

Disaster
Reduction in
ASIA

ISDR INFORMS
Issue 1, 2005



**Asia prepares for the
World Conference
on Disaster Reduction**



International Strategy
for Disaster Reduction

Introduction

Since its inception in late 2003, the ISDR Asia Partnership has evolved and proved itself a valuable collaboration among member organizations the Asian Disaster Preparedness Centre (ADPC), the Asian Disaster Reduction Centre (ADRC), the UNDP Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery (BCPR), the UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP) and the UN inter-agency secretariat of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UN/ISDR). Indeed, the Partnership has generated a great deal of interest across the region, and I am pleased to announce the Office of the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) as a new member to contribute to the development of concrete initiatives in disaster reduction in Asia.

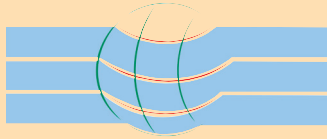
Following the launch of Issue 0 in late 2003, this issue of *Disaster Reduction in Asia – ISDR Informs* focuses on the region's preparations for the World Conference on Disaster Reduction (WCDR), presenting a range of activities that have taken place throughout 2004 which in turn will contribute to the discussions at the WCDR. These activities also represent a process that will continue beyond the Conference, building on existing capacities and ongoing initiatives through coordination and inter-regional exchange of experiences.

A product of the ISDR Asia Partnership, *Disaster Reduction in Asia – ISDR Informs* is an opportunity to strengthen the regional dialogue on disaster risk reduction. I take this opportunity to thank our partners for their support and collaboration.

Sálvano Briceño

Director, Inter-Agency Secretariat of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UN/ISDR)





World Conference on Disaster Reduction

18-22 January 2005, Kobe, Hyogo, Japan

Welcome to the WCDR

The WCDR will take place in Kobe, Hyogo (Japan) in January 2005. Exactly ten years after the Great Hanshin-Awaji earthquake that killed and injured tens of thousands of people in the Kobe area, the conference will open on a stark reminder that disaster reduction concerns us all, whether from wealthy nations or poor countries, from the South or the North. Up to now, the year 2004 has been an illustration of precisely that point: from Japan to Haiti, from Florida to Grenada, extreme climate events have unleashed the spectrum of horrendous tragedies in communities and households irrespective of their place on the global economic scale, in industrialized countries as well as in the developing world. The scenario and special effects in the movie "The Day after Tomorrow" bear a look of almost realistic relevance.

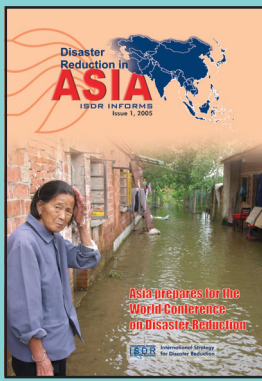
When the United Nations General Assembly decided to convene this conference in Kobe, accepting the invitation of the government of Japan, it intended to take stock of and build on progress achieved since the Yokohama Conference in 1994. Among its objectives are the identification of good practice in disaster reduction, the definition of challenges and opportunities, the examination of emerging issues and new risks, and the development of a new plan of action for disaster risk reduction for the next ten years.

During five days in Kobe, Hyogo, the international community will have a real opportunity to sensitise all layers of authority and all avenues of development planning, to move determinedly to build a new culture of resilience for communities and individuals around the world. This is expected to be the fundamental drive of the framework for action that is being negotiated by Members States of the United Nations and international, regional and national organisations, governmental and non-governmental. Much of the existing knowledge, expertise and competence to tackle complex issues of risk management will be present in the conference halls in Kobe. This unique forum presents an opportunity not to be missed to make a strong commitment to manage risk and reduce disasters.

On the eve of the WCDR, this first issue of "Disaster Reduction in Asia" is a timely and welcome initiative from UN/ISDR and the ISDR Asia Partnership. In grouping their efforts to exchange views, ideas, experience and good practice, its main sponsors and partners, ADPC, ADRC, UNDP/BCPR, UNESCAP and OCHA are leading the way to building and strengthening regional partnerships. While most issues at the heart of the discussions in Kobe will have a global resonance, regional specificity will be addressed, from the perspective of cross-fertilization both between different parts of the world, and within regions and groups of countries. Partnerships are essential to capitalize on the experience gained during the past ten years since Yokohama.

No conference will ever control hazards or stop disasters from occurring, but the wealth of understanding, knowledge, expertise and competence to tackle complex issues of risk management, the determination of individuals and groups to reduce vulnerability, and the political will of States and local government to actually make things happen, this combination will lead to the world becoming a safer place.

John Horekens
Coordinator of the WCDR



Disaster Reduction in Asia - ISDR Informs is a collaborative effort of the Asian Disaster Preparedness Center (ADPC), Asian Disaster Reduction Center (ADRC), UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP), UN Development Programme (UNDP), UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) and the UN Inter-agency secretariat of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UN/ISDR), who together represent the ISDR Asia Partnership.

Further information on the ISDR Asia Partnership is available at www.unisdr.org/asia

The information and opinions expressed in this newsletter do not necessarily reflect those of the ISDR secretariat.

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New UN/ISDR Outreach Office in Central Asia

UN/ISDR has established a new Central Asian outreach office based in Tajikistan, covering the five CIS states: Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan that are all prone to a variety of disaster triggered by natural hazards. According to the European Commission Humanitarian Aid Office (ECHO), natural disasters have killed about 2,500 people and affected some 5.5 million (almost 10 percent of the total population) in Central Asia over the past decade. The majority of disasters caused by natural hazards know no borders and regional cooperation will be a key in preventing disasters.

It is difficult to identify a single approach to disaster risk reduction among the many cultural, social, and political distinctions in Central Asian societies. However, there seems to be an increased interest in focus on knowledge sharing, networking, developing common strategies and platforms that would result in strengthen national capacity on disaster prevention which in turn would strengthen the social and economical development. This fundament gives a prospect of fruitful work in the region together with the governmental bodies as well as NGOs, IGO and other parts of the UN system.

With the WCDR coming up in January – it will be particular interesting to follow up and build upon regional activities in Kobe and beyond.

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New ISDR focal point in Kobe, Japan

As the focal point of its activities in Asia, UN/ISDR has established a joint post with OCHA in Kobe, Japan in July 2004. Designated to the post, Ms. Takako Izumi works on regional issues and concerns relating to disaster reduction within the framework of collaboration between UN/ISDR and OCHA. In close consultation with relevant organizations, she helps promote and maintain inter-agency networks and inter-sectoral cooperation to achieve ISDR goals for Asia.

Asia has been a region most prone to all kinds of natural hazards. However, disasters from these hazards are not inevitable. On the contrary, they can be managed, reduced or prevented. In order to address this concern in Asia, numerous collaborative activities in disaster reduction and response have been pursued at the national and regional levels. This includes the promotion of Total Disaster Risk Management, a holistic approach to disaster reduction and response involving all stakeholders across all sectors and disciplines. A more recent initiative is the collaboration between and among ADPC, ADRC and UN/ISDR, together with UNDP and UNESCAP, for an open-ended regional partnership in disaster reduction in Asia. This initiative is also meant to enhance regional cooperation on disaster reduction and pursue the recommendations of the forthcoming WCDR.

Set in Kobe, Hyogo, Japan, the WCDR coincides with the commemoration of the destructive earthquake that hit the prefecture ten year ago. The many significant lessons drawn from this catastrophic earthquake shall be shared at the WCDR. These include their enormous experience in disaster recovery and reconstruction that has been widely acknowledged for their creative and innovative approach to development planning and community development. As a host to WCDR, the Government of Japan has extended its generous support to holding this important world conference in Kobe, Hyogo. This milestone event is expected to increase global awareness and promote cooperation and collaboration in disaster risk reduction as a major prerequisite of sustainable development.

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Learning to live with risk

"In the aftermath of a disaster, government authorities, businesses, community groups and individuals should all ask whether appropriate actions, such as early warning, were taken to save life and property.

Young people should also be encouraged to learn these lessons – in school, at university, and through community networks. By participating in educational activities, engaging in community risk mapping exercises, and sharing good practices, young people can learn lifelong lessons, and help make their communities more disaster resilient."

Kofi Annan, UN Secretary-General

Media contributions to disaster reduction recognized

On the occasion of the international day for disaster reduction, ADPC and UNESCAP in collaboration with the Department of Disaster Prevention and Mitigation of the Royal Thai Government presented awards to six journalists and media persons on excellence in reporting on disasters and emergencies. This scheme, introduced in 2004, covering media in Thailand will be expanded to cover other countries in Southeast Asia in 2005.

On Wednesday 13 October the world commemorated the International Day for Disaster Reduction, in line with the theme for 2004: "learning from today's disasters for tomorrow's hazards".

On the occasion of the International Day, UN/ISDR, UNICEF and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) held a press conference in Geneva that highlighted the importance of learning and education for disaster risk reduction and marked the official launching of the boardgame and video "Riskland". Jointly produced by UNICEF and UN/ISDR, the game teaches players about what they can do to reduce disaster impacts by answering questions and advancing along the board's winding path. The game is currently being translated in over 35 languages worldwide.

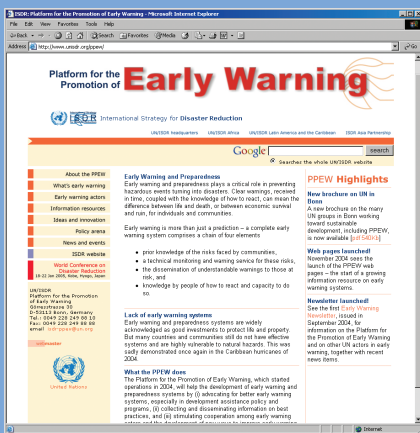


Will Your Provisions and Reserves Be Fine?

*We lie side-by-side with disaster. We don't have any ways to know when natural disaster like earthquake, tsunami, and thunderstorm hit us. Will our provisions and reserves be fine?
Submission for international art contest by Saya Takashima, 14 of Japan.*

Another activity related to learning for disaster risk reduction organized by the UN/ISDR is an international art contest for young people aged 16 and under, which attracted almost 500 submissions from around the world, of which the best 14 will appear in the 2005 ISDR calendar. Numerous artworks will also be exhibited in the WCDR Public Forum.

Further information on education and learning for disaster risk reduction (including the "Riskland" video) is available at http://www.unisdr.org/eng/public_aware/world_camp/2004/pa-camp04-inter-day-eng.htm



ISDR Platform for the Promotion of Early Warning

Early warning gets a boost with the establishment of the new ISDR Platform for the Promotion of Early Warning (PPEW), in Bonn, Germany. A child of the Second International Conference on Early Warning (EWC-II), held in Bonn in October 2003, the Platform will promote the development of more effective early warning systems to save lives, livelihoods and property. The Platform recently launched its new website as well as a newsletter highlighting news in early warning.

To receive the newsletter, contact isdr-ppew@un.org or refer to www.unisdr-earlywarning.org

Disaster reduction and SIDS

The upcoming International meeting for the review of the Barbados Plan of Action for the sustainable development of small island developing States (SIDS), to be held on 10-14 January in Mauritius is strongly linked to the discussions to be held at the WCDR. Indeed, both processes play an integral role in ensuring that the specific needs of SIDS are addressed, thus contributing to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals, the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation and other UN development objectives.

The meeting will discuss emerging threats related to risks and vulnerability in SIDS, including urbanisation, local environmental degradation and climate change.

Further information on BpoA+10 is available at <http://www.un.org/smallislands2005/> or contact John Harding, UN/ISDR, harding@un.org

Linking the disaster reduction and climate change communities

DR+CC infolink is a newsletter that represents the collaboration between the International Red Cross/Red Crescent Centre on Climate Change and Disaster Preparedness, UNDP and UN/ISDR.

The main focus of the DR+CC infolink is the intersection of disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation, to promote disaster risk reduction as an adaptation strategy, and to clarify the role of climate change in disaster risk management. It will provide information on key issues, upcoming events, publications and linkages with other like-minded organizations and individuals.

Issue 3 of DR+CC highlights inter-governmental and policy processes including those activities held at the Tenth Conference of the Parties (COP-10) to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) to be held in Buenos Aires, Argentina in December 2004. These will also feed into high-level events and thematic sessions that are of relevance to climate change and adaptation, including a round table entitled "Emerging Risks: What will tomorrow hold?" and within the thematic segment "Disaster prevention and adaptation to climate change."

DR+CC is available on-line at <http://www.unisdr.org/eng/risk-reduction/climate-change/rd-cch-infolink3-04-eng.htm>
Please direct all subscription enquiries to isdr@un.org

Beijing Declaration on the 2005 World Conference on Disaster Reduction

An International Conference on Disaster Reduction was held in Beijing, People's Republic of China, from 25 to 27 May 2004. Co-organized by the Ministry of Civil Affairs of the People's Republic of China and UN/ISDR, the Conference was part of the preparatory process for the WCDR.

More than 100 delegates from 18 countries and six international organizations attended the Conference to further promote regional cooperation and collaboration in disaster reduction, and the integration of disaster reduction into development planning, policies and implementation.

At the end of the Conference, the delegates issued the "Beijing Declaration on the 2005 World Conference on Disaster Reduction". The full text is available online at: <http://www.unisdr.org/wcdr/meetings/docs/Beijing-Declaration.doc>



ADPC Regional Consultative Committee Meets in Bangladesh

The fourth Meeting of the ADPC Regional Consultative Committee on Disaster Management (RCC4) was held in Dhaka, Bangladesh from 29-31 March 2004, in collaboration with the Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh. The Meeting was attended by 20 delegates from 15 RCC Member Countries comprising heads of National Disaster Management Offices from Bangladesh, Cambodia, China, India, Iran, Jordan, Laos, Mongolia, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Vietnam, and senior officials from Embassies of Myanmar and Philippines. In addition, 24 observers consisting representatives from regional organizations, UN Agencies, and bilateral and multilateral funding agencies: ADRC, AusAID, East West Center (EWC), International Center for Integrated Mountain Development, Kathmandu (ICIMOD), Melbourne Fire and Emergency Services Board (MFESB), Mekong River Commission (MRC), USAID/OFDA, Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA), UNDP, UNESCAP, UN/ISDR, UN-Habitat and World Food Programme (WFP), senior officials from the Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh and ADPC's NGO partners from Bangladesh.

The Honourable President of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, Professor Dr. Iajuddin Ahmed inaugurated the meeting. Keynote addresses were delivered by Professor Krasae Chanawongse, Chairman of ADPC Board of Trustees Mr. Chowdhury Kamal Ibne Yusuf, Honorable Minister for Disaster Management and Relief (MDMR), Mr. Asadul Habib Dulu, Honorable Deputy Minister and , Mr. Faruq Ahmed, Secretary-in-charge MDMR, Mr. Sálvano Briceño, Director UN/ISDR, and Dr. Suvit Yodmani, Executive Director, ADPC. The ceremony was attended by 700 people comprising Ambassadors, senior officials from UN agencies, representatives of international organizations, delegates from RCC member

countries, senior officials from the various Ministries, NGOs and the media.

The Meeting consisted of seven substantive sessions, namely:

1. Recent work of ADPC and follow up actions since RCC 3
2. Asian Consultation in preparation for the WCDR 2005.
3. Introduction of the RCC program on Mainstreaming Disaster Risk Management (DRM) into Development Practice.
4. Challenges and Experiences of Urban Disaster Risk Management with presentations by the RCC member countries, the ADPC-UDRM team and UN-Habitat.
5. Bangladesh Experiences on DRM covering innovative legal and institutional arrangements, Natural Risk Reduction and Cyclone Preparedness Programs, CDMP and Urban Risk Reduction initiatives.
6. Experiences of recent disasters and presentations by UNESCAP and UNDP's *Reducing Disaster Risk: A challenge for development* report.
7. Future directions of the RCC mechanism and ADPC.

Outcomes of RCC-4

Key outcomes of the Meeting were the recognition by all RCC member countries of:

- the importance of political will and commitment from the highest levels of government to support DRM initiatives and programmes.
- the need for enhancing the role and activities of the national disaster management agencies by building their capacities; and
- a greater role played by the media in publicising the benefits of pre-disaster risk reduction activities.
- that regional activities should present a menu of issues from which national governments could select activities that are pertinent to their priorities.

Recommendations on WCDR, Kobe 2005

In relation to the WCDR, break-out discussions focused on i) the constraints faced by the various countries for effective DRM ; ii) processes for National Reporting for WCDR; and iii) priorities to be addressed at the WCDR.

Reporting on constraints, countries identified lack of financial and technical resources, the difficulties in involving other agencies in DRM work and the consequent need for synergies between agencies and coordination, increased information exchange and communication, enforcement and effective implementation of policies, political commitment, training and increased awareness of risks and vulnerability amongst decision makers as well as the populations at risk, and the lack of effective disaster risk assessment. They also identified the need to integrate DRM with poverty reduction and raise its awareness to the current level of the integration of gender issues, the need for technical assistance in DRM, the use of technology and knowledge networks, increased access to information and regional cooperation and sharing of good practices among developing countries facing similar constraints.

The priorities that RCC Members recommended be addressed at the WCDR were the provision of technical and financial assistance; increased linkages with and coordination between the different UN agencies, NGOs, private organizations, Local Government Units and the community, need for capacity building by the provision of skilled and trained technical expertise and for effective advocacy including the integration of DRM into the different levels of the educational curriculum. Calls were to formulate performance indicators to measure the success of DRM programmes and that climate change concerns should be integrated in DRM programmes.

Outcomes of the RCC4 were reported at the 9th session of the Inter-Agency Task Force on Disaster Reduction in Geneva and at the International Conference on Disaster Reduction held in Beijing in May 2004. This influenced the formulation of the Beijing Declaration on the WCDR.

Launch of the RCC Program on Mainstreaming DRM into Development Practice

The Meeting provided clear direction for the development of the RCC program on “Mainstreaming disaster risk management into development planning” (MDRM) which seeks to systematically promote the integration of DRM into sustainable development policies and practices amongst RCC members based on the recommendations of earlier RCC Meetings.

The program to be implemented from 2004-2007 with funding from AusAID and other donors has two key objectives to:

1. Increase the awareness and political support for mainstreaming DRM into the development practice in the RCC Member countries (Regional Focus), and
2. Enhance the capacity of National Disaster Management Systems to develop and implement national plans to mainstream DRM in ongoing national development work (National Focus).

The concept for the program as endorsed by the meeting focuses on the integration of DRM into national development plans, national Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers, National Donor Strategies, the development of the National DRM Plans including implementation of the WCDR outcomes, the UN Framework Convention for Climate Change National Adaptation Plan of Action (NAPA) and Disaster Impacts Assessments. The program calls for DRM to be integrated across and in all sectors, but identified infrastructure, health, education, agriculture and micro-finance as priority sectors to initiate mainstreaming of DRM.

The RCC Members look forward to the program as an opportunity to advance a key dimension of the wide-ranging agenda that the RCC set for itself at its series of meetings held since 2000.

Building Capacity for Landslide Impact Mitigation

In July 2004 ADPC in collaboration with the Norwegian Geotechnical Institute (NGI), started a three-year program for Regional Capacity Enhancement for Landslide Impact Mitigation (RECLAIM). With core funding from the Royal Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the program was developed with a long-term objective of reducing the landslide disaster vulnerability of human settlements, infrastructure and critical facilities in the targeted countries of Bhutan, India, Indonesia, Nepal, Sri Lanka, and Thailand.

The program, which is being implemented under ADPC's Urban Disaster Risk Management (UDRM) Team, started with a regional workshop for Landslide Risk Reduction in Asia, from 13 - 15 September 2004 in Bangkok.

For more information on the program contact arambepola@adpc.net and rajesh@adpc.net or visit <http://www.adpc.net/udrm/reclaim/introduction.html>

Disaster and Development Course Focuses on Health

The first International Training Course on Disasters and Development (D&D) with focus on health was held in Bangkok from 1-12 November 2004. Attended by 24 participants from 9 countries, the course addressed health-related issues in the context of disasters and development. It was **conducted by ADPC's Public Health in Emergencies Team in line with the WHO-UNDP/BCPR** pilot project that courses on the promotion of effective public health risk/emergency management as a contribution to sustainable development.

For more information on the training activities under the team contact Dr Marcel Dubouloz, Team Leader at marcel@adpc.net.



Masayuki Kitamoto
Executive Director
Asian Disaster Reduction Center (ADRC)

New Executive Director at ADRC

It is my great pleasure to introduce the activities of the Asian Disaster Reduction Center (ADRC) for the WCDR to the readers of the ISDR Informs Asia in my new capacity as the Executive Director of the ADRC. Appointed by the Chairman of ADRC, Prof. Shigeru Itoh, I took office on 1 July 2004, as a successor to Mr. Satoru Nishikawa. Seizing the opportunity, I would like to confirm my intention to further promote ADRC's activities in cooperation with member countries and partner organizations.

ADRC Utilizes Range of Venues to Promote Risk Reduction

ADRC plans to disseminate the basic disaster reduction concept "TDRM (Total Disaster Risk Management)" and its tools such as "Community-Based Hazard Mapping" and "GLIDE (Global unique disaster IDentifier)", which have been developed and promoted by ADRC, and to contribute to knowledge sharing by organizing a public forum, thematic and poster sessions and a symposium. I would like to introduce to you, hereinafter, our activities which are my first and breathtaking challenges towards our common goal.

Public Forum

ADRC, in cooperation with OCHA Kobe, developed a holistic approach to disaster reduction, TDRM, which involves all stakeholders and addresses all phases of disaster risk management, i.e. prevention/mitigation, preparedness, response and rehabilitation/reconstruction. ADRC will organize a public forum "Sharing of Experiences for Safer Asia - TDRM and its Good Practices -" on 19 January (9:20-12:00) to provide the general public as well as the WCDR participants with an opportunity to share the concept and a variety of good practices in Asian countries. Views and comments from the floor will be welcome.

Thematic Sessions

ADRC plans to be actively involved in thematic sessions, in particular, on risk communication and post-disaster recovery. ADRC, which promotes Community-Based Hazard Mapping as a tool for risk communication and public awareness, will play an

active role in the session on risk communication. In the session on recovery coordinated by UNDP, importance of disaster risk reduction considerations and international cooperation in the recovery phase will be discussed. ADRC will contribute to other thematic sessions, to mention a few, the sessions addressing disaster data and earth observation for effective disaster reduction.

Poster Sessions

ADRC will organize two poster sessions on GLIDE and Community-Based Hazard Mapping.

International Symposium (Pre-event)

On 17 January 2005 (15:30-17:30) ADRC will organize an International Symposium "Living with Risk - disaster reduction for future generations -" co-organized with Cabinet Office, Government of Japan, UN/ISDR, Hyogo Prefecture, and OCHA Kobe, in cooperation with JICA, NHK, IFRC, and WMO. The symposium has a special significance because it coincides with the day of the tenth anniversary of the Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake and the day before the WCDR. It is planned that high level representatives from the UN, ADRC member countries as well as heads of Japanese and international organizations will be invited to serve as the guest speakers of the Symposium. It will play a catalytic role to stimulate active discussions at the WCDR and will provide the general public with an opportunity to understand the importance of cooperation and collaboration in disaster reduction.

Throughout these events, an active exchange of views and knowledge will take place on various subjects. I believe that ADRC and its member countries, regional organizations in Asia, UN and other institutions/organizations will cooperate positively and actively towards the success of the WCDR. After the WCDR, needless to say, ADRC will pursue the implementation of its outcome with our partners.

Conference on Disaster Reduction 2004 held in Cambodia

The Asian Conference on Disaster Reduction 2004, consisting of the 6th ADRC International Meeting and the 3rd ISDR Asian Meeting, was held from 4 to 6 February 2004 in Siem Reap, Cambodia, co-organized by the Governments of Cambodia and Japan, UN/ISDR, and ADRC. More than 130 people including high dignitaries and officials from Cambodia and other countries, representatives of UN/ISDR and various UN and international organizations participated in the Conference. It was honoured by a commemorative keynote speech by H.E. Mr. Samdech Hun Sen, Honourable Prime Minister of Cambodia, expressing his support for disaster reduction. Co-chaired by H.E. Mr. Nihm Vanda, Senior Minister and First Vice President of NCDM, Cambodia, and H.E. Mr. Tatsuo Sato, Special Adviser to the Prime Minister and Senior Vice Minister of Cabinet Office, Japan, the Conference issued a Chair Summary.

The Conference aimed to build a framework for disaster reduction in Asia, within which short-term and longer-term measures to reduce risk and vulnerability could be proposed, including concrete solutions that could be incorporated into national and local policies. It stressed that the major challenge is how to translate the concept into practice, institutionalize disaster risk reduction programmes at the community level, and fill in the existing gaps in the disaster reduction cycle. Concrete measures, tools and mechanisms need to be improved to achieve this aim. Conceptual frameworks must lead to specific programs of action focused on people and the actual needs of the community.

In order to respond to the emerging issues, concerns and challenges, and to address them adequately and effectively, the conference agreed that the following actions are especially important. 1) a comprehensive review of national disaster management situation, 2) evolution of national policies for disaster reduction, 3) investment in disaster reduction both structural and non-structural, including development of human resources, 4) communication and information management, and 5) enhancement of partnerships at all levels.

This Conference was held as part of a series of international and regional events serving as preparatory consultations for the WCDR. In this context, it provided a platform to identify challenges and concrete future actions to mitigate the negative impact of disasters in our region by way of important contribution to the WCDR.

Public Forum on Recovery



On 24 August 2004, commemorating the Disaster Prevention Day (1 September) and Disaster Prevention Week (30 August–5 September), a Public Forum “Recovery from Catastrophic Disasters - towards a safer world for all-” was held at UNU in Tokyo, co-organized with UNU, Cabinet Office of Japan, UN/ISDR, UNDP and ADRC, in cooperation with USAID, NHK and Hyogo Prefectural Government. It was the third of a series of forums conducted with UNU, Cabinet Office and other partners; first one on earthquake risk management held on 4 October 2003 and second one on flood risk management held on 23 March 2004.

The Forum addressed the important issue of how to enhance the understanding among the general public to further strengthen disaster reduction capacities and how to further promote international cooperation in disaster reduction, focusing on the recovery phase of disaster.

Ms. Helena Molin Valdes, Deputy Director of UN/ISDR made a keynote speech “World Conference on Disaster Reduction-A new milestone event for reducing disasters,” followed by presentations: 1) “Disaster Recovery: Faster, Better, or Safer?” by Dr. Patricia Bolton, Senior Research Scientist of Battelle Seattle Research Center, 2) “Challenge of Bam Earthquake - road map for safer communities” by Mr. Kamal Kishore, Regional Disaster Reduction Advisor for South and Southwest Asia, UNDP/BCPR, 3) “Recovery and Reconstruction towards Disaster Resilient Communities - from Lessons Learnt in Japan -” by Mr. Tadashi Harada, Deputy Director General for Disaster Management, Cabinet Office, and 4) “Sustainable Post-Disaster Recovery - Turning Disasters into Opportunities for Development” by Mr. Andrew Maskrey, Chief, Disaster Reduction Unit, UNDP/BCPR.

After the presentations the Coordinator of panel discussion, Prof. Kishie Shigekawa, Fuji-Tokoha University, pointed out that development of a mechanism for sharing lessons and experiences of disasters, especially in the phase of recovery and reconstruction, should be pursued with an aim to build safe communities through effective disaster risk management.

The Forum was honoured by the presence of His Imperial Highness the Crown Prince of Japan, which made it exceptionally important.



UNDP Sees WCDR as a Means to Build Capacity in Asia

Supporting National Participation at WCDR

UNDP's cooperation for Asian participation at the WCDR is reflected in its provision of financial and advisory support to UNDP Country Offices' for the preparation of national reports. It has supported consultative and preparatory meetings to help consolidate key national, sectoral and regional concerns of countries. UNDP is also supporting WCDR participation of stakeholders from governments and civil society organizations, ensuring a representative gathering of people at the event.

Governance for Risk Management

Over the past decade UNDP played a significant part in encouraging countries to develop institutions for disaster management and reduction. As part of a global study on Institutional and Legislative Systems (ILS) for Disaster Risk Reduction; UNDP conducted an Asian review on institutional capacity building for risk reduction that focused on the impact of UNDP's support to national institutions in disaster risk management. The review captured key strengths, gaps and lessons related to building disaster management systems in Nepal, Sri Lanka, Vietnam and the Pacific Islands, and the findings will guide UNDP and other actors in future risk reduction activities. It will also guide the development of a UNDP policy paper and strategy on institutional capacity building for disaster risk reduction; potential pilots for selected countries and practical tools for national risk reduction capacity building. Findings will be presented at the UNDP-hosted panel on 'National Policies, Institutional Development and Legislation' at the WCDR.

Local Level Risk Management (LLRM)

In a similar light a global analysis of local level risk management initiatives (LLRM) was conducted by UNDP, with a view to extracting lessons and best practices that can guide its future disaster reduction programming with local level interventions. The study reviewed results of UNDP past and ongoing assistance to LLRM initiatives in India, Nepal and Sri Lanka, capturing the role of volunteers (especially United Nations Volunteers – UNV) in building local risk management capacity. While, Phase I of this study will involve compilation and presentation of results at the WCDR, Phase 2 (post WCDR) will expand the analysis to

UNDP advocates for change and connects over 166 countries to knowledge, experience and resources to help people build a better life, through their own solutions to development challenges. Supporting over 16 programme countries and regional entities in Asia, its Bureau of Crisis Prevention and Recovery (BCPR) works to ensure that development choices reduce disaster risk and that disasters serve as opportunities for development. Its global objectives in disaster reduction and recovery are to a) achieve sustainable reduction in disaster risks; b) reduce loss of life and livelihoods due to disasters; and c) ensure that disaster recovery serves to consolidate sustainable human development.

UNDP believes that WCDR and its preparatory activities have much potential in strengthening risk reduction in Asia. Some broad areas of potential cooperation in the region are disaster risk information management systems, community based disaster management approaches, integrated climate change risk management approaches, gender implications for risk management and earthquake risk mitigation strategies.

other stakeholders representing the (inter)national, regional and local agencies, sharing experiences of government, voluntary and civil society actors. The results of the study will feed back into UNDP's ongoing and future work in LLRM to increase its effectiveness for local level risk management capacity building.

Volunteers for Disaster Risk Management

UNDP and UNV recently organized a workshop on 'South-South Cooperation for Disaster Risk Management' (October 2004) in India, to facilitate sharing of experiences related to the contributions of volunteers for disaster risk reduction in India and Sri Lanka. The workshop involved participation of 50 UNVs and disaster management focal points from 7 Asian countries, contributing to the consolidation of past experiences and future directions for the use of volunteers (especially UNV) for the strengthening of disaster management. The workshop discussed partnerships with local volunteers in Asia to build sustainable local human resources for risk reduction, concluding with a firm commitment to further strengthen the UNV mechanism within DRM in India and develop a strategy to instill similar mechanisms within countries in Asia. The findings of this workshop are being packaged for wider dissemination during the WCDR.

Understanding Gender Dimensions of Disaster Risk Management

UNDP is supporting Intermediate Technology Development Group (ITDG), South Asia to produce the India imprint of a South Asian publication on gender and disasters entitled: *Gender Dimensions in Disaster Management; a Guide for South Asia*. This initiative is timely to bridge the gap between the current sensitivity on factoring gender concerns in most voluntary programmes and the actual practice of it. This book aims to address the dearth of specific information on the subject of 'gender issues in disasters', particularly in the South Asian countries. The primary objective of compiling this Guide is to introduce the subject, and to raise awareness in policy/decision makers and the many thousands of development practitioners across South Asia, whose contribution is crucial for effective disaster management and sustainable development. Excerpts from the book will inform the WCDR deliberations. Based on the interest generated, the guide will be published in local languages Hindi, Bengali and Urdu in the coming year.

Enhancing the Disaster- Development Link

In early 2004, UNDP launched its global report on *Reducing Disaster Risk: a challenge for development*. This Report is premised on the belief that in many countries the process of development itself has a huge impact — both positive and negative — on disaster risk, and shows how countries that face similar patterns of natural hazards often experience widely differing disaster impacts. The report has been launched in a number of countries in Asia, most recently in Iran in the presence of representatives from nine countries.

Reducing Disaster Risk is available at:
<http://www.undp.org/bcpr/disred/english/publications/rdr.htm>

Disaster Risk Management Inventories and Information Systems

Lack of information on existing and emerging patterns of disaster risk is recognized as a major constraint for effective disaster management policy and programme decisions in South Asia. In order to address this gap, UNDP with the support of LA RED (Network for Social Studies on Disaster Prevention in Latin America) adapted and implemented an existing methodology called DesInventar, to help build systematic disaster inventories in Asia. These inventories capture time-series, local-level impacts of disaster events (specially small and medium scale disasters) and help map trends in emerging disaster risks and in making policy, programme design and resource allocation decisions to manage those risks.

Based on pilots UNDP expanded the scope of introducing this methodology beyond India and Nepal, to Vietnam and Sri Lanka in 2004, which are at varying levels of institutionalizing this inventory during this important step towards developing national disaster risk information management systems. UNDP has been encouraged by countries' positive response to this inventory, and is currently looking to expand the scope of countries in the region, so that a South Asia Regional Disaster Inventory can be built in due course. Its interface with other global systems like GLIDE is also being explored. This methodology will be shared during thematic sessions at the WCDR, especially at side events on disaster risk Indexing, vulnerability and impact assessment.

Adaptation to Climate Change

Adaptation to climate variability and change and its links to vulnerability reduction have been of much discussion in South Asian countries, particularly those that are prone to regular climate-related disasters such as floods and droughts. Despite this interest, there has been little investigation on adaptation strategies and initiatives for climate change risk reduction. To address this gap, UNDP invited the Social and Environmental Transition (ISET) to share the findings of its regional climate change study at a workshop on 7-8 June 2004 in India. The study is the first major effort to capture how rural populations in Asia are adapting to natural climate variability, identifying strategies through which actors can intervene to effectively reduce vulnerability and associated social instability. The workshop united over 50 regional and global stakeholders, initiating a dialogue on strategies and adaptation initiatives for climate-related disasters in the region.

UNDP is supporting the production of a CD on 'A Climate Risk Management Approach to Disaster Reduction and Adaptation to Climate Change', comprising the proceedings of a meeting on "Integrating Disaster Reduction and Adaptation to Climate Change" organized by UNDP in Havana in June 2002. This CD will be made available at the WCDR.

Communications Strategy for WCDR

UNDP has developed a communication strategy for the WCDR that will help raise public awareness for reducing disaster risk and generate financial and political support at the regional and national levels. The strategy has helped compile experiences through approaching critical national and local actors, including good practice and lessons related to disaster risk information management and recovery strategies for risk reduction (with case studies on the Bam Earthquake and the Sri Lanka Floods in 2003). These are being developed for wider dissemination during WCDR side-events on Sustainable Recovery.



UNESCAP prepared for WCDR

Ti Le-Huu

Economic Affairs Officer, Water Resources Section, Environment and Sustainable Development Division, UNESCAP

Collaboration with the Typhoon Committee

Under the framework of Typhoon Committee, which had been established by its 14 Members under the auspices of UNESCAP and the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), a series of regional activities has been implemented aiming at promoting typhoon-related disaster prevention and preparedness. The major activities included the following:

- Development of guidelines for the dam operation in relation flood forecasting, led by Republic of Korea.
- On-the-job training on flood forecasting for Typhoon Committee members, led by Malaysia
- Extension of flood forecasting systems to selected river basins, led by China
- Pilot project on the preparation of flood hazard maps, led by Japan
- Project on the evaluation and improvement of operational flood forecasting system focusing on model performance, led by Republic of Korea
- Pilot project on the establishment of community-based flood forecasting system, led by the Philippines
- Pilot project on the establishment on flash-flood and sediment disaster forecasting and warning systems, led by Japan
- Improvement of Hydrological products in response to user needs, led by the Philippines
- Project on the evaluation and improvement of hydrological instruments and telecommunication equipment, led by China

Many of the above activities were jointly implemented by all Members of the Typhoon Committee to prepare for their possible participation in WCDR, among which the most advanced activities are those related the preparation of flood hazard maps and the

UNESCAP has been taking an active part in the preparation of the WCDR, including the participation of UNESCAP in the UN/ISDR publication *Know Risk*, to be available at the WCDR.

UNESCAP has been working closely with several international and regional organizations as well as member countries of UNESCAP to prepare for WCDR. The activities, which are directly linked to the preparation of WCDR, are briefly discussed below.

establishment of flash flood and sediment disasters forecasting and warning systems.

These activities were also intended to demonstrate the effectiveness of regional collaboration in synergizing national efforts on disaster prevention and preparedness. In this context, an international symposium cum regional workshop on “Living with Risk: Dealing with Typhoon-related Disasters as part of Integrated Water Resources Management” was held in Seoul in September 2004 to help establish a clearer strategy for sustaining these national and regional efforts. The international symposium cum regional workshop was organized by the Ministry of Construction and Transportation, the Korea Institute of Construction Technology and Korea Water Corporation of Republic of Korea in cooperation with Ministry of Land, Infrastructure and Transport and the Infrastructure Development Institute (IDI) of Japan, ADRC, Typhoon Committee Secretariat and UNESCAP.

The regional workshop reviewed progress of work and achievements, adopted measures and procedures to improve the implementation and worked out detailed road maps to ensure successful completion of these joint activities. In addition, the workshop also identified measures for better mainstreaming disaster prevention and preparedness activities into the integrated water resources management process.

Collaboration with UNDP and ECLAC

In the common efforts to ensure effective integration of disaster prevention and preparedness measures into socio-economic development policies and strategies, UNESCAP in cooperation with UNDP and the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and Caribbean (ECLAC) has started the introduction and application of new methodologies on holistic assessment of socio-economic impacts of disasters in Asia. The project is funded by UNDP/BCPR. Following the organization of a regional workshop in May 2004 to introduce the methodology developed by ECLAC, seven countries, namely China, Lao PDR, Philippines, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Viet Nam, have agreed to apply the proposed methodology to assess impacts of hydro-meteorological disasters. It is expected that some of the results could be made available at the WCDR.

Collaborative activities with ADPC and ECHO

With financial support of the European Commission Humanitarian Office (ECHO), UNESCAP and ADPC completed the implementation of Phase 2 of the Partnership in Disaster Reduction in South-East Asia (PDR-SEA 2) in 2003/2004. The project aimed at strengthening capacity to prepare and protect at risk communities from natural disasters through training and information exchange in targeted South-East Asian countries. Outputs of PDR-SEA 2 included a set of handbooks for CBRDM field practitioners and integration to socio-economic development process. Subsequent to the successful completion of Phase 2, a proposal to strengthen the foundation of community-based disaster risk management (CBDRM) in South East Asia was submitted to ECHO for consideration as Phase 3 of PDR-SEA.

It is expected that the above achievements would enable UNESCAP and its partners to take an active part in WCDR, especially on the Sessions related to flood hazard mapping, CBDRM and regional cooperation in Asia.



OCHA Promotes Preparedness for Effective Response

OCHA is very pleased to join the Asian partnership consisting of ADPC, ADRC, UNDP, UNESCAP and UN/ISDR. The mission of OCHA is to mobilize and coordinate effective and principled humanitarian action in partnership with national and international actors.

OCHA is ready to enhance the collaboration with all stakeholders in disaster management in Asia pursuing more disaster resistant societies through a strong and holistic disaster risk management approach.

In all the phases of the disaster cycle, we all aim for the same objectives to: save lives, preserve health, and reduce suffering and economic losses. OCHA promotes the inclusion of disaster reduction concerns already during the emergency phase, to ensure that lessons are learned and used as a base for sustainable recovery and reconstruction activities.

The OCHA Kobe office has been involved in numerous activities promoting interagency and overall response preparedness of the international humanitarian community, as well as capacity building on both national and local level in many countries. Through the collaboration with key stakeholders in disaster management in Asia such as ADRC, ADPC, NGOs and UN agencies, OCHA has been actively participating in the promotion of the Total Disaster Risk Management approach. Together with ADRC, OCHA has organized a number of regional workshops and conferences with support from various donors to strengthen the understanding of integrating disaster risk management in national and local development planning and activities. Moreover, national training workshops have been held together with ADRC, UNDP and other partners in 7 countries in the region.

OCHA Kobe and ADRC have been active in facilitating the Asian Disaster Reduction and Response Network (ADRRN) to strengthen the regional cooperation on disaster reduction and response among Asian NGOs. OCHA is also active supporting regional collaboration in disaster preparedness through the ASEAN Disaster Management Committee.

In the WCDR, OCHA together with WFP will facilitate the sessions under cluster five: *Preparedness for Effective Response*, and will also organize two sessions: "Humanitarian preparedness" and "Assessment to enhance immediate response". OCHA will also present a photo exhibition during the conference. For OCHA it is important to emphasize how we can strengthen national and local disaster management capacity. The on-going joint efforts in Asia to promote the TDRM approach will contribute to the discussion during the WCDR.

UNESCO Works to Reduce Natural Disasters

By Badaoui Rouhban, Chief, Section for Disaster Reduction, UNESCO, Paris and Carlos Villacis Project Coordinator Consultant for UNESCO & UN/ISDR

As a result of population increase and concentration, societies in hazard-prone areas in Asia and Latin America are becoming more vulnerable and their protective systems are not necessarily adapted to cope with this increase in urban vulnerability. Recent tragic natural disasters in countries of these regions, including floods, hurricanes, earthquakes and landslides, have severely affected the development of these communities. In Bangladesh for example, just one flood destroyed 15,000 km of roads, 14,000 schools, and caused US\$ 500 million in damage to rice crops.

The toll from natural disasters is particularly severe and tragic in weak economies of Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean. Since there is a basic relationship between development and disaster-proneness, the impact of disasters in these countries is closely linked to poverty levels. There is a need, therefore, for integrated approaches in development policies and planning, to take into account disaster reduction goals for the overall benefit of the socio-economic development process. Above all, improved building capacities and proper urban planning are crucial for disaster resilience in hazard-prone communities. UNESCO, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, bringing together as it does the natural sciences, education, culture, communication, information and the social and human sciences, has an important contribution to make to the development of a culture of disaster prevention.



Photo: Kathmandu students showing their building models after testing them

UNESCO, in partnership with UN/ISDR, has carried out, over the last three years, a project entitled "Reduction of natural disasters in Asia, the Caribbean and Latin America". The project has focused on four earthquake-prone cities. The overall purposes were to promote the development and application of wise disaster reduction practices by improving preventive action and disaster preparedness through community empowerment and elaboration, dissemination and application of prevention tools and information. To achieve its goal, the initiative worked in close collaboration with local authorities, experts, and institutions of selected cities in Asia and Latin America to a) evaluate the cities' existing development plans and determine their potential impact on the level of urban earthquake risk, b) utilize the cities' growth tendencies (demographic, economic) to estimate future earthquake risk if urban growth continues with the current characteristics, and c) identify feasible, effective mitigation options

for each participating city and perform cost-benefit analyses to determine the most efficient risk reduction activities for each particular city. The cities selected for the project were Antofagasta (Chile), Kathmandu (Nepal), and Tijuana (Mexico). In addition, the project has initiated links with the city of Dehradun (India). The UNESCO offices in Kathmandu, New Delhi, San José (Costa Rica), Mexico and Santiago (Chile) and the UN/ISDR office in San José have facilitated the project activities.

The project placed the participation of local communities at the centre of disaster reduction initiatives by promoting the empowerment and capacity-building of local government staff and stakeholders. This vocation was accomplished. The initiative produced urban planning mitigation options tailored to the particular needs and implementation capacity of each city. These options are being incorporated into the cities' development plans. Additionally, the project increased local capacity by installing risk assessment tools in the computer systems of the local governments and training city official and local experts on the use and application of those tools to urban planning. Also, the project increased public awareness through the active participation of city institutions and representatives of the various sectors of the community throughout the project and a collaborative interaction with the local mass media. In the course of the project, the professionals and officials of the participating cities presented their work to the international community and exchanged experiences and best practices.

The project included also an educational component to promote the establishment of a culture of preparedness and planning in the participating cities. Demonstration projects were implemented with local schools at the primary and high-school levels. The aim of these demonstration projects was to promote the introduction of risk reduction and management in the educational system of the participating cities, and, in this way, contribute to the long-term objective of creating a culture of prevention. School children from the participating cities were invited to present their work at a final symposium in Tijuana-San Jose.

The impact of the project has been felt immediately. The cities' development plans are being revised to include the risk reduction options produced by the project. The representatives of the Kathmandu City Government to the project's mid-term meeting in UNESCO Headquarters in Paris expressed: "*The beauty of this project is that we, the staff of the city government, performed the assessment of Kathmandu's risk and we now understand what is making our city vulnerable to earthquakes. Thus, we now can act accordingly.*" The local working teams are using the methodology learned during the project to initiate similar efforts in other cities. The educational component of the initiative has been nominated for the Tech Awards, a prestigious prize that is awarded annually in the United States.

UN Centre for Regional Development gears up for WCDR

UNCRD has been and will be implementing various activities to contribute to the WCDR. As a pre-event of the WCDR, UNCRD organized an International Symposium on "Community Legacy in Disaster Management" on 7 February 2004 in Kobe. UNCRD also organized an International Conference on "Partnership in Community Based Disaster Management (CBDM) in Asia" 24-26 August 2004, Delhi, India as a pre-event of the WCDR, aiming at initiating the PARTNERSHIP formation process towards the WCDR. As a follow-up of the conference, UNCRD organized an On-Line Forum to collect voices from the world.

At the WCDR, UNCRD plans to support the Cluster 4 "Reducing the underlying risk factors" with UNEP and WHO. Under the cluster, UNCRD will organize a session on Sustainable CBDM and a session on "Safer Housing. UNCRD will also organize an international symposium on "Safer Communities" in the Public Forum. In relation with the Symposium, the Improvised Shake Table Demonstration will be conducted to disseminate a demonstration education tool on safer housing for non-engineered buildings for its wider applications which promote implementation of simple techniques of earthquake disaster resistant housing in vulnerable communities of the developing countries.

Lessons from Bam inform WCDR

Almost one year after the Bam earthquake that killed 26,000 people, experts on disaster risk management gathered in Teheran to discuss how to reduce seismic risk.

Over 150 participants, including representatives of international organizations, disaster risk managers, practitioners and seismic experts from 20 countries gathered in Tehran on 16-18 November 2004, and together endorsed a strong message on earthquake risk reduction for the WCDR and beyond. The seminar was organized by OCHA in collaboration with UNDP and UN/ISDR as well as the Government of Iran.

“The seminar highlighted the fact that while a broad understanding of what constitutes effective earthquake risk reduction is often available, it is not sufficiently and appropriately applied, due to a number of social, economic and political reasons,” said Rashid Khalikov, Deputy Director of OCHA in Geneva. “It was encouraging that the discussions and conclusions focused specifically on how to overcome these obstacles.”

“The event proved very useful for the World Conference in January as it analysed key issues related to the entire spectrum of earthquake risk reduction in great detail, which in turn will feed into the discussions in Kobe,” said UN/ISDR Sálvano Briceño.

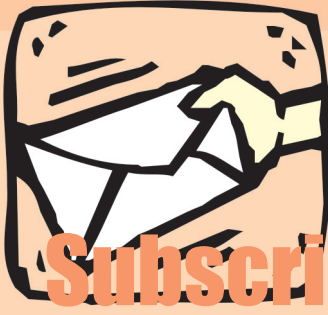
Urgent and sustained actions are required for the efficient implementation of available know-how in developing countries, with the main objective of saving human lives and reducing economic losses.

The following priorities were identified:

- *Risk reduction policies should take highest priority in development plans at all levels. A genuine balance between post-disaster response and pre-disaster preparedness, prevention and reduction is essential.*
- *Authorities need to adopt an integrated, comprehensive and multi-hazard strategy for disaster risk reduction including prevention, mitigation, preparedness, response, recovery and rehabilitation. This can most appropriately be provided through multi-disciplinary and inter-sectoral interactions, taken into consideration socio-economic and cultural issues, including the civil society, from international to the local level;*

- *Maximum public participation, appropriate decentralization of responsibilities and resources and clarification of accountabilities are key considerations;*
- *Development planning processes, including urban and land-use plans, poverty reduction strategies and development frameworks, with active participation of the communities at risk, should systematically and fully integrate disaster risk reduction;*
- *Collective prevention and safety culture should become an integral part of development programmes and be promoted through risk communication, awareness and educational activities, with a focus on children and families and using all types of media;*
- *Women play a key role in ensuring the effective implementation of all the phases of disaster risk reduction and their contribution should be emphasised;*
- *Local authorities should ensure sustainable development of urban and rural areas and make sure that all structures, especially essential buildings and infrastructures, such as schools and hospital, are safely built with the full implementation of codes. Providing incentives is an effective tool for enforcing safety standards and zero tolerance is required for any type of violation;*
- *Scientific communities also have a responsibility to provide effective, useful and affordable solutions for vulnerability reduction and earthquake safe design and construction;*
- *Local capacity building supported by appropriate transfer of knowledge, experience and technology, at community, national, regional and international level is required;*
- *The provision of necessary resources to implement earthquake risk reduction is a prerequisite for effective action. Guidance is required to develop cost benefit analysis as incentives to finance risk reduction measures. Risk sharing mechanisms through public-private partnership can contribute to enhancing resilience to earthquake impacts.*

Participants called on Governments, international organizations and non-governmental organizations preparing for and participating in the WCDR to integrate the above priorities in the outcomes of the Conference and in particular the framework for future action to be adopted. Implementing these priorities will support the achievements of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR), the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and ultimately, sustainable development.



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We are interested in articles or opinion pieces about projects, activities, programs, educational initiatives, and lessons learned. Scientific and technical papers are also welcome, as is news about upcoming workshops, seminars, meetings, publications, videos, CD-ROMs and other material related to disasters.

Submissions may include photographs, graphs, charts, and other illustrations. However, they should not exceed 1,500 words. Brevity is appreciated in order to display the broadest possible spectrum of ideas and case histories. When using acronyms of national and even regional bodies please quote the name of the agency or institution in full the first time you mention it. It is also essential for you to include at the end of your text, the following information:

- The name of a contact to which further enquiries may be directed,
- The institution represented, and
- Telephone and fax numbers, postal address, and e-mail address.



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