

Panel Discussion

Panel discussion

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Special Speech: Dr. Marco Ferrari; Deputy Head of Department of Humanitarian Aid,
Swiss Agency for Development and Coordination (SDC)

Panelists:

Mr. Andrew Maskrey; Chief, Disaster Reduction Unit, UNDP/BCPR

Mr. Alfredo Lazarte-Hoyle; Director ad interim, Crisis Response and Reconstruction Programme,
ILO

Mr. Satoru Nishikawa; Director for Disaster Preparedness, Public Relations and International
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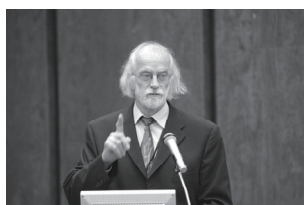
Mr. Koji Suzuki; Executive Director, Asian Disaster Reduction Center

Special Commentator: Prof. Ian Davis, Visiting Professor of Cranfield University, UK.

Preamble:

Briceño

Good afternoon. We have heard very valuable contributions this morning. A lot of new ideas and new information were shared and now we will have the opportunity to hear and listen to some experts that are also working on the subjects to comment and share the views on this important subject. We are going to have two separate moments in the panel. First one is dedicated to looking at what have been the efforts and practices on the implementation of the Hyogo Framework and the second part will focus on the future challenges, future cooperation on better recovery activities. With this brief introduction, we will start the proceedings with the special speech from Dr. Marco Ferrari of SDC.



Special Speech:

Ferrari

Ladies and gentlemen, it is really a pleasure to be here. My intention was

here to come and make an advocacy as the Chair of the committee which is here in this building that discussed, elaborated and negotiated the Hyogo Framework for Action. I want to make an advocacy, especially on the greater attention which should be given to disaster risk reduction. I want also to talk about the holistic approach in identifying and putting into action this complex multidisciplinary disaster risk reduction measures.

Therefore, ladies and gentlemen, the Hyogo Framework for Action has given an impact to us for further strengthening the ISDR system. It was widely felt that successful and coherent implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action requires such a strengthened capacity. Hence, after the Kobe World Conference a consultative process was launched to consider practical ways of strengthening this ISDR system, building on existing mandates, on institution, partnerships and mechanism with the key purpose of implementing the Hyogo Framework for Action.

In this process, we, the Government of Switzerland, have been much involved particularly in the role I assume the Chair of the Support Group. You may

remember that back in 2002 already we established this Geneva based group on the request of the then Under-Secretary General for Humanitarian Affairs, Mr. Kenzo Oshima. But since the Kobe Conference, this ISDR Support Group is now an open-ended group, bringing together approximately 60 countries or committed governments with a keen interest in supporting and development of the ISDR system. Since January 2005, a number of meetings of this support group have taken place and focused specifically on this ISDR strengthening process including a one-day workshop which took place in Geneva last month.

According to us, in this strengthening process, three aspects are absolutely important. The first one: the vision that emerged since the world conference is to see the ISDR evolving from an inter-agency coordination mechanism into a global movement for disaster risk reduction. With the active participation of governments that is new. Hence, all major stakeholders in disaster risk reduction, government, inter-government and non-government organizations, international organizations and agencies, financial institutions and scientific and technical bodies and networks, as well as civil society and the private sector ought to become an active part of the ISDR system. This would then allow building a stronger, more systematic and coherent international effort to support national disaster reduction activities but to support national disaster reduction activities and to support the implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action. Second, we also believe that it is important that the ISDR system partners at regional and sub-regional levels be further empowered for promoting and coordinating disaster risk reduction initiatives and, in this regard, very much welcome the close linkage of the ADRC with the ISDR system. We think that it is not only essential to build a stronger international system for disaster risk reduction, but it is equally important that regions

and states (particularly disaster prone developing countries) take charge of disaster risk reduction efforts and be supported in their efforts. Third, in terms of dealing with the substantive disaster risk reduction issues, we very much welcome the plans for the ISDR system to be organized in thematic platforms such as early warning, risk identification, preparedness, capacity development and recovery. The governments of Japan and Switzerland have supported the International Recovery Platform, the secretariat of which is based here in Kobe. We are very pleased to see that the IRP is orienting itself to become the thematic platform of the ISDR system for recovery. We believe that the IRP is a good example of a global network geared at having a positive impact at regional and local level. We hope, of course, that this Kobe meeting will enable the IRP to deal with some issues requiring further clarification including its future structure and governance.

The next step in the strengthening of the ISDR system is the establishment of the global platform for disaster risk reduction. We will be cooperating very closely with the ISDR secretariat in the preparatory phase, and hope that other governments and stakeholder groups will also actively support this process and provide substantive input in order to ensure the success of this important global gathering on disaster risk reduction.

Thank you very much.

First Round:

Lazarte-Hoyle

Thank you very much and good afternoon to all the members of the panel, and also to our audience.

First of all, it is not very common to see an



organization as the ILO, International Labor Organization, who is the development agency being on this type of forums. But fortunately since 1999, our organization was raising awareness in terms of importance to be present since the early aftermath of major crisis defining different and better future for a society-centered operation. Obviously, the area we are involved in was very concentrated, We deal with the area of livelihood, livelihood recovery, preparedness, more than to reduce the level of exposure to damage on the livelihood activities as well as to help the most vulnerable people to recover their capacity of handling their livelihood after these types of major hazard.

First of all, the livelihood dimension of disaster was practically unknown and in many cases neglected. Fortunately, this situation began to evolve significantly in the last years. We could feel at this moment that livelihood dimension of disaster began to be more systematic area of attention of international community even if there is a long way to be undertaken. But we could say that today we have firm advancement in terms of activity on the responsive side on recovery as well as on the area of prevention and preparedness. But reducing risk on livelihood implies the needs to properly address the reduction of social-economic vulnerabilities. We could say that one of the major conditions to enhance the impact of these disasters is just poverty, which began as one of the most important risks for us in terms of natural disasters. But it is a long-term process, and for the meanwhile we need to undertake special measures to protect the most vulnerable sectors of population. But we need to do something to address these types of challenges. We need to do something more than to help these people who are the most vulnerable to provide alternative source of livelihood that are going to enhance their capacity to respond when one of these new hazards happens again, but as well to reduce the way how these activities are threatening

themselves and the conditions of the community. Finally for this first part, the restoration of livelihood in the aftermath of disasters imply the needs of major consensus to be built between the different international and national actors for dealing with investment for recovery and reconstruction which facilitate environmentally-friendly reconstruction investment. It is important to identify and promote investments that are going to use local stakeholder, local manpower, local business community, and through their participation on these recovery activities to find opportunities to re-launch the process of sustainable development.

Thank you very much.



Maskrey

Thank you and good afternoon.

At national level, I think UNDP has really been trying to fulfill three different roles, each of which responds to three different senses of needs and constituencies. The first role which I think is a role we really play as a UN system rather than UNDP is really supporting coordination both for recovery assessment, for strategic planning and for information management. I think the immediate humanitarian phase is well understood by all the actors, such as national, international, non-governmental, and governmental. In a longer term, reconstruction of strategic infrastructure and physical assets is also well understood. Both of those are very clear political and economic imperatives. The middle phase is how we actually help people recover in a very short term and in a medium term, we still work on what kind of coordination mechanism is required and we are still at the beginning of learning.

A second area where we support on behalf of the

UN system is really facilitating recovery programming. This we do in conjunction with, and support of many other specialized agencies and programs of the UN. We work on livelihood restoration with ILO and FAO, on housing and shelter issues and support of Habitat etc. The effort that we have been trying to get recovery introduced into the humanitarian flash appeals to national authorities and some key sectors to actually initiate activities which can then perhaps be picked up in a much larger scale later on in the process by the international financial institutions.

The third area, nationally, which we support as really being as UNDP. This is perhaps alone an area where we can add values really in governance and institutional arrangements, again which probably has two dimensions in it. The first dimension is getting local governments by assisting national governments to get local government back on its feet. Secondly, we also try and assist the national government to see how we can use this political window of opportunities created by a major natural disaster to rethink institutional and legislative arrangements for the national level of disaster risk management. This came out so clearly today I think in the presentations from the four countries on how they really used the opportunities to do that.

When I review our work globally and national institutional and legislative arrangements, and in fact, if I go around the world most of legislations and institutions that exist at some time in the history have something to do with the UNDP. Most of the success stories came out of a major natural disaster, which isn't to say that doesn't work beforehand often to success, in the moment you have to be doing work beforehand. That is really where the recovery intersects with the whole HFA agenda and why we have to see disaster recovery as one of the major ways of taking the whole HFA forward.

Thank you very much.

Suzuki



Thank you very much. Now from ADRC, I will touch upon the issue of

disaster-related community or education at school. As the receiving party, if the people's capacity is not sufficient, then good effects cannot be expected. In an effort to develop the school education, we have come up with various materials about disaster prevention and reduction. For teachers we have made guiding principles and in Sri Lanka, for example, for community town watching methodology is available. Together with the administrator and experts and together with local people in the highly risky area, we want to understand the disaster-prone area so that students will get more knowledge on the disaster reduction. This is the activity that we are carrying out. Also, in order to effectively carry out local activities, we have the pleasure to have representative from Malaysia, and we would like to deepen our relationship with NGOs also. In Japan also, so far we had various knowledge base in propagating disaster education at school level. We have tsunami disasters and this can be translated into French or English and distributed. We are doing this as ADRC contributes to improve the school level disaster education.

Thank you very much.

Nishikawa

Thank you very much. Two years ago, the Hyogo Framework of



Action and Hyogo Declaration was made in the Hyogo Prefecture and as far as Japan is concerned,

there were various discussions made at that time based upon the ODA initiatives for disaster prevention. Disaster risk reduction has incorporated many things such as science and technology, education, and also organization of administration and risk management. Four countries have provided their reports earlier this afternoon. In case of the Indian Ocean Tsunami, the victims of the tsunami were invited to Japan in order to explain them on what kind of risk management approaches we have in Japan. It is often said that end-to-end measure is very important. Natural observation, information, communication and evacuation methods must be linked in order to have effective risk reduction. In some seminars we took the trainees to the coastal lines of various sites which are prone to tsunami. We showed them sign boards that warn the residents that this area is prone to tsunami. There is an alarming system and also a map in order to evacuate in case of tsunami. Sign posts are now located in Indonesia, which is reported by his Excellency, that was something we felt very pleased and honored to hear. Also, from Japan, we provided various funds and also we provided various know-how. We also provided other information. I think the most important thing is that disaster reduction culture must be established. Culture of prevention is the word that is used often, and so culture of prevention must be stabilized in various locations in order to have a long-term strategy against disaster. I hope that we will be able to continue our contribution towards the establishment of such a culture. Through IRP, we provide various cooperation and also through ADRC we provide various coordination, and ISDR is to be strengthening. Through ISDR, we want to provide information to various countries in the future.

Thank you very much.

Special Comments:



Davis

Thank you. We had some wonderful presentations today.

The country presentations by our colleagues were breathtaking because we've seen huge progress being made very rapidly. The comment on the tsunami warning system is extraordinary heart warming. I think in such a short time, so much progress has been made. We followed that up in these discussions here.

I just have three observations to make. First, talk about governments. In governments, we have seen key roles being defined. It is very exciting to hear about the work that is going on in ISDR where the initiative of government platforms is underway. That is crucially important. Unless the government offices are protected, looked after and restored, nothing is going to happen. So we had a very good discussion about governments and we just heard further comments from our Japanese colleague about the importance of government being a donor. I think we really need to acknowledge the tremendous support from the Japanese government to this initiative.

We have also heard about local preparedness and we heard from Koji about the work of town watching going on in Sri Lanka. The great initiatives that come out from Kobe are community-based disaster risk management, and we have to thank ADRC and all the workers for putting on that in this field for many years.

I was very grateful to our colleague from ILO to talk about the economy, and how it is vital to protect jobs, and to protect jobs particularly of vulnerable people. The livelihood recovery is a

quite interesting part of the recovery process. Our preparedness has to be linked to design of buildings and strengthening programs to see things work together.

Lastly, my final point is just to congratulate colleagues in UN/ISDR to see the ways in these movements, which many people opposed when it first started. It's now taking off and we are seeing this movement becoming more open-ended and it is not a closed club.

Thank you very much.

Second Round:

Lazarte-Hoyle

First of all, what I want to share is to reaffirm the institutional commitment of ILO and to go deeper on working together with all the partners of the international community to the Hyogo Framework for Action participating on the ISDR system and then other partners on the international recovery platform on this major endeavor.

Secondly, it has to be announced that as part of this exercise the different activities were creating linkage between disaster risk reduction and the local communities. With the support of the international training center of the ILO, we launch on November 18 the first disaster management training program at a local level. It is a first such initiative that will cope with cases of the Central America, but we hope this is going to be viable, to be expanded in 2007 and 2008 after the training in different areas.

As well, the second important area of contribution working together with the UNDP is a work on the pre-disaster planning for preparedness on recovery that is a major challenge that we are committed and

working together. Finally to a great better, what are the needs for recovery and reconstruction on the aim of our participation in post-disaster need assessment? We focus principally on the elements for the livelihood recovery assessment, and this is an exercise that we have started and we are already in a very inclusive process of consultation with different institutions, and that is going to be a major contribution for the finalization of the post-disaster need assessment.

Thank you very much.

Maskrey

I can actually pick up on exactly what Alfredo has just mentioned. I think the key challenge we have in the coming period, is really to move from a focus from post-disaster recovery to post-risk recovery. Because the challenge we have is not to recover from disaster, it is the recovery from underlying risks which caused the disaster in the first place. It really helps us if we refocus recovery in terms of reducing risks and not restoring conditions of risk. Most of the countries are aware large disasters will happen in the future, and after a large disaster, ensuring emergency is very difficult. We can save, we can make buildings back better, and we can get risk reduction into place, but it really depends on the amount of work done a lot of work before the disaster happens. We have to make the recovery better in the future, and it should now be one of the main focuses of the international recovery platform.

Thank you very much.

Suzuki

I would like to say two things. One is that for disaster reduction training to be more effective, we should utilize image and visual aids. The Japanese media has many disaster related images, and we

would like to incorporate them in the ADRC activities. We would like to translate it into various languages and distribute them to all the relevant countries.

Another thing is that the ADRC is carrying out cooperative attitude and in the future for the specific projects we would like to cooperate with the IRP.

Thank you.

Nishikawa

It has been repeatedly said, but I would like to emphasize that for sustainable development, disaster prevention is a must. Unless we have such a policy, people would become poor and also land use would be a failure, and this will lead to a greater disaster which will form a vicious cycle. In order to break this vicious cycle, the Hyogo Framework for Action was formalized. For that, various know-hows will be continuously provided from us. As for Japan, the government is concerned with various countries, how they should organize the administration of disaster prevention and also how they should strengthen their capacity for disaster prevention. We have had a bilateral comprehensive disaster prevention blueprint formalized between a country and our government. The day before yesterday, in Japan there was a warning of tsunami. Tsunami alarm was enforced and this was actually propagated by the mass media and the residents evacuated. How we can maintain this kind of living alarm is very important. We will continue providing such know-hows.

Thank you.

Comments:

Ferrari

Thank you very much. I have also three points which I just want to underline. Number one is the clarity of the international system at each level: international, regional and national. It has to be clarified who is doing what, who is giving the guidelines, who is making advocacy, who is serving as the clearing house, and who is serving and being operational, because two things cannot be mixed. They can but consequences will be a total mess, and that we have to really prevent it.

Second one is the culture of prevention. I think that is absolutely also essential for three reasons. Number one, one has to know what is the risk and issue of assessing the risk in order to have really everybody on the same line. The second thing is so-called last mile to the people can be bridged. The third point of this cultural prevention is the paradigm shift which is taking place and that has to come to notice to everybody again from the top to the bottom.

Third big point is the cooperation between all the actors especially in the international system, the humanitarians, the development people, and also the environmentalists, economists and so on because it is a holistic and integrated approach.

Thank you.

Comments from Floor:



Kadiman

Recovery must be treated as being a long term investment. This is a really big homework

for everybody in this room, how to convince not only the government but equally importantly the parliament that recovery also be a long-term investment. I really support that statement. Second, this is the suggestion to everybody, especially organizations and champions in making this recovery process successful. That is how we can deal to minimize the reluctance of people to let go things that have been become their habit or culture of the people. This is not merely a technological issue; this is a social, economic and political issue. Next is we must share information and knowledge so that participation of women will be more in recovery.

I thank you very much.



Menon

It was also mentioned in the morning about the need for identifying specific risk transfer instrument, as has been done in some counties for vulnerable communities. The issues of insurance, and reinsurance should be consolidated and promoted to developing countries by international financial institutions.

Thank you.



Samarasinghe

Disaster risk reduction is a cross-cutting issue and must receive consideration by parliament such as in the case of Sri Lanka. Further post risk recovery is needed for economic growth, especially of developing countries.

Thank you.

Closing Remarks:

Briceño

I like to use this time to make three comments that I think are relevant. One main comment I want to make is that in order to achieve a long-term effective reduction of risk and vulnerability, we do need to engage on a common process. We have the Hyogo Framework, and we have the ISDR as a movement and as a system ready to support now with the participation of many governments, many agencies, regional, international governmental, non-governmental, public and private. So it is becoming more important, however, the more it grows, the more mistakes we are bound to make and we have to understand that in a process like this, it is important to make mistakes, it is the only way to learn. I would very much point to the need to keep track of implementing the Hyogo Framework and using it, and using the ISDR system regardless of the mistakes we all make and that we will continue to make.

Second point is that we are going to engage very soon, in other words governments in the first place but also international organizations, regarding to climate change as the ultimate disaster. We have the Hyogo Framework, which is already an instrument agreed upon by governments, agencies and institutions, and is being gradually implemented everywhere. HFA could serve as an important negotiation tool for the adaptation of climate change.

Thank you very much again, and this ends the panel discussion.