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THE JTI FOUNDATION

Towards Resilient Business Community



Towards a Resilient Business Community

Learning from the experiences of Private Sector (Small and Medium Enterprise) in Thailand and their Pathways to Disaster Resilience

8-9 Thursday Friday October 2014

Venue: The Eastin Grand Hotel, Sathon, Bangkok

Concept Note

1. Background

Natural disasters are occurring more frequently and continue to be unpredictable. Damages and losses caused by disasters are an obstacle to economic growth and sustainable development, since private companies, both large and small, are severely disrupted by such extreme events, and often pushed out of business.

The relationships amongst private sectors in post-Thailand 2011 Floods are indicative of good cooperation to build a conducive environment for resilient investment. The Office of Promotion of SMEs (OSMEP) of the Royal Government of Thailand has been working with the Asian Disaster Preparedness Center (ADPC) in engaging the private sector in general and SMEs in Thailand in particular, to embed disaster risk reduction into their core business activities through effective legislation, incentives, awareness raising and capacity building. The progresses made so far are baby steps yet very formidable. The in-depth study carried out by ADPC on the existing risk reduction practices in Thailand by SMEs clearly indicate that global best practices from Japan, Korea, Singapore, Australia and New Zealand is going to help Thailand to launch the “*Thailand for Resilient Investment*” campaign.

Since 2003, efforts are being made to improve SME’s resilience in by increasing awareness, supporting SMEs to engage effectively with local government in risk reduction activities, and building its own capacities in business continuity planning (BCP) at par with national and international standards. The certification (ISO 22301) training for SMEs in in Logistic, Automotive, ICT, Tourism and Agriculture sector to prepare BCP has just begun and needs further consultation to ensure its effectiveness and usability.

The national workshop “***Towards a Resilient Business Community: Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) and Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) in Thailand***” will provide an opportunity to;

- Learn from Thailand’s private sector disaster resilience initiative
- Draw lessons from global best practices on legislation, incentives, awareness raising and capacity building for SMEs resilience.
- Explore recommendations on future engagement and enabling environment for business continuity and risk-informed investment for the private sector

2. Key Sessions

The one and a half-day meeting will be held in English, with Thai translation upon request. Key speakers will consist of a mix of policy makers, practitioners and business owners, who believe that they can contribute towards making Thailand a prosperous and safer country to invest. The proposed key sessions are:

2.1: Key Note Address: *“Road to Resilience: Engaging Private Sector in Disaster Risk Reduction”*

Private Sector is among the key stakeholders for local, national and international disaster risk reduction frameworks. The Bangkok Declaration resulted from the 6th Asian Ministerial Conference on DRR, further encourages risk-informed investment as part of the business process in order to achieve business sustainability and resilience. The coming 2015 will mark the completion of the 10-year international disaster risk reduction framework “Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA)” and the private sector is already geared up for a post-2015 disaster risk reduction agenda to be adopted in Sendai, Japan next year.

The keynote address by an eminent personality would outline the need for private sector engagement in disaster risk reduction, and the corporate, social, economic, political and legal basis by which SMEs could be disaster resilient.

2.2: Policy Dialogue: Enabling Environment and Opportunities for *Safer Investment*

Private sector investment accounted for 70-85 percent of overall global investment (GAR, 2013). The private sector should hence take responsibility by incorporating disaster risks into investment decisions, since making risk-informed investments can greatly reduce the cost of disaster impacts borne by the private and public sectors, minimizing uncertainty in the economic forecast. Although a lot has been discussed in this regard, actual work is yet to be done in order to effectively promote safer investments. What kind of support do business managers need from government agencies in order to make this a reality? What kind of collaboration with private companies would facilitate the government work in preparing for, and react to, natural disasters? There are many schemes and synergies yet to be explored, however, these will only be achieved with mutual understanding and awareness of each other's capacities and limitations.

The policy dialogue between the National and Local Government, business owners and managers, and development partners, will focus in exploring *get-ready* solutions for businesses in Thailand, by providing a platform to bridge the communication gap among stakeholders.

2.3: Research to Practice: Options for Business Resilience

ADPC has conducted an in-depth study focusing on legislative frameworks, incentives, awareness raising and capacity building programs on disaster preparedness available for Thai SMEs. Moreover, the project team traveled across five countries in Asia-Pacific including Singapore, Japan, South Korea, Australia and New Zealand to collect and document best practices in SMEs' disaster resilience and business continuity planning (BCP). Research findings are analyzed to indicate current institutional gaps and provide possible recommendations to relevant public entities in supporting the private sector especially SMEs to engage in disaster risk reduction.

This session is dedicated to disseminate the outcomes and prioritize action that Thailand can take to minimize the disaster losses and enhance business resilience. The activities carried out so far will be presented with audio-visual help.

2.4: Business Forum: Lessons Learned & Experiences from Thailand

In 2011, businesses in Thailand experienced the worst flooding in half century, with over half a million SMEs affected directly or indirectly. Some of these businesses could continue their business operations as usual due to their effective business continuity management practices. Also, a number of entrepreneurs did turn the bad days into good opportunities to explore new types of businesses. However, many other companies had to shut down and were even pushed out of business. This was of particular concern for global value chains (GVCs). In order to prevent and mitigate business disruptions caused by upcoming adverse events, experiences and lesson learned including business continuity planning activation, disaster risk reduction activities, emergency response and recovery strategies should be shared among business society.

The Business Forum is dedicated to the business champions in Thailand who made substantial contributions in Thai Government's initiatives in disaster risk reduction as well as adopting appropriate prevention measures in their own organization. It is structured in three parts: 1)Disaster-proof BCP and turning DRM into business opportunities; 2)Local SME champions; and 3)Protecting Global Value Chains (GVCs).

2.5: Take Away Session: The Window of Opportunities for Private Sector in the post-2015 Hyogo Framework of Action (HFA-2)

There is no doubt that the future investment by global companies in Thailand will be influenced by the resilience of Thailand SMEs. However, more needs to be done to put in place appropriate legislation, conducive environment, win-win incentives, and public and private awareness and capacities for enhancing skills in business continuity planning. The HFA-2 discussions have so far generated a lot of interest and curiosity among the business community, to be part of the global framework and channelize risk reduction interventions.

The participants, particularly business owners and managers of Thailand, will take a bag full of experience, knowledge and suggestions from UN agencies, development partners and home countries on what is there for them in the post-2015 HFA and sustainable development frameworks.

3. Tentative Agenda

8 October 2014	
Time	Agenda
9.00-9.30	Registration
9.30-10.00	Welcoming the Guests <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OSMEP • DDPM • ADPC
10.00-10.30	Key Note Address: “Road to Resilience: Engaging Private Sector in Disaster Risk Reduction” <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ambassadors (TBC)
10.30-10.45	Coffee Break
10.45-12.00	Policy Dialogue: “Enabling Environment and Opportunities for Safer Investment” <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UNOCHA • UNESCAP • UNISDR • ADB • GIZ • Thai Chamber of Commerce • Foreign Chamber of Commerce
12.00-13.30	Lunch Break
13.30-14.30	Research to Practice: “Options for Business Resilience” <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Representative from JTI Foundation • Mr. Aslam Perwaiz, Head, Disaster Risk Management Systems, ADPC • ADPC “iPrepareBusiness” team
14.30-15.30	Thailand Business Resilience’s Forum Part I: Disaster-proof BCPs and turning emergencies into business opportunities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr. Apichai Intakaew, SCG (TBC) • Mr. Vasant Chatikavanij, Loxley (TBC)
15.30-15.45	Coffee Break
15.45-16.30	Thailand Business Resilience’s Forum Part II: Local SME champions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local SMEs • Rojana Distribution Center (TBC) • Aonang Princeville Resort&Spa (TBC) • AEC Business (Asia) Co., Ltd (TBC)
9 October 2014	
9.00-9.30	Registration
9.30-10.30	Thailand Business Resilience’s Forum Part III: Protecting Global Value Chains (GVCs) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ms. Kobkarn Wattanavrangkul, Toshiba Thailand (TBC) Seagate (TBA)
10.30-10.45	Coffee Break
10.45-12.00	Take Away Session: “The Window of Opportunities for Private Sector in Post-2015 Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction ” <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UNISDR • USAID • MFA Thailand • Diplomatic Missions
12:00	Closing Remarks: Chairman, ADPC Foundation and ADPC Board of Trustees
12:30	Networking Lunch and Meet the Press