

Empowering Communities to Reduce Disaster Risks : Field Experiences

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1. Communities are the first responders in a disaster

- It is individuals and families within communities that save their neighbors and friends.



2. Local Coping Practices have been in place in all communities

- Communities have traditionally been living with risks and have learnt how to cope with them locally.



3. Communities need external assistance only when the scale of disaster is overwhelming



4. Factors that have overwhelmed communities in Asia :

- Effects of climate change
- Increased urbanization
- Side-effects of rapid economic growth – creating environmental and social pressures
- Scale of natural hazards



Community Education is the heart of risk reduction process

- Education that helps communities To Learn, To Reflect, To Practice
- Education that is adaptive
- Education that is innovative
- Education that is based on “reflective practice”



Participatory Risk Assessments



Safe Schools, Safe Communities



“Hands-on” Learning

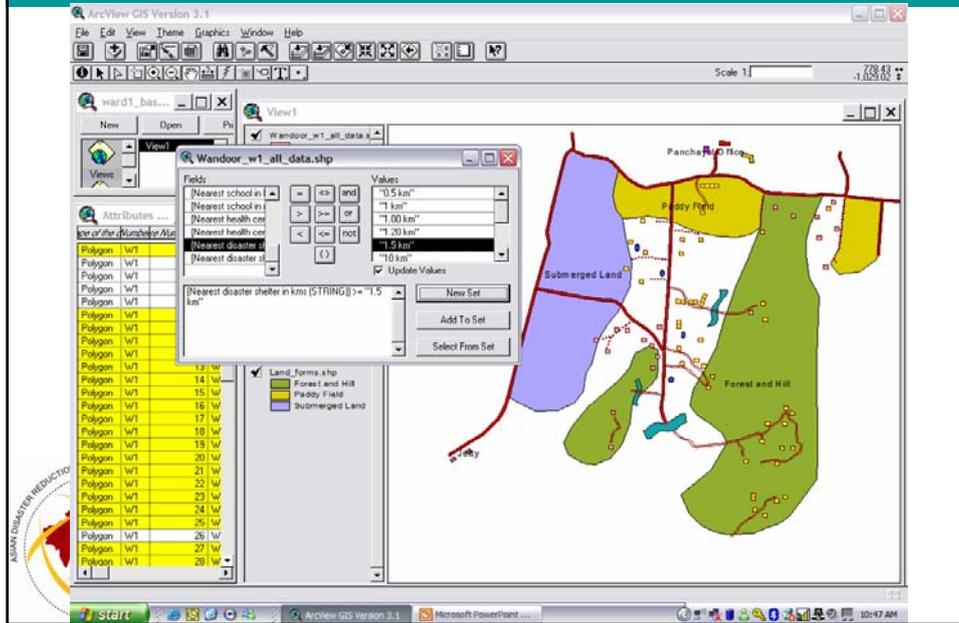


Community Information System

- Community Resource Centres
 - Museums (Saving memories of past disasters)
 - Knowledge banks
 - Information and activity centres
 - Outreach programmes
 - Early Warning through public broadcast, SMS
 - Community Radio



Creating Knowledge Hubs



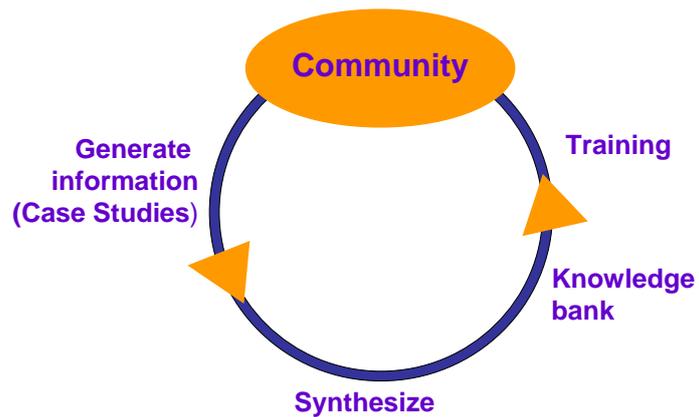
Community Radio

- Concept
 - Share traditional knowledge
 - Learn from each other
- Strategy
 - Broadcast risk reduction messages
 - Broadcast storylines dramatised experiences of communities



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Reflective Practice



Reflective Practice

“developing with communities from and for them”

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Community Mock Drills



Catalysts for Community Empowerment through Education

- Good Governance – Decentralization
- Communication Technology
- Multi-stakeholder approach
- Comprehensive Risk Assessment to serve as baseline



Education for Risk Reduction now
practiced in local communities
across Asia



Asian Disaster Reduction & Response Network

Is an alliance of over 40 national
NGOs working with communities
at risk across Asia



The ADRRN

- Formed in February, 2002
- Initially supported by ADRC & UN-OCHA
- Secretariat Based in Mercy Malaysia, Kuala Lumpur



In many parts of Asia, Disaster Risk Reduction is inherently linked to poverty alleviation. ADRRN member NGOs are actively working with communities at risk to natural hazards and conflicts, by responding to their needs and empowering them through education.



Together we are working for a
SAFE ASIA !



Thank you

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