

ACT Alliance Regional Consultation – Asia and Pacific

Special Session: Presentation and Discussion with Eternal Persons

13:00-15:00, November 07, 2012

Windsor Suits Hotel, Bangkok, Thailand

The **objective** of this session was to gain conceptual and practical understanding of current trends, priority issues, and challenges in Asia Pacific region that influence the Alliance's strategic direction in its priority pillars in humanitarian, development, and advocacy work. The session participants (approximately 40 SEOs from the region) represented various members of the Alliance attending the organization's regional consultations in Bangkok on November 5 to 8, 2012.

After a short introduction by Mr. Takeshi Komino, the floor was given to **Mr. Oliver Lacey Hall**, OCHA Director for AP Region who elaborated on the current trends in the international humanitarian system in AP region. By way of introduction, Mr. Hall pointed out that with disasters on the rise the number of requests for assistance coming from governments has increased too, globally. Having briefly mentioned the overall disaster situation in the region and the growing collaboration between OCHA and ASEAN in the coordination of humanitarian assistance, Mr. Hall elaborated on the five points which he called "big things" deserving our attention, namely:

- A shifting paradigm in disaster management in the AP region;
- Growing impacts of disasters;
- A symptomatic trend: the last request for assistance was received by OCHA in 2009 which means the governments try to cope on their own;
- Need to focus attention on resilience of urban communities as compared to rural, taking into account the growing urbanizations, the percentage of slums in big cities (up to 50%), mega-cities' situation, etc.
- Global changes in economies: while donor money is decreasing for various objective reasons, one can observe an economic boom in the AP region (Indonesia, India, China, to name a few).

The task is to re-orient thinking and better engage middle-income countries (mostly in Asia) in disaster management. Of the three levels of assistance – national, regional, and international, the latter one is still the biggest while ideally it should be the smallest.

Among other, Mr. Hall mentioned a "Guide for Disaster Managers" currently developed by OCHA (1st draft is ready).

UNISDR presentation (**Ms. Goulsara Pulatova**) was mostly focused on Post-2015 DRR Framework, including brief information on the reasons behind the launch, process, and objectives. A copy of the presentation is attached. (Interesting but some participants never heard of the HFA so I had to start from there). The meeting participants were mostly interested in the AMCDRR process - from stakeholder groups' meetings to the final Open Plenary. Several of the participants have also attended the AMC, and on the whole, the interest to the Conference outcomes and the Post-2015 process itself

was great, as great was the appreciation of UNISDR efforts. Special appreciation was expressed for the attention to the CSO stakeholder group proposals.

Questions and comments that followed can be summarized as follows:

- Appreciation of the multi-stakeholder approach taken at the 5th AMCDRR, with the question to follow: Will this approach also be applied at the Global Platform meeting in May as it seems it has brought excellent results?
- How UNISDR is collaborating with UNDP to make sure DRR and CCA will be reflected in the Post Development Agenda?
- Need to make sure CCA is included in Post-2015 DRR Framework;
- Questions related to UNISDR mandate with regard to other UN agencies, national governments, etc.;
- Someone inquired if the process (Post-2015) is also taking place in other parts of the globe, e.g. in Africa, Central Asia, etc.
- Concern was expressed for the 5TH AMCDRR Declaration to be followed up so it does not end up “on a shelf”.
- “Underlying factors” again raised a concern – measures should be thought through and taken.

The third and last presentation was made by **Ms. Manisha Thomas (Independent Expert)** and related to advocacy and coordination of NGO activities with that of the UN.

In fact, there were many more questions, especially after the session was over. On the whole, it was a good meeting, I was impressed by the sincere respect of UNISDR and its work and efforts, and by the ACT Alliance members’ seriousness of intentions to follow up on the recommendations (at least, part of them).

Prepared by: Goulsara Pulatova

November 8, 2012