

# REPORT

## Forum on Natural Disaster Resilience & Response in Asia



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Square-Brussels Meeting Centre



**EIAS**

European Institute for Asian Studies

The forum on Natural Disaster Resilience and Response was convened on 22 October 2015 at Square-Brussels Meeting Centre, to explore the many opportunities for increased cooperation and coordination in efforts to reduce the human cost of natural disasters. Led by the European Institute for Asian Studies<sup>1</sup>, several partners contributed to make the forum possible, particularly the Mission of the Republic of Indonesia to the EU, the Mission of the Philippines to the EU, the Embassy of the People's Republic of Bangladesh in Brussels, the People's Republic of China, Japan, the Republic of Korea, and Public Advice International. Enclosed here is a summary report of the findings of the panels and participants, as well some general lessons learned that should guide future efforts in Natural Disaster Resilience and Response, at the domestic and international levels alike.

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<sup>1</sup>We would like to express our gratitude to our entire team who worked tirelessly for the successful realisation of this Forum. We are extremely thankful to Jim Stoopman (Programme Coordinator), Robert Zielonka (Project Coordinator), Hannes Dekeyser (Junior Researcher), Omar Alam (Fellow), Leonardo Taccetti (Junior Researcher), Sebastiano Mori (Junior Researcher), Federico Sabeone (Junior Researcher), Martina Desogus (Junior Researcher), Shiori Katsuta (Junior Researcher), Yun Ju Jeong (Research Fellow), Jin Woo Kim (Junior Researcher), Shairee Malhotra (Junior Researcher), Alberto Turkstra (Programme Coordinator), Andras Megyeri (Research Coordinator) and Sung Yoon Yang (Visiting Fellow).

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Cooperation and coordination can contribute significantly to resilience and response outcomes in natural disasters. While cooperation and coordination are not sufficient for a good response – there must also be domestic and international capacity – improving either measure will increase the efficiency of the limited funds committed to resilience and response efforts. Within this report, resilience and response experts alike provide evidence and advice for improvements. In this executive summary, the major lessons are highlighted.

- Coordination within disaster struck countries is at least as important as international coordination, especially because those areas that tend to be affected most are remote and often without full coverage of public goods.
- In the context of Asia, coordinated participation by the larger and more resourceful countries such as China, Japan, South Korea and India is of paramount importance.
- The majority of work – indeed often the most efficient way to spend resources – should be in preparation for disaster, rather than response. Clear assignment of responsibilities in case of disaster, as well as critical infrastructure should be in place; the better the resilience, the easier the response.
- It is crucial that countries share data and information, regardless of the quality of that data. Much of the dearth of data available to responders and project planners happens because many governments are hesitant to open themselves and their statistical, geographical, geological and emergency agencies up for critique.
- Whereas particularly resilience efforts appear to benefit significantly from heavy community involvement, that same benefit does not accrue to disaster response, where technical know-how is important – especially in the very short run. It may be imprudent to rely on community based planning and reporting while the crisis is unfolding.
- The private sector, when available and capable, can contribute both with respect to resilience and response. Many companies pursue corporate social responsibility programs that could include resilience efforts, and other companies can add tremendous value through Private-Public Partnerships.
- International donors should not only coordinate efforts, but also the funds that are pledged during and shortly after disasters. Governments of disaster struck countries benefit tremendously from clarity in these pledges – whether they are loans, in-kind, budget support, tied aid, or some other variety. Whenever permissible, pledges should be clear to the recipient countries and their governments to facilitate better coordination and planning.

## **OPENING REMARKS**

### **Axel Goethals, CEO, EIAS**

On behalf of the European Institute for Asian Studies, Mr Axel Goethals welcomed all the audience members and the large group of distinguished speakers. Mr Goethals expressed his appreciation for the broad participation on this crucial topic, ranging from multilateral organizations to country governments and from the European Union to NGOs. He thanked all the partners who made this event possible and wished a very insightful day and fruitful forum.

## **CONGRATULATORY REMARKS**

### **H.E. Ambassador Keiichi Katakami**

With a long history of dealing with natural disasters, Japan has accumulated great knowledge and technology in the field of disaster risk reduction. Ambassador Katakami stated the importance of disaster preparedness and praised the value of international cooperation in disaster response.

At the UN World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction in Sendai, Prime Minister Abe announced the "Sendai Cooperation Initiative for Disaster Risk Reduction", announcing that Japan will contribute to the mainstreaming of disaster risk reduction. In the next 4 years, Japan will provide financial cooperation of 4 billion US dollars and train 40,000 government officials and local leaders to play a leading role in national efforts for disaster risk reduction and post-disaster reconstruction. Japan's commitment also goes to "global and region-wide cooperation". Japan attaches importance in international cooperation for disaster risk reduction in 3 key areas that are prior investment, global partnership and human security.

Last month, following on from the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), the UN General Assembly in September adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. In this context, Japan has agreed to make cities and human settlements resilient and reduce the number of deaths and economic losses caused by disasters. Japan is determined to play a leading role in formulating and implementing the post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction and to promote international cooperation towards a world that is resilient to disasters.

## **OPENING SPEECH**

### **Morten Wendelbo, Research Analyst, and project coordinator of the Natural Disaster Resilience and Response Research Series, EIAS**

Wendelbo characterised natural disasters as natural phenomena with significant costs to humans, including, but not limited to, the loss of life. Whereas we cannot prevent natural phenomena like earthquakes and typhoons, we *can* prevent them from becoming disasters, by building resilience and efficient response mechanisms that ensures limited costs to humans.

Wendelbo used three earthquakes with similar magnitudes to illustrate this point: Sudan, 1992; Nepal, 2015 and Chile, 2015. In Sudan there was no disaster because the

population in the area was sparse and did not occupy structure that could collapse. In Nepal, on the other hand, disaster ensued, largely because the affected areas were densely populated and buildings were not constructed to withstand earthquakes. In Chile, actually by far the strongest of the three earthquakes, the human cost was very limited, despite dense population; rather, Chile's resilience efforts are very far advanced. The good news, Wendelbo said, is that we have proof that resilience and capacity building can reduce, avoid or reverse the high human costs in natural disasters.

One distinct challenge for resilience and response – and especially for enabling the two to complement one another – is that they tend to fall in separate institutional realms. Consider FAO and WFP, EU DG DEVCO and DG ECHO, or US OFDA and USAID. Humanitarian aid – disaster response – never seems to want for proponents, while development aid – disaster resilience – tends to be under more significant scrutiny, and to suffer severely from underfunding. While all these agencies work hard to bridge their work with one another, there exists a persistent gap between resilience and response. Yet, efficiency in rehabilitation – moving from recovery after disaster into resilience against future disasters – depends deeply on aligning humanitarian assistance with longer term development goals, the ultimate goal of which is to make humanitarian assistance unnecessary in the first place. Ultimately, they both save and improve lives, but while results from humanitarian assistance are often quite clear because we can measure success in lives saved, results from development programs are hard to show, because success in this case – the lives that are saved – are more like “lives that are never endangered”.

According to Wendelbo, another challenge for resilience and response is the long stretches of time between disaster events. It is common to work towards being able to withstand 100 year weather events – that is, weather events that would occur, on average, once in a 100 year period. As a consequence, policy makers that are one or two generations removed from the type of event they are preparing the country for, are tasked with ensuring sufficient resilience efforts, without having experienced the true magnitude of a disaster. These policy makers are faced with allocating funding between competing objectives on a daily basis, some of which are very immediate. With natural disasters, a largely invisible enemy until it is too late, it is hard to allocate the necessary funds and staff.

In addition, it is increasingly commonplace to measure international aid outcomes with a host of indicators, designed to keep track of how efficient aid funds are spent. But, how do you measure the lives not endangered? And how do you measure the efficiency of resilience measures until the day a disaster strikes – maybe 80 years in the future? It is possible to some extent, but very difficult.

This is one part of why humanitarian assistance tends to receive much better support than development programs that actually have a greater long term potential to save lives. Another aspect of that same dichotomy is the timing issue – witness how willing international donors were to donate funds, material and responders to Nepal in the immediate aftermath of the earthquakes. Wendelbo wonders if, in 10 years, long after the literal dust settles, those same donors – country governments and individuals at home alike – will offer the same support for resilience efforts.

## PANEL 1

### New Approaches to the Technical Framework of Cooperation



The first panel focused on the physical and human infrastructure necessary to improve cooperation between countries in all facets of the disaster. Specific questions that were posed include:

- Is there any clear benefit to organizing (local) countries around a common infrastructure to facilitate post-disaster interventions? Specifically, investments in human and physical infrastructure across borders which would facilitate and improve response.
- Are there ways to institutionalize cooperation so that information and infrastructure sharing becomes automated and thus rapid?
- Are there pieces of physical infrastructure that could be jointly acquired (or provided by international organizations or donor countries) and installed that would improve countries' ability to learn from each other, and post-disaster, assist one another?
- In general, how can cooperation and common infrastructure for resilience and response (or, if it is the case, how can it not) improve outcomes for disaster-struck countries.

The speakers in this panel, chaired by **Gina Yannitell Reinhardt**, lecturer at the University of Essex, were **Stephan Baas**, Delivery Manager of the Major Area of Work on Resilience to Natural Hazards at FAO; **Giovanni de Siervo**, Seconded National Expert and Policy Officer in the Emergency Response Unit at DG ECHO, European Commission; **Alanna Simpson**, Senior Disaster Risk Management Specialist and Team Leader of the Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery Innovation Lab (GFDDR) at the World Bank; and **Muamar Vebry**, Programme Manager for Climate Change, Food Security and Disaster Management at the EU Delegation to Indonesia, Brunei Darussalam and ASEAN.

The diverse backgrounds of the speakers allowed the panel to explore very different perspectives on the coordination. De Siervo and Vebry focused on the EU contribution to creating natural disaster resilience and response in Asia, from the different point of view of the Brussels-based DG ECHO and the EU delegation in Jakarta. Baas represented the view of the UN in general, and the FAO in particular, focussing on the agricultural sector,

forestry and fisheries, while Simpson described the work of the GFDRR at the World Bank, making the point that citizens can deliver outstanding contributions to the analysis of open source data and the mapping of devastated areas.

The speech of Stephen Baas from FAO mainly focused around the destruction created by natural disasters, and the effect that this has on the livelihood of people, especially farmers. He mentioned that agriculture, food, and nutrition security are dimensions that are not yet covered enough in the discussion on disaster risk reduction and resilience, which is why his agency is working so much towards the strengthening of these areas. Indeed, 22% of the impact of medium to large-scale calamities is being absorbed by agriculture, forest and fisheries. This is a very high figure, which underlines the importance of upgrading agricultural institutions and infrastructure, and hereby to make agriculture more resilient worldwide.

What is particularly worrisome about the impact of natural disasters on agriculture is that the largest losses the farmers face are post-disaster indirect losses rather than losses that are directly related to the adverse event; this is the case for example of the losses that are being faced the year after the cataclysm because of the limited fertility of land. This is all particularly true for the damages caused by droughts, but also holds for floods. Both events are expected to become more frequent and devastating in upcoming decades because of climate change.

Specifically addressing the questions posed, Baas acknowledges the importance of coordination, but also stresses the importance of a strong command by the government at country level. Indeed, the coordination within a country is at least as important as the international coordination, especially because many disasters hit neglected areas, and need a subnational and local response. Regional approaches have proved to be very useful in this regard. The UN contributes proactively to disaster risk reductions, and its various agencies actively try to coordinate among the different actors, often under the umbrella of the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR). As an example, Baas made a strong point assessing the importance of early warning systems, thanks to which populations can anticipate on draughts and floods before they have actually set in. This framework had an impressive success in Africa, and needs to be equally well implemented in Asia.

Finally, Baas discussed the institutionalisation of cooperation and of the importance of intra-institutional coordination that is key for an effective emergency response. In this context, he praised the good example of the Philippines, which has now formalized intra-institutional coordination.

Giovanni de Siervo presented the setup of the European disaster response mechanism, and the coordination between the agencies of the various EU member states. Every European country has one of these agencies, always acting as – but not always called – ‘civil protection’. At the European level, the Commission decided to merge the tools addressing humanitarian aid and civil protection five years ago, in order to make its approach more coherent. Also, in 2001 the EU Civil Protection Mechanism was created, acting as a coordination mechanism of national disaster management agencies. Composed by 33 participating countries, it realises the necessity to speak a single language to respond to disasters. It coordinates the disaster management with the 33 national agencies, and it contributes to the delivery of assistance, financing the

transportation costs and overseeing the implemented activities. The EU Civil Protection Mechanism helped to build common standards and to develop a common language among interested parties; in fact, it can be stated that all EU member states are now on the same page, and they coordinate their efforts while responding to disasters all around the world. Right now, priorities include improving the exchange of know-how and of mutual cooperation with overseas countries, including China and Japan, which are crucial for a comprehensive response to natural disasters in Asia.

Alanna Simpson outlined the work of the GFDRR at the World Bank, which does not work in humanitarian relief, but rather opens up a dialogue with national governments after a disaster has hit. Together, the government and GFDRR analyse how to manage and finance the reconstruction best. The majority of work with governments takes place before disasters even happen, in order to quantify the financial needs in case a disaster hits, what impact it might have on the country's infrastructure, and how the financing of the reconstruction could be coordinated.

Simpson especially highlighted the opportunities created by open data sharing as a trigger for innovation and improved effectiveness of disaster response. Working in partnership with other international bodies, including the Red Cross and UN agencies, the World Bank analysed various data to understand the scale of the disasters. Interestingly, the World Bank is also working with 'the crowd', volunteers who help to map out several areas which have never been mapped before. The images that are provided by the crowd, with the use of satellites imagery, show the pre- and post-disaster situations, making it possible to assess the damage. There are many interesting examples where the use of satellite images helped towards the making of accurate estimations within few days after the disaster: the Philippines, Myanmar, Malawi and Haiti were all mapped at an incredible pace without any cost, showing that data sharing can save many lives. In Nepal, this online mapping was particularly important to understand which roads were available for being used by humanitarian aid workers.

Muamar Vebry discussed the work that the EU delegation in Jakarta is delivering on the reduction of disaster risk in Indonesia. He praised Indonesia's magnificent achievements over the last years in terms of disaster risk reduction. The country mourned almost 200,000 casualties as a result of the 2004 earthquake and tsunami, but was far better prepared for the 2006 Yogyakarta earthquake, the 2006 West Java tsunami and the 2010 Merapi eruption. Indeed, after the 2004 tsunami disaster risk reduction and institutionalisation of a coordinated response improved Indonesia's resilience to disasters. The EU supported Indonesia with the Multi Donor Fund for Aceh and Nias, and the Java Reconstruction Fund. This way, the EU provided support for the construction of roads, maritime reconstruction, improvements of water supply and critical waste management and the rebuilding of housing and local infrastructure.

The involvement of the EU in the technical working groups and joint monitoring missions contributed to the trust funds' successful implementation. The work of the EU in the ASEAN towards an improved natural disaster resilience and response is, however, far from finished. The EU is now supporting the strengthening of the capacity of the ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance on disaster management (AHA Centre) and of the ASEAN Emergency Rapid Assessment Team (ASEAN-ERAT); it is also actively promoting the ASEAN Environmental Education Programme, the ASEAN Farmers Organisations Support Programme (AFOSP), the Environmentally Sustainable, Low

Carbon and Climate Resilient ASEAN Cities (ESC) programme, the ASEAN Safe Schools Initiative, the Sustainable Use of Peatlands and Haze Mitigation in ASEAN (SUPA) programme and the ASEAN Centre for Biodiversity. The EU, Indonesia and the other ASEAN countries cooperate on all of these topics, and international agreements were signed to institutionalize this cooperation.

## **Q&A**

During the Q&A session the panellists discussed the main challenges for improved coordination lying ahead. When asked how cooperation can improve the outcomes for disaster-affected countries, De Siervo highlighted the European achievements, where agreements on minimal standards have improved the overall disaster response. Simpson pointed out that it is crucial that different countries in the same region reach minimal standards that make coordination possible, as otherwise the mutual disparities would hamper attempts of efficient cooperation. Also, she highlighted the importance of data sharing, which eases an effective partnership of all stakeholders, acknowledging that many parties are reluctant to opening their data to the public, because doing so would open themselves up to criticisms regarding the quality of their data.

Baas pointed out that FAO is working on trying to institutionalize disaster risk reduction and resilience within several national ministries of agriculture. He also praised, along with some other speakers, the outstanding achievements of Indonesia, the Philippines and Thailand in institutionalising detailed legal frameworks and response networks. In terms of regional cooperation, Vebry talked about the establishment of the ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response (AADMER), the first legally binding agreement among ASEAN member states on this matter. While the agreement and the cooperation are relevant, the allocated budgets are, however, not enough for effective action. Therefore, it is especially important that limited funds are strategically invested.

Simpson also suggested that funds should be invested for training and teaching people to use new technologies that are already available, rather than for buying new infrastructure that they are then unable to make use of. Before investing too much in infrastructure, we need to make sure that people can actually use and maintain them.

In their final remarks, the speakers highlighted the progress that has already been made in many countries – a progress that is beyond what one could have predictable ten years ago.

## PANEL 2

### The International Contribution to Natural Disaster Resilience and Response



The second panel focused on coordination of the efforts between donors and responders, and those affected by natural disasters, both with respect to resilience and response. Specific questions that were posed include:

- It is often the case that international contributors to disaster response make duplicate efforts, as opposed to purely complementary efforts. How can the international community address these coordination challenges?
- Even when international responses are complementary these efforts tend to compete for the same resources on the ground, such as transport, shipping and in some cases critical infrastructure (consider for example the bottleneck in the airport of Kathmandu after the Nepal earthquakes this spring). Often international efforts compete directly with domestic efforts as well. How are those efforts best prioritized?
- What are the benefits from having major donors and international organizations and NGOs coordinate their resilience building efforts more closely? Are those efforts best coordinated directly by the recipients, or at least in part by contributors?
- Post-disaster commitments of aid among donor countries come in various guises: in-kind aid, loans, concessional loans, technical assistance, budget support and so forth. However, in the immediate aftermath of a disaster, there is often confusion about the nature and extent of aid from different contributors, which makes rehabilitation planning difficult for the domestic government, international organizations and NGOs. Is it feasible to have a standard mechanism for *expressing* aid commitments that would allow uniformity across donors and disasters, thus improving the ability to plan?

The speakers in this panel, chaired by **Deirdre de Burca**, Director of Advocacy at World Vision, were **Soyoung Kim**, Deputy Managing Director, Multilateral Cooperation and Humanitarian Assistance Office, Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA); **Li Yigang**, Senior Engineer, National Earthquake Response Support Service, China Earthquake Administration; **Rene Nijenhuis**, Former Head of OCHA Nepal Humanitarian Affairs Officer, OCHA Emergency Services Branch, Geneva; **Rio. D Praaning Prawira Adiningrat**, Secretary-General, Public Advice International Foundation (PA

International); **Koji Suzuki**, Executive Director for National Research Institute for Earth Science and Disaster Prevention (NIED), Japan; **Bruno Maestracci**, Colonel, Project Manager, ASEAN - EU Emergency Management Project, Jakarta.

As the need for a multilevel response to natural disaster resilience and response is widely recognized, the second panel focused on what the international contribution to natural disaster response should be and, in particular, how it can be made politically, financially, practically and technically possible.

Soyoung Kim briefly introduced the work carried out by the Korean International Cooperation Agency (KOICA), which is the aid execution agency under the auspices of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the Republic of Korea. The history of the Korean government's engagement in the humanitarian assistance crisis is not long. The first time that the South Korean government dispatched its overseas emergency relief team was in 2003, in help to the victims of the earthquake in Iraq. Ever since, the government has consistently sent its crew to major international disaster zones, including to the Indian Ocean for the tsunami in 2004, the earthquake in Pakistan in 2005, the China Sichuan earthquake in 2008, the cyclone in Myanmar in 2008, the earthquakes in Indonesia in 2009 and in Haiti in 2010, the typhoon in the Philippines in 2013, the Ebola outbreak in Sierra Leone in 2014, and the earthquake in Nepal in 2015.

Despite its short history in humanitarian engagement, the South Korean government has contributed to providing rapid rescue and relief to disaster-affected countries when overseas disasters occur, by prescribing the matters necessary for overseas emergency relief, such as the dispatch of emergency relief teams, the provision of emergency relief supplies, and the support for interim recovery from disasters. It has also shown steady efforts to expand its humanitarian response capacity through the institutionalization of laws and regulations: in March 2007 the Korean government enacted the Overseas Emergency Relief Act, which provided a comprehensive legal framework for effective and systematic response to disasters overseas.

Furthermore, in March 2015, the Korean government also released a main policy document, called the 'Humanitarian Strategy for ROK' with the purpose of implementing efficient and integrated humanitarian assistance activities and mainstreaming DRR activities into development and capacity-building projects. The Korean government increased its preliminary humanitarian assistance from USD 4 million in 2003 to USD 28 million in 2013, which corresponds to 1.6 per cent of South Korean gross bilateral ODA. The increasing significance of humanitarian aid and DRR measures is reflected in the number of activities carried out by the government of ROK. They include the modalities of assistance (support in financial and in-kind contribution, dispatch of overseas emergency relief teams, and establishment of partnership programmes with CSOs) and the range of support (preparedness, emergency relief and immediate recovery).

The organizational structure of the Korea Disaster Relief Teams (KDRT) – which are overseas disaster relief teams providing emergency support to affected countries and recovery from damage – involves several agencies, including the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Public Safety and Security, the Secretariat of KDRT, and the Ministry of Health and a mechanism called 'Public and private joint council for overseas emergency relief'. On the International level, Korea has contributed to the reconstruction process in Nepal and participated in the 'International Conference on Nepal's

Reconstruction' on 25 June 2015 that aimed at addressing the country's massive reconstruction challenges.

Li Yigang presented the work of CISAR (China International Search and Rescue Team) Humanitarian Assistance & Disaster Relief Efforts. CISAR is a governmental organization, officially established on April 27, 2001. It is comprised of 480 people, including administrators and technical experts from the China Earthquake Administration (CEA), the 38<sup>th</sup> division of the military search and rescue corps and medical teams from the China Armed Police General Hospital. CISAR was recognized as a high-level international rescue team in November 2009, becoming the 12<sup>th</sup> high-level team in the world and the second in Asia.

Since 2003 and as of April 26, CISAR has carried out rescue operations and has provided medical treatment during 20 national and international aid missions, including Algeria 2003 (earthquake), Indonesia 2004 (earthquake), Pakistan 2005 (earthquake), China 2008 (earthquake), Haiti 2010 (earthquake), Pakistan 2010 (floods), Japan 2011 (earthquake and tsunami), and Nepal 2015 (earthquake). The team also contributes to the UN response mechanism for earthquake disasters, participating in almost all the advisory and working group meetings for instruction and training – it also hosted two training exercises in Chengdu for earthquake emergency response. Moreover, Beijing hosts a training base – established in 2009 – which cooperates successfully with experts from Switzerland, Japan and Germany, and provides training courses for other rescue teams, including Mongolia and Singapore.

Earlier this year, fourteen hours after the April 2015 earthquake struck Nepal, CISAR was deployed and, after twenty-two hours, a team of 62 people, 17 tons of equipment and supplies, and six search dogs arrived in Kathmandu airport. The Chinese team was in 18 sites, providing medical treatment and conducting rescue operations.

Koji Suzuki addressed the thorny issues of insufficient coordination and information among donors and NGOs, and the lack of flexible funds for emergency rescue, rehabilitation operation and early stage recovery. Indeed, the insufficient coordination and information on site results in ineffective resource allocation, inefficient and delayed delivery of goods and services, delay in rescue operation and rehabilitation activities, and unbalanced media coverage of donor initiatives. Furthermore, the lack of flexible funds for rescue and rehabilitation operations, and early stage recovery results in longer lead time to initiate operations and activities, delay in recovery of local economy, and loss in the human network, culture and community. In order to overcome these issues, there is an urgent need to set up coordination mechanisms with enforcement, authorized activities by Disaster Management Agencies, donors and NGOs, and stand-by operation fund with financial commitment. As a result, the expected outcomes include avoiding unnecessary competition among donors and NGOs, avoiding duplication, overlapping and bottleneck, making effective and timely resource allocation, getting well-balanced media coverage, minimizing time for rehabilitation and early stage recovery operation for local economies and communities.

Bruno Maestracci began his intervention stating that saving lives requires specific skills, training, education and equipment. Disaster preparedness and post-emergency recovery necessitate analysis of risks, complementarity, continuity and coherence. For this reason, the help of the international community is essential in filling up each other's gaps and

shortages. For this purpose, Europe and Asia should share analysis, agree on the ways to provide efficient and timely help without overlapping measures, and collaborate closely instead of developing plans in isolation. When many organizations have multiple overlapping objectives to achieve in a disaster situation, the outcome is often inefficient.

Maestracci stressed that efforts must be complementary, striking a balance between talents and human needs. Helping each other requires training and mutual knowledge, not only cultural, social and personal, but also situational. Moreover these efforts are continuous, meaning that the process is in perpetuity, as a good response grows into better preparedness. Last, Maestracci points out, resilience and response efforts must be made in a coherent fashion, conscious of the interconnectedness of interventions and efforts by international and domestic responders alike.

Rio Praaning focused his presentation on the importance of a multi-stakeholder approach as a response to natural disasters. One of the missing links is that all stakeholders need to work together and present one single view to politicians and bureaucracies. Some of the ways to reach this goal include using Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) as an angle to ensure participation of local businesses in a possible disaster, and have them join with foreign companies. Indeed, industry-sponsored social development conducted as a win-win solution that would be beneficial for both business and the rest of society. Furthermore, another tool to achieve this coordinated multi-stakeholder approach is using Public Private Partnership (PPP) as providers of optimal chances to ensure efficient and sustainable responses in case of natural disasters.

Furthermore, combining both private and public efforts to address a natural disaster in a prepared and structured way would derive better efficiency, sustainability and social development; this should result in immediate jobs and thus self-reliance and participation of the community. In a multi-stakeholder approach, cooperation among national and regional governments, foreign and domestic industries, multinational and international organizations, foreign and domestic NGOs, as well as foreign and local industries is essential. Emergency professionals of both governments and industries must be involved and devise joint strategies and roadmaps, which should be regularly exercised on a multi-stakeholder basis.

Transformational change requires multiple stakeholders: a multi-level, multi-sector and multi-stakeholder approach is imperative in order to effectively align national climate goals and sustainable development objectives. All these factors would ultimately lead to a holistic multi-stakeholder disaster management approach.

Rene Nijenhuis presented his experience in Nepal and highlighted that, during the period of May-August 2015, UNOCHA Nepal was in charge of coordinating the incoming humanitarian assistance with the Nepal government. China and India were the first to arrive, providing rapid assistance to the people affected by the disaster. Nepal received in total 76 SAR teams from 31 countries, 2,242 general staff, 141 medical teams and 1,858 personnel. More than 4000 people arrived in Nepal in the first days. Several countries amongst which China, India, Bangladesh, Pakistan, U.S., Russia and Sri Lanka sent 29 military aircrafts and 19 helicopters. In addition to the support from foreign states, support also included international organisations and NGOs such as the Red Cross, the Red Crescent and UN agencies.

This huge inflow of foreign assistance was managed and coordinated according to three different mechanisms in cooperation with the Nepali government. UNOCHA was in charge of the SARs and coordinated the foreign assistance according to the cluster approach, defining who operates in which sectors. The WHO operated in collaboration with the Nepali Ministry of Health in assessing who needed help, where people in need were located and setting up field hospitals.

During the first days following the earthquake, there was a massive upsurge of foreign aid and assistance. This extensive solidarity provoked problems regarding the capacity of the country to absorb all this help. For future scenarios, there is the need to focus more into enabling governments to lead coordination in both humanitarian and reconstruction level. Implementing the cluster system mechanism at the national level like in the Philippines and Nepal, significantly increases the capabilities of the country to react, and improves drastically the integration of international and national systems. This development will strengthen governments' ability to coordinate. Indeed, the earthquake in Nepal created the opportunity to coordinate with the humanitarian community, increasing the preparedness for next crises.

On the funding side, USD 420million was needed to complement the efforts of the government and only 57 per cent of that UN appeal was funded. This data is symptomatic of the fact that the financial system for humanitarian crisis is broke and broken. In the last 10 years, there has been a 430 per cent increase of money needed for humanitarian assistance worldwide. That shows that the funding at disposal is not enough and reveals the magnitude of the humanitarian crisis.

## **Q&A**

During the Q&A session, the panellists' replies offered insights and point of views on several aspects of humanitarian aid and rehabilitation coordination at the national and international level. Soyoung Kim discussed the increase in the number of joint exercise for coordination amongst Japan, the Republic of Korea and the People's Republic of China in the response to natural disasters, following the Fukushima earthquake in 2011. Indeed, China is becoming an increasingly important actor in natural disaster resilience and response internationally, and it is enhancing the cooperation with other countries in the region and beyond, as Li Yigang pointed out.

Also the multi-stakeholder approach was examined and Mr Rio Praaning observed that governments should be in the driving seat on coordination, but it is crucial to let industries do what they are good at and let them contribute in their area of expertise, from helping to re-establish the local production of water and food, to child-care and technology transfer. However, Nijenhuis argued, the private sector is not prepared to play that role.

Furthermore, Mr. Wendelbo, research analyst at EIAS and coordinator of the forum, challenged the panel with a question concerning how the funding was provided – if in kind or in loans – and how the governments are supposed to coordinate efficiently if these funds are not entirely transparent and clear. Mr Nijenhuis responded that UNOCHA financial tracking service provides the accountability behind pledges, but it is often hard to understand the solidarity expressed by bilateral arrangements.

### **PANEL 3**

#### **Regional Cooperation and Integrated Response**



**Panel 3** broadly addressed local cooperation among neighbouring states which are uniquely suited to assist each other in the case of disaster, and focused on the more direct coordination effort and political agreements among countries. Specific questions that were being posed include:

- How have neighbouring countries assisted during and after natural disasters in the past?
- What are the technical and non-technical challenges to shared resilience and response infrastructure?
- Militaries tend to be central to the logistical efforts necessary in emergency response – both for domestic emergency management agencies and in efforts abroad. Most countries are, understandably, reluctant to let foreign military personnel into their territory, even during emergencies. How can the international community address those challenges? How can the militaries be equipped to handle sensitive responses to emergency?
- What are the diplomatic challenges to an integrated framework that institutionalizes response (automatic measures that ensure consistent support from neighbours and facilitate rapid response)?

The speakers in this panel, chaired by **Brendan McDonald**, Senior Humanitarian Affairs Officer & Chief of Emergency Preparedness and Environment Section, OCHA, Geneva, were **Megumi Muto**, Chief Representative, Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), Paris; **Robespierre L. Bolivar**, Deputy Chief of Mission and Consul General, Mission of the Philippines to the European Union, Embassy of the Philippines to Belgium and Luxembourg; **Asa Patia Silalahi**, Minister Counsellor, Acting Chargé d’Affaires, Embassy of the Republic of Indonesia, Brussels; **Kazi Ehsanul Haque**, Counsellor, Embassy of the People’s Republic of Bangladesh, Brussels; and **Mahmood Akhtar Mahmood**, Counsellor, Embassy of Pakistan, Brussels.

**Megumi Muto** introduced the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA). As the ODA arm of the Japanese government, JICA is advancing its activities around the pillars

of a field-oriented approach, human security, and enhanced effectiveness, efficiency, and speed. After introducing the main activities and initiatives carried out by JICA during her mandate in the Philippines and the Pacific from 2009, Megumi Muto presented the main actions taken by the central government in the field of disaster prevention and management, which are summarized in three main points.

Firstly, the Building Back Better Policy, which is at the core of the reconstruction plans in the Philippines. It addresses the need for structural measures (more resilient and better designed structures), the lack of non-structural measures (early warning, policy changes and community awareness), the need for capacity building of National Government Agencies (NGAs) and local governments (LGUs), and the inadequate public infrastructure facilities for emergency situations and disaster mitigation. A second main strategy undertaken by the government of the Philippines is the creation of strategic policies that include the establishment of an Office of the Presidential Assistant for Rehabilitation and Recovery, the creation of a cabinet-level Climate Change Commission, the adoption of Integrated Water Resource Management (IWRM) principles and the implementation of a River Basin Approach to Flood Management and Water Optimization. Thirdly and finally, the Filipino government established a stronger Disaster Risk Reduction Management (DRRM) structure with a permanent and fully staffed DRRM office, and achieved better coordination with humanitarian organizations such as UN, WB, JICA, ADB, and the Red Cross.

Moreover, Megumi Muto explained an important ex-ante financial mechanism to build back better, called SECURE, that functions as a stand-by emergency credit for urgent recovery after a natural disaster, ensuring a fast and immediate disbursement of funds. She also presented an interesting mechanism, called Business Continuity Management (BCM) rating. It is a tool that gives better credit rating to private companies and incentivizes the private sector to be better prepared. Finally, JICA is working closely with the World Bank in the Philippines to initiate several private-based insurance mechanisms in order to achieve more resilience in the private sector and in SMEs.

Robespierre Bolivar addressed two major issues during his speech: the first one took into consideration the changes in the framework of the Filipino government in responding to and reducing the risk of disasters, and the second one addressed the framework of cooperation in the region – especially in the ASEAN and ASEM contexts.

The most significant changes in the framework for DRRM can be summarized in four key words: Resilience, Mainstreaming, Decentralization and Inclusiveness. Firstly, the government of the Philippines is putting emphasis on building the country's resilience to disasters by addressing the root causes of the vulnerabilities and by strengthening the country's institutional capacity for disaster risk reduction. The country's priorities are to enhance disaster resilience of the affected communities, improving infrastructure, promoting inclusive and sustainable business models. Secondly, the government is also mainstreaming internationally accepted principles of disaster risk management into the country's overall development plans. It is also working towards the implementation of national, regional, and local sustainable development plans, particularly in the areas of environment, agriculture, water, energy, health, education, poverty reduction, land use, and urban planning and housing.

Thirdly, the government recognizes that building a truly disaster resilient nation begins at the community level. Therefore, it emphasizes decentralization and capacity building of local government units and communities, which should be prepared to build their respective disaster resilience mechanisms and mitigate, get ready for, respond to and recover from disasters.

Fourthly and lastly, the country is working to produce DRRM and climate change measures that are inclusive, gender-responsive, sensitive to the indigenous knowledge systems and respectful of human rights. Interestingly, two important innovations have resulted from the country's plan: the institutionalization of a system of public information for early warning at the grassroots level and an online management information system designed to facilitate the monitoring of foreign aid, called Foreign Aid Transparency Hub (FAITH).

The second important aspect addressed by Mr Bolivar concerned the framework of cooperation in the region – especially in the ASEAN and ASEM contexts. In spite of the fact that many steps have been taken to strengthen regional cooperation and multilateral efforts, many challenges lie ahead. One of them is represented by coordination; in a region comprised of developing countries with similar vulnerabilities to disasters, such as in ASEAN, resources can become insufficient in a humanitarian emergency situation. In this context, strengthening local capacity to respond to and mitigate the risks of disasters is of paramount importance. Furthermore, the promotion of harmonious and synergistic relations between national, regional and local actors has been emphasized at the Asia-Europe Meeting on Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Conference, held in Manila in June 2014, which resulted in the “Tacloban Declaration” containing proposals for the Post-2015 Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction.

Asa Patia Silalahi started his presentation outlining that disaster preparedness is a crucial part of Indonesia's national agenda and national priorities. Indeed, the country put in place a comprehensive disaster risk reduction mechanism, and shifted the paradigm from emergency response and recovery to a more comprehensive approach towards risk reduction – from a reactive to a preventative paradigm, from a government approach to a civil society model. Precisely, since 2008, a comprehensive approach was introduced, which involves investing in disaster prevention, mitigation and preparedness. More importantly, this DRR management has now also become Indonesia's development agenda, which gives particular attention to efforts such as strengthening local capacity and local action, using local knowledge and local wisdom, and engaging every group in the community in disaster risk reduction efforts, particularly women, poor people, youth and people with disabilities. This approach is crucial, since local communities are at the forefront in facing disasters.

As for international cooperation, besides being involved in a number of bilateral agreements, Indonesia is also part of many regional multilateral organizations such as ASEAN and the Asian Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction. Indonesia is very active in the global forum, advocating his risk reduction mission. It recognizes the importance of knowledge sharing, emphasizes that the international cooperation in disaster risk reduction should also include the empowerment of local communities, the incorporation of local knowledge and local wisdom, as well as the inclusion of various groups and communities in the disaster risk reduction decision-making process.

Kazi Ehsanul Haque explained that Bangladesh has always been subject to regular natural disasters, including floods, cyclones, river erosions and seasonal droughts. The combination of frequent natural hazards, high population density, poor infrastructure and low resilience to economic shocks makes Bangladesh especially vulnerable to natural calamities. Moreover, its high incidence of poverty and heavy reliance on agriculture has increased its vulnerability. In the 80s and early 90s, Bangladesh had not made any significant contribution in pre-disaster planning and preparedness. As a result, there was extensive damage to the lives, livelihoods and property following disasters.

The origin and impact of most of the medium and large scale disasters transcend the boundaries of nations and affect the people and territories of many countries. Therefore, in order to assess the hazards, vulnerabilities, and risks of disasters, we need regional cooperation to make better planning for prevention, mitigation, preparedness and response.

The population of South Asia has increased manifold recently, and correspondingly so has water usage. Water diversion in the upstream causes minimal water flow in the downstream. As a result, the water retaining capacity of the rivers has decreased. The main challenge to sort out this problem is to reach a regional water cooperation agreement among the nations which includes all the components of sustainable and fair use of the water resources. Cooperation among the EU countries in using water resources is evident, so the regional governments can follow it.

In this context, the SAARC Disaster Management Centre was set up in New Delhi, in January 2007, to develop a SAARC Comprehensive Framework on Disaster Management, as well as twelve Road Maps of Regional Cooperation on Disaster Management on various thematic issues. Furthermore, in 2000, the Government of Bangladesh and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) began to explore opportunities to fast track the transition from response and relief to comprehensive risk reduction. This resulted in the design of the Comprehensive Disaster Management Programme (CDMP). The government has also given importance to community-based disaster risk management and community-based adaptation to focus the attention to the role of women in increasing resilience. And finally, the government has also implemented effective early warning systems coupled with public awareness campaigns and evacuation systems. The above steps have helped reduce the death toll during the super cyclone SIDR in 2007: an estimated 1.5 millions of people took refuge in the cyclone shelters and a lower death toll of approximately 3,500 was recorded.

The last presentation, by Mahmood Akhtar Mahmood, started with a reminder of the 2005 shattering earthquake that changed completely the view on how to deal with disasters in Pakistan and elsewhere. It happened in the first week of October and by October 24 Pakistan had already established an organization named Earthquake Relief and Rehabilitation Authority, now known as the National Disaster Management Authority. The epicentre of the 2005 earthquake was in the Kashmir region and, for that reason, political challenges immediately emerged. In SAARC countries the request of emergency aid should come from the country that has suffered from the calamity, and regional cooperation and compromises are needed for effective recovery and resilience. However, in Pakistan, the greatest challenge was the lack of capacity building and resources. For instance, in Baluchistan – which comprises more than 40 per cent of Pakistan's land mass

– a provincial disaster management authority was established, but the equipment used was built by UNHCR in the 80s.

In sum, at the domestic level, Pakistan has built its institutions from scratch and its army has been at the forefront in disasters, integrating its work with provincial authorities and government policies. Regionally, the country is adhering to the SAARC framework for disaster management and, globally, it is committed to a fast and timely response.

## **Q&A**

The discussion started with the question of the military role in response to disasters. The cases of Pakistan, Nepal, the Philippines and Japan were discussed. All participants were keen on the role of the military and discussed their respective experiences, as well as their prescriptions on what can be done diplomatically and in terms of coordination to further harness military assets at a regional and multilateral level.

The theme of diplomatic coordination and institutional capacity continued with panellists being questioned on what the challenges for a more integrated multilateral framework in disaster response include. A need for the multilateral system to better understand the local context and work in partnership with regional and national authorities was expressed by all the panellists.

Furthermore, all the speakers touched on the key role of the community. The panellists expected to see an increasing trend, particularly in South Asia and Southeast Asia, for more regional support and bilateral support, while, at the same time, envisioning less growth and involvement in multilateral systems. Indeed, since countries continue to develop and strengthen their own development models, get stronger and become more resilient and independent, the challenge for the multilateral system is to add value and create innovative support.



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