

ADPC seeks academic advocacy for sustaining disaster mitigation measures



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Bangkok, Thailand – More than 20 academic professionals from twelve education institutes in eleven countries in Asia and Europe recently attended a workshop on “Institutionalization of Urban Disaster Mitigation” organized by the Asian Disaster Preparedness Center (ADPC), a Thailand-based disaster management agency spearheading in shifting the disaster management paradigm from response and relief to mitigation and reduction.

The workshop was the endeavor initiated by the Asian Urban Disaster Mitigation Program (AUDMP) as a way to sustaining disaster mitigation measures. This was done by integrating the subject of Urban Disaster Mitigation (UDM) into the curricula of undergraduate/postgraduate courses in Schools of Urban Planning of related academic institutes and institutionalize it. The focus was placed on Land Use Planning, which is viewed as one of the main thrusts in natural disaster mitigation.

The participants consisted of representatives from ten academic institutes, including Institute of Technology Bandung (ITB), Indonesia; University of Moratuwa and University of Ruhuna, Sri Lanka; Indira Gandhi National Open University and Center for Environment Planning and Technology (CEPT), India; Tribhuvan University, Nepal; University of Philippines, the Philippines; International Institute for Geoinformation Science and Earth Observation (ITC), the Netherlands, Chiang Mai University and Asian Institute of Technology (AIT), Thailand.

The initiative received a positive response from all participants. The workshop also discussed tentative development of the strategy and workplan for institutionalization of UDM subject area in academic programs in respective universities.

In fact, the institutionalisation process of UDM is already underway in several universities in the Asian region. For example, University of Moratuwa, the only degree granting institute in architectures and town and country planning in Sri Lanka, has been working on this initiative since last year through the support of AUDMP. The curriculum development is expected to be completed by September 2002.

Also in the Philippines, the institutionalisation of UDM is underway at the University of Philippines. “The subject will be included for the first time in the Special Problems Program at the School of Urban Planning as a 3-unit elective course, focusing on the Metropolitan Manila. It will be taught as a workshop course. We hope that it will make students become more aware of disaster mitigation measures, which are very important for disaster reduction in the Philippines,” said Prof. Alex Ramon Q. Cabanilla, a professor of the School of Urban and Regional Planning, University of Philippines.

INSIDE...

- [Introductory workshop organized to launch the Lao project](#)
- [Chinese delegates visits SLUMDMP for learning opportunity on flood and drought mitigation](#)
- [Fourth feature on ‘Social Marketing’: The application of social marketing \(Part II\)](#)

Apart from the commitment given by individual educational institutions towards the institutionalization of UDM, one of the major outputs of the workshop was the idea to establish an online channel for professional training by ADPC in collaboration with ITC, Netherlands, which is currently engaged in training of professionals from planning and other associated disciplines in spatial analysis and hazard zonation mapping using GIS techniques. The proposal of this initiative will be followed up by ITC to be submitted for funding.

Another possible initiative beyond the workshop is the formation of bilateral collaboration between ADPC and the respective academic institutes by signing a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), which will specify the roles of ADPC and the collaborating university towards mutual benefit.

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At present, very few academic programs offer the area of study concerning land management strategies for mitigating natural disaster impact within the Asian region. Yet, ADPC hopes that providing students of land use planning with theoretical support on the issue to enrich their study may bring about changes in attitude and practice when they emerge as fully pledged professional land use planners.

National Demonstration Projects

Lao PDR Urban Disaster Mitigation Project (LUDMP)

Introductory workshop organized to launch the Lao project

The Lao PDR Urban Disaster Mitigation Project under AUDMP has formally started on July 1, 2002. A Stakeholders Workshop was organized on July 19 with the objectives of introducing the project to the Vientiane Community and obtaining support and inputs from the community for project implementation and activities.

The Workshop was inaugurated by Mr. Khammound Souphanethong, Director of Social Welfare Department, Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare.

It was attended by approximately 40 participants, representing the National Disaster Management Committee; the four urban districts of Vientiane namely

Sikhottabong, Chanthabouli, Sisattanak and Xaisettha; Lao Red Cross; U.S. Embassy, and disaster management coordinators from Ministries of Education, Foreign Affairs, Transportation, National Security, Finance, Defense, Agriculture, Industry, Information and Culture, and Public Health.

Mr. N.S.M.I. Arambepola, AUDMP Deputy Program Manager, and Mrs. Suthira Suwanarpa, AUDMP Project Manager, along with the Lao partners, the National Disaster Management Office (NDMO) and the Urban Research Institute (URI), made presentations on an overview of disaster impact and management, AUDMP, the community risk assessment and disaster reduction planning component.

At the discussion session, participants offered a number of suggestions. The following are some of the highlights:

1. Community self-help and women involvement in fire prevention/mitigation.
2. Strategy to disseminate information about the project by using media.
3. Increase awareness and understanding in fire prevention/mitigation of all sectors.
4. Town planners should play a major role in this regard.
5. Adoption of a national fire safety day.
6. Emergency services improvement (fire and road accident rescue)
7. Lao Red Cross to participate in project by providing first aid training

The representatives from the four districts in Vientiane also expressed their interest to participate in the project by proposing a number of high risk communities in their districts as a demonstration site for the community risk assessment.

Sri Lanka Urban Multi-Hazard Disaster Mitigation Project (SLUMDMP)

Chinese delegates visits SLUMDMP for learning opportunity on flood and drought mitigation

A group of 20 participants from the China Civil Affairs Bureau (CCAB) visited Sri Lanka during 2-4 July 2002 on a study tour to observe and learn Sri Lanka’s mitigation measures against flood and drought. The study tour was organized by ADPC and facilitated by Sri Lanka Urban Multi-Hazard Disaster Mitigation Project (SLUMDMP) as a part of the study course on Disaster Management and Social Relief delivered to the group by ADPC.

The study tour was arranged with an objective of enhancing understanding in flood and drought mitigation through the following areas of study:

- Natural disaster situation and process of disaster management in Sri Lanka
- Activities carried out under the demonstration and replication phases of SLUMDMP
- Droughts preparedness and rain water harvesting activities of the country
- Flood mitigation in Ratnapura demonstration city of SLUMDMP
- Community-based disaster mitigation- Nawalapitiya experience
- Academic involvement in disaster management in Sri Lanka

During the three-day visit, the Chinese delegates visited many places, including the National Building Research Organization (NBRO), the National Disaster Management Centre (NDMC) of the Ministry of Social Welfare in Sethsiripayak, Battaramulla, Centre for Housing, Planning and Building (CHPB/SLUMDMP) and the Human Disaster Management Council (HDMC).

To gain a firsthand experience on flood and drought mitigation measures in Sri Lanka, the participants were exposed to many ongoing activity sites of SLUMDMP. They visited the flood prone areas in Ratnapura, SLUMDMP's demonstration city, to learn the traditional applications of flood preparedness in the areas. The new town of Ratnapura and new bus stand built on higher elevations, overhead bridge constructed as flood mitigation measures were also shown to the participants.

On the last day of the study tour, the participants visited the Department of Geology of the University of Peradeniya, which is the first and oldest university established in the country. Dr. Athula Senaratne, Head of the Department, Prof. Kapila Dahanayake and other academic staff welcomed the participants and conducted a session on the "Role of the Geology Department in Disaster Management in Sri Lanka".

Though the study tour's duration was short, the participants learned a lot to enrich and supplement their knowledge in flood and drought mitigation measures, which would be applied to the situation in China.

Information and Networking

MONTHLY UPDATE

Regional Workshop on Best Practices in Disaster Mitigation: Lessons Learned from the Asian Urban Disaster Mitigation Program and other initiatives 24-26 September in Bali, Indonesia

The workshop agenda is being fine-tuned and will be available on the website very soon. The background papers and presentations under each theme are being developed. These papers will be made available to all workshop participants.

Co-organizers

ADPC is pleased to co-organize the workshop with CITYNET and The Urban Governance Initiative (TUGI) of UNDP.

CITYNET (www.citynet-ap.org), the Regional Network of Local Authorities for the Management of Human Settlements promotes cooperation on local urban improvement initiatives in the Asian-Pacific region. Members are from 130 Asian urban organizations including national and local governments, development authorities, NGOs, research and training institute from more than 70 cities in 20 countries.

TUGI (<http://www.tugi.apdip.net>) is a project developed and funded by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). The project is a response to UNDP's continuous commitment to work on urban issues, building upon its earlier investment and insights from the Urban Management Programme for Asia and the Pacific (UMPAP) and the Asia Pacific 2000 (AP2000). TUGI aims at assisting local authorities in improving the urban quality of life through strengthening capacities, promoting good governance principles and enhancing the tools available to urban administrators and decision-makers.

ADPC looks forward to working with CITYNET and TUGI.

About the Venue

The workshop will be held at Hotel Padma. The hotel is situated on Legian Beach, near restaurants and shopping areas but away from the hustle and bustle of Kuta. It is 15 minutes drive from the airport, 5 minutes drive to the center of Kuta and 20 minutes drive to the city of Denpasar. For a glimpse of the hotel, you can visit their website at: <http://www.hotelpadma.com>

You may book your accommodation at Hotel Padma **through** ADPC at a reduced rate of USD67 per night per room (single and double occupancy), inclusive of american breakfast and tax. To take advantage of this reduced rate please complete the attendance confirmation form at: <http://www.adpc.ait.ac.th/audmp/rllw/attendance.html> and ADPC will make the bookings for you.

To confirm your participation at the workshop, submission of the completed attendance confirmation form together with payment of the registration fee (USD100) is required. The fee covers workshop documents, admission to all theme sessions, teas, lunches and two dinners. Accommodation and transport costs are **NOT** included. In the attendance confirmation form, you will find details of payment method.

Workshop brochure

Multiple copies of the workshop brochure have been sent to AUDMP partners for dissemination to colleagues and other interested institutions. For additional copies of the brochure please e-mail us at audmp@ait.ac.th

The application of social marketing (Part II)

In the last issue of the AUDM News, two elements of the marketing mix, namely product and positioning, for social marketing application were explained. This issue will cover the other three elements; place, price and promotion.

Place refers to where social marketing products can be distributed, delivered to and obtained by target audience. To effectively stimulate interest among target audience in a social marketing product, place must be easily accessible and widespread in order for the product to be easily obtained. For instance, in case your campaign aims at promoting disaster-resistant shelters, the technical information on how to build such houses should be widely disseminated among related parties. Then, as a follow-up, it is essential for social marketers to ensure that disaster-resistant building materials are easily obtainable in different areas after the information has been disseminated and interest has been generated. Easy accessibility would help boost enthusiasm in adopting the product.

One example of how to optimize the 'Place' element could be seen in the Kathmandu Valley Earthquake Management Project (KVERMP) implemented by the National Society for Earthquake Technology (NSET). The project attempted to take across the message of earthquake-resistant house to the people at large. In doing so, scientific and technical information on earthquake preparedness and mitigation was shared through seminars and workshops for identified audience segments, including policy-makers, government officers, masons and the public in general. To reach a wider audience, the information is also documented and disseminated in different forms, both visual and audio, which were suitable and easily obtained for different sectors of society.

The next element is Price, which refers to adoption cost of social marketing products, be it either of a monetary or a non-monetary kind. In case of the KVERMP, the 'Price' element was wisely positioned. Building houses with earthquake-resistant materials would usually incur additional expenditure of approximately 5%. Though posing a possible weakness of the campaign, the 5% additional expense of earthquake-resistant elements to new building was positioned against the priceless value of lives it could save. The strong focus on its capacity to protect lives outweighed the additional expense, convincing people that the slight increase was, in fact, a worthwhile long-term investment in an exchange of safer shelters that can save lives.

Last but not least, 'Promotion' is another important element. It refers to vehicles or methodologies, which can induce, motivate and spur learning process of social marketing products to a greater extent possible. The focus is on creating and sustaining demand for the product. Promotional strategies may employ various means of communication, including personal communication (word-of-mouth, volunteers, etc), selective communication (direct mail, brochures, etc.) or mass media communication (newspaper, radio, television or website-based advertisement).

This element is an existing integral part in every AUDMP project. One noteworthy example is the establishment of Disaster Safety Day in several project countries, including Bangladesh, Nepal and Sri Lanka. Many activities are held to celebrate this special occasion, such as parades and drawing/debate competitions. Through entertainment, the occasion gets across the message on disaster preparedness to target audience as well as increases and maintains people's awareness to act ahead of disasters, which is the best way to reduce disasters.

As noted by Kotler and Roberto (1989), the science of social marketing is relatively new as an approach to changing public behavior in socially desirable ways. It has been employed to tackle many types of social concerns such as health, environment and education. However, it still allows a lot of rooms for application in other field of social concerns, including disaster mitigation. As many of its tools have proven themselves to be effective in commercial applications, they are on the way to proving themselves in social applications.

The Asian Disaster Preparedness Center (ADPC) is a regional resource center dedicated to disaster reduction for safer communities and sustainable development in Asia and the Pacific. Established in 1986 in Bangkok, Thailand, ADPC is recognized as an important focal point for promoting disaster awareness and developing capacities to foster institutionalized disaster management and mitigation policies.

The Asian Urban Disaster Mitigation Program (AUDMP) is an eight-year program designed to reduce the natural disaster vulnerability of urban populations, infrastructure, critical facilities and shelters in Asian cities. The AUDMP's projects are being implemented in 9 countries – Bangladesh, Cambodia, India, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Nepal, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand. Pipeline project is planned in Vietnam. Core funding for the AUDMP comes from the Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA) of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). Additional funds come from ADPC and collaborating institutions in target countries. The program is managed by the USAID's Regional Urban Development Office for South Asia (RUDO/SA) and is implemented by ADPC.

The AUDM News, made possible through support from OFDA, USAID, reports on the monthly activities of the programs and projects in target countries. The opinions expressed herein are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of USAID.

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