



AMCDRR
2016

From Intent to Action: Commitments of AMCDRR 2016



Photo: AIDMI.

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ABOUT THIS ISSUE

The recently concluded 2016 Asian Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (AMCDRR) at New Delhi, India has provided a clear path for building resilience at the global, regional and local levels. The first important conference to be held after the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (SFDRR), AMCDRR 2016 also led to the finalization of the 'New Delhi Declaration' and the 'Asian Regional Plan (ARP) for Implementation of the Sendai Framework'. While the 'New Delhi Declaration' is a political statement that spells out the commitment of the participating governments to reduce and manage risk in their respective countries, the ARP provides a roadmap of converting these commitments to results.

This issue of *Southasiadisasters.net* is titled 'From Intent to Action: Commitments of AMCDRR 2016'. The 2016 AMCDRR saw the participating governments take up commitments for achieving the targets and goals of SFDRR. This issue of *Southasiadisasters.net* discusses the possible ways, strategies and approaches that can help in fulfilling these commitments over the 15 year horizon of SFDRR.

This issue takes a broad overview of all the sectoral and thematic areas ranging from welfare to infrastructure and from gender equality to youth leadership that can help in fulfilling the aforesaid commitments. Particularly important is the prime minister's address at AMCDRR 2016 that provides a detailed agenda for DRR across different levels and sectors. Topical and timely, this issue highlights how to leverage existing capacities and build future capabilities for achieving the commitments of AMCDRR 2016. ■

- Kshitij Gupta, AIDMI

INTRODUCTION

A Ten-Point Agenda for Disaster Risk Reduction



Prime Minister's address at Asian Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (AMCDRR), New Delhi, November 02-05, 2016

1. All development works must imbibe the principles of disaster risk management. This will ensure that all development projects - airports, roads, canals, hospitals, schools, bridges - are built to appropriate standards and contribute to the resilience of communities they seek to serve. All our public expenditure must take into account risk considerations.

2. Work towards risk coverage for all - starting from poor households to small and medium enterprises to multi-national corporations to nation states. Currently, in most countries of the region, penetration of insurance is limited to only middle and upper-middle income groups. States have an important role in not just regulating but also encouraging coverage for those who need it the most.

3. Encourage greater involvement and leadership of women in disaster risk management. Women are disproportionately affected by disasters. They also have unique strengths and insights. We must train a large number of women volunteers to support special needs of women affected by disasters. We need

women engineers, masons and building artisans supporting reconstruction, and women self help groups assisting livelihood recovery.

4. Invest in risk mapping globally. For mapping risks related to hazards such as earthquakes we have widely accepted standards and parameters.

5. Leverage technology to enhance the efficiency of our disaster risk management efforts. An e-platform that brings together organizations and individuals and helps them map and exchange expertise, technology and resources would go a long way in maximizing our collective impact.

6. Develop a network of universities to work on disaster issues. Universities have social responsibilities too. Over the first five years of the Sendai Framework, we should develop a global network of universities working together on problems of disaster risk management. As part of this network, different universities could specialize in multi-disciplinary research on disaster issues most relevant to them. Universities located in coastal areas could specialize in managing risks from coastal hazards, and the ones located in the hill cities could focus on mountain hazards.

7. Utilize the opportunities provided by social media and mobile technologies. Social media is transforming disaster response. It is helping response agencies in quickly organizing themselves, and enabling citizens to connect more easily with authorities. In disaster after disaster, affected people are using social media to help each other. We must recognize the potential of social media and develop applications for all aspects of disaster risk management.



8. Build on local capacity and initiative. The task of disaster risk management, particularly in rapidly growing economies, is so huge that formal institutions of the state can at best be instrumental in creating the enabling conditions. Specific actions have to be designed and implemented locally. Over the last two decades, most community based efforts have been confined to disaster preparedness and contingency planning for the short term. We need to expand the scope of community based efforts and support communities to identify local risk reduction measures and implement them. Such efforts reduce risk and create opportunities for local development and sustainable livelihoods. Localization of disaster risk reduction will also ensure that we make the most of traditional best

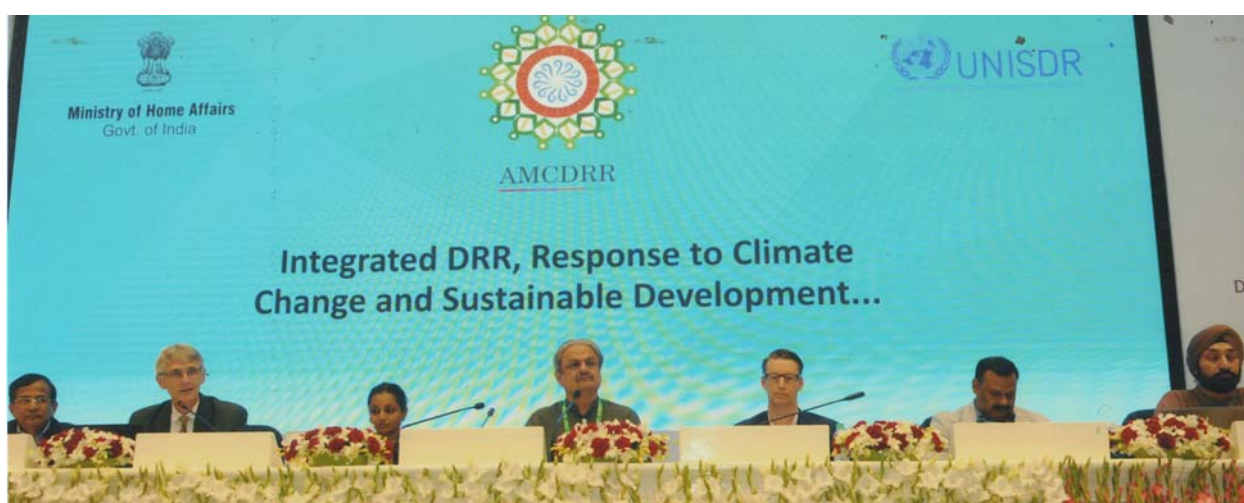
practices and indigenous knowledge. Response agencies need to interact with their communities, and make them familiar with the essential drill of disaster response. For example, if a local fire service visits one school in its area every week, it would sensitize thousands of children over a period of one year.

9. Ensure that the opportunity to learn from a disaster is not wasted. After every disaster there are papers and reports on lessons learnt that are rarely applied. Often the same mistakes are repeated. We need a more vibrant and visual system of learning. The United Nations could start an international competition of documentary films that record disaster events, their scale, and relief, rehabilitation, reconstruction and recovery afterwards. Post-disaster

recovery is an opportunity to not just 'build back better' in terms of physical infrastructure, but also in terms of improved institutional systems for managing risk. India will work with partner countries and multilateral development agencies to establish a facility for technical support to post-disaster reconstruction of houses.

10. Bring about greater cohesion in international response to disasters. In the aftermath of a disaster, disaster responders pour in from all over the world. This collective strength and solidarity could be enhanced further if we work under a common umbrella. The United Nations could think of a common logo and branding under which all those who are helping with relief, rehabilitation and reconstruction operate. ■

- AIDMI Team



AIDMI at AMCDRR 2016



AMCDRR
2016



Pre Conference Event on School Safety and Child Centred DRR, Nov. 1, 2016,



Children and Youth meeting at Hotel Ashoka, Nov. Nov. 2, 2016.

Integrated DRR, Response to Climate Change and Sustainable Development, Nov. 4, 2016.



Joint Stakeholder Group Consultation, Hotel Ashoka, Nov. 2, 2016.



Panel Debate on Building Resilience across Scales, IIC, New Delhi, Nov. 4, 2016.



Risk Financing and Insurance, Vigyan Bhavan, New Delhi, Nov. 4, 2016.



Duryog Nivaran Meeting, New Delhi, Nov. 5, 2016.

- AIDMI Team

Gender Equality and Local Ownership in AMCDRR

Here, on the eve of Asian Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (AMCDRR) 2016 we have gathered to reaffirm our commitment to the implementation of the Sendai Framework for Action on DRR towards building a resilient community. The significance of this AMCDRR in New Delhi is because it is the first Ministerial Conference on DRR after the advent of the Sendai Framework the SDGs commitment and Paris Agreement. There is no doubt that we are on the right path in reducing the absolute number of disaster-induced loss to lives and in coping with the raising negative economic consequences. We equally expect that all these global commitments will guide us throughout the next decades for

preventing, mitigating, protecting and rescuing all the lives and resources from natural, man-made and pseudo development induced disasters. We also look forward to have the Asian Regional Plan for Implementation of the Sendai Framework an outcome document from AMCDRR with a consolidated political commitment of the governments, civil society and local communities.

Local Community has perceived that, when a disaster occurs, destruction increases from the "Butterfly effect or Chain Reaction" of a series of policy failures to integrate local context appropriately. Hence, localization and socialization of all the relevant policies of natural resource management, agriculture,

environment to disaster risk reduction require alignment in a holistic way. Local must be an independent stakeholder, being not the only beneficiaries while gender, ecological and social justice needs to be safeguarded.

The challenges in addressing the root causes of vulnerabilities in South Asia remain formidable as they are inseparable from the very issues confronting our development such as shared resources, the population, poverty, rapid urbanization, gaps in access to basic services and many others. We equally note that gender relations in a society determine the manner in which men and women are affected by, and deal with disasters. Although active in all stages of a disaster, women continue



to be seen as passive victims and their roles and capacities in building resilience in communities are not fully recognized. Therefore, we call on the governments to deliver the following actions with a mutual and shared responsibility:

- It is evident that the natural infrastructures play the prime protection to save lives and development pathways, thus more insights should be focused to protect, conserve and nurture local Ecosystem and Biodiversity as those are first windshield to fight back disaster.
- The transnational Disaster forecasting bodies are instrumentally capable and well equipped of pin pointing early warning for cyclone, flood, drought, insect locust and earthquake alert system etc. In order to bridge the digital divide the transnational bodies should be utilized to make information

available for local dissemination.

- Local community should be well acquainted with the modern disaster related technology and rescue instruments as they are the first responders. They also need to be trained, skilled and have improved capacity. For this, organizing exhibitions at local level, showing the modern instruments, training initiatives, strengthening of local disaster management committees are crucial for increasing people's self-confidence to fight back disaster.
- Consider Region wise River Basin Management to Reduce River Erosion, Flood and Salinity Intrusion especially in Lower Riparian Countries. Effectively addressing the problems of transboundary water management.
- Support national and local capacity development for gender responsive DRR and inclusive

development planning with an empowerment approach. Provide tools and methodologies, suggest a framework and share best practices for gender inclusion in all phases of disaster management.

Finally, we are experiencing emotional non-attachment from the policy makers and researchers dealing with disaster issues. This probably is the largest hole in disaster management. So, DRR and Humanitarian actors and decision makers should plan in a humane way to resolve any humanitarian issue. Policies and activities pertinent to Disaster Management should be free from political and development jargons including "Fake promise" from development stakeholders. ■

- **Shaila Shahid**, Gender and Water Alliance Bangladesh and **Zakir Shahin**, Krisoker Sor (Farmers' Voice), Bangladesh

IDDR 2016

Celebration of International Day for Disaster Reduction in Assam

Assam State Disaster Management Authority and UNICEF jointly organized an event to celebrate the International Day for Disaster Reduction (IDDR), on October 28, 2016 at the Conference Hall of Assam Administrative Staff College in Assam. The theme of the event, as it has been declared by the UNISDR, was 'Live to Tell' targeting towards reduction in disaster mortality which is one of the seven targets adopted in the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction.

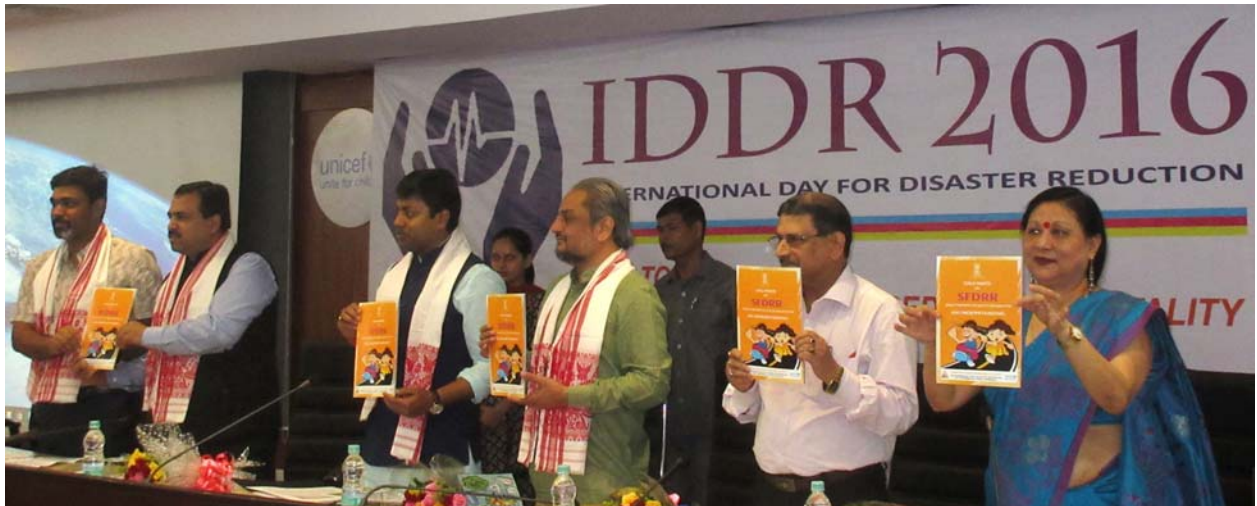
The event was flagged off with a street play on earthquake sensitization by a group of young actors called 'Team Bodhi' in the

presence of Shri. Pallab Lochan Das, Minister of State (Independent), Revenue and Disaster Management, Government of Assam who was the chief guest for the event. The street play was very objective and entertaining and included the do's and don'ts to practice during an earthquake.

After the street play an in-house function followed. In his welcome address, Shri. Dipak Kumar Sarma IAS, Chief Executive Officer, ASDMA welcomed the distinguished guests and explained the importance of the event in line with global theme and in the context of SFDRR.

He was followed by Mrs. Nandita

Hazarika ACS, Joint Secretary-cum-State Project Coordinator, ASDMA who made a brief presentation about the importance of the theme and the various initiatives of ASDMA in accordance with the four priority areas of SFDRR. Her presentation reflected some of the very important and laudable steps taken by ASDMA like Safety Audits, Flood Early Warning System, School and Hospital Safety initiatives, training and capacity building initiatives as well as innovative awareness generation activities along with extensive investment in research to magnify understanding of disaster risks in the state. She stated that as only 6 years old, ASDMA's initiatives are seen as 'Baby Steps' and still there are miles



to go. She reiterated that ASDMA is committed to build disaster prepared and resilient Assam.

Dr. Smair Pawar, Chief Officer (I/C), UNICEF office for Assam, briefly stated UNICEF's role in enhancing children's resilience to disasters and climate change in global context. He highlighted different facts about global disaster mortality and impacts, he also spoke on particular hazard scenario of the state.

After his speech, the guests on the dais launched a couple of key documents which included a book on "Child Rights and SFDRR" by UNICEF and the first ever publication of grey book on disaster do's and don'ts for visually impaired children developed by ASDMA, Assam Autism Foundation and other expert agencies. The Chief Guest also launched "Resilient Assam Award-2016" commissioned by ASDMA for schools and hospitals. This Award will recognize successful disaster risk reduction (DRR) initiatives by schools and hospitals to encourage and motivate local initiatives on DRR.

Mr. Pallab Lochan Das, Minister of State (Independent), Revenue and Disaster Management, Government of Assam, Chief Guest in the event delivered his speech with a focus on children and youth and highlighted the priorities of the Government of

Assam to ensure a "Safer Assam" if not 'Golden Assam'. He called upon participants particularly children to interact with guests and speakers who were present in the event and to learn from them. He urged the teachers to focus on 'social education' with the objective of building responsible and informed citizens' who are concerned and aware about their safety issues and are taking steps towards reduction of disaster risks in the society as a whole. He appreciated the work of AIDMI for developing and transferring knowledge on disaster risk reduction in local language for Assam.

Vote of thanks for the inaugural session was given by Mr. Abhijnan Tamuly Rajkhowa, Communication Expert, ASDMA who listed all the guests, participants and contributors and conveyed his earnest gratitude



Mr. Mihir R. Bhatt, Managing Trustee, AIDMI delivering his speech as 'Guest Speaker' during the event.

for successfully holding the event. This was followed by tea break

Post tea break, Shri. Mihir R. Bhatt, Managing Trustee, All India Disaster Mitigation Institute was introduced as the first eminent 'Guest Speaker' of the event. Shri. Bhatt in his inspiring address highlighted the various international and national developments being made in the context of disaster risk reduction. The key thematic highlights of his speech were as follows:

1. Disaster resilient development needs including mainstreaming DRR and CCA in development process.
2. Role safer schools in ensuring safety of children as well as neighborhood and communities.
3. Adopting a culture of safety in all spheres of life and importance of children in promoting this culture.
4. Celebration of DRR day in true spirit in day-to-day life rather than a one day celebration.
5. Investment in DRR at multiple levels including government allocations, private sector investment as well as familial and personal investments

He stated the strategic importance of Assam when it comes to disaster survival and response. Being the gateway to the Northeast, Guwahati is not only responsible for its own safety but also for a robust response

to disaster in interior parts of the state, other north-eastern states and even cross border response in South-east Asian countries. He highlighted that children and youth are no doubt vulnerable to disasters but they equally have the potential to play as leaders in disaster risk management. He insisted upon capturing roles played by children and youth in responding to disasters in the state and country. He highlighted six key questions and sought response of the children. The questions and their responses were as follows:



Master Ridom Das, Student of Assam Jatiya Vidyalaya, Addressing the house.

Q.1 Can children and youth contribute to reduction of disaster mortality by 2030? If yes how?

Master Jugal Sharma a Class X student responded by saying that an informed student is capable of passing information and skills to a number of other individuals 'through a multiplier approach' which can be effective in self protection as well as protection of others thereby reducing disaster mortality.

child approach. She stated her experience when she along with her friends mobilized clothes to be distributed to flood affected people. Other responses by children were generic but all of them were related to use disaster management education in practice, mainstreaming disaster management education in the formal evaluation process, avoiding unsafe constructions, emergency response actions as school level competitions.

Q.2 Can children and youth contribute towards reduction in the number of affected population by disasters?

Ms. Sweta Kashyap, a class X girl said children can help in assisting other children who are comparatively more vulnerable through a child to

Master Ridom Das a student from Assam Jatiya Bidyalaya, Noonmati, Guwahati who was the next speaker, spoke about the initiatives of his school for promoting safety. He listed out the visible measures particularly non-structural mitigation measures as

adopted by his school and called upon his fellow students to participate actively in disaster drills for adopting safer behaviors. He emphasized upon continuous learning and innovation to be better prepared.

Ms. Arpita Das of South Point School gave an electrifying speech wherein she presented the importance of understanding risk reducing behavior. She said that children could be leaders if learning and guidelines were taken and practiced seriously.

They were followed by the 2nd eminent guest speaker of the event, Dr, Pranay K. Swain, Chairperson, School of Humanities and Social Sciences, NISER, Bhubaneswar. He enlightened that children have the potential to influence the decision making of their parents which can be used for adopting risk reducing behaviors. He elaborated his experiences of responding to "Super Cyclone-1999" in Odisha and the role played by youth. He sighted different examples so as to explain the technological advantages of the present day youth which can be tapped for reducing risks.

The event with a concluding remark and vote of thanks by ASDMA. ■

- Mihir R. Bhatt



Photos: AIDMI.

Mr. Pallab Lochan Das, Minister of State (Independent), Revenue and DM, Govt. of Assam addressing the gathering as 'Speech Guest' of the IDDR celebration in Assam.

Highlights for Asian Ministers from Global Summit 2016

The world is facing unprecedented crises and growing challenges. With an estimated 98.5 million people affected by disasters in 2015 alone, the number and scale of disasters triggered by natural hazards are increasing. There are 65 million people forcibly displaced both within and across borders, resulting in mounting humanitarian needs which are exceeding available resources. Meanwhile, the rate of globalisation and urbanisation makes the realities of health crises much harder to contain.

The latest trends and lessons learned in disaster relief and resilience worldwide were discussed at this year's Global Disaster Relief Summit, organised by the Aid & International Development Forum (AIDF) in Washington D.C.

Despite broad recognition that investing in resilience before a disaster can save lives and money, less than 13% of development assistance funding goes into disaster risk reduction. Lack of global investment in strengthening community resilience leaves tens of millions exposed to predictable and preventable disaster risks.

The traditional approach to disasters is no longer viable in current escalating global crises. Investment in technology, solutions and partnerships that build resilience, improve livelihoods and support communities to resist future disasters and crises must be developed.

In order to achieve resilience, aid and development stakeholders must understand inequalities and specific

The Aid & International Development Forum would like to invite you to the upcoming 3rd annual Aid & Development Asia Summit, taking place in Myanmar in June 2017. For more information, please visit <http://asia.aidforum.org>.

drivers of risk for different communities. A people-centred approach to humanitarian action is required to strengthen the resilience of vulnerable and at-risk communities.

Connectivity

Access to information is critical to successful disaster risk management. When disaster strikes, real-time updates about evolving crisis situations and information about those affected, including their needs and locations, are paramount to effective emergency response and better decision-making. Gathering essential data to provide rapid disaster relief involves many challenges ranging from security of aid workers to cultural barriers and difficulties in communication.

Infrastructure

While connectivity and ICT increase the immediate impact of aid workers, improving efficiency of humanitarian

response programmes and supporting disaster resilience, any communication solution is only as reliable as the infrastructure that supports it.

Calamities often result in communities being cut off from rescue operators and with no means to access physical aid. While mass broadcasting channels continue to be part of the emergency response, remote areas face greater risk of being unreachable due to their under-developed infrastructure or infrastructure that has been compromised by the disaster. Furthermore, aid agencies need to ensure the wellbeing and safety of their teams in the field.

Partnerships

Strong Public Private Partnerships drive disaster risk reduction and resilience at the local and national level. Therefore it is important for international aid agencies and donors to partner with local organisations that have long-standing ties in affected regions, as they are best placed to determine and address immediate needs after disasters. Such partnerships also ensure that communities have systems in place for future disasters, beyond short-term relief.

For example, WeRobotics partnered with Kathmandu University to assess earthquake damage in Nepal with the use of drones. The flying robots captured the damage and carried out aerial surveys to support local recovery efforts. WeRobotics trained locals to use the technology and conduct additional 3-D modelling to create high-resolution maps of the most damaged areas. By involving



local partners in developing countries and allowing them to gain professional skills, impact of humanitarian efforts is maximised and the access to robotics is democratised.

Data

It is important to look holistically at disasters and crisis response in order to ensure that the resources are being used in the best way possible. Data plays a vital role as it informs decisions, optimising effectiveness of humanitarian programmes and mitigating potential risk of future disasters. With help of data mining software, computer algorithms and statistical analysis, Big Data became useful in providing patterns and insights into complex situations, drawing on massive amounts of data generated with mobile phones, satellites and social media to avoid incomplete or inaccurate information. Along with crowd sourced data initiatives, Big Data analytics offer a holistic approach to decision-making,

prediction and coordination of disaster response and humanitarian programmes.

Early warning systems

Disaster preparedness and early warning systems are also key part of reducing the effects of disasters. Together with the Nicaraguan government, General Electric is working on installing 80 wireless sensors inside Masaya, one of the country's active volcanoes, in order to gather real-time data to better

Open source innovation can change how humanitarian and development stakeholders are able to resolve, not just respond to, global needs.

predict its eruption. The data collected, including temperature and pressure, will be transmitted through the internet to an open-source database called Predix, which is also accessible by public. The American Institute of Physics (AIP) built a ring laser interferometer to detect storms, earthquakes, hurricanes and tornadoes, demonstrating the technology's potential as an early-warning system for natural disasters.

Conclusion

Open source innovation can change how humanitarian and development stakeholders are able to resolve, not just respond to, global needs. Yet an integrated approach and collaboration between frontline aid agencies, donors and governments and the private sector is needed to address the most prominent challenges in building resilience and implementing programmes for disaster risk reduction. ■

- Alina O'Keeffe, Aid and International Development Forum, UK

Children and Youth Commitments in DRR

The Sendai Framework on Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030 (Sendai Framework) recommence and further recognise the principle of "an all of society engagement in DRR". During the recent 7th AMCDRR the children and youth announced their further commitments in support of the Sendai Framework.

The commitments and call for actions are built upon years of experience combined with knowledge in building resilience within the community as well as previous political engagement in the Asian region.

Fifty children and youth throughout the Asia region made their way to the 7th AMCDRR. They successfully shared their good practices in how to build an all of society engagement in DRR, showcased their scientific findings in regards of good DRR governance, and communicated challenges and trends in DRR they witnessed in their community. They showed that children and youth are not just vulnerable; rather youth and children are part of the solution and are already taking positive and relevant action. Children and youth possess unique capacity to contribute to disaster risk reduction (DRR), respond to disasters and humanitarian crises, and build resilience. They are dynamic, resourceful, innovative and fast learners. Moreover, children and youth have the right for their needs to be met and participate in decisions affecting them.

During 2016, several National and Regional Consultations were conducted with children and youth in countries in Asia and the Pacific. Through these, children and youth outlined how they contribute to DRR and CCA, including participatory risk assessment of the school and

their communities, school preparedness, and participation in decision-making and policy design at all levels.

During the 7th AMCDRR they announced their commitment support of the Asia Regional

Plan for Implementation of the Sendai Framework. The commitment consists of the following actions:

1. Support children and youth to raise awareness of risk and identify practical actions to strengthen resilience including through their active engagement in social media, within their communities and through various networks.
2. Advocate and support boy's, girl's and youth's equal participation in the roll-out, monitoring and evaluation of the Asia Regional Plan for Implementation of the Sendai Framework at the national and local levels.
3. Provide and support capacity building opportunities and equip children and youth with knowledge and skills on DRR, CCA and resilience.
4. Support government ministries in committing to ensuring education continuity and implementing the three pillars of the Comprehensive School Safety Framework.
5. Support national and local government sector development plans, including child protection, health, education and social protection to be risk informed and contribute to resilient development.
6. Promote boys' and girls', especially the most vulnerable, meaningful and equal participation in disaster risk management policy and decision-making at all levels.

To support the children and youth to deliver these commitments, they called on governments and other partners for the following actions:

1. Strengthen the collection of

disaggregated data on loss and damage by age, disability, and gender and promote child/youth sensitive risk assessment to inform policy and programming.

2. Ensure children and youth have access to age-appropriate information on disaster risks, climate impacts and relevant policy frameworks.
3. Strengthen mechanisms and dedicated spaces to ensure the gender balanced and meaningful capacity building and participation of children and youth, prioritizing the most vulnerable groups, in the implementation and monitoring of the Sendai Framework at all levels.
4. Strengthen national and local development plans so that children and youth enjoy their rights to access basic social services, including child protection, before, during and after crises.
5. Strengthen the integration of DRR into formal and non-formal education and ensure continued access to quality education including drawing on the three pillars of the Comprehensive School Safety Framework.
6. Implement evidence-based and innovative policies that discourage underlying risk factors, such as climate change, conflict, inequality, and unplanned urbanization.

Children and youth are within the Sendai Framework referred to as "agents of change".

They grew up in a globalised world and strive for a world without borders, a world with equal human and social rights, and a sustainable world which is equipped to manage striking disasters. By providing the space, tools and knowledge to participate, the youth and children will continue to strive for such a world. ■

– **Moa Herrgard**, Deputy Organising Partner, UN Major Group for Children and Youth, Sweden

Building Youth and Women's Leadership in DRR

Among demographic groups, youth and women are highly vulnerable to the adverse impacts of disasters. Their enhanced vulnerability is partly explained by their limited access to resources and partly due to restrictive social norms which limit their scope of opportunity. Despite this enhanced vulnerability, youth and women seldom find a voice in DRR.

To promote the leadership of youth and women in resilience building, the All India Disaster Mitigation Institute (AIDMI) organized an orientation programme on March 14, 2016 with 28 female students of SNDT University, Mumbai. Titled 'Building Youth and Women's Leadership in Disaster Risk Reduction', this programme introduced the participants to a youth and women centric approach to DRR. Through



Photo: AIDMI.

interactive sessions, various efforts to promote the role of youth and women in DRR were also discussed.

Dr. Narayan Gaonkar (Health Specialist, UNICEF Gujarat) was the guest of honour at this programme. He also took one session to explain to the participants the concepts of 'Child Centred DRR'. Perhaps the

most important outcome of this programme was the views shared by the participants (mostly young women) on the risks they face and possible resilience building measures. AIDMI has captured these views and will incorporate them in its work of risk reduction for vulnerable communities in India and beyond. ■

- Vandana Chauhan, AIDMI

DISASTER RESILIENT EDUCATION

Education and Risk: Way Ahead

What are the key areas waiting for action in the overlap of education and risk reduction in India?

AIDMI was recently felicitated for its contributions in societal development in Gujarat by the Department of Social Work, Sardar Patel University on September 10, 2016. The felicitation

event coincided with the 2016 NGO meet of the department titled "Demystifying the Role and Impact of NGOs in Societal Development". Mehul Pandya from AIDMI shared the organization's recent work on DRR and climate change across Gujarat and six states of India, including possible areas of collaboration

with the university faculty and students in creating and utilizing knowledge for Gujarat's sustainable development. AIDMI works with over 12 universities in India and abroad. Recent focus of educational collaborations have been on co-creating knowledge for green growth.

First, what do we know about need for skills for green growth? What are there skills and how well we have it? Second, how well we understand the concept of green growth? What it means to many individuals at many levels? What it excludes? Third, are there tools available to spread education better and faster among students? Fourth, are there opportunities to green internship that take students from class room to office table. And, fifth area is action and learning around green growth. ■

- AIDMI Team



Photo: AIDMI.

Grand Bargain: What can make it more grand at local level?



Consulting a community group about a drought resilience programme in South Omo Ethiopia.

One of the significant outcomes of the WHS was the Grand Bargain where 30 large donors and UN agencies, and some other key actors, signed up to 51 commitments across 10 themes to facilitate more flexible, longer-term financing, less burdensome reporting requirements, greater transparency by agencies, more collaborative approaches and reduced overhead costs.

One of the themes of the Grand Bargain that was most prominent in consultations in the run-up to WHS is the commitment to "more support and funding tools for local and national responders". Grand Bargain signatories will "achieve by 2020 a global, aggregated target of at least 25% of humanitarian funding to local and national responders as directly as possible". This is potentially transformative, depending on how it

is interpreted and how energetically it is delivered. Development Initiatives estimate that direct humanitarian funding to national actors currently stands at between 0.2% and 0.4%.

IFRC and the Government of Switzerland have led a working group looking at how to move this forward. The key strands of work emerging are:

- Reform and increased resourcing of pooled funding mechanisms that enable more direct funding to local actors
- Greater resourcing and sharing of best practice around capacity building for local actors
- Development of a localization marker to enable us to measure progress

Critical to the success of this agenda will be how the international

community chooses to define what constitutes "local and national responders" and "as directly as possible". Many INGOs have branches of different shapes and sizes in developing countries, often populated largely by national staff, sometimes with bespoke national-level governance. These national INGO offices do fantastic work and deserve great respect. But they are not starved of secure, sustainable and substantial financial resources in the way that many non-affiliated home-grown smaller NNGOs, LNGOs and FBOs are. If resources channeled to CARE Bangladesh, Christian Aid Honduras or OXFAM Kenya were classed as direct funding to local responders, the impact of the Grand Bargain would be significantly less transformational.

A second area of definitional challenge is whether in-kind

contributions – eg food - count toward the 25%. The spirit of the WHS and Grand Bargain implies a future where - in accordance with Principles of Partnership - national front-line responders are treated as true, equal partners, not mere sub-contractors – whereas in-kind contributions tend to imply a sub-contractual vision. Furthermore, if one includes in-kind, many large agencies already are close to or surpass the 25% target – so would have to change nothing to meet it – and surely what WHS and the Grand Bargain intend is significant change.

The most concrete commitment arising from WHS towards true localization was the Charter for Change (www.charter4change.org) where 30 INGOs pledge to implement 8 concrete

actions to improve the position of their local partners. It will be a great step forward if Charter for Change signatories honour these commitments and if all other INGOs who are genuinely committed to strengthening national humanitarian action sign the Charter.

Another vital part of the Grand Bargain is its commitment to a "participation revolution". Putting people affected by disaster front and centre of decisions affecting their lives is a critical reform for the humanitarian sector. Commitment to the Core Humanitarian Standard would be a huge step forwards. To date

reform efforts focus on shifting power to national civil society and government. Less work has been done on how survivors can be supported to take a lead in shaping responses themselves. Yet, increasingly, the humanitarian industry admits that the first – and most important – responders are disaster affected communities themselves. Look out for the inspirational DanChurchAid/Church of Sweden Local2GlobalProtection initiative's forthcoming new ideas on how we better support effective, rapid and scalable survivor-led crisis response. ■

– **Michael Mosselmans**,
Head of Humanitarian Policy and Practice and Programmes in LAC,
Christian Aid

URBAN RESILIENCE

Risk, Cities and Reportage: Agenda for Asia

The global south, with its burgeoning cities, is especially vulnerable to the consequences of climate change. Cities get inundated with a host of interlinked problems, including failing infrastructure, mismanagement, environmental pollution and shortage of water and energy.

The role of the media in this scenario is very important since they are key agents in reporting disasters and in dissemination of information on mitigation efforts. It is hence essential that journalists have access to proper information, background knowledge on disasters and on mitigation efforts.

An important point to note is that a journalist/reporter, even one who is versed in environmental issues, covers a very varied spectrum of issues in his/her work. A news reporter, for instance, might go to cover a dengue epidemic, a cricket match and continue on to a press

conference run by a politician. Communicating efficiently to the reporter on your field of work thus becomes key to accurate reporting and dissemination

Additionally, the media scene in the region is in flux. Clamphdowns on free speech and journalism are common to the region. In India, legal harassment and state repression are nowadays more common; this is affecting editorial content and journalistic freedom.

Moreover, social media despite its mostly urban audience, is rapidly-growing and has become a powerful phenomenon in spreading news. However, it can also be used negatively and therefore there is a need to create sensitivity in the use of these massive communications tools.

Engaging both a journalist and the resultant space needed in his/her publication to go beyond reporting screaming disasters to pre-assessment and risk management becomes an important role for the field NGO/organisation to convey. Writing a press release needs precise, clear and simple language, informative, well-referenced statistics, links with further information and field trip experiences in which accurate reportage can be collected.

Building up networks with journalists requires credibility from the organisation and patience and skill from the latter. But it is possible, even in the scenario the region presents today. ■

– **Keya Acharya**, Founder Trustee,
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Youth for Resilient India

A consultation with 15 youths of Ahmedabad city was held on July 30, 2016: What is Safe School and Safe Education? This question was on the discussion agenda. The purpose of the consultation was to understand youths' perspectives on what is to be added in National Education Policy 2016 in terms of Safe Schools and Safe Education.

The youths suggested to include them in safety assessments of schools and all educational buildings in their neighbourhood. Youths wanted to include their views on disaster management planning in National Education Policy 2016. They demanded more investments in awareness of risk and attribution of weather events. The suggestion included greater participation, use of technology, and investment in capabilities.



Photo: AIDMI.

Youths also suggested integrating disaster risk management and climate risk management in IT related courses at all levels from ITIs to IITs. Youths strongly emphasised on the use of emergency technology such as twitter and whatsapp in disaster management in India. Youths demanded to introduce disaster risk reduction education in civil

engineering and mechanical engineering courses in attribution to humanities and science streams. Youths showed their interest in awareness generation of DRR and attribution of weather change to extreme events such as heat wave and floods in urban areas. ■

- Vandana Chauhan,
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