

Thematic Session: Early Warning and Disaster Communication

Natural and technological hazards often result in disastrous events that can profoundly impact societies. Hazards such as Flood, Cyclone, Tsunami, Epidemics etc. or human made events such as industrial accidents, gas leakages, and terrorism etc. have not only caused huge loss of life but also resulted in large properties damages. Regardless of how or where a hazard originates, early warning are the means of reducing the risk of a disaster. The expression 'early warning' is often used to mean the provision of information on an emerging dangerous circumstance where that information can enable action in advance to reduce the risks involved. Early warning systems exist for natural geophysical and biological hazards, complex socio-political emergencies, industrial hazards, personal health risks and many other related risks.

Nearly a million of people have been killed over the last decade in disasters caused by storms, drought, floods etc. While some material losses seem to be unavoidable especially in the case of large and complex disasters, in many cases the loss of life could have been avoided. This was amply evident during the Indian Ocean Tsunami 2004 which killed more than a quarter of million of people. In many cases such as Cyclone, Flood, Drought etc. elaborate early warning system have been in operation for long but in spite of that our societies continue to suffer huge losses of life and properties damage which emphasize the need of greater scrutiny of such system and identification of gaps to achieve more effectiveness.

Issuance of an early warning is closely linked to timely communication of such warning to all vulnerable population at risk. One of the lessons learned globally during recent past is that in spite of the major advances in information and communication technologies in recent times, still large number of vulnerable people do not receive timely warning and often warning communication or dissemination to the most vulnerable population who are located in remote areas pose major challenges in disaster risk management. Also while evolving modern technologies are opening new opportunities for better warning communication at the same time local indigenous early warning practices play an important role and effective integration of such modern technologies with traditional and local warning system is essential for reducing disaster risk.

Recent studies have shown that receipt of an early warning do not necessarily translate to compliance behavior and vulnerable population often differ in their hazard risk perception, ability to take action and compliance pattern. Considering the goal of an early warning is ultimately prevention or minimizing loss of life and properties, greater understanding of public response process to early warning is a prerequisite to improve and ensure desired actions are taken.

Session Focus:

The thematic session, Early Warning and Disaster Communication will cover early warning system for various hazards such as cyclone, flood, landslides etc. and relevant communication technologies to reach different user groups including public at risk and authorities who are in charge of disaster management. The session will also discuss public response to early warning, evacuation and compliances with recommended protective measures.

Some of the focus areas will be as follows

- New early warning mechanism for potential hazard risk
- Studies/researches which have implications for improvement of existing early warning system
- Early Warning communication technologies and new technological options for last mile connectivity
- Studies on indigenous early warning practices
- Studies on public response and perception to early warning

Objectives:

The broad objectives of the session are:

- To discuss and disseminate studies which have potential for making early warning system advancement and improving their effectiveness
- To analyze existing gaps in early warning and communication
- To encourage studies on indigenous early warning and their integration

Second India Disaster Management Congress

4-6 November 2009, New Delhi

Tentative Session Plan

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Date: Friday, 6th November, 2009

Venue: Hall-5 (tentative), Vigyan Bhavan, New Delhi

Time Slot	Session details
10.00-11.30	<p><u>SESSION – 1</u></p> <p>Chair: AVM Dr Ajit Tyagi, Director General, IMD</p> <p>Co-Chair: Mr Rohit Magotra, CEO, Ekgaon</p> <p>Rapporteur:</p> <p>Lead talk: Strategies for Early Warning of Tropical Cyclone to maximize relevance and Effectiveness over India- Dr Ajit Tyagi, IMD</p> <p>P-1: An Architecture of Rapidly Deployable Communication Network for Disaster Management- Prof Chandan Mazumdar, Jadavpur University</p> <p>P-2: Application of Wireless Sensor Network in Forest Fire Detection- Zeenat Rehena, Jadavpur University</p> <p>P-3: Landslide Hazard Warning System: Dr JK Ghosh, IIT Roorkee</p> <p>P-4: Design and Development of GSM Abis Interface over Satellite Emulator to illustrate communication support of Disaster Management- PK Srinivasam, SAC, Ahmedabad</p>
	Tea
11.45-1.15	<p><u>SESSION-2</u></p> <p>Chair: Dr GS Mandal, Specialist NDMA</p> <p>Co-chair: Mr RC Bhatia, (Former ADG, IMD)</p> <p>P-5: Dissemination to Response: In Search of New Strategies for Broadcast Media in Cyclone Warning of Bangladesh- Prof MS Ullah, Bangladesh</p> <p>P-6: Implementing Inclusive ICTs: Mobile Cell Broadcasting for a Public Warning System in Maldives- Natasha Udugama, Maldives</p>

	P-7: The Role of Social Network in Disaster Information and Management- Niharika Mohapatra, JNU
	P-8: FOCUS Humanitarian Assistance Andhra Pradesh Relief to Development, Arup Patro, Focus
	Vote of Thanks

Lead Talk duration: 25 minutes, Other Presentations: 15 minutes