GP09 Daily

Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction
Second Session, Geneva, Switzerland
16 – 19 June 2009

ISDR

Informal highlights from today's events at the Second Session of the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction

Wednesday 17 June 2009

Indonesian scientist is 2009 Sasakawa Award Laureate

A highlight of last night's reception hosted by the Government of Switzerland – following the welcoming remarks made at the opening ceremony earlier in the day by the Swiss Confederation President Hans-Rudolf Merz – was the presentation of the Sasakawa Award to Dr Eko Teguh Paripurno, the 2009 Laureate.

He received the award – valued at US$ 50,000 – from John Holmes, UN Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Global Platform Chair, for his lifetime contribution and his outstanding commitment to reducing disaster risk and building capacity at the community level in Indonesia, one of the countries most vulnerable to multiple hazards.

"Disaster risk reduction begins with learning, which is basically building the trust that everyone can play a significant role in collective risk reduction efforts" says Dr Paripurno. "I am planning to make use of the award money to promote learning in a number of areas prone to volcanic eruptions as well as to initiate a community centre for learning in disaster risk reduction" continues the laureate.

Certificates of Distinction went to the French Non-Governmental Organization Development Workshop France and to Jeunesse en Mission Entraide et Developpement based in Niger. Recipients of the three Sasakawa Certificates of Merit were the Tehran Disaster and Mitigation Management Organization in Iran, Focus Humanitarian Assistance in Pakistan and the International Research Centre on El Nino, Ecuador.

The UN Sasakawa Award for Disaster Reduction is, together with the WHO Sasakawa Health Prize and the UNEP Sasakawa Environment Prize, one of three prestigious prizes established by the Nippon Foundation in Japan in 1986

Views from the Frontline

In a major announcement at the Platform, the Global Network for Disaster Reduction unveiled its grassroots assessment of progress on disaster risk reduction – 'Views from the Frontline'.

Over 7,000 people at community level in 48 disaster-impacted countries were consulted in the ground-breaking survey conducted by the Global Network for Disaster Reduction (GNDR). Results revealed a huge amount of energy and expertise at the 'frontline'; but a failure to create genuine partnerships and provide the resources to support this.

The survey emphasises that more resources should be mobilised to build resilient communities. Whilst estimates put the current spend on disaster reduction at $250 million per year, an estimated $20 billion per year is spent on poverty reduction in the least developed countries and the costs (estimated by UNFCCC) for climate change adaptation in developing countries could be $28-67 billion per year by 2030. Disaster risk, poverty alleviation and climate change adaptation all come to the same thing - the security of lives, livelihoods and assets. Dealing effectively with climate change provides a major opportunity to reduce both disaster risk and poverty.

The survey concludes that closer integration of risk reduction, climate adaptation and poverty alleviation means bringing decision-making processes closer to people at-risk, unlocking synergies and resources through solid partnerships with local governments and civil society, and building resilient communities.

"Only when this happens will the goals set by the 'Hyogo Framework for Action' on disaster reduction be achieved," stresses GNDR Chair, Marcus Oxley.

Global Platform launch of the World Disasters Report
The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) World Disasters Report (WDR) was publicly launched at the Global Platform this afternoon. Now in its 17th year of publication, the 2009 document focuses on the need for developing an 'Early Warning, Early Action' approach that would protect people from disasters.

Overviewing the report's main findings and recommendations, IFRC Secretary-General Bekele Geleta stressed that said that early warning and early action are two key aspects of disaster risk reduction, adding: "Early action demands a longer-term perspective on addressing risk patterns, using local knowledge and working to reduce people's vulnerability to hazards."

The World Metrological Organization's Maryam Goinaraghi, noted that thanks to early warning systems over the past decades, the number of loss of life has decreased, declaring: "The numbers show that if you bring together scientific and technological know-how, together with community preparedness and response you can really make a difference."

Meetings' round up
Principal proposed solutions, plans and commitments from today's Platform meetings include:

- The IPCC called on delegates to sign up to participate in the preparations of the Special Report on Risk.
- The publication by the RTF-URR **"**Reducing Urban Risk in Asia, status report and inventory of initiatives" was officially launched by UNISDR Director Salvano Briceno. The launch of the 'SPIDER Global Thematic Partnership' with the aim to further enhance inter-institutional cooperation intended to contribute to the access and use of space-based information to support disaster risk management.
- Pronounced need for the establishment of an International Group to work on Wind-Related DRR.
- Kingdom of Saudi Arabia will offer a DRR Award for Best Practices and support and host the first Arab Regional Platform on DRR.
- India fully committed to implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015: Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disaster (HFA).
- Assurance of Swiss Support to the ISDR system and the Global Platform for DRR.
- Germany committed to strengthen DRR strategies through both humanitarian and development aid.
- Germany commends ISDR system for compiling the Global Assessment Report: Risk and Poverty in a Changing Climate recommendations and looks forward to actively discuss the follow-up on its findings.
- UN and the World Bank committed to strengthen the Post Disaster Needs Assessment (PDNA) and to institutionalize the lessons learned and knowledge sharing in the contexts of IRP.
- Meteorology, hydrology and civil protection services should work together to develop an effective early warning system. Community-level EWS must be linked to national level EWS. Communities should be resourced (financial and know-how) through the higher level of government (e.g., provincial and federal), supported by international coordination mechanisms.
- National agencies for curricula development should take the lead in integrating DRR in school curriculum along with partnership with National Disaster Management Authority. Involvement of local authorities and communities are important for integrating DRR in the non formal school curriculum which provides an opportunity to teach about risk reduction specific to the geographical area.
- It is important to incorporate indigenous knowledge into all levels of education and national DRR policy. Indigenous knowledge needs classified documentation and pilot project implementation.
- ProVention Consortium: The DRR community has over the years switched its focus from hazards to increasing resilience; the climate change debate brings the focus back to climate hazards. We need to bring the focus back to addressing vulnerability and enhancing resilience. This highlights the importance of institutions at different levels and the critical role of interfaces between them

Kofi Annan at Global Platform tomorrow
Former UN Secretary-General and President of the Global Humanitarian Forum, Kofi Annan, will attend the Global Platform tomorrow morning (Thursday) at 10h30 to launch a landmark public-private sector initiative centering on an important practical solution for African meteorology.

For more daily coverage:
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