Asian Disaster Preparedness Center (ADPC)

Title of initiative:	1) Risk Communication: Improving Community Response to Warnings 2) Production and dissemination of Disaster Reduction in Asia – ISDR Informs
Countries primarily supported:	Maldives, Myanmar, Sri Lanka, Thailand
Duration:	From 22 August 2005 to 31 December 2006

Objectives

The initiative was designed with a goal to improve community response to warnings in the Maldives, Myanmar, Sri Lanka, and Thailand. The specific objectives were:
- Clarify roles of stakeholders in the end-to-end warning;
- Identify gaps in existing warning dissemination system;
- Recommend a set of actions for improving warning dissemination system;
- Develop a risk communication strategy.

The expected outputs were:
- Stakeholders clear of each others' roles in the end-to-end warning;
- Gaps, constraints, and needs in existing warning system identified;
- Recommendations for improving existing warning dissemination system;
- Risk communication strategy.

Achievements

- **ADPC Activities for ISDR Asia Partnership Newsletter**[70]

  Two issues of the newsletter entitled "The Disaster Reduction in Asia – ISDR Informs (Issue 1, 2005)" and "The Disaster Reduction in Asia and Pacific – ISDR Informs (Issue 2, 2006)" were produced by ADPC under this initiative. The publication aims to provide latest information on the activities, initiatives/projects and events that took place in Asia and the Pacific including various publications of relevant partners.

  - The first issue was printed in English (3,000 copies) with translated versions in Chinese, Bahasa Indonesia and Russian (2,000 copies each). The translated versions were distributed at the World Conference on Disaster Reduction (Kobe, Japan, 18-22 January 2005).
  - The second issue was produced in consultations with the members of the ISDR Asia Partnership and the UN/ISDR Asia office, and was printed in English (5,000 copies), Thai (2,000 copies), Chinese (2,000 copies) and Bahasa Indonesia (2,000 copies). This particular issue contains a 23 page special section, "The 2004 Indian Ocean Tsunami: One year Later".

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[70] Both newsletters were produced in collaboration with the Asian Disaster Reduction Center (ADRC), UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP), UN Development Programme (UNDP), UN Office for the Coordination for Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) and the UN/ISDR, who together represent the ISDR Asia Partnership. Both issues are available at: http://www.unisdr.org/asiapacific/ap-informs/ap-informs.htm
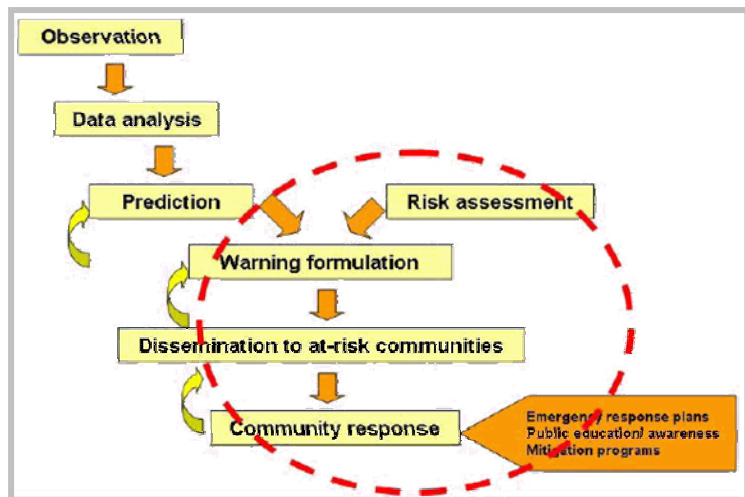
> **Risk Communication: Improving Community Response to Warnings**

Status of early warning systems in the above-mentioned four countries was studied by utilizing ADPC's reports from national assessments and secondary information from various sources.

The information was verified, and study results were discussed during the national workshops specified below. National workshops on disaster risk communication were organized by ADPC in Maldives, Myanmar, Sri Lanka and Thailand to improve community response to warnings.[71]

- **Maldives:**
  A national risk communication meeting was held in Male on 11 June 2006. It was attended by the representatives from over 10 government and non-governmental institutions including broadcasting, tourism, education and health sectors.
- **Myanmar:**
  A national workshop was held in Yangon on 17-18 July 2006. It was attended by representatives from over 20 government and non-governmental institutions.
- **Sri Lanka:**
  A national workshop on disaster risk communication was held in Hikkaduwa on 21-22 September 2006. It was attended by the representatives from over 15 government institutions (ministries, departments, research and other organizations), an academic institution, a broadcasting corporation as well as international and non-governmental organizations.
- **Thailand:**
  A training program was carried out from 16-18 August 2006. It was attended by over 40 young professionals of the National Disaster Warning Center.

The workshops brought together stakeholders involved in communicating disaster risks. Discussions during the workshops focused on 1) describing the status of communicating risks for enhancing disaster prevention, mitigation, and preparedness; and 2) identifying constraints and needs of institutions involved in communicating risks. Participants also recommended a set of actions including a risk communication strategy. Follow-up activities have been undertaken to practically apply the introduced disaster risk communication concepts.

Figure 6: Disaster Risk Communication in an end-to-end Early Warning System, Source: National Workshop on Disaster Risk Communication, 21-22 September 2006, Hikkaduwa, Sri Lanka

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[71] http://www.adpc.net/ews06/ewsJul06.htm