UNITED NATIONS ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMISSION FOR ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

Training workshop on knowledge and policy gaps in disaster risk reduction and development planning
8-9 March 2016
Bangkok

Concept Note

The Asia-Pacific region remains the most hazard-prone region in the world in terms of frequency, magnitude and type of hazard. While the introduction and mainstreaming of ICT at various stages of disaster management has proven to be indispensable in identifying, managing, and reducing disaster risk, promoting early recovery from disasters, and building resilience through business continuity and disaster recovery planning, many countries still struggle to integrate these principles into their development planning. Despite strong interest and the growing prevalence of ICT in disaster risk reduction and management, ICT capabilities and governance remain limited at the regional, sub-regional and national levels. Low government investment and limited awareness further contribute to information, knowledge and policy gaps related to ICT for DRR and development and to weak institutional and human capacity to develop and implement ICT for DRR and development policies and programmes. Highlighting the importance of this issue, in 2015, the ESCAP published the latest edition of the Asia Pacific Disaster Report, which dealt extensively with ICT-related issues, such as disaster information management.

In this context, ESCAP has been actively engaged in the implementation of a Development Account (DA) project on strengthening information and communications technology capacities for disaster risk reduction and development. This project has included research, training and capacity building activities. As part of the research component, ESCAP has engaged in a series of country studies which examined lessons learned and good practices in the region on the subject of integrating ICT into development planning. These studies have shown a need for enhancements to ICT infrastructure resilience, multi-hazard early warnings systems and the value of other emerging ICT applications such as mobile data. In addition, good practices such as the application of communication network diversity, business continuity and disaster recovery planning, and the value of spectrum management (TV whitespace) have been identified.

The results of these research activities have been integrated into a series of capacity-building training workshops which have been held to help member countries benefit from this acquired knowledge, supplemented by peer learning. This training workshop is part of that series and will gather participants from selected ESCAP sub-regions to build their capacities in these key areas. By including a variety of sub-regions, the meeting will enable countries to take advantage of synergies and promote cooperation on issues of common interest.

Objectives of the workshop

Against the backdrop of the above-listed completed and ongoing activities, this meeting is organized with the following objectives in mind:

1. Address key thematic areas for capacity building in the ESCAP region, including:
   o Communications resilience
   o Multi-hazard early warning systems
   o Emerging Solutions
   o Technology disaster recovery planning and business continuity

2. Improved awareness of stakeholders to utilize ICT to collect and analyse disaster data and mainstream disaster risk reduction into development planning
3. Improved capacity of stakeholders to integrate emerging ICT solutions into disaster risk reduction and development planning.

Expected Participants

- Policymakers and government officials from ministries of ICT and related agencies
- National Disaster Management Authorities (NDMAs)
- National technical supporting agencies providing disaster management information services, including relevant information analysis and decision supporting tools

Date and venue: 8-9 March 2016, UNCC, Bangkok

Tentative Programme

Tuesday 8 March 2016	
9:00 – 9:45	**Session 1: A View of the ESCAP Region** *Objective: Regional synthesis identifying salient commonalties and differences in the region* *Opening Speech:* Shamika Sirimanne *Report Launch: Building e-resilience:* Enhancing the role of ICTs for Disaster Risk Management: IDS and LirneAsia
9:45 – 12:00	**Session 2: Regional Perspectives on Gaps and Opportunities in Promoting ICT for DRR** *Presentations*: 1. Asia-Pacific Information Superhighway: Enhancing e-resilience of ICT Infrastructure: (Atsuko Okuda, ESCAP) 2. Asia Pacific Disaster Report (Sanjay Srivastava, ESCAP) 3. Multi-hazard Early Warning Systems(Alf Blikberg, ESCAP) 4. Satellite Technologies and GeoPortals (Tae Hyung Kim, ESCAP) 5. Asia Pacific Gateway for Disaster Risk Management and Development (Puji Pujiono, ESCAP) Q&A
12:00 – 13:00	**Lunch Break**
13:00 – 14:30	**Session 3: Emerging Solutions** *Presentations*: 6. Open Government Data (Mr. Keping Yao, UNPOG) 7. Social Media for DRM (ADPC) 8. Mobile Data for DRM (Rohan Samarajiva, LirneAsia) Q&A
14:30 – 14:45	**Coffee Break**

14:45 – 16:15	**Session 4: National Perspectives on Terrestrial Connectivity for DRR in Central Asia** *Introductory presentation*: Ms. Duangthip Chomprang, ISOC Panel Discussion: • Tajikistan (Mr. Sherkhonov Urozali) • China (Mr. Hui Chen) • Pakistan (Mr. Muhammad Yaseen Shar Baloch)
16:15 – 16:30	**Summary of the day**

Wednesday 9 March 2016	
9:00 – 10:30	**Session 5: National Perspectives on Multi-hazard Early Warning Systems in Southeast Asia** *Introductory presentation:* Tsunami Trust Fund (Alf Blikberg, ESCAP) Panel Discussion: • Sri Lanka (Ms. Jayasirige Rupasinghe) • Myanmar (Ms. Htwe Kyi) • Bangladesh (Mr. Dilwar Bakth) • Viet Nam (Mr. Vu Huy Cuong) • Cambodia (Mr. Bunnavith Ku)
10:30 – 10:45	**Coffee Break**
10:45 – 12:15	**Session 6: National Perspectives on Communications Resilience among LLDCs** *Introductory presentation:* Abu Khan, LirneAsia *Panel Discussion*: • Mongolia (Ms. Ariunaa Chadraabal) • Nepal (Mr. Manohar Bhattarai) • Bhutan (Mr. Karma Jamyang) • Laos (Mr. Souliya Sengdalavong) • Kyrgyzstan (Mr. Almaz Bakenov)
12:15 – 13:15	**Lunch Break**
13:15 – 14: 45	**Session 7: National Perspectives on Emergency Satellite Communications among Island Nations**

	Introductory presentation: Stephen Sheehan, APT *Panel Discussion*: • Fiji (Mr. Josaia Kamanalagi Baro) • Palau (Mr. Waymine Towai) • Samoa (Ms. Josephina Leaia Chan Ting) • Maldives (Mr. Ahmed Rasheed)
14:45 – 16:00	**Session 8: Closing and The Way Forward** *Objective: To review the lessons learned from the meeting, address any final issues and suggest useful areas for further consideration, including opportunities for enhanced regional cooperation.*