

EMPOWERING THE COMMUNITIES TO PREPARE FOR DISASTERS

chaired by Peeranan Towashiraporn, ADPC

SESSION
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ULTIMATE GOAL

**Communities and the general public
equipped with the knowledge
required and empowered to use
earth observation and other
technologies for disaster risk
management for the community
safety and resilience**

PANELISTS

- **Dr. Du Yuan**, Education Officer, UNICEF, China
- **Ms. Zhu Yicun**, Program Manager, China Foundation for Poverty Alleviation, China
- **Dr. Papori Barooah**, Assistant Professor, Girl's Polytechnic, Assam State Council for Technical Education, India
- **Dr. Nama Budhathoki**, Executive Director, Kathmandu Living Labs, Nepal
- **Dr. Jose Quintanilha**, School of Engineering, University of Sao Paulo, Brazil

KEY OBSERVATIONS (1)

- Education on disasters should be prioritized in communities.
- Child-centered DRR activities include child-centered risk assessment and comprehensive school safety programs.
- DRR should be done with children, not only for children.
- Children could be agents of change to bring technology to the communities.
- During a relief effort of a major disaster event, coordination can become a challenge.
- DRR measures/tools must be tailored to people at various levels, from professionals to illiterate laymen. That applies to the applications of satellite technology too.

KEY OBSERVATIONS (2)

- Preparedness is still key.
- Women are not only victims, but can be agents of change in the family and in the communities (e.g., the Mother's Club).
- There is an obvious need to further educate women on DRR.
- Communication and dissemination of information is as important as the DRR measure itself. That can be done in communities through non-conventional means such as using role plays, folklore, and songs, in addition to leaflets, TV, and radio broadcast.
- Almost anyone can be a mapping expert.
- People and the communities come together stronger during difficult times.

KEY OBSERVATIONS (3)

- Map products are not very meaningful until they are used by someone else.
- The culture of voluntarism can be a powerful tool for DRR and it's already happening.
- Everyday small-scaled disasters such as road accidents can be as important. It is much closer to the communities and general public than a major disaster event.

MAJOR CHALLENGE

There remain big knowledge gaps from both the earth observation scientist and the community sides (i.e., EO scientists have limited knowledge on DRR and the communities think EO is not something for them.)

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Earth observation technology can be used for mapping resources for disaster relief purposes.
- Communities need ‘champions’ and ‘case studies’ to help bring the technology closer to them.
- Universities and the education sector in general can be a good bridge between the technology and the communities.
- Capacity building is 2-way. While the communities need to know more about EO and how it can help them, the EO scientists need to learn about DRR too to be able to tailored to technologies to fit the needs.