

Summary of Conference Proceedings

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Conference Sessions of 02 December 2003

- 1. Keynote Address: Total Disaster Risk Management for Sustainable Development.** Mr. Satoru Nishikawa, executive director of ADRC, spoke on disaster reduction as a major challenge that the Asian region faces as disasters pose as among the biggest obstacles to sustainable development and social security of nations. He cited cases where the cost of damage was substantial, if not greater than the gross domestic product of the affected country. In this regard, he emphasized that disaster reduction is a must for sustainable development. Furthermore, he explained how disasters can be lessened by reducing vulnerability to hazards. Citing lessons from disaster events in Japan, such as the Ise Wan Typhoon in 1959, and the recurrent earthquakes in Miyagi-ken and Tokachi-oki, Mr. Nishikawa showed specific disaster reduction policies and measures that were adopted and had consequently saved many human lives. He explained the importance of a holistic approach to disaster reduction and response and the adoption of the TDRM approach in Asia. He briefly explained risk management and the strategies for TDRM, namely coordination mechanism, information sharing, disaster reduction investment, public awareness, and collaboration among stakeholders. He also emphasized the importance of reaching out to people at risk and of sharing disaster risk information to bridge the gap between people's perceived risk and the actual risk. In pursuit of TDRM, he cited the capacity building activities of ADRC in Nepal, Bangladesh, Cambodia, Philippines, and Singapore
- 2. Keynote Address: Mainstreaming Disaster Risk Management.** Mr. Tom Brennan, regional disaster reduction advisor, UNDP-Bangkok, spoke on the need to mainstream disaster risk management into development. He explained the many ways of dealing with disasters and the need for an integrated disaster risk management approach that addresses altogether policy, standards, enforcement, organization, early warning, flood mapping, planning, training and finance, among others. He explained further that in mainstreaming disaster reduction into development, risks are managed and reduced, development gains are protected and sustainable development is ensured. He presented as today's challenges (1) the convincing of development agencies to integrate disaster risk management into national planning process, (2) the establishment of appropriate institutional arrangements for disaster risk management, and (3) the development of necessary capacities, skills and tools for disaster risk management.
- 3. Keynote Address: The Needs of Holistic Approach.** Prof. Haruo Hayashi of Kyoto University explained the need for the holistic approach. With reference to the Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake, he cited two major lessons: (1) that structural mitigation really worked to reduce disasters; buildings that complied with better building codes could survive the earthquake; and (2) managing long-term recovery is a most difficult and complex disaster management issue. He elaborated on disasters as a social phenomenon that requires restoration of social stability and improvement of social resilience. Therefore, a disaster recovery plan must necessarily be founded on the recovery of basic social infrastructures. Dr. Hayashi also expounded on an integrated recovery plan with three related goals: (1) economic recovery for revitalizing local economies, (2) physical recovery for developing destructive cities, and (3) personal and family recovery for helping victims. In concluding, he conveyed three major lessons from the Kobe earthquake: (1) A pre-event recovery plan is important. (2) This plan must be holistic. (3) The planning process must be participatory.
- 4. Best Practices Towards TDRM in China: The Policies and Measures on Flood Disaster Reduction in China Since 1998.** Prof. Hongtao Wan of the Research Center on Flood and

Draught Disaster Reduction discussed the policies and measures on flood disaster reduction in the country since the devastation of the Yangtze River Flood of 1998. He mentioned the series of policies and measures for flood prevention and control, including fiscal policy changes to enable increased investment in water infrastructure development. He related that enhancing flood control infrastructure and local capacity directly resulted in improved socio-economic status of the local people. He also stated that the benefits realized far exceeded the investment.

5. **Best Practices Towards TDRM in Japan: NHK's Disaster Reporting and the Role of Media.** Mr. Noboru Yamazaki of NHK in Japan discussed the effective role of media in disaster risk reduction, particularly through real-time broadcasting of emergency news and early warning. He mentioned that media is most useful to disaster victims, promptly providing forecasts, warnings, damage reports, and other critical information in a manner that is easily understood by the public. He also related how NHK staffs would prepare themselves for responsive and reliable disaster reporting through drills.
6. **Best Practices Towards TDRM in India: Development of an Integrated Disaster Risk Management System and the Importance of Reliable Information.** Mr. Anil Sinha, former executive director of the National Center for Disaster Management in India, discussed the development of an integrated disaster management system in the country. He presented the context in which this development came about, citing the prevalent hazards and vulnerability of communities in India and the lessons drawn from recent disasters such as the Orissa Super Cyclone in 1999 and the Gujarat Earthquake in 2001. He informed about the creation of the country's High Powered Committee on Disaster Management in 1999 that has employed holistic planning in addressing all types of hazards and disaster risks and has referred to select best practices abroad. Moreover, he conveyed the importance of reliable information in effective disaster management and in the promotion of a culture of quick response, strategic thinking and prevention. He further qualified that information should be effective, accurate, timely, easily understood, and reliable.
7. **Best Practices Towards TDRM in Vietnam: The Mangrove Disaster Preparedness Program of the Vietnam Red Cross.** Mr. Nguyen Hung Ha of Vietnam Red Cross described its Mangrove Disaster Preparedness Program in pursuit of its mission to enhance local capacity for disaster preparedness. The overall objective of the program has been to minimize the vulnerability and loss of the coastal community in conformity with the basic principle of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement. The specific objectives included the establishment of permanent coastal protection forest of mangroves and building local capacity for education, research and management in the Red River Delta Region. Aside from the protection of coastal environment, Mr. Ha cited the various benefits the local community has derived from the mangroves, including livelihood and income generation. The program has now covered with mangroves 18 thousand hectares of coastal land and protected more than a hundred kilometers of sea dikes.
8. **Best Practices Towards TDRM in Japan: The Comprehensive Approach to Earthquake Risk Management.** Dr. Kimiro Meguro of Tokyo University contended that response to an earthquake has minimal impact on saving lives since, by the statistics of the Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake of 1995, 84% of the victims died due to building collapse and furniture falls, and 92% of them had died within 15 minutes of the earthquake. He explained that the most effective life-saving measure is prevention-mitigation by improving engineered structures and promoting proper seismic retrofitting. He further explained that the lack of appreciation of the problem stems from the lack of ability to visualize or imagine realistically how disasters will actually strike and affect individual work, roles and lifestyles. He conveyed that the extent of one's responsiveness to a particular disaster depends on the extent he could imagine and prepare himself for it. He contended that government can significantly reduce the toll on lives and limbs if arrangements for promoting seismic retrofitting, especially at the citizen level, are institutionalized. He said that limited resources should be devoted to reducing the number of people who may be affected before any earthquake strikes.

9. **Panel Discussion.** The forum allowed the messages of the individual presenters to be reiterated and elaborated on. However, among the messages highlighted in the discussions were: (1) Public awareness is important and the risk perception gap must be addressed. (2) Risk reduction is less visible and dramatic than relief. The challenge therefore lies in making people understand what vulnerability means and what it meant to their lives, especially the poor, to reduce it. (3) In pursuing disaster risk reduction and the paradigm shift from response to prevention, we must endeavor to set aside a certain portion of funds for response for reduction initiatives. (4) There is need to enhance people's understanding and appreciation of the importance of retrofitting their respective houses to ensure earthquake safety and injury prevention.
10. **Announcement of the UN World Conference on Disaster Reduction 2005.** Before the session ended, Mr. Yuichi Ono of the ISDR Secretariat announced the planned holding of the UN World Conference on Disaster Reduction on 18-22 January 2005 in Kobe, Hyogo, Japan. The event coincides with the 10th memorial anniversary of the Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake. Intended to review and conclude the Yokohama Strategy, the conference shall emphasize on disaster reduction as an integral component of sustainable development.

Conference Sessions of 03 December 2003

1. **UN ECLAC Socio-Economic Impact Methodology.** Mr. Thomas Brennan, Regional Disaster Reduction Advisor, UNDP Bangkok, explained the socio-economic impact of disasters in Asia, which have increased in frequency as well as severity, and the need for integrated disaster risk management that incorporates a broad range of anticipatory, compensatory and reactive measures into sustainable national economic development policies and programs. He explained the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (UN ECLAC) methodology to assess the economic and social impacts of natural disasters, which is being used in other regions (Latin America and Caribbean). He informed that the introduction and adaptation of this methodology will be piloted in the Asian region through a workshop (March 2004) by ESCAP.
2. **Climate Forecast Applications for Monsoons in Bangladesh.** Mr. A.N.H. Akhtar Hossain of the Bangladesh Water Development Board presented floods vulnerability and the constraints of the present management system in Bangladesh. He explained the background and development of futuristic climate forecasts approach and the importance to translate and interpret the information into an easily understood form for end users. He mentioned that the latest knowledge to use regional climate systems for the production of real time local forecast at a minimum lead-time, which are very important for minimizing the disaster risk of the society and the environment, is imperative for effective disaster reduction in the region.
3. **Climate Risk Management in Australia.** Dr. Holger Meinke of the Agency for Food and Fiber Sciences, Department of Primary Industries, Australia, outlined the Australian experience with climate risk management/risk factors impacting on agricultural performance systems and management. Extreme climate events can affect sustainable development of any country. Hence climate knowledge has become an important risk management tool for the agricultural sector. Understanding when, where and how to use this tool is a complex and multi-dimensional problem. Targeted and appropriately conceptualized climate knowledge can increase overall preparedness and consequently reduce vulnerability. He also mentioned as to how Australian work links in this field with international efforts in Asia and South America, which need balanced and participatory communications methods that ensure the on-going associations between decision makers, advisors and scientists.
4. **GLIDE Methodological Information on Disasters.** Mr. Satoru Nishikawa, Executive Director, ADRC, Japan gave a presentation on the Global Unique Disaster Identifier Number (GLIDE) for prompt, reliable and effective use of disaster information sharing and management. He elaborated on the components and importance of the GLIDE and its use as tool for more effective and methodological sharing of information among international and national disaster management professionals and practitioners.

5. **SUMA Humanitarian Supply Management System.** Ms. Ardi Voets of FUNDESUMA and Dr. Arturo Pesigan of WHO, presented and discussed SUMA. In her presentation, Ms. Voets explained the brief history, methodology and the conceptual framework of the development of an effective humanitarian and emergency supply management system. The system facilitates effective supply management by local authorities and humanitarian agencies. She further elaborated on the other logistic components of SUMA, i.e. sorting, inventory of the items, and warehouse management of the relief materials. She also elaborated that SUMA permits communication and exchange of information among existing commodity tracking systems and supplies channel through other agencies with transparency and accountability for unsolicited donations at one window. In addition, Dr. Pesigan explained the Philippine experiences with the adoption of SUMA. Moreover, he highlighted critical problems associated with logistic management in the Asian perspective.
6. **TDRM Primer.** Mr. Aloysius Rego, director of Asian Disaster Preparedness Center, gave an introduction to primer on disaster risk management in Asia. He discussed the background of the Asian Urban Disaster Mitigation Program (AUDMP). He defined the primer project, and mentioned the achievements, outputs, lessons learned from previous projects, and the experiences of ADPC project partners. These achievements and lessons learned have been shared and showcased by ADPC in various fora. He elaborated the need for and purpose of the primer that is expected to serve as a practitioner's manual for urban disaster mitigation and for analyzing and presenting information on effective strategies, good practices, and current initiatives in disaster risk mitigation in Asian countries.
7. **Panel Discussion.** Facilitated by Mr. Anil Sinha, the discussions enabled the panel members to present their respective views on the obstacles and challenges to adopt and pursue TDRM in Asia. Furthermore, Mr. Sinha, presented some guidelines for removing these hindrances and for taking up the challenges. The session expressed the importance of strong cooperation and interactions between and among regional players for the adoption and promotion of TDRM.
8. **Africa's Experience on Disaster Reduction.** Ms. Feng Min Kan, Senior Regional Officer, International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR), Kenya, outlined the African experience with promoting disaster risk management. She conveyed that African countries are extremely vulnerable to disaster risks because of poverty, HIV/AIDS and frequent armed conflicts in the region. The available resources are diverted to relief, disrupting the socio-economic progress of poverty alleviation and sustainable development in the African countries. She mentioned about the disaster reduction framework and ongoing activities in the region. To minimize disaster risk in Africa requires integrated, multilevel, multi-sector and collaborative efforts, representing all relevant players and stakeholders. She emphasized that disaster risk management is a cross-cutting issue. Achieving sustainable development requires that appropriate mechanisms for risk management are established with national ownership as key to success.
9. **Group Presentations and Discussions.** At this session, the participants were divided into four (4) groups and discussed the obstacles and challenges for the further adoption of TDRM in Asia. They shared their experience and identified current strengths and weaknesses of the present system to promote the partnership among Asian countries. The group presented their respective findings on the obstacles, challenges and opportunities to further adopt TDRM in Asia along with the suggestions for World Conference on Disaster Reduction in 2005 and the agenda for the next decade. The discussions conveyed the importance, challenges and highlighted the need for strong partnership between regional players for the adoption and promotion of TDRM. They also suggested some important considerations in promoting and strengthening TDRM, such as identifying champions, understanding the regional context, learning from lessons, educating future generations, along with promoting the culture of disaster reduction.

10. **Review of the Discussions.** Mr. Thomas Dolan, Senior Regional Advisor, USAID/OFDA, reviewed the discussions and emphasized the importance of pursuing the TDRM approach in the region. He further conveyed some suggestions for future implementation and explained OFDA's role in removing the hindrances and taking the challenges to promote TDRM in Asia. Mr. Dolan expressed full support of USAID/OFDA in this regard.

Conference Sessions of 04 December 2003

1. **Role of Media in Disseminating Disaster Risk Information in Korea.** Mr. Yong-seok Kim, deputy chief of the social division of KBS, Korea's main public broadcasting network, expounded on the network's role in disaster reduction, particularly in delivering accurate disaster reports to the public. He stated that KBS takes the lead in collecting information from disaster areas and organizing joint press corps. Citing the case of Typhoon Maemi, Mr. Kim described the phases of disaster broadcasting and identified areas of improvement, including public education, research, and manuals. In this regard, he cited the current disaster reduction measures addressing the problem, namely, the strengthening of structural standards and facilities enhancement, the planned reclamation of land for disaster prevention, public awareness and safety guidelines, and production of broadcasters' manual for each type of disaster. He informed about the introduction by the government of the national disaster warning broadcasting system for more efficient dissemination of warning to the public.
2. **Role of Media in Disseminating Disaster Risk Information in India.** Mr. Sunil Jain, contributing editor of the Business Standard in India, described media's role in the country as chiefly to inform people where to get aid, to inform outsiders of the situation and what help to send, and to keep up the pressure on government. Comparing India with other countries, he cited the deficiencies in health care and medical facilities, like the lack of trauma centers. He related some issues on responsible journalism, truthful and reliable reporting, and disaster preparedness. He stressed that media must learn to be truthful and responsible in disaster reporting.
3. **Role of Media in Disseminating Disaster Risk Information in Japan.** On the role of media in Japan, Mr. Hiroyuki Saegusa, director of the Management Division of AM Kobe, narrated how AM Kobe broadcast live the earthquake of 17 June 1995 after it struck at 5:46 early morning. He showed the impact of the earthquake, including the extent of the damage on the broadcasting facilities and the psychological effects on the staff. He narrated the heroic effort to resume broadcasting, reporting amidst the rubble and ruins, in order to provide fresh information to the public. He recalled the efforts undertaken throughout the nine years from destruction to reconstruction and expressed hope that Kobe will fully recover and become even more beautiful, friendlier and safer five years from now.
4. **Private Sector Partnership in Promoting TDRM in the Philippines.** Mr. Alberto Lim, chairman of the Corporate Network for Disaster Response in the Philippines, discussed the evolving role of the business sector in disaster preparedness and response, since the Luzon Earthquake of 1990, the disaster that precipitated the formation of the network. He explained that the involvement of the business sector has evolved from a humanitarian perspective to self-interested motivations and pragmatic approaches, including risk management as a corporate social and organizational responsibility. He qualified that humanitarian assistance should now mean risk management, citing CNDR initiatives in prevention, mitigation and preparedness, stakeholders networking and advocacy, public education as support to hazard awareness, and building disaster resilient communities in partnership with NGOs. In concluding, Mr. Lim impressed that the growing business sector involvement in disaster reduction is a measure of the areas of pursuit of corporate social responsibility. Thus, any effective leader should realize that risk management makes sense financially.
5. **Private Sector Partnership in Promoting TDRM in India.** Mr. Pawan Devraj Kant of Hindustan Construction Company in India, introduced the Disaster Resource Network, a network of private companies committed to assist in disaster response and humanitarian

- efforts in the country by providing technical support and services in engineering, construction, transportation and logistics. Spearheaded by the Construction Federation of India, DRN was established in November 2002. On integrating the efforts of the corporate sector and the government, he cited the need for formal mechanisms, such as networking, information sharing, participation and training. As DRN endeavors to become a major corporate sector resource, Mr. Kant conveyed the intention of the organization to train volunteers, conduct research with stakeholders, participate in public awareness activities, and broaden corporate reach to include telecommunications, IT and engineering industries.
6. **NGO Involvement in Risk Communication in Japan.** Mr. Naoki Kokawa, director for international relief of Japan Red Cross Society, presented the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, the organizational network of the international federation, its Strategy 2010, mission and core activities. He discussed the community-based disaster preparedness programs of the federation, particularly the Cyclone Preparedness Program in Bangladesh and the Integrated Community Disaster Planning Program in the Philippines. Mr. Kokawa cited the key to the success of their programs. This includes collaboration with the government, including local governments, and broadened area of coverage beyond the community.
 7. **NGO Involvement in Risk Communication in India.** Mr. Amod Dixit, executive director of NSET Nepal, presented the community-based programs for earthquake disaster mitigation in Nepal. He cited NSET's local experiences in earthquake risk communication and its pursuit of disaster risk communication adopting altogether the transfer of knowledge, use of knowledge, and ownership of knowledge. Mr. Dixit cited the various programs of NSET, which employ disaster risk communication. They are the use of the earthquake disaster scenario, risk management action planning, school retrofitting, awareness raising, shake table demonstration on earthquake safety day, broadcast media involvement, and the pre-positioning of emergency response stores. He concluded that the critical factors in sustaining community-based disaster risk management are resources, appropriate technology, awareness, institutionalization, and political commitment.
 8. **NGO Involvement in Risk Communication in Vietnam.** Mr. Dang Thanh Son, team leader of World Vision Vietnam, presented the Central Vietnam Disaster mitigation Project. He cited the prevalent risks in the country, including flooding, landslides and typhoons and the volatile nature of the Mekong River. He also cited the priority mitigation projects in Quang Tri in the central region. He mentioned their objective of sustaining the capacity of communities for disaster preparedness and mitigation and constructing small scale infrastructures to reduce loss of life and property. In particular, he showed the initiatives in training, resettlement construction, reforestation, farming, with special consideration on the involvement of women.
 9. **TDRM and Education in Japan.** Mr. Seiji Suwa of Maiko High School in Japan, discussed the lessons learned from the Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake and the roles and functions that schools assumed, including the provision of refuge to victims. He conveyed the important lesson that citizens' lives should be protected by the citizens themselves. Moreover, Mr. Suwa described the current initiatives on disaster mitigation education, citing the Environment and Disaster Mitigation Course at Maiko High School and other external activities like the international exchange in Nepal. He illustrated the cycle of life-long education and the focus on gaining the ability to live and survive in the 21st Century.
 10. **TDRM and Education in Armenia.** Mr. Alvano Antonyan of Armenian National Survey for Seismic Protection or NSSP, gave a background on the disaster risk reduction arrangements in Armenia and the role of the organization which was founded in 1991. He cited the seismic reduction strategies in the country which included hazard and risk assessment, vulnerability reduction in urban areas, public awareness and education, and public-private sector partnership. He also introduced the undertakings of Armenian NSSP Public Education Center and the Syunik International Programs Support Center.

11. **Education for Disaster Reduction Towards Sustainable Development.** Mr. Badaoui Rouhban, chief of Disaster Reduction Section of UNESCO Paris, conveyed the magnitude of the disaster problem and the related efforts of UNESCO. He emphasized that education for disaster reduction is an integral part of education for sustainable development. He stated that education is critical for achieving environmental protection and ethical awareness. He further explained that education for disaster reduction and sustainable development enhances understanding of the linkages among the issues of sustainable development and disaster reduction. He mentioned that the disaster management community and the education community should collaborate, especially in the promotion and improvement of basic education, reorientation of existing educational policy and programs, enhancement of public understanding and awareness of sustainability, and the design of specialized training programs. In view of the dual roles and purposes of schools in times of disasters, he emphasized the importance incorporating the upgrading and constructing of disaster-resilient schools in long-term planning of nations. He informed about the Decade of Education for Sustainable Development from 2005 through 2015 and the role of UNESCO in this decade.
12. **Open Forum.** Two major issues were raised: (1) the incorporation of disaster reduction education into school curricula, and (2) the effort to broaden the knowledge and understanding of future generations in other evolving vulnerabilities and risks in life.
13. **Panel Discussion.** The presenters highlighted the following issues:
 - establishment of community-based disaster management network involving media and private companies in Kobe
 - enabling local governments to use local development funds for disaster mitigation and preparedness activities in the Philippines
 - involving media in enhancing public awareness in Nepal
 - the challenge of explaining complex disaster reduction-related issues to school children in Japan
 - the momentum for civil society to move disaster reduction forward and to consider investing in disaster risk management
 - the recognition of limits of expertise in the various aspects of disaster reduction
 - considering a holistic perspective in promoting the culture of prevention through education
 - sensitizing stakeholders and financing disaster reduction and development
 - reconstruction and rehabilitation should incorporate mitigation measures
 - encouraging insurance companies to sustain interest in disaster reduction