

The 4th Asian Seismological Commission 2002 sheds light on various aspects of earthquake risk management



The inauguration ceremony of ASC 2002 was held on 24 November 2002. The picture shows (from left to right): Dr. Upendra Devkota, Honorable Minister for Health, Science and Technology; Prof. Krasae Chanawongse, Chairman, ADPC's Board of Trustees; Mr. Amod M. Dixit, General Secretary of NSET-Nepal; and Prof. Zhu Chuanzhen, ASC's Secretary General.

Over 200 participants from 20 different countries of the Asia and Pacific nations converged at the 4th General Assembly of Asian Seismological Commission 2002 (ASC) organized during 24-26 November 2002 in Kathmandu to discuss and share their experiences on earthquake hazard assessment and risk management. The event was organized by the Asian Seismological Commission, a regional scientific organization affiliated to the International Association of Seismology and Physics of the Earth's Interior (IASPEI); National Society for Earthquake Technology-Nepal (NSET-Nepal) and Asian Disaster Preparedness Center (ADPC).

ASC recognized the high seismicity and very large population that combine to create the earthquake risk in Asia and the need to improve cooperation among countries in Asia and Pacific region to mitigate the catastrophic effects of large earthquakes. The first assembly of ASC was held in August 1996 in China, second and third were held in India and Iran, respectively.

The ASC 2002 was inaugurated by Dr. Upendra Devkota, Honorable Minister for Health, Science and Technology, Nepal. More than 100 papers were presented and discussed in three parallel sessions. A poster session, the ASC Council Meeting, and a Shake-Table Demonstration also took place.

Prior to the ASC 2002, a training course on Earthquake Vulnerability Reduction for Cities (EVRC) was offered during 11-22 November 2002 by ADPC in association with International Institute for Geoinformation Science and Earth Observation (ITC), the Netherlands, International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD) and NSET-Nepal. The course was conducted for the second time, based on its curriculum and materials from its first delivery held in Kathmandu in May 2002 by ADPC. This time, the EVRC-2 was attended by 30 participants from Bhutan, China, India, Iran, Malaysia, Nepal, Pakistan, the Philippines and Thailand.

The objective of the course was to give the participants an overview of the methodologies that can be implemented to reduce the vulnerability to earthquakes. Apart from theories and techniques in the series of earthquake hazard, vulnerability and risk assessment, the participants had an opportunity to learn and gain hands-on experiences on the latest development of the application of GIS and RS to hazard management, which were new features added to the EVRC-2.

The third EVRC (EVRC-3) will be held during 9-18 June 2003 in Dhaka, Bangladesh. Online application is available at <http://www.adpc.ait.ac.th/training/form.html>. Please see page 3 for more details.

Change of ADPC telephone numbers

Please note that effective from 2 January 2003, ADPC official telephone numbers are (662) 516-5900-10. The fax numbers remain the same, (662) 524-5360 and (662) 524-5350.

INSIDE...

- Community Fire Risk Mapping and Risk Reduction Planning in Lao PDR
- ADPC offers the third regional course on Earthquake Vulnerability Reduction for Cities (EVRC-3)
- Urban Disaster Mitigation Primer in Asia under development by ADPC

National Demonstration Projects

Lao PDR Urban Disaster Mitigation Project (LUDMP)

Community Fire Risk Mapping and Risk Reduction Planning in Lao PDR



The panel at the Community Fire Risk Mapping Workshop held in Vientiane, Lao PDR

The Lao Urban Disaster Mitigation Program (LUDMP) Phase 1 has completed the fire risk zonation of Vientiane. One hundred communities in four districts have been covered in this risk mapping. The Phase 1 activities also include a risk mapping and risk reduction planning in one high risk community, besides the city risk mapping.

From a list of four priority communities identified by the LUDMP team, Ban Hatsdy Tay in Chantabury District was selected as the community wherein to undertake the community risk mapping. A brief Training Needs Assessment was conducted by Ms. Lorna Victoria, AUDMP Consultant together with Ms. Suthira Suwanarpa, AUDMP Project Manager, Messrs. Bouvanh and Vongsak (of the Urban Research Institute - URI), Thonephokam (of the National Disaster Management Office – NDMO) and Surisak (of the Fire Prevention and Protection Department – FPPD) on 9-11 October 2002, followed by a Community Fire Risk Mapping Workshop at Ban Hatsdy Tay on 24-28 October 2002. The workshop was attended by 27 participants representing the community.

The participants conducted a community survey, based on their knowledge about the community and came up with a community fire risk map, which comprises the following attributes: fire history; fire source related to livelihood; building construction and density; quality of electrical wiring system; access in and out of community for fire truck, vehicles and people in the event of fire; houses in which there are young children and elderly, who should be put to safety in case of fire; and mapping resources in the community which can be used in preparedness, mitigation and prevention activities.

At the end of the workshop, some measures for community fire prevention, mitigation and preparedness were identified as follows;

- Increasing Community Awareness - of the fire risks and prevention, mitigation and preparedness measures to undertake at the individual, household and community level
- Implementing Individual, Household, Community Fire Safety and Preparedness Measures - 24 hours
- Training and Education - fire drills and first aid training
- Organization and Strengthening of Community Fire Volunteers Brigade
- Working for and Enforcing Fire Safety Regulations
- Networking and Resource Generation



Community Fire Risk Map of Ban Hatsdy shows levels of fire risk in Ban Hatsdy community, a pilot site for community fire assessment. The red section indicates very high risk and blue shows areas with moderate risk. Based on this community fire risk map, further detailed strategies for fire prevention, mitigation and preparedness were developed and discussed among the participants of the Community Fire Risk Reduction Planning Workshop.

On November 10, 2002, a **Community Fire Risk Reduction Planning Workshop** was held at Ban Hatsdy Tay with the same group of participants to detail out the fire safety measures. Participants were divided into four groups to discuss in further detailed strategies for fire prevention, mitigation and preparedness. Each group was also given a map where they were to put the escape routes of people in case of occurrence of fire in the community. In addition, they were asked to do a poster and pamphlets to be used in increasing community awareness on safety measures to be undertaken. They were given sample posters, pamphlets and some pictures to use, crayons and paper as materials.

Results of the group discussion related to the key strategies will be shared among other community members in order for them to be actively involved in the implementation of the fire risk reduction plan. The project implementing organizations will work closely with the community to undertake selected activities, based on the recommendations derived from the workshop.

Training, Resource Materials and Continuing Education

The 3rd National Urban Disaster Mitigation Course conducted in Lao PDR

The third National Urban Disaster Mitigation Course in Lao PDR, jointly organized by the URI, NDMO and the ADPC, was conducted during 16-21 December 2002. The course was conducted at the office of URI and attended by 25 participants from URI, NDMO, Vientiane Municipality, Vientiane Urban Authority, and various provincial municipalities. The resource persons came from URI, NDMO and ADPC.

Prior to the delivery of the course, its materials were adapted and translated into Laotian. In the future, the course will be offered by URI on a regular basis as part of its annual training calendar.

The 5th Natural Disaster Mitigation course in Sri Lanka

Twenty-two participants representing disaster-prone districts across the island of Sri Lanka attended the fifth Natural Disaster Mitigation course organized during 2-7 January 2003 by Centre for Housing, Planning and Building (CHPB) in collaboration with ADPC.

The heterogeneous group of participants consisted of town planners, engineers, university lecturers, Municipal Council officers, Fire Department's officers, environment officers, district land use planners and CHPB's trainer.

The 6-day course was organized at the Training Auditorium of CHPB. It was adjusted and re-designed in line with the ADPC's regional training course on Urban Disaster Mitigation to suit the natural disaster environment in Sri Lanka.

Overall, the large majority responded that the course content provided satisfactory knowledge gains. Similar response was seen for depth of content covered in sessions. There was full consensus that the material handed out was satisfactory and all participant agreed that the course imparted new knowledge.

The need for extra content areas to suit the changing context in Sri Lanka were recommended by some participants. These recommendations will be taken into account for further development of the course.

ADPC offers the 3rd regional course on Earthquake Vulnerability Reduction for Cities

The third Regional Training Course on Earthquake Vulnerability Reduction for Cities (EVRC-3) will be conducted during 9-18 June 2003 in Dhaka, Bangladesh by Asian Disaster Preparedness Center in collaboration with the National Society for Earthquake Technology-Nepal, World Seismic Safety Initiative, Earthquake and Megacities Initiative and BRAC University, Bangladesh.

With increasing population and the potential encroachment of urban development into areas susceptible to earthquakes, vulnerability to earthquakes could intensify. However, with a greater understanding of the causes and effects of earthquakes, reduction of damage and loss of life from these destructive events can be made possible. The course on EVRC has been designed to achieve this goal.

In case of Bangladesh, apart from annual rain-induced disaster risks such as flood, cyclone and storm surge, the country also faces considerable seismic risks, though perceived unimportant by most of its population and some policy-makers. Geographically, Bangladesh is located within the area of two fault lines (the gap between the two Tectonic Plates). As a result, many Bangladeshi cities have the possibility of facing devastating earthquake without pre-warning. During the last 150 years, seven major earthquakes with magnitude of an average of 7 on Richter scale and a number of those of moderate intensity have affected Bangladesh, causing significant damages to people's lives and property. In 1993, the government of Bangladesh established the Disaster Management Bureau, which has prepared comprehensive Disaster Management Plans with more attention lately given to mitigating the effects of earthquakes, particularly in urban areas.

The EVRC-3 course is particularly useful for those concerned with reduction of vulnerability to earthquakes in urban areas worldwide. The course aspires to build on past and enduring endeavors such as Earthquakes and Megacities initiative (EMI), UN, IDNDR, ISDR initiatives for Risk Assessment Tools for Diagnosis of Urban Areas against Seismic Disasters (RADIUS) and Global Earthquake Safety Initiative (GESI) launched by UNCRD and GeoHazard International.

The course is open to all countries in the Asia-Pacific region. The course fee is US\$1,500 per participant. Costs of books and materials are included in the fee.

If you are interested in participating in this course, please contact ADPC's Training and Education Division by phone at (66-2) 5165900-10 or via e-mail at supicha@ait.ac.th or buddhiwe@ait.ac.th

Information and Networking

Urban Disaster Mitigation Primer in Asia under development by ADPC

Since the beginning of the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction (IDNDR) in 1990, we have seen significant increases in vulnerability and risk alongside corresponding advances in hazards forecasting, risk assessment, information management, understanding sustainability, and integrating risk reduction into urban planning and development.

Notwithstanding these advances, most of the currently available resource documents on disaster mitigation and management represent the thinking and experience of over ten years ago.

A Primer on Urban Disaster Mitigation in Asia is needed to share the advances in knowledge and experience gained since 1990. Such a Primer could:

1. Provide policy- and decision-makers with convincing arguments on the importance of disaster risk management and the steps to be taken
2. Serve practitioners as a state-of-the-art "how-to" guide and reference on good practices in urban disaster mitigation in Asia
3. Contribute to the mainstreaming of a holistic approach to disaster mitigation

In connection with the Regional Workshop on Best Practices in Disaster Mitigation (Oct.-Nov. 2002 issue), ADPC organized a "mini-workshop" to seek advice on the approach, framework, and process for development of the Primer on 27 September 2002. The 20 participants included the Regional Workshop's theme resource persons and various key ADPC partners and staff.

The mini-workshop was conducted in true brainstorming fashion to bring to light a broad range of inputs and ideas. The eight themes of the Regional Workshop may serve as the backbone for the Primer. A draft outline of the Primer that further expanded on the themes was developed. The format and design of the Primer was also discussed extensively.

The Asian Disaster Preparedness Center (ADPC) is a regional resource center dedicated to safer communities and sustainable development in Asia and the Pacific through disaster reduction. 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 10 countries – Bangladesh, Cambodia, India, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Nepal, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand and 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 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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Extracts taken from "A Concept Paper on Development of The Primer on Urban Disaster Mitigation in Asia," prepared by Ms. Shirley Mattingly, ADPC Consultant, with inputs from the Mini-Workshop on the Primer, 27 September 2002, Bali, Indonesia. For a copy of the concept paper, please e-mail ccapikul@ait.ac.th. To share your thoughts and suggestions on the Primer, please write to the AUDMP discussion list: audmp-network@yahoogroups.com

The 8th annual Working Group Meeting scheduled for March in Colombo

The 8th annual Working Group Meeting of the AUDMP jointly organized by ADPC and the Centre for Housing, Planning and Building (CHPB), Sri Lanka, is scheduled to be held in Colombo, Sri Lanka during 17 to 19 March 2003. The theme for this year's meeting is 'Disaster Risk Communication and Monitoring & Evaluation' in urban disaster mitigation.

The Working Group Meeting will bring together representatives from project partner institutions in the region to review progress of the program and discuss future directions. Over fifty participants will attend this year's meeting, representing an extensive coalition of partner organizations including local and national government agencies, NGOs, academic institutions and others from 10 different countries in which the AUDMP's projects are being implemented.

Discussions during the meeting will focus on issues pertaining to monitoring and evaluation for urban disaster mitigation as well as the strategies for communicating disaster risk to different groups of target audiences in different partner countries. A set of disaster risk communication guidelines developed by AUDMP will also be disseminated among country partners to enhance effectiveness of their initiatives in this regard.

Announcement of new electronic format of AUDMP Monthly Activity Highlights

For faster dissemination, AUDMP Monthly Activity Highlights (MAH) will be produced only in electronic format from next issue onward (February 2003). Archives of old issues of MAH as well as future issues can be viewed at www.adpc.ait.ac.th. For subscription, please send a blank e-mail to adpc-announce-subscribe@yahoogroups.com