

# **“Actionable” Early Warning: One of the key ingredients of Preparedness Systems**

**by**

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# “Actionable” Early Warning System

- First link in the chain for people’s protection and community resilience
- “Action” to
  - Protect life
  - Protect livelihoods and assets
  - Drinking water resources

# Preparedness for Protection requires that Household and Livelihoods must be resilient

- Safe house or safe emergency shelter
- Evacuation routes
- “Killa” or loft in house or shed
- Well or Bore well Raised above flood level

# Moving from Forecast to “Actionable” Warning requires clarity on

- **Whom to inform** – administrative level, department responsible
- **When to inform** – frequency of communication of Outlooks, Alerts and Graded Warnings
- **What to inform** – what action needs to be taken, based on the level and extent of likely impact

# We Must

- **Learn from**
  - **Good Practices**
  - **Bad Practices**
  - **Best Forgotten Practices**
- **Respect Local Indigenous knowledge and ancient wisdom**
- **Respect animals' instinct and watch animal behaviour**
- **Use nature's Early Warning Systems**

# Warnings, like all risk communication, must be:

- Understandable
- Hazard and location specific
- Enable People to Act
- Cope with inherent uncertainty
- Deal with “warning fatigue” factor
- Culturally and socially sensitive
- Reach Segmented audiences



# Local Good Practices in Asia

- **Flood** Referencing project – **Prey Veng, Cambodia**
- **Cyclone** Preparedness Program– **Cox's Bazaar, Bangladesh**
- Actionable **Volcano** alerts and warning, **Mount Mayon, Philippines**



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# Success Stories of Protective Evacuation

- Pondicherry India – 2004
- Kenya and Seychelles 2004
- Florida 2004
- Dong Thap, Vietnam 2000
- China 1988
- West Virginia 1985
- Hirokawa, Japan 1854 “Fire of Rice Sheaves”



# Respecting the Kobe spirit, to make a difference, Early Warning Systems must have:

- Working **Partnerships** (Cyclone Preparedness Program)
- Credible **Champions** (Mr. Disaster)
- Committed **Volunteers** ('Mike' and Rescue Youth Union)
- Listen to community elders

# Good Practice

## Regional

- Tropical Cyclone Panel and Typhoon Committee – WMO/ESCAP
- Mekong River Commission – Regional Flood Forecast and Flood Mitigation and Management Program
- Famine Early Warning System (Africa)

## Global Catalytic Action

- WMO's World Weather Watch (1972)
- EWC Potsdam (1998) and Bonn (2003)
- Platform Promoting Early Warning 2004
- International Early Warning Program 2005

# Best-Forgotten Practices

- National Flood Warning faxed to an ex-minister
- Marine Cyclone warnings not understood by local population

# Learning from community elders

***“We must dare to imagine the unthinkable, or we will always be surprised”***

- Prof. Ginkel, Rector, UNU, 18 Jan '05

***“The disaster you plan for is not the one that will happen”***

- Col. Brian Ward, Director Emeritus, ADPC  
at DMC – 1, 1986

# An Apocalyptic Early Warning from India

***“Another ‘Bhopal’ will happen on the Mumbai-Goa Highway in the next decade. At least two tankers carrying Petroleum products will have a road accident and kill at least 150 villagers each”***

- 2<sup>nd</sup> Main Committee for Goa, India, 1994

# An Apocalyptic “Early Warning” Challenge from Kobe

Disaster Reduction needs your personal response as a  
leading manager

***“ In the first half of the 21st Century, it is sure we will experience the Tokai; To-Nankai and Nankai earthquake disasters. A magnitude 8.6 accompanied by a gigantic Tsunami will create a catastrophe, unprecedented in densely populated urban area with 40 thousand mortalities and One Thousand Billion US Dollars loss.***

***Let me ask each one of you, at this moment, what could and what should you do to protect you and your family”***

*10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Exhibition at the Great Hanshin-Awaji Memorial  
Museum, 17 Jan '05*



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# Possible SMART Target/Wish-list for EWS for the coming decade

- “Actionable” Early Warning and “Workable” Preparedness Plan prepared in each ‘at-risk’ community by 2008
- Developed through leadership of local (District/Sub-District) DM committee/team in close partnership with community
- Operationalized and well-resourced by 2014