

Asia-Pacific Broadcasting Union (ABU)

Title of initiative:	Regional workshops on emergency information flows and public awareness, preparedness and response in disaster situations
Countries primarily supported:	Countries affected by the Indian Ocean Tsunami of 2004
Duration:	From 1 June 2005 to 31 December 2006

Objectives

The Asia-Pacific Broadcasting Union (ABU), a professional association of 102 radio and television broadcasters in the Asia-Pacific region, proposed a series of Asia-Pacific regional workshops for radio and television broadcasters. The objectives of these workshops were:

- To help develop a faster, more effective early warning systems in the Asia-Pacific region by increasing the rate and accuracy of information flows from meteorological and geographic organizations to broadcasters;
- To ensure a rapid flow of disaster and emergency information from broadcasters to the public;
- To help develop faster, more accurate coverage of disasters when they strike;
- To raise public awareness of disaster reduction and prevention and emergency preparedness by airing special educational programmes and public service announcements.

Achievements

➤ **Media-targeted regional workshops**

Two workshops were jointly organized by Asia-Pacific Broadcasting Union (ABU), UN/ISDR secretariat and UNESCAP in June 2005, bringing broadcasters together with technical experts from the tsunami and weather warning fields to improve dialogue and understanding in respect to warning dissemination and public education.

- The first workshop entitled “Emergency Information Flows from Meteorological Organizations to Broadcasters” was organized from 13-14 June 2005 in Bangkok. The workshop was technical in nature, and targeted mainly engineers and TV broadcasters involved in weather reporting. Seventeen representatives from influential broadcasting companies of the countries affected by the Indian Ocean Tsunami and from Kenya, Tanzania and Seychelles, three observers from Thailand TV broadcasting companies as well as representatives from meteorological, oceanographic and disaster management organizations including ADRC, ADPC, UNESCO/IOC, UNOCHA and WMO participated in the meeting.
- The second workshop entitled “Public Awareness, Preparedness and Response of Individuals and Communities” was organized from 15-16 June 2005 in Bangkok back-to-back with the first workshop to address broadcasters’ capacity and responsibility to educate audiences and raise awareness of the dangers of and appropriate responses to natural disasters through the use of public service announcements, educational documentaries, current affairs programming and other content. This workshop involved programming and production directors from broadcasting companies from the 12 tsunami-affected countries.⁶⁸

⁶⁸ <http://www.abu.org.my/public/compiled/p586.htm>

➤ **Professional discussion during ABU's General Assembly, November 2005**

To continue the discussion on the role of broadcasters in disaster prevention, reduction, awareness and response, the ABU organized a professional discussion during its Annual General Assembly in Hanoi, Vietnam 26-28 November 2005. The discussion involved more than 400 high-level broadcast executives and heads from more than 100 broadcast companies.⁶⁹

➤ **Compilation and distribution of footage of the Tsunami disaster, October 2005**

The ABU compiled unedited footage of the Tsunami disaster through the contribution by the participating broadcast companies for the purpose of distribution on the International Day for Disaster Reduction on 12 October 2005. The content of the footage was distributed to broadcasters via satellite across the region and was used in compiling individual news stories by broadcasters across the region. It was also made available to European broadcasters via Eurovision. An alternative backup footage (B-roll footage) was sent to Asia-Pacific Broadcasters by the UN/ISDR secretariat through the European Broadcasting Union.

➤ **Broadcasting disaster reduction related programmes on the occasion of Tsunami commemoration around 26 December 2005**

The Asia-Pacific Broadcasting Union, through a collaborative arrangement with the CNN International, compiled scripts and materials produced by the participants of the above-mentioned two Bangkok workshops. The compiled content was circulated to broadcasters in the Asia-Pacific region via satellite for their use on and after 26 December 2005 to commemorate the 26 December 2004 Tsunami. ABU has produced together with the UN/ISDR secretariat a B-roll and Video news releases to compliment the content produced by the participants. The pieces were also broadcasted in CNN World Report. Participating broadcasters have produced news features on tsunami recovery efforts and issued Public Service Announcements (PSAs) to convey messages to raise awareness on disaster reduction on the Tsunami Commemoration event.

Contact person

Ms. Francyne Harrigan
Development Projects Manager,
Development Projects Department
Asia-Pacific Broadcasting Union
PO Box 1164
2nd Floor New IPTAR Building
Angkasapuri, Kuala Lumpur 59700, Malaysia
Tel: 60 3 2282 4205
Fax: 60 3 2282 4606
Email: francyne@abu.org.my

⁶⁹ <http://www.abu.org.my/public/compiled/p641.htm>