The International Day for Disaster Reduction (IDDR) is a day to celebrate how people and communities are reducing their risk to disasters and to raise awareness about the importance of disaster risk reduction (DRR). For 2012, the theme of IDDR ‘Women and Girls: The inVisible Force of Resilience’ aims to highlight the role that women and girls play in risk reduction. While they are often marginalised and unrecognised, women and girls are powerful agents of change who have unique knowledge and skills that are crucial when addressing or managing disaster risks.

In the ASEAN region, IDDR is celebrated jointly with the ASEAN Day for Disaster Management (ADDM), with the participation of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC). The ADDM and IDDR both serve as a strategy to increase the level of public awareness for disaster risk reduction. Thailand has been leading in organising the ADDM for the past few years as Co-Chair of ACMD Working Group on Prevention and Mitigation and Lead Shepherds for Public Education, Awareness and Advocacy for the AADMER Work Programme. This year, the theme for ADDM is ‘Children and Women, Step Up for Disaster Risk Reduction!’

Regional Showcase of Community-Based Disaster Risk Reduction Practice

All over the world, and particularly in Asia, women and children have played key roles in reducing disaster risks. The exhibit features the different ways women and children contribute to community resilience in Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Philippines, Thailand, and Vietnam.

The exhibit also showcases different organisations’ initiatives to promote disaster risk reduction, focusing on the changes brought about by gender and vulnerability-inclusive processes at various levels.

The exhibit is open on 8-12 October.

Women and girls are effective purveyors of information. Information exchange must be two-way and accessible for equal inclusion of women’s and men’s voices.

Heroes of Resilience

A resilient community is a gender-sensitive community. Gender inequality puts women, children and entire communities in danger when natural hazards strike. The weakest link can mean the destruction of the entire chain. Gender inequality is a weak link - strengthening that link strengthens resilience.

Gender equality begins with education. Women and girls must be included in public life. This begins with the education of boys and girls through to adulthood. This is how men and boys will become involved in removing the barriers that prevent women and girls from participating in the disaster risk reduction cycle.

The Theme

Empower women & girls for a safer tomorrow.

Women and girls are empowered to fully contribute to sustainable development through disaster risk reduction, particularly in the areas of environmental and natural resource management, governance, and urban and land use planning and social and economic planning - the key drivers of disaster risk.

Women & girls are powerful agents of change.

They are activists, law makers, social workers, role models, community leaders, teachers, and mothers. They are invaluable in disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation processes if real community resilience and significant reduction of disaster impacts are to be achieved. Women must always be part of policy planning and implementation processes. They represent roughly half the world’s population and are among the most affected by disasters. Their experience, knowledge and expertise are critical to climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction strategies and processes.

Household adaptation measures are more likely to take root if women are included in processes from beginning to end.

The International Day for Disaster Reduction (UNISDR) and IDDR are joined by the ASEAN Secretariat, the AADMER Partnership Group (APG) and the Thammasat University Faculty of Journalism and Mass Communication. This event is also organised in coordination with the UN Thematic Working Group on Gender co-chaired by UN ESCAP and UN Women, GIZ, Huairou Commission, and civil society organisations in Thailand through HelpAge International.
Calendar of Events

All events will be held at the 3rd Floor, Boonchu, Rojanasatan Room, Anekprasong 1 (Multipurpose Building), Thammasat University, The Prachan Campus, Bangkok, Thailand

8 OCTOBER

AADMER Orientation
10:30-12:00
By invitation.

DDPM, with the support of HelpAge International, will focus on institutionalisation of AADMER at national level. Participants will be the National Committee on AADMER and civil society organisations.

Lead: DDPM and APG

9 OCTOBER

MORNING SESSIONS

Vulnerable Groups: Stepping up for Disaster Risk Reduction
Forum
08:30-12:30
By invitation.

Vulnerable groups have specific needs during disasters but they are also capable agents who contribute to disaster reduction. This event pays attention to experiences of vulnerable groups in past disasters and how they were able to cope in its aftermath.

Lead: National CSOs: Foundation for Older Persons’ Development, Senior Citizens Council of Thailand, Disabled People’s International Asia Pacific, Disabled People’s Council of Thailand, and APG organizations in Thailand: HelpAge and Save the Children

AFTERNOON SESSIONS

Ensuring Child Safety during Disasters
Seminar and Exhibit
13:30-16:30
By invitation.

Dr. Adisak Palidpolkarnpipoom, a famous doctor and speaker, will give a talk about child safety and injury prevention during the disaster, giving experiences from last year floods in Thailand. An exhibit complements the talk to demonstrate child safety practices.

Lead: Child Safety Promotion and Injury Prevention Research Center, Faculty of Medicine Ramathibodi Hospital

10 OCTOBER

MORNING SESSIONS

Mass Media, Women, and Children: Disaster Risk Reduction & Management
08:30-16:30
By invitation.

Research Presentation of Survey of Communication Landscape for Women in the Community of Communication Policy in Flood Crises

The role of media during a disaster and their involvement in disaster risk reduction is crucial. As a co-host of the event, the Faculty of Journalism and Mass Communication will present its research findings on the issue.

Lead: Thammasat University Faculty of Journalism and Mass Communication

11 OCTOBER

Forum with Women and Children in Community-Based Disaster Risk Reduction and Launch of Oxfam Publications and Webinars on Gender & DRR
09:00-12:00
By invitation.

Women and children from Southeast Asia and other countries share their experiences in working with their communities, government, civil society and other actors, showing that women are not victims but capable citizens helping build resilient communities now and in the future. Oxfam and APG will also be launching publications and webinars on Gender and DRR during this day.

Lead: Oxfam and APG

LAUNCH

The Role of Thailand in ASEAN Disaster Management
13:30-16:30
By invitation.

This will focus on the role of appointed government agencies in the National Committee on Implementation of AADMER and the role of Thailand in AADMER disaster management mechanisms such as the ASEAN Committee on Disaster Management (ACDM).

Lead: DDPM and APG

12 OCTOBER

Joint Commemoration of IDDDR and ADDM 2012
By invitation.

08:30 Registration
09:00 Opening Ceremonies

Ms. Margareta Wahlström, Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Disaster Risk Reduction
H.E. Dr. Surin Pitsuwan, Secretary-General of AADMER
H.E. Yingluck Shinawatra, Prime Minister of the Government of Thailand
Ms. Salvacion Basiano, Spokesperson of the Confederation of Older Persons Association of the Philippines on behalf of the Women and Children

09:25 Presentation of a plaque to H.E. Yingluck Shinawatra, for her commitment to empower more women on disaster risk reduction (On behalf of Ms Margareta Wahlström)

09:30 Speech by Dr. O.P. Mishra, Director Disaster Management Centre, SAARC about the Essay competition from SARRC members

Awarding Ceremony to Winners of the South Asia Regional Drawing Competition

10:45 Press conference

By invitation.

H.E. Margaret Wahlstrom
H.E. Dr. Sandeep Kumar
H.E. Yingluck Shinawatra
Ms. Salvacion Basiano

Coffee break for the rest of the participants

10:30 Panel Discussion: Women’s Vulnerability to Disaster Risks and Leadership in Mitigating Disasters
11:00 Refreshments

Panel Discussion: Strengthening the Role of Women and Girls in Disaster Risk Reduction
11:30 Closing Ceremonies

Ms. Chalita Thromd, Director-General, Department of Disaster Prevention and Mitigation of Thailand
Dr. German Velasquez, Senior Regional Coordinator, UNISDR (TBC)
Ms. Sarah Ireland, Oxfam Regional Director, representing the Chair of the AADMER Partnership Group

Programme Insights - Gender Equality in Emergencies: practical lessons

This collection draws together and carries out in-depth reflections of Oxfam’s experiences and achievements, in a variety of countries, in engendering humanitarian responses and disaster risk reduction work. The collection also points to persisting limitations and problems in understanding, and in the use of available tools and approaches that still affect the way we respond to and prepare for disasters.

The Disaster Crunch Model: Guidelines for a Gendered Approach

This booklet is intended for practitioners and researchers engaged in emergency and disaster risk work in the context of a changing climate, so that they are encouraged to use an important analytical framework - the disaster pressure and release model also known as the ‘crunch model’ - in a way that clearly reveals the role that gender differences and inequalities play in determining vulnerability and capacity in the face of disasters.

Promoting Gender Equality in Disaster Risk Reduction: Oxfam’s Experience in Southeast Asia

These short case studies illustrate the close ties between Oxfam’s concern for gender equality and our efforts in disaster risk reduction (DRR). The case studies reflect recent Oxfam experiences in Cambodia, Indonesia, Myanmar and Viet Nam and show which steps are possible and desirable in overcoming the disproportionate vulnerability of women in disaster-prone areas and making use of their capacities.

Publication Launch

G&D Journal Issue: Post-disaster Humanitarian Work, July 2012

As a contribution in spreading knowledge on women’s rights and disaster risk among key stakeholders, Oxfam is launching new publications and webinars on Gender and DRR as part of the joint commemoration of IDDDR and ADDM. Other resources are also available online at www.oxfam.org/iddr.

All humanitarian and DRR interventions need to take into consideration the different impact that disasters have on men and women, and to explicitly aim at eliminating gender discrimination that often increases women’s vulnerability. Oxfam and APG are embarking on an initiative to build the skills and commitment of staff and partners on gender equality and DRR through a series of online training to generate commitment for action on gender equality and women’s rights.