**“Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) Preparedness, COVID-19 and Sustainability”**

**(SDGs 9, 11, 13)**

A Webinar of RCEs of Asia-Pacific Region to mark celebration of

‘International Day for Disaster Reduction’ (IDDR) 2020

Tuesday, 13 October 2020 11:00-13:00 hrs Japan Standard Time

Zoom Link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87400370624>

Meeting ID: 874 0037 0624

Password not required

**Some Background Reading Material:**

"The mitigation of devastation caused by disasters is therefore a global issue that determines the future, not only of our economies and environmental heritage, but also of humanity. Let us join forces in this fight – there is no time to lose."

* Audrey Azoulay,

Director-General of UNESCO on the occasion of the IDDR 2019

**Disaster Risk Reduction** (DRR) is an integral part of social and economic development, and is essential if development is to be sustainable for the future.

Many disasters can be avoided or prevented if there is a risk-informed approach to the development construction and maintenance of critical infrastructure, in order to ensure that the creation of new risk is avoided, and that critical infrastructure continues to function during and after a disaster. Given the high death tolls, notably in earthquakes and tsunamis, it is crucial that great care is taken to ensure that schools and hospitals are built to last by ensuring that location and hazard-appropriate planning regulations and building codes are enforced.

Disasters induced by natural and technological hazards affect millions of people every year worldwide, but much of their impact can be reduced through pro-active measures and planning.
Humanitarian agencies have been engaged in the conceptual shift in thinking away from post-disaster reaction and towards pre-disaster action and helps countries build their capacities in [managing disaster and climate risk.](http://www.unesco.org/new/en/natural-sciences/special-themes/disaster-risk-reduction/)

The IDDR was started in 1989, after a call by the UN General Assembly (UNGA) for a day to promote a global culture of risk-awareness and disaster reduction. In 2009, the UNGA officially designated 13 October as the date to commemorate the Day. The Day celebrates how people and communities around the world are reducing their exposure to disasters and raising awareness about the importance of reining in the risks that they face.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development recognizes and reaffirms the urgent need to reduce the risk of disasters. It addresses to the following SDGs directly, but also all other SDGs indirectly. The main focus for this panel discussion will be:

SDG 9. Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure

SDG 11. Sustainable Cities and Communities

SDG 13. Climate Action

The “Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030” was adopted during the Third UN World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction held in Sendai, Japan in March, 2015.

**Key features of the Sendai framework:**

1. It is the first major agreement of the post-2015 development agenda, with seven targets and four priorities for action.
2. It was endorsed by the UN General Assembly following the 2015 Third UN World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (WCDRR).
3. The Framework is for 15-year. It is a voluntary and non-binding agreement which recognizes that the State has the primary role to reduce disaster risk but that responsibility should be shared with other stakeholders including local government, the private sector and other stakeholders.

The new Framework is the successor instrument to the Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA) 2005-2015: Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters.

The implementation of the Sendai Framework involves adopting integrated and inclusive institutional measures so as to work towards preventing vulnerability to disasters, increase preparedness for response and recovery and strengthen resilience.

**Seven goals of the Sendai Seven campaign:**

* Save lives from natural disasters
* Reduce the number of people affected
* Measures to reduce economic losses
* Reduction of infrastructure damage and interruptions of basic food and health needs.
* Encourage countries to develop disaster risk reduction strategies
* Encouraging cooperation between developing countries
* Improve access to disaster response early warning systems

We are literally helpless against these problems, but with proper preparation, early warning, and more developed infrastructure, we can dramatically reduce losses and save lives.

There is a need to raise awareness of risk management and to inform the public about what to do in the event of a natural disaster.

* That’s why disaster management is one of the 17 goals of the UN Sustainable Development Goals.
* The International Day for Disaster Reduction also provides a global platform to foster coordination between countries to share their experience and knowledge.

**Themes of the International Day for Disaster Reduction:**

* 2020 “Strengthening disaster risk governance to manage disaster risk”
* 2019 “Reduce disaster damage to critical infrastructure and disruption of basic services”
* 2018 “Reducing Economic Losses of Disasters”
* 2017 “Home Safe Home – Reduce Exposure, Reduce Displacement”.
* 2016 “Living to tell: raising awareness, reducing mortality”
* 2015 “Knowledge for Life”
* 2014 “Resilience is for life”
* 2013 “Living with a disability and disasters”
* 2012 “Women and girls: the invisible strength of resilience”
* 2011 “Children and Youth are Partners for Disaster Risk Reduction: A Step Forward for Disaster Risk Reduction!”
* 2010 “My city is getting ready!”

**COVID-19 and DRR:**

Disasters can happen at any time, and the COVID-19 pandemic is making them more difficult to manage and potentially more dangerous. The pandemic is a complex global crisis, and in just about every country around the world, its response is taking up the bulk of resources, expertise, time and effort. Dealing with response and recovery from a disaster in the midst of the coronavirus pandemic raises new and unsettling questions. Who is available to respond? What medical assistance can be provided if hospitals are treating COVID-19 patients and there is already a shortage of supplies? Where do we shelter and house evacuees, given the need to keep large numbers of evacuees socially distant from one another? Moreover, the time frame for dealing with this dual challenge may not be measured in days or even weeks, but rather months and possibly years.

Irrespective of the nature of the disaster, whether a slowly occurring process or an emergency, all disasters cause displacement, food crises, and diseases for people and livestock. Even in non-pandemic times and high-income countries, disasters overwhelm national response systems. However, the outcomes of disasters, amid the COVID-19 pandemic, has been compounded. Congregate shelters and large-scale population movements can challenge the physical distancing requirements of lockdowns and displaced by a natural disaster. The COVID-19 lockdowns in southeast Asia, Africa, and Latin America resulted in mass gatherings which increases the likelihood of transmission. It has caused disruption to health services and health infrastructure. Further, natural disasters can also impact COVID-19 control measures indirectly by disrupting clean water supplies (reducing hygiene practices) and stretching government budgets already struggling to cope with the pandemic response.

This panel will explore further some of these issues and positive and practical responses to DDR and COVID-19.

Read more: <https://pursuit.unimelb.edu.au/articles/the-dual-risks-of-natural-disasters-and-covid-19>

**Issues:**

Governance, Health, Sustainable Development, Disasters and Humanitarian Relief, Human Settlements & Population, Economics and Investment, Stakeholder Participation, Climate Change, Adaptation, Monitoring & Evaluation, National Action, Follow-Up and Review

**Global Partnerships:**

Means of Implementation, Finance, Capacity Building & Education, Systemic Issues, Policy & Institutional Coherence, Multi-stakeholder Partnerships, Data, Monitoring & Accountability

The United Nations General Assembly has designated 13 October as International Day for Disaster Risk Reduction to promote a global culture of disaster risk reduction. It is an opportunity to acknowledge the progress being made toward reducing disaster risk and losses in lives, livelihoods and health in line with the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015- 2030 adopted at the Third UN World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction in Japan in March 2015. The Sendai Framework has seven strategic targets and 38 indicators for measuring progress on reducing disaster risk and losses. These indicators align implementation of the Sendai Framework with implementation of the SDGs and the Paris Agreement on climate change.

#### RCE e-bulletin

#### Issue 74: October 2017

#### Open Calls

#### Expansion of RCE Asia Pacific DRR Network Concept – Calling on Japanese RCEs

In February last year, there was an open call to establish a RCE group to collaborate on DRR. This has now been established with several RCEs joining this group. However, they are now calling on Japanese RCEs to collaborate with them, due to their expertise in Disaster Risk Reduction. Also, there are funds available by the [Environmental Restoration and Conservation Agency Japan (ERCA)](https://connections.unu.edu/sites/all/modules/civicrm/extern/url.php?u=11490&qid=1356533), i.e. the Japan Global Fund for Environment that could be used to bring this group forward. [Read more](https://connections.unu.edu/sites/all/modules/civicrm/extern/url.php?u=11491&qid=1356533)

# RCE e-bulletin

# Issue 66: February 2017

# Open Calls

**Launch of RCE Disaster Risk Reduction Group in Asia Pacific**

The frequency and magnitude of disasters pose a serious threat to mankind, which require a certain preparedness for Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR). Preparedness for DRR is an integral part of ESD. The RCE community provides a perfect platform for addressing DRR by way of ‘Building Climate Smart, Disaster Resilient and Sustainable Communities’. The ‘Mehfooz’ (in Urdu language) ‘School Safety’ Programme encompasses safety of all, safety everywhere, and safety all the time. In an open call, RCE Srinagar appeals and encourages RCEs in the Asia Pacific region to engage in DRR. For more information on how to join the RCE DRR Group for Asia Pacific click [here](https://connections.unu.edu/sites/all/modules/civicrm/extern/url.php?u=10762&qid=1216637).

**RCE Srinagar, Asia-Pacific RCEs DRR Network and DRR Preparedness:**

RCE Srinagar right from its acknowledgement has been actively engaged in DRR Preparedness and has been trying to take DRR Preparedness to the RCE Community at Asia-Pacific level, also at Global level.

Considering disasters occurring so frequently world over, ‘DRR Preparedness’ becomes very important. We would say it is ‘must’ and ‘non-negotiable’ and every citizen need to be familiar with it. Being ‘DRR Prepared’ we will be able to help ourselves during any disaster and will also be able to help others in need thus ensuring a safe society. We need to be humanitarian and it demands that during any disaster we must get into helping the people in need. Helping others is not that simple unless we are ‘Prepared’. By being not ‘Prepared’ but just having good intentions of helping others and moving to help others ‘Unprepared’ we ourselves often become a victim and liability.

Reference is invited to RCE e-bulletin Issue 74: October 2017 Open Calls ‘Expansion of RCE Asia Pacific DRR Network Concept – Calling on Japanese RCEs’ and Issue 66: February 2017 Open Calls ‘Launch of RCE Disaster Risk Reduction Group in Asia Pacific’.

During the 9th Tongyeong ESD International Forum “Together for a Sustainable Future through Sejahtera Initiative” held on 12-13 December 2017 at Tongyeong, Republic of Korea RCE Srinagar with participation and support from all other RCEs present during the International Forum “Asia-Pacific RCEs DRR Network”was launched.

DRR Preparedness during COVID Era and beyond gains utmost importance. It will help us in containing COVID pandemic, other epidemics and pandemics and all kind of disasters. In this context this webinar “Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) Preparedness, COVID-19 and Sustainability” (SDGs 9, 11, 13)- A Webinar of RCEs of Asia-Pacific Region to mark celebration of ‘International Day for Disaster Reduction’ (IDDR) 2020 becomes much relevant and appropriate.

**Time Zones:**

07:00 hrs Pakistan

07:30 hrs India

07:45 hrs Nepal

08:00 hrs Bangladesh and Kyrgyzstan

09:00 hrs Cambodia, Jakarta and Thailand, Yogyakarta

10:00 hrs Balikpapan, China, Malaysia and Philippines

11:00 hrs Japan & Korea

12:00 hrs Sydney (Australia)

14:00 hrs Waikato (New Zealand)