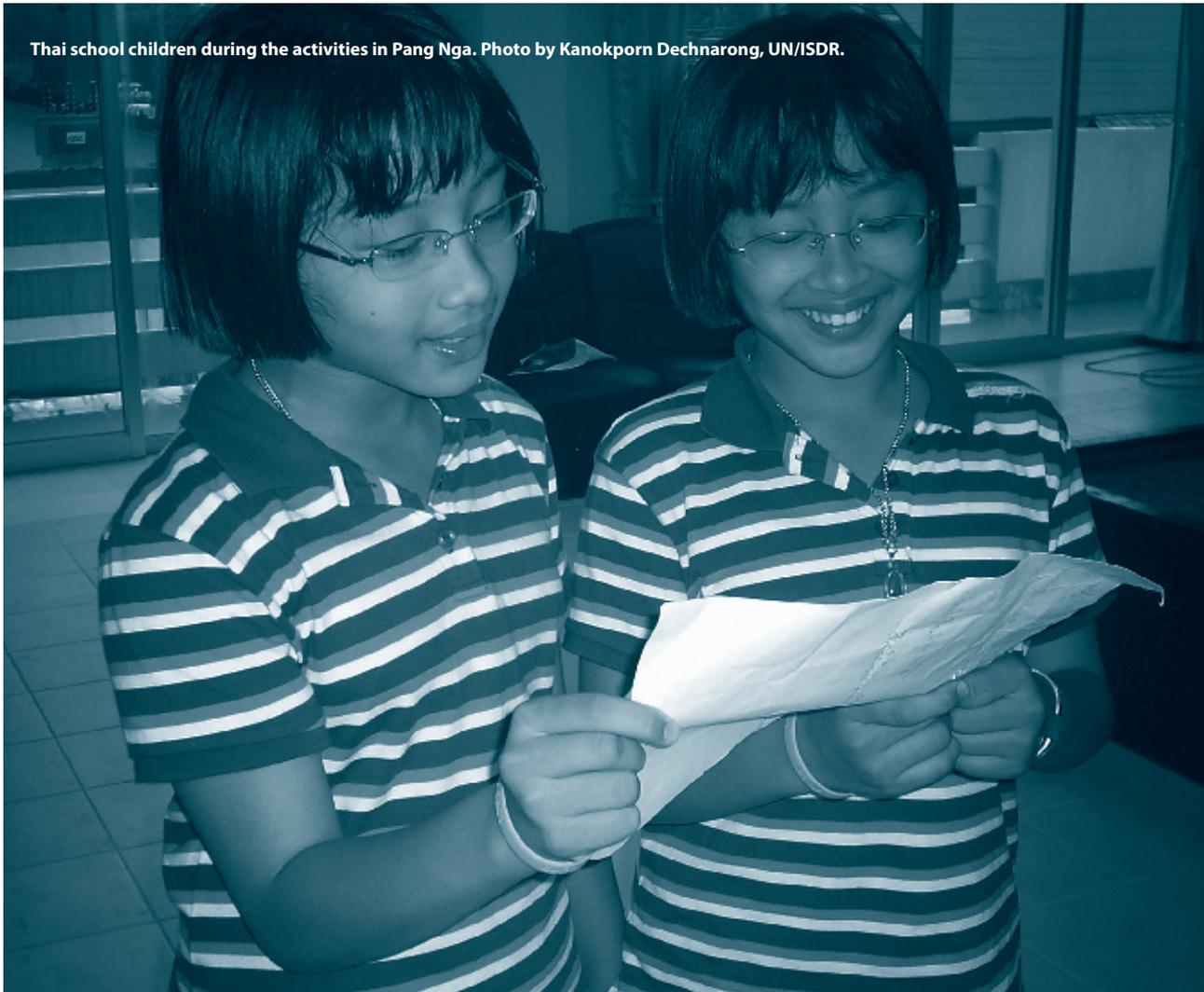
For additional information, please contact **Christel Rose, UN/ISDR Asia & Pacific**, rosec@un.org

Basic learning about evacuation

For the *Tab Lamu* village, all villagers have to evacuate to the higher grounds or at the planned target. It will take around 20-30 minutes from the village to the safe place. The community leader also took part in the discussion.

For the school, it is recommended that they go to the second floor of the conference hall. Some have learnt also that they can even stay in the classroom (the 2nd Floor or higher) in case of the sudden situation – if they are not afraid. The hall is located in the heart of the school and easily recognized. The student leader could guide other students on the route and plan very well.

Thai school children during the activities in Pang Nga. Photo by Kanokporn Dechnarong, UN/ISDR.





A story for International Disaster Risk Reduction Day

Over the past decade Thailand has not been as severely hit by disasters as its neighbours such as the Philippines and Indonesia. However the December 2004 tsunami that killed over 5,000 people along the six coastal provinces in the South of Thailand sent a strong signal how disaster preparedness is increasingly needed, especially among local coastal communities where residents are traditionally not widely concerned about risk reduction in disaster situations.

To help raise more public awareness among local residents on the issue, the Thai Red Cross Society's Relief and Community Health Bureau and its Red Cross Youth organized the first *'Disaster Safety Mind Campaign'* in three districts of Phuket, Phang Nga and Satun provinces which are affected by the deadly tsunami.

Its objectives are to create greater awareness on the importance of disaster safety in daily life, to enable the youth aged between 6-19 years old and general public in risk areas learn about risk factors and weakness points in their communities. More importantly, the campaign expects all residents to be able to help not only themselves, but those close to them in times of disaster.

For additional information, please contact Atiwan Kunaphinun from the Thai Red Cross, atiwan.kunaphinun@ifrc.org

Tuvalu

Disaster Risk Reduction Workshops in Primary Schools

In Tuvalu, the Red Cross, National Disaster Management Office and National Met Office worked together to conduct Disaster Risk Reduction workshops in primary schools in Funafuti and also have plans to run similar workshops with communities in Funafuti and all islands in the country. They will also run radio programmes prior to the cyclone season coming up. ■

For additional information please contact Emi Taginakaibure, Communications officer, SOPAC (Pacific Islands Applied Geosciences Commission), emit@sopac.org



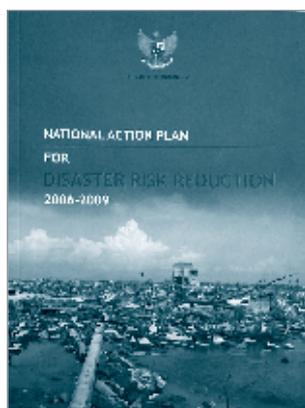
Hyogo Framework for Action, implementation in the region

Launch of Indonesia's National Action Plan for Disaster Risk Reduction

The National Development Planning Agency (BAPPENAS), the National Coordination Body for Disaster Management (BAKORNAS PB) and UNDP Indonesia launched the National Action Plan for Disaster Risk Reduction on 24 January 2007 at Bidakara Hotel, Jakarta, with the UN/ISDR's participation. The launch highlighted a significant shift in paradigm from a traditional reactive approach to longer-term preventive measures, thereby confirming the Government's new commitment to disaster risk reduction.

The Action Plan, which spans over 2006-2009, had been previously socialized in Medan, Yogyakarta, Makassar and Jakarta by engaging various stakeholders including academics and the civil society as part of its effort to produce participatory and comprehensive inputs from lessons learned from previous disaster handling and management.

UNDP has been providing technical assistance on disaster management legislation and assistance to develop disaster risk reduction programmes in selected communities in Indonesia. ■



For further information about the National Action Plan on Disaster Reduction, please contact the Secretariat Team, ikhwanuddin@bappenas.go.id or please visit www.bappenas.go.id



Bhutan's National Disaster Risk Management Framework

The Royal Government of Bhutan has launched its National Disaster Risk Management Framework on 5th September 2006. The Framework, prepared with support from the UN System in Bhutan spells out the sectoral mandates and responsibilities aimed at avoiding any ad hoc reactive approach while dealing with disasters. The framework mandates the various sectors within the country to take up certain responsibilities within their own technical expertise and ensure a coordinated approach to disaster risk management.

Glacial Lake Outburst Floods (GLOFs) remains one of the biggest hazards the country will continue to face given its numerous rivers which are glacial fed. Of the 2,674 glacial lakes in the country, 24 of them have been identified as potentially dangerous. The other potential hazard that poses a serious threat to Bhutan is earthquake as Bhutan is located in one of the most seismically active zones of the world. Flash floods and forest fires are two recurrent phenomenon that pose serious threat to environment and livelihoods of local inhabitants. As mitigating threats from Glacial Lake Outburst Floods remain a high priority for a mountainous country like Bhutan, efforts are underway on mitigating and establishment of early warning systems to avert major catastrophes resulting from such floods. ■

For further information please contact Mr. Dorji Kunzang, Head of the Disaster Management Division, Ministry of Home and Cultural Affairs, Thimphu, Bhutan, kunsanja605@hotmail.com

Disaster management policy being formulated in Malaysia

Minister in the Prime Minister's Department Datuk Seri Mohamed Nazri Abdul Aziz said the policy, which would apply the Hyogo Framework for Action, would focus on the concept of mainstreaming disaster risk reduction into development policies, planning and implementation. The Hyogo framework is a global blueprint for disaster risk reduction efforts during the next decade. The framework, which offers guiding principles, priorities for action, and practical means for achieving disaster resilience for vulnerable communities, aims at substantially reducing disaster losses by 2015 - in lives, and in the social, economic, and environmental assets of communities and countries. In January 2005, 168 governments adopted a 10-year plan to make the world safer from natural hazards at the World Conference on Disaster Reduction held in Hyogo, Japan.

As an immediate step, Nazri said the roles and cooperation between the Rural and Town Planning Department, the Environment Department, the Drainage and Irrigation Department, the local authorities and the National Security Division would be intensified. However, he said the policy formulation was still at a discussion stage and the proposal would only be presented to the Cabinet later. ■

For more information please contact Umar Che Moin, Government of Malaysia, moin@bkn.jpm.my

The International Forum on Tsunami and Earthquake

The International Forum on Tsunami and Earthquake – progress of the implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA) and Recovery from Tsunami and Earthquake – took place in Kobe, Hyogo, Japan, on 15-16 January 2007. The Forum was hosted by International Recovery Platform (IRP) Secretariat, Asian Disaster Reduction Center (ADRC), the Government of Japan, and Hyogo Prefecture in partnership with Governments of Switzerland and Italy, UN/ISDR, UNDP, UN/OCHA, ILO, the World Bank, IFRC and UN-HABITAT. About 300 participants from 34 countries and 20 international organizations comprising of dignitaries, national and local officials, experts on disaster reduction and recovery, and representatives of various



stakeholders attended the Forum.

The Public Symposium on 15 January began with the opening remarks from H.E. Mr. Kensei Mizote, Minister of State for Disaster Management, H.E. Mr. Takeshi Iwaya, Senior Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr. Toshizo Ido, Governor, Hyogo Prefecture, Japan, Mr. John Ohiorhenuan, Deputy Assistant Administrator and Senior Deputy Director, BCPR, UNDP, and Mr. Sálvano Briceño, Director, UN/ISDR. This was followed by a video message from President Bill Clinton, the former President of the USA and Special Envoy to UN Secretary General for Tsunami Recovery, which emphasized the importance of recovery as a unique opportunity to build back better.

In the keynote speech Dr. Maryvonne Plessis-Fraissard, Advisor, the World Bank (WB) Group, acknowledged that development and risks have been understood through a long learning process as the WB devoted a large and growing portion of its development activities on reconstruction, with the focus on prevention accorded only recently.

In Tsunami Recovery Status Reports, the honorable ministers from Indonesia, Sri Lanka, Maldives and India made country presentations wherein the experiences, key achievements and lessons learned from recent events of tsunami and earthquake were mentioned along with highlighting of various measures for the reform in the arena of disaster risk reduction including recovery process. Mr. Patricio Bernal, Executive Secretary of Inter-governmental Oceanographic Commission and Assistant Director-General of UNESCO, made a presentation and informed on the status and progress of the Indian Ocean Tsunami Early Warning and Mitigation System. Consecutively, a panel discussion was held to discuss the progress of the implementation of HFA for better recovery. Mr. Marco Ferrari, Deputy Head of Department of Humanitarian Aid of Swiss Agency for Development and Coordination (SDC) initiated the panel discussion with his special speech highlighting the importance of building international systems for disaster risk reduction and the sustained support of countries for the system, including the IRP.

In the experts' meeting held on 16 January the representatives from Pakistan and Thailand presented the reports on their on-going recovery efforts. In the keynote speech, Prof. Ian Davis, Cranfield University, UK, made a presentation on 'Learning from Disaster Recovery' based on an evidence-based study conducted with the cooperation and support of IRP. These were followed by thematic sessions in the

form of group discussions on the topics of Housing, Livelihood and Organizational and Institutional Arrangements, led by UN-HABITAT, ILO and UNDP respectively.

The Forum concluded with the adoption and release of Kobe Communiqué as Forum Outcome highlighting the importance of advancing international cooperation in disaster risk reduction, promoting build back bet-

Launch of Sri Lanka's Roadmap for DRR

'My own experience of disasters in other parts of the world leads me to believe that the future of disaster risk management is not with disaster managers alone. It is with everybody: government organizations - across all sectors; civil society organizations, professional bodies, scientific and technical institutions and the private sector - all have to play an important role in this effort. And it is in this respect that the process behind the preparation of this Road Map is very impressive.

In many ways, this Road Map is the manifestation of the Hyogo Framework at the national level in Sri Lanka and we remain committed to supporting the implementation of this Road Map.'

'The Sri Lanka Disaster Management Act provides a legislative framework towards this end. However, legislation alone cannot induce people to follow the rules. We now need to strengthen the Disaster management Center

as well as other relevant institutions to ensure that the provisions of the Act are effectively implemented.

Finally, as we move forward with the implementation of this Road Map, I would like to urge ourselves to keep in mind the local level perspective. We know from past experience that disaster risk management at the local level is a key element in any viable national strategy to reduce disaster risks, building on the quality of community networks, the social fabric and effective local governance. We must continue to focus at the local level in some of the most vulnerable areas and strengthen systems at that level to reduce disaster risks.'

Miguel Bermeo, United Nations Resident Coordinator on the occasion of the launch of the Road Map for Disaster Risk Management in Colombo, Sri Lanka on 11 May 2006

ter principles, and addressing issues on governance, institutional arrangements, education, and local culture in recovery processes.

For further details please visit the IRP website, www.recoveryplatform.org or contact the IRP Secretariat, irp@recoveryplatform.org

Advocacy and pilot project implementation in education sector

Disasters have huge impact on children, especially those attending schools in times of disaster. The Mekong floods of 2000, where hundreds of children in Cambodia died and over 75 schools were seriously damaged, the 2006 mudslide on Leyte island in the Philippines where more than 200 school children were buried alive, only reinforces the need to increase awareness of children and teachers of disaster and risk reduction. Thus teaching about disaster risk in school through school curriculum would help increase awareness and have better understanding among the children and teachers of their immediate environment in which they and their families live and work and help to reduce the risk faced by the community. At the same time, investing in strengthening school-building structures before disaster occurs, would reduce long term costs, protect the children and ensure educational continuity after the event.

The Education sector has been recognized and prioritised by the Mainstreaming Disaster Risk Management into Development Planning, Policy and Implementation Program (MDRD) of the Asian

Disaster Preparedness Center (ADPC)'s Regional Consultative Committee of Disaster Management (RCC) members as one of the priority sectors to initiate implementation of mainstreaming of disaster risk reduction. Further, during the consultation process of RCC, all the three countries of Cambodia, Lao PDR and Philippines have prioritised and expressed their interest to take up priority implementation project to mainstream Disaster risk reduction in Education sector by integrating DM modules into educational curriculum.

This project is a major contribution to the implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action in South East Asia. It will help advance the mainstreaming of disaster risk reduction in these 3 important countries of Asia, strengthen networking among disaster risk reduction practitioners and enhance the Government commitment in making communities safer and upholding Government responsibility to ensure public safety.

This project is designed with the primary focus to assist the Ministry of Education in three countries working with the NDMO, to undertake a pilot project on integrating DRR into the secondary school curriculum and promoting resilient construction of new schools using research on the past impact of disasters on Education sector. Results from these initiatives would be used to build consensus and commitment to mainstream disaster risk reduction in education sector in these three countries, and identify further activities for mainstreaming.

The experience of the project would serve as a good example for drawing lessons on how to mainstream disaster risk reduction into development policy and planning which can also be used in other countries and in other sectors. ■

For more information please contact Sanjaya Bhatia, Program Manager, Disaster Management Systems (DMS), Asian Disaster Preparedness Center, sanjayab@adpc.net or visit www.adpc.net

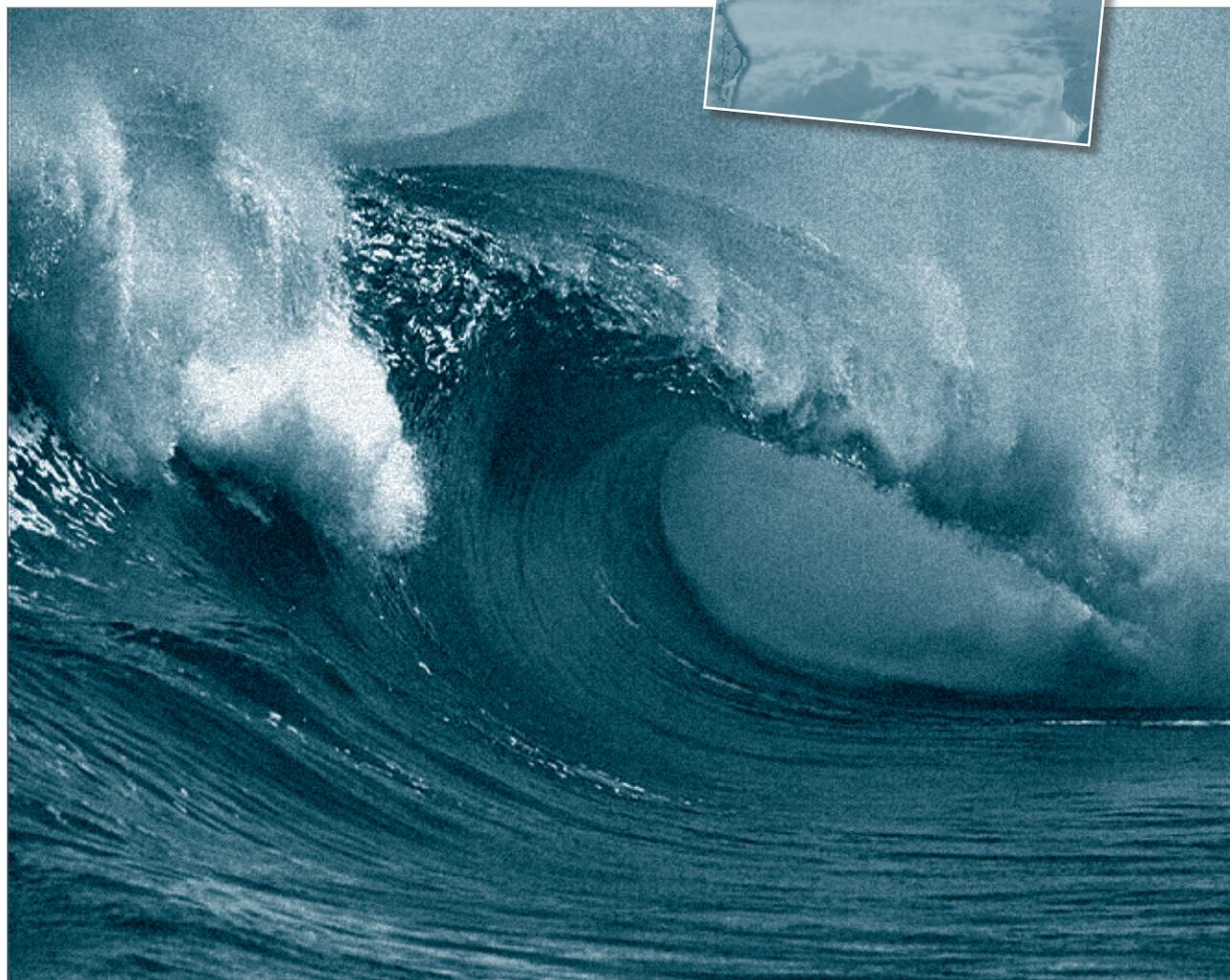
The Corporate Plan 2005–2009; A Framework for Action, Bangladesh

The Government of Bangladesh is committed to disaster management and reduction, reflected in its policy and institutional framework. The Corporate Plan 2005 – 2009 A Framework for Action presented by the Ministry of Food and Disaster Management serves as a key management tool to guide the efforts of the Ministry in the achievement of the commitments made by the government, nationally and internationally. This plan emphasizes community empowerment as a key area through strengthening of community institutional mechanisms. To realize this objective, the development and implementation of education and awareness programs is an identified strategy. ■

For further information, please contact Nasimul Haque,
nasim@doe-bd.org

Indonesian version of the Hyogo Framework for Action is published

For further information please contact Lya Anggraini,
Communication Officer, Indonesian Society for Disaster Management,
lya@mpbi.org and visit the website, www.mpbi.org



Debate



Disaster Diplomacy in the Asia-Pacific Region

Background

After the 2003 earthquake disaster in Bam, Iran, a headline in the UK newspaper *The Independent* proclaimed, 'Human tragedy forces US to rethink hard line.' Just over a year later, a headline in the *Christian Science Monitor* referring to the 2004 disaster in Sri Lanka enquired, 'Peace dividend from tsunami?'. These news stories support the growing interest in the concept of 'disaster diplomacy' (www.disasterdiplomacy.org). Disaster diplomacy explores how and why disaster risk reduction—both pre-disaster including prevention and mitigation and post-disaster including response and recovery—do and do not lead to peace and cooperation.

Three types of Asia-Pacific scenarios have been examined:

- A specific country or region that experiences disaster, such as North Korea's international relations following floods, droughts, and famines since 1995 and an April 2004 train explosion.
- A specific disaster event or type of disaster. The Bam earthquake had potential for improving US-Iran relations while Taiwan's 1999 earthquake suggested improvements in China-Taiwan relations. Neither led to long-lasting diplomatic outcomes.
- Other trans-boundary opportunities, such as international cooperation in identifying disaster casualties. Partly due to the large number of casualties from more affluent countries, the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami disaster set the stage for improved protocols regarding international disaster casualty identification.

All evidence so far suggests that disaster risk reduction rarely creates, but sometimes catalyses, diplomacy. For instance, the most successful tsunami diplomacy case study following the 26 December 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami disaster is Aceh's peace deal, but it had pre-tsunami origins and cannot be attributed solely to the tsunami disaster. More specifically, disaster risk reduction can, but does not always, have a short-term impact on diplomacy. But over the long-term, non-disaster factors such as leadership and historical grievances have a more significant impact on diplomacy than factors related to disaster risk reduction.

Changing the priority of disaster risk reduction

Many reasons explain why disaster risk reduction sometimes has less diplomatic influence than might be expected or hoped for. Reconciliation is not necessarily an important objective, irrespective of disaster risk reduction's advantages. Similarly, diplomacy may be used to cover hidden political and economic interests as has been suggested for American and Turkish interventions in Aceh following the 2004 tsunami.

Inertial prejudice, misgivings, and mistrust can overcome disaster diplomacy efforts, as demonstrated by the conflict over aid in post-tsunami Sri Lanka and India. As another example, the U.S. initially did not respond to Iran's aid offers following Hurricane Katrina in 2005. Additionally, lack of political forethought and media hype can derail good intentions. That was the case when the American government tried to send a high-profile emissary with supplies to Bam following the 2003 earthquake disaster.

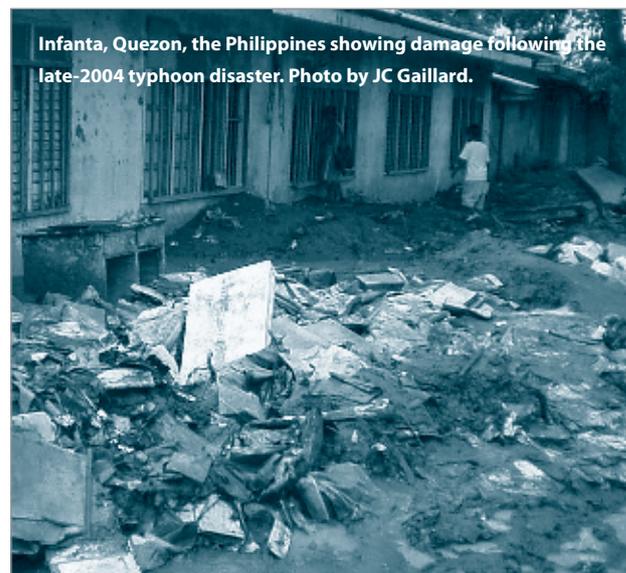
Denying that international assistance is needed allows countries to avoid having to accept external resources—meaning that no basis exists for even attempting disaster diplomacy. With lingering memories of the failed Bam-related earthquake diplomacy, Iran declined an American offer of aid following the February 2005 earthquake disaster which killed over 600 people in southern Iran. Iran stated that they could handle the disaster domestically, yet aid was accepted from several other countries and international organizations.

These observations suggest that neither domestic nor international disaster risk reduction are inevitably a high political priority, even after a disaster or when goodwill is present. Other factors tend to be more important for political decision-making, although the efforts of UN/ISDR and other organizations are slowly changing such views to make disaster risk reduction a higher priority.

Within these successes, should disaster risk reduction be directly linked to peace and diplomacy efforts? Opposing answers emerge:

No. Extensive effort occurs to divorce disaster risk reduction from politics and to make it a normal and accepted process rather than depending on political whims. New mechanisms for relating disasters and politics are not needed. Instead, encouraging further separation would be preferable.

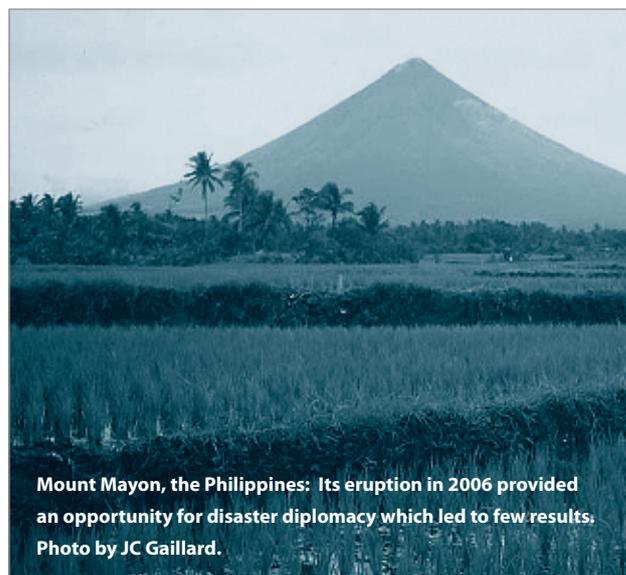
Yes. Disasters are inherently political events and disaster risk reduction is fundamentally a political and social, not a scientific



Infanta, Quezon, the Philippines showing damage following the late-2004 typhoon disaster. Photo by JC Gaillard.



Infanta, Quezon, the Philippines showing damage following the late-2004 typhoon disaster. Photo by JC Gaillard.



Mount Mayon, the Philippines: Its eruption in 2006 provided an opportunity for disaster diplomacy which led to few results. Photo by JC Gaillard.

Tsunami damage in Banda Aceh, Aceh, Indonesia.
Photo by Joseph Ashmore.



In Aceh, a stranded village with roads leading nowhere due to widespread flooding and land displacement.
Photo by Elizabeth Babister.



A jail, south of Meulaboh, Aceh where all 500+ prisoners, many of them militants, and staff were killed by the tsunami. Photo by JC Gaillard.



or technical, process. The more positive outcomes from disaster-related activities which could be fostered, the better. Such outcomes should be actively pursued rather than taking the naïve stance of trying to extract politics from disaster risk reduction.

Political construction of disaster

The Philippines is a useful case study for indicating the inextricable links between disaster risk reduction and politics with regards to disaster diplomacy in the Asia-Pacific region. From November–December 2004, four typhoons struck Quezon province killing over 1,000 people through floods and mudslides in areas with a long-standing guerrilla conflict led by the New People's Army (NPA).

Illegal logging was quickly identified as one of the causes of the devastating slope failures and floods. The Filipino government promptly associated the illegal logging with the NPA. The Filipino opposition blamed the government for not tracking down the loggers and for contributing to the environmental damage. The opposition even suggested the death penalty for the loggers.

Rather than grasping the opportunity to tackle the long-standing conflict and illegal logging simultaneously as part of long-term disaster risk reduction, peace, development, and environmental management, the government sought to shift blame and to inflame the NPA. Fanning the NPA conflict occurred while the parallel conflict with Muslim separatists in the south had cooled down, almost as if the government were seeking a conflict somewhere, perhaps to bury the opposition's claims of new evidence for governmental corruption and incompetence. Both sides have media allies promoting their arguments. Instead of disaster diplomacy, this event became politically constructed by the government, the opposition, and the media around the alleged responsibility of nature, illegal loggers, and the NPA.

Two other flood disasters plus two volcanic eruptions in the Philippines in 2006 displayed some similar characteristics regarding the political construction of the disaster. In fact, firefights occurred between the NPA and the government's soldiers during relief operations. Conversely, these events also led to proposals for and declarations of ceasefires, sometimes from the government and sometimes from the NPA. Yet no scope for longer-term peace was suggested and longer-term peace outcomes were not witnessed. Disaster produced short-term, not long-term, diplomatic dividends.

The Philippines, as with post-tsunami Aceh and Sri Lanka, present intra-state disaster diplomacy, where internal conflicts within sovereign states are involved. Other case studies mentioned—North Korea, U.S.–Iran following Bam and Katrina, and China–Taiwan following the 1999 earthquake—are inter-state disaster diplomacy where two or more sovereign states are negotiating. Are there disaster diplomacy differences between inter-state and intra-state case studies?

Despite some marked disparities amongst the conflicts examined, minimal disaster diplomacy difference is found between the two groups. Based on the evidence available, with regards to disaster risk reduction, non-state groups such as rebel organizations and non-sovereign jurisdictions can be as important in local, national, and international affairs and conflict resolution as state governments. That is not always true, but it often happens, even with wide

variations amongst the form of conflict, diplomacy, and disaster risk reduction. Frequently, a conflict-inducing political construction of disaster is the result, to the detriment of disaster diplomacy.

Hope for disaster diplomacy?

Such complex interactions and the lack of rules for disaster diplomacy case studies suggest that disaster diplomacy outcomes are never certain. Disaster diplomacy can actually be a distraction by:

- Raising expectations which cannot be met immediately, leading to disillusionment, impatience, and ammunition for opponents of reconciliation or disaster risk reduction.
- Avoiding the long-standing root causes of enmity.
- Failing to implement the long-term measures necessary for building and maintaining confidence in peace and in disaster risk reduction.
- Disaster diplomacy can instead produce a quick fix which is expected to solve all disaster and diplomacy problems. In reality, successful disaster risk reduction and peacemaking are long-term endeavours which must be integrated into development and sustainability processes.

Absence of evidence, however, is not evidence of absence. A successful example of new, lasting diplomacy based on only disaster risk reduction may yet emerge. However unsuccessful the notion seems to be at present, the option always exists of actively pursuing disaster diplomacy, irrespective of the drawbacks and the chance of failure, rather than passively sitting back and watching events unfold.

If that choice is made, the depth and long-term characteristics of both diplomacy and disaster risk reduction must be accepted from the beginning and never forgotten. Otherwise, disaster diplomacy could make the diplomatic and disaster situations worse than before it was attempted. ■

For further information, please contact Ilan Kelman, Center for Capacity Building, National Center for Atmospheric Research, ilan_kelman@hotmail.com and visit the website www.ilankelman.org

Ilan Kelman's main research and advocacy work relates to disaster diplomacy, how disasters do and do not bring together enemy states, and island vulnerability, building safe and healthy communities on small islands and other isolated areas. More details are available at www.ilankelman.org

Jean-Christophe Gaillard is interested in disaster vulnerability and the ethnic and cultural dimensions of disasters in insular Southeast Asia. More details are available at website <http://jc.gaillard.monsite.orange.fr>

Can preparedness pay? Recovery and mitigation expenditure as political investment

During the past 15 years, India has suffered five major earthquakes, four major cyclones, severe floods annually, regional drought every 2-3 years, an avalanche, and a tsunami. Every year, over 4000 lose their lives in disasters, 2.36 million houses are damaged, and 1.42 million ha. of agricultural land. This amounts to a value some Rs. 25,000 crores, equivalent to 2% of annual GDP. The World Bank and Government of India estimated the disaster loss caused by the Tsunami to be in the region of \$1.5 bn.

Diversion of Funds

The costs associated with disaster response and recovery divert development funds, decrease industrial output, and prompt the emergency and distress sales of public and private assets. Additionally, there are numerous indirect costs associated with disaster such as increases in cases of malnutrition and school dropouts. The psychosocial effects of disasters upon victims are immeasurable.

The costs of recovery and reconstruction are not just significant in monetary and human terms, but also in other non-monetary terms - the opportunity to develop brought by disaster is seldom seized by those involved in facilitating reconstruction.

Additionally, disaster related costs are not just short-term in nature and cannot all be met by reconstruction expenditure. Costs to the well-being of the population and to the health of the nation's economy are long-term in nature, difficult to quantify, and not easily redressed in disaster response measures.

Cost-benefit analysis of mitigation measures

Through mitigation measures, natural hazards can be prevented from turning into natural disasters, and long-term costs can be minimized. The costs and benefits of preparedness, risk transfer and mitigation activities are relatively straightforward to calculate. For example, the private and social costs of reinforcing a school building according to earthquake codes are easily identifiable; these costs include human and capital resources (materials), time costs, and the costs associated with disruption. The private and social benefits are also discernible - the economic benefits of undertaking the work, and the benefits associated with improved safety for the school and local communities.

If we compare the cost of improving the fire safety of the school with the costs associated with a fire damaging the school, and the



subsequent required reconstruction, it is clear to see that the cost of mitigation is lower. The costs of damage reconstruction, of disruption to education, and the cost of lives lost or damaged by the fire would outweigh the cost of structural safety measures.

The value of undertaking mitigation is enhanced by the combination of structural measures with non-structural ones. For example, fireproofing the school and providing fire-safety training or emergency medical training for the pupils/ teachers will create long-term social benefits since even if there is no fire in the school, the skills and knowledge learnt in training could be used in any situation in the future.

There have been proven examples of how mitigation measures are cost effective, and outweigh the costs of disaster recovery through cost benefit analysis in India. The Humanitarian Policy Group carried out cost-benefit analyses of two mitigation projects in Bihar and Andhra Pradesh. It was found that in Bihar, for every Rs. 1 spent on mitigation measures in a flood-prone district (hand-pump provision, capacity building etc.) yielded Rs. 3.20 in benefit. Similarly in Andhra Pradesh, it was calculated that in a drought mitigation programme, for every Rs. 1 spent on measures, the yield was Rs. 3.70 in benefits.

The value of mitigation

Therefore, it can be said that the value of hazard mitigation lies in avoiding damage and loss, and this can be readily identified by asking the question - what would society have lost in disaster had the mitigation measures not be implemented. The answer

is usually 'a great deal more' - in monetary, economic, social and most importantly human terms.

Disaster management funds

The 2005 Indian Disaster Management Bill provides for the establishment of 525 separate disaster funds at the state and district level. There are currently no stipulations that funds must be deployed for relief in part for preparedness, risk reduction and transfer, and mitigation measures. This gives rise to an unprecedented opportunity - an opportunity for efficient expenditure on reducing the future cost of disasters through mitigation and preparedness activities. Decision makers should take the opportunity to reduce future human and financial costs: mitigation pays. ■

Sources: Ganderton, P. (2004). 'Benefit-Cost Analysis' of Disaster Mitigation: Application As A Policy And Decision-Making Tool. *Mitigation and Adaptation Strategies*. Vol. 10. Pp. 145-165. Kumar, S. and Newport, J. (2005). *The Role of Microcredit in Disaster Mitigation*. *Disaster Prevention and Management*. 14(2). Pp. 176-182. Venton, C. and Venton, P. (2004). *Disaster Preparedness Programmes in India: A Cost-Benefit Analysis*. London: Humanitarian Policy Group, Overseas Development Institute. Available at: www.odihpn.org/report.asp?ID=2686.

For further information, please contact Aripita J. Chhatrapati, All India Disaster Mitigation Institute, dmi@icenet.co.in and also visit the website www.southasiadisasters.net

Training Opportunities

Teachers' training course on disaster management

SEEDS initiated a Certificate Course on Disaster Management for schoolteachers. The distance learning course is aimed at enabling teachers to impart knowledge on risk education based on the syllabus recently prescribed by the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE).

The course is of duration of three months, towards the end of which a two-day contact programme, in the form of a workshop, is going to be conducted. The course will follow a case-study teaching methodology as a general approach. The course has been divided into seven modules, which cover topics ranging from definitions and types of disasters to studies of initiatives adopted by schools to prevent and manage disasters.

Evaluation will be based on:

- Online interaction of teachers with the faculty
- Submission of assignments based on topics given
- Discussions during the two-day workshop

The course is designed to bridge the gap between knowledge, as it exists in universities and research centers, and practice, as carried out in the field. Moreover, a Learning Workshop such as this is going to be implemented for the first time in India.

This course is also seeking active participation of international organizations working in the field of disaster risk reduction. ■

For additional information please contact Jyotika Mathur, jyotika@seedsindia.org or Manu Gupta, manu@seedsindia.org

Photo right, schoolgirls take part in activities at an exhibition related to the International Day for Disaster Risk Reduction in Bangkok.

Post-graduate program: *Disaster Preparedness, Mitigation & Management*

Recent intense occurrences of disasters all over the earth leading to massive loss of life and destruction of infrastructure have grabbed the attention of the world. Receiving less attention is disaster risk management—the know-how to prepare for such disasters and to reduce their effects. The academicians and practitioners at Asian Institute of Technology (AIT) and its partner institutions are determined to start a new post-graduate program, '*Disaster Preparedness, Mitigation and Management*'.

The aim of this new academic program is to instill the necessary interdisciplinary capacities to manage and minimize the effects of disasters in people on the front-lines of disaster response and preparedness. Courses are designed to accommodate applicants with engineering, architecture, natural and social science, as well as management backgrounds. ■

For further information please contact Pennung Warnitchai, Coordinator, Disaster Preparedness, Mitigation and Management, AIT, dpmm@ait.ac.th or visit the website www.ait.ac.th/dpmm

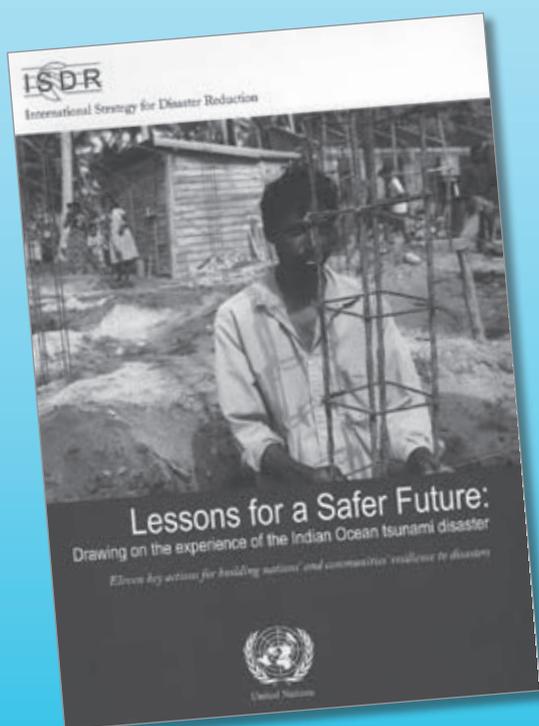


Publications & Multimedia

UN/ISDR

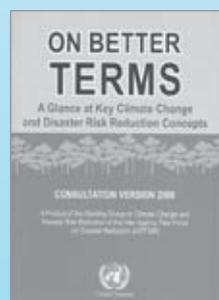
Lessons for a Safer Future

'Lessons for a Safer Future' draws on the experiences of many organizations and individuals during and following the tsunami. The report offers eleven lessons as a contribution to the ongoing process of learning how nations, communities and individuals can become better prepared for and reduces the risk of potential natural hazards.



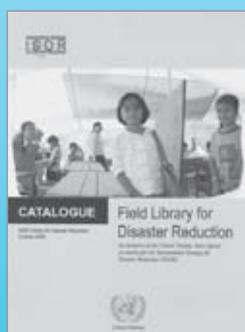
On Better Terms: A Glance at Key Climate Change and Disaster Risk Reduction Concepts Consultation version

This pocket-sized booklet clarifies a few terms that both the climate change and disaster risk reduction disciplines use but often use differently, so as to avoid possible sources of confusion. The booklet is accompanied by a CD-ROM providing glossaries and sources of conceptual work for climate change adaptation and disaster reduction. This edition is a product of the Working Group on Climate Change and Disaster Risk Reduction of the Inter-Agency Task Force on Disaster Reduction (IATF/DR) led by UNDP, IDS and the ISDR secretariat.



CATALOGUE: Field Library for Disaster Reduction

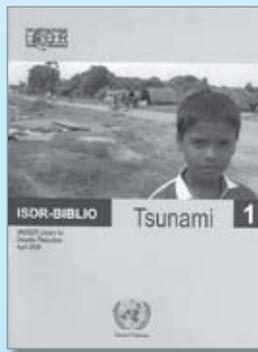
An initiative of the United Nations Inter-Agency secretariat for the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UN/ISDR)



ISDR-Biblio: Issue 1: Tsunami – 2006

It was produced by UN/ISDR secretariat. ISDR-BIBLIO is a bibliographic compilation of publications available at the UN/ISDR System Library and related to a specific hazard or aspect of disaster reduction. The first edition of ISDR-BIBLIO is on tsunami literature in commemoration of the devastating earthquake of 26 December 2004. This catalogue lists major academic, technical and scientific publications on tsunami as well as reports produced by United Nations agencies.

www.unisdr.org/eng/library/biblio/isdr-biblio-1-tsunami-2006.pdf



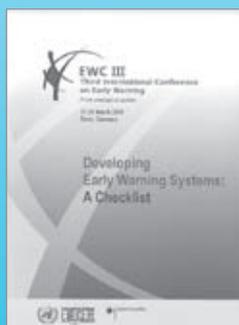
The Hyogo Framework for Action

Translated into Thai language version.

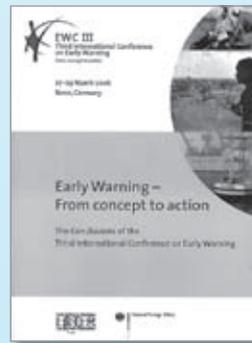


Developing Early Warning Systems

The checklist is an outcome document of the EWC III. It was generated in order to help governments and communities implement people-centred early warning systems. The checklist was translated into 19 Indian Ocean languages such as Arabic, Burmese, India (Hindi, Punjabi), Indonesia, Iran (Persian), Maldives (Male), Malaysia, Sri Lanka (Sinhalese, Tamil), Thai, and Pakistan (Urdu).



Early Warning – From concept to action, the Conclusions of the 3rd International Conference on Early Warning



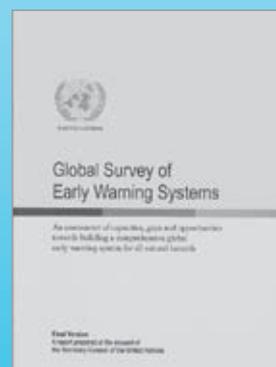
Early Warning Project Portfolio

The database of early warning projects, from which the Compendium was established, has been developed by PPEW to support the Project Forum of the Third International Conference on Early Warning. Following the conference, the Compendium and its associated on-line database will continue to be administered by PPEW as an important international resource to support the development and promotion of early warning systems.



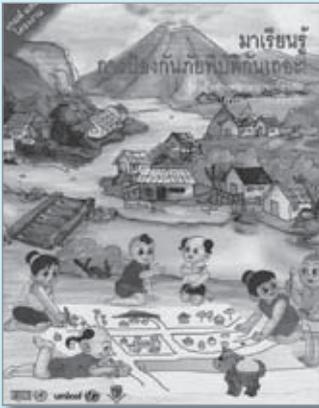
Final Version of the Global Survey of Early Warning Systems

An assessment of capacities, gaps and opportunities toward building a comprehensive global early warning system for all natural hazards, is now on-line available.



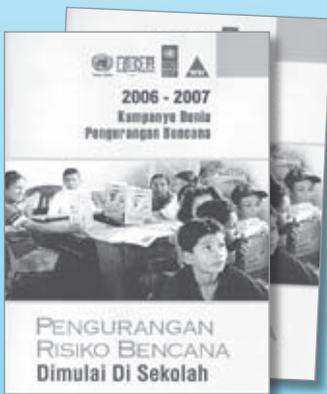
Riskland Game

The Thai version of Riskland Game has just been launched, with the support of the National Disaster Warning centre (NDWC), Prime Minister's Office of the Royal Thai Government.



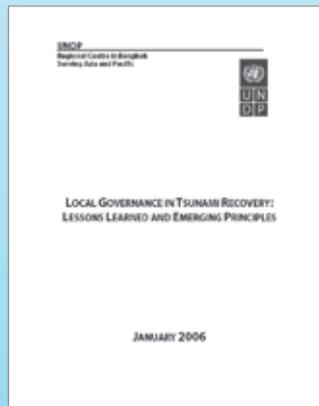
Education Kit for the 2006-2007 World Campaign on Disaster Reduction 'Disaster Risk Reduction Begins at School'

Translated into Thai and Bahasa.



For further information, please contact Lya Anggraini, Communication Officer, Indonesian Society for Disaster Management, lya@mpbi.org and website www.mpbi.org

UNDP



Local Governance in Tsunami Recovery: Lessons Learned and Emerging Principles, January 2006

This paper presents the findings of an initiative by a group of UNDP practitioners in Asia working in the interface between Decentralization and Local Governance and Crisis Prevention and Recovery to analyse the lessons learned on local governance in Tsunami recovery. The purpose is to provide an analysis of lessons learned and emerging principles on the functioning of local governance in disaster recovery (and briefly relief and early recovery) – drawing primarily on experiences from the five countries most seriously affected by the Tsunami: India, Indonesia, Maldives, Thailand and Sri Lanka but also experiences from previous disasters.

Integrating Disaster Risk Management in Local Governance

The handbook, *'Integrating Disaster Risk Management in Local Governance, a Facilitators' Guide and a Sourcebook for Barangay Disaster Risk Management Training Workshop'* is a pioneering collaborative effort in disaster risk management in the Philippines. It is developed by a group of people, who take upon themselves the task of promoting disaster risk reduction/ management. The primary objective of the handbook is to provide local government units a guide so that they can push forward the agenda of reducing risks at the community or local levels.

For more information, contact Zenaida Delica Willison, Advisor, Disaster Risk Reduction, UNDP Regional Center Bangkok, zenaida.willison@undp.org



UNICEF

Much done, more to do

A 24-Month Update on UNICEF's Work to Rebuild Children's Lives and Restore Hope since the Tsunami, published in 2006.

www.unicef.org/emerg/disasterinasia/files/tsunami_2-year_2006.pdf



UNESCO

Landslide VIDEO, poster and text

UNESCO Bangkok and the Thailand Environment Institute (TEI), jointly launched a Thailand-specific educational video on landslides. The video capturing the various aspects of landslides in close collaboration with communities in northern Thailand and describes how landslides occur, how to recognize an imminent landslide, and most importantly, how to be prepared to protect oneself from landslides. Through easily understandable dialogue and the effective means of visual media, this video aims to target and raise the awareness of local community members. The UN/ISDR supported this initiative.

For more information, contact Derek Elias, UNESCO Bangkok, d.elias@unesco Bangkok.org



Tsunami Awareness Kit

An information and resource building capacity to respond and mitigate to tsunamis.



Tsunami Warning

The UNESCO-IOC/ITIC has revised and updated its most popular educational materials and additionally made them available in an easily customisable electronic format for localisation by countries. The publications include Tsunami the Great Waves, Tsunami Warning, Children's Book, Tsunami Glossary and a Tsunami Safety Poster. Massive reprints of 'The Great Wave' and the 'Tsunami Glossary', along with safety posters and flyers prepared by the IOC's International Tsunami Information Centre (ITIC) in Hawaii, were distributed directly to Tsunami Warning Focal Points (TWFP) all across the Indian Ocean.

The ITIC also worked with TWFP of four countries (Indonesia, Maldives, Sri Lanka, and Thailand) to translate and customize its Tsunami Warning awareness booklet. The booklet illustrates the procedures followed by tsunami warning centres and emergency response agencies subsequent to a large earthquake, as well as before, during, and after a tsunami striking the coast off western Sumatra, Indonesia. Over 10,000 copies of Peringatan Tsunami have been printed and distributed cooperatively with the Indonesia Meteorological and Geophysical Agency (BMG). ITIC educational material is available on ioc3.unesco.org/itic/. The UN/ISDR supported this initiative by facilitating the adaptation and translation of the "Tsunami Warning!" booklet to the local contexts for Thailand, Indonesia, Maldives and Sri Lanka.

For more contact please contact **Christel Rose, UN/ISDR Asia and Pacific**, rosec@un.org

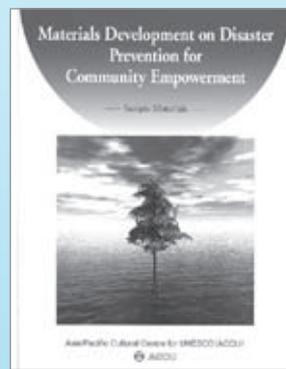


ACCU

Asia/Pacific Cultural Centre for UNESCO (ACCU)

Material Development on Disaster Prevention for Community

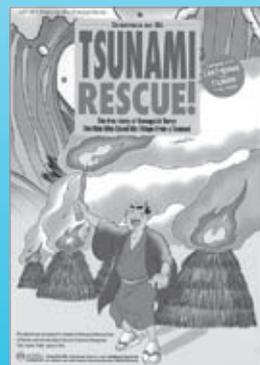
Starting from 2005, ACCU will develop materials on disaster prevention for community empowerment. As a starting point, ACCU collected printed materials on disaster prevention focusing on tsunami and earthquake already existing in countries in Asia and the Pacific. Among them, 28 titles are selected and introduced in a reference book in English, entitled 'Material Development on Disaster Prevention for Community Empowerment'. ACCU hopes that this book will serve as a stepping stone leading to further materials development on disaster preparedness. Details will be forthcoming shortly.



Tsunami Rescue! – The True Story of Hamaguchi Goryo: The Man Who Saved His Village From a Tsunami

Other material to be produced is PLANET 4 'Disaster Preparedness', the fourth title of PLANET (Package Learning Materials on Environment) multimedia package learning materials, consisting of different materials such as cartoon animation video, booklet, posters and facilitator's guide, to be disseminated widely both in English as well as other languages.

For more information on the PLANET, please visit www.accu.or.jp/esd/planet/index.html



IRP

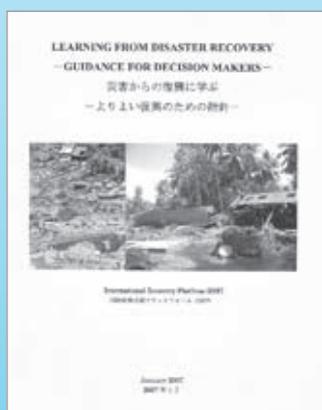
International Recovery Platform (IRP)

**Learning from Disaster Recovery –
Guidance for Decision Makers**

The book *Learning from Disaster Recovery* is the first major product of the International Recovery Platform (IRP) that was launched during the World Conference on Disaster Reduction (WCDR) in 2005. The IRP has been designed to promote collective learning, and is supported by a consortium of United Nations Agencies including UNDP, ADRC, UN/ISDR, and the Government of Japan. This initiative of IRP is the first 'evidence-based' examination of international experiences to determine the nature of successful disaster recovery. The publication of the book coincides with ongoing recovery operations following three epic-scale disaster events: the Indian Ocean Tsunami, Hurricane

Katrina and the South Asia earthquake, and these operations have yielded vital data that have been described and analysed in the book. Since disaster recovery concerns the rebuilding of people and society as well as their livelihoods and the buildings and towns they inhabit it requires the acceptance of shared values by decision makers. Therefore, to aid this process a series of underlying recovery principles: ethical, strategic and tactical are proposed with summaries of policy guidance in relation to each topic.

Two aspects of knowledge are addressed in this book: first to inform its readers to help them gain knowledge and understanding of disaster recovery, but also to indicate some routes to further knowledge through published material, hyperlinks to Internet sources etc.



ADRC

Asian Disaster Reduction Centre (ADRC)

A perception study in Indonesia has been coordinated by ADRC to survey the level of tsunami awareness at the community level, schools and national institutions. The project team surveyed and interviewed respondents consisting of residents, elementary school students, elementary school teachers and government officers within the area of affected by earthquake or tsunami in Nias Island, Simeulue Island and West Coast Aceh. The study has built on the ADRC perception studies for Sri Lanka and Maldives, and has been carried out between December 2005 and April 2006.

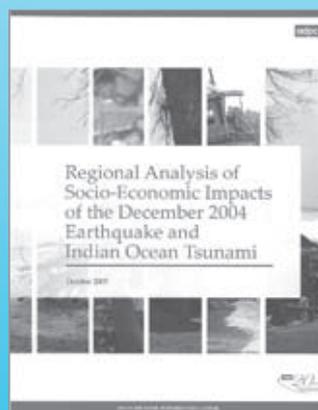


ADPC

Asian Disaster Preparedness Centre (ADPC)

**Regional Analysis of Socio-Economic
Impact of the December 2004
Earthquake and Indian Ocean Tsunami**

www.adpc.net



IUCN, Care

Several key publications provide concrete guidance for practitioners as well as policy-makers towards these ends, most recently 'Ecosystems, Livelihoods and Disasters' (IUCN and CARE, 2006).

WWF's Green Reconstruction Policy Guidelines (WWF, 2005)



Disaster and Development

National Institute of Disaster Management published 'Disaster and Development' which is purported to provide a forum for the publication of original and innovative works on various facets of disaster management carried out by scientists, researchers and practitioners in the country and abroad.

The maiden issue of this bi-annual Journal consists of invited articles from eminent experts and scholars on various disciplines related to disaster risk reduction and management.



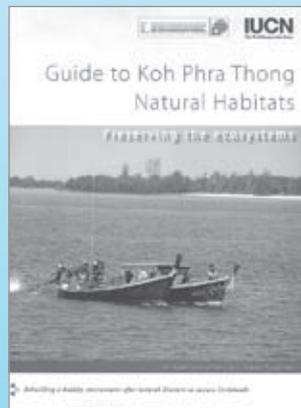
Mangroves for the Future

A strategy for promoting investment in coastal ecosystem conservation.



A Guide to Koh Phra Thong Natural Habitats

Rebuilding a healthy environment after natural disasters to sustain livelihoods.



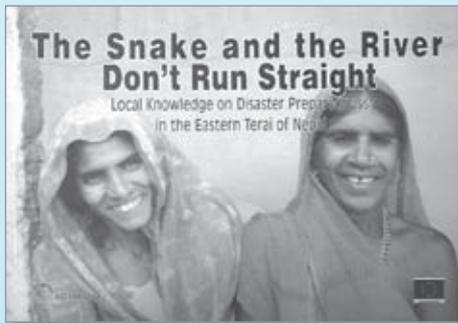
IUCN's Guidance Notes on Post-Tsunami Reconstruction (IUCN, 2005)



ICIMOD

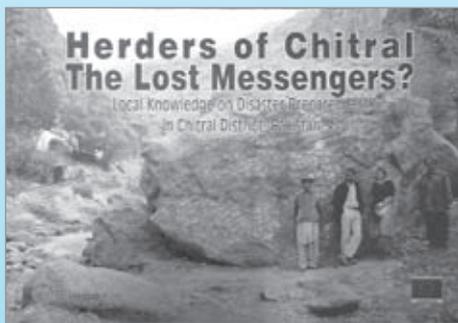
The Snake & The River Don't Run Straight

Local Knowledge on Disaster Preparedness in the Eastern Terai of Nepal.



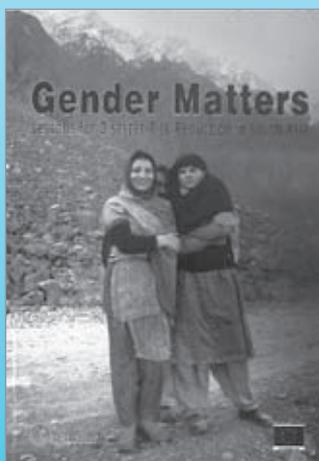
Herders of Chitral – The Lost Messengers

Local Knowledge on Disaster Preparedness in Chitral District, Pakistan.



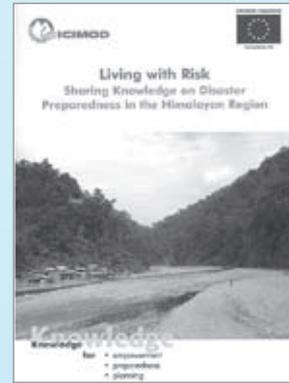
Gender Matters

Lessons for Disaster Risk Reduction in South Asia.

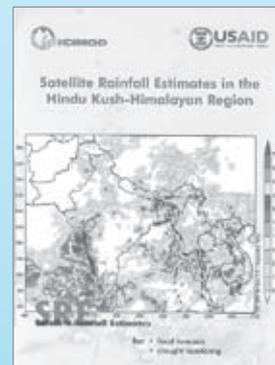


For more information on ICIMOD's books, please visit <http://books.icimod.org/index.php/search/subject/2/>

Living With Risk – Sharing Knowledge On Disaster Preparedness in the Himalayas



Satellite Rainfall Estimates in the Hindu-Kush/Himalayan Region



Other

Community-Based Disaster Management Toolkit

www.idepfoundation.org/cbdm_download.html

This online version of UNESCO Jakarta's Community-Based Disaster Management Toolkit, contains general but concise guidelines on preparedness and prevention of disasters at community level, a ready-to-use form book in the event of a disaster, brochures and posters on disaster preparedness, and eight comic books on different disaster topics.



Indonesia

In collaboration with UN/ISDR, UNESCO Office Jakarta has been able to strengthen the community based disaster preparedness in three pilot sites in Indonesian. Three pilot sites were selected representing different human settlement patterns, i.e. from large urban cities to rural villages: 1. Kota Padang, West Sumatra Province (large city – 1,000,000 inhabitants), 2. Kota Bengkulu, Bengkulu Province (middle-sized city – 300,000 inhabitants), 3. Pulo Aceh and Sama Tiga, Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam Province (village – 5,000 inhabitants).

Bringing together a wide range of institutions, universities and local organizations (i.e. Indonesian Institute of Sciences (LIPI), the Institute of Technology, Bandung (ITB), University of Andalas, Padang (UNAN), University of Bengkulu (UiB), KOGAMI), the project acted as a catalyst for innovative approaches to disaster management, with a strong emphasis on the preparedness component. Activities included awareness, capacity building as well as developing and piloting a new methodology and tool for assessing and measuring tsunami and earthquake preparedness.

In addition to a pocket book, poster, leaflet and a comic book, a website has been created to inform on preparedness and prevention of disasters at community level.

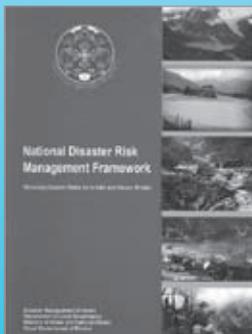
www.siagabencana.lipi.go.id/

Currently, all outcome documents are being translated from Bahasa into English.



National Disaster Risk Management Framework in Bhutan

The Framework, prepared with support from the UN System in Bhutan spells out the sectoral mandates and responsibilities aimed at avoiding any ad hoc reactive approach while dealing with disasters. The framework mandates the various sectors within the country to take up certain responsibilities within their own technical expertise and ensure a coordinated approach to disaster risk management.



For further information please contact Mr. Dorji Kunzang, Head of the Disaster Management Division, Ministry of Home and Cultural Affairs, Thimphu, Bhutan, kunsanja605@hotmail.com

Disaster Management Booklet publishing

Sharing information on what National Societies in the region doing and best practices in the field of disaster management has become a regular basis with the aim to express the importance of DM within SEA especially for such a highly disaster prone area.

The DM booklet included reference to the need for a holistic / balanced approach to DM which includes disaster response (DR), disaster response preparedness (DRP), risk reduction (RR), regional DM Programme, Public Awareness Activities and other areas

The booklet which has been done by Regional Disaster Management Committee (RDMC) and Regional Disaster Management Unit (RDMU). It is for use of NSs promote and inter partners and Government donors of Disaster Management within Southeast Asia.

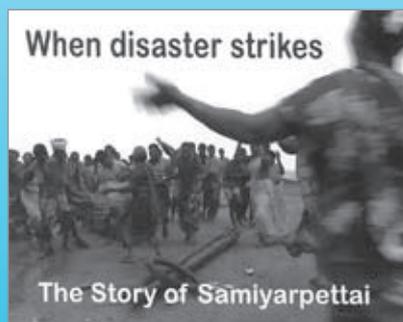
For further information please contact Nguyen Hung Ha, Regional Disaster Management Programme Officer, International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, Southeast Asia Regional Delegation, hung.ha.nguyen@ifrc.org



Submission 3 - Film CD

The film 'When Disaster Strikes'—The story of Samiyarpetta', was published in partnership with Government of India, Government of Tamil Nadu and UNDP India, capturing the experiences recounted by the people of 'Samiyarpetta' village of the community centered approach to disaster risk management which worked with success when tsunami hit the coast of Tamil Nadu on the 26th December 2004. ■

For more information on the film you may contact Mr. Sushil Kumar, Assistant Resident Representative, DRM Programme, sushil.kumar@undp.org and Mr. G.Padmanabhan Emergency Analyst, UNDP g.padmanabhan@undp.org



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A magazine from International Strategy for Disaster Reduction covering the field of disaster prevention and mitigation for all people of Asia and Pacific region.

Submissions are welcome

Informis is interested in articles or opinion pieces about projects, activities, programs, educational initiatives, and lessons learned. Scientific and technical papers are also welcomed, as is news about upcoming workshops, seminars, meetings, publications, videos, websites and other material related to disaster reduction.

Please send all submissions to rosec@un.org

Submissions should be concise and not exceed 1500 words. Brevity is appreciated in order to display the broadest possible spectrum of ideas and cases. When using an any acronym please quote the name of the body in full the first instance of use, even for large regional organizations.

Images and details

It is recommended you attach at least one high-resolution image, but you may include photos, graphs, charts and other illustrations. It is also essential for you to include at the end of the text the following information: 1) a contact where follow-up enquiries may be addressed (for print), 2) the institution represented, and 3) full contact details including email, telephone, fax, postal address (not to be printed).

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