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**Title of the Session:** Urban and rural community-based DRR through “Decent Civism in Action” to empower municipal governments for good community leadership and businesses.

**Date:** 25/05/2015 to 31/05/2015

## Summary

Our intention is to speak about the applicability of *“a Decent Civism in Action”* to get everyday citizens engaged and motivated so as to be direct actors to fight against disaster risks that have been destroying gradually their community environment of abode although they do not really have a lot of financial and technical resources, included a clear lack of complex human, corporate, foreign and central government expertise and management. Nonetheless if they attempt to be methodical, painstaking and efficient therefore they can make a huge difference to locally and serve as a concrete example that may be replicated elsewhere.

Broadly speaking, the longer term goal for sustainable DRR is to enable communities to teach people how to be technically matured, accountable for themselves, and auto-sufficient, while having the capacity to understand what can be done swiftly so as to be able to attenuate environmental problems that have been plaguing their own communities. In a sense that people, especially lay-persons, can avoid being too dependable but being committed enough to create a mindset indispensable for working to save their ailing environment.

## Context

Contextual Definition

*“Decent” in this context is defined as something, an act or action that is: fairly good, acceptable, or satisfactory to attain this or that for a given sustainable solution; further suitable or fitting to get it done properly and democratically by the concerned people and for the people. Therefore this is the fashion I understand it!*

Why, how and for what civics?

What type of civics do we really mean? What type of recipes to get it right?

*“An adaptation based civics” so as to be pragmatic and create quick solutions to tackle disaster risks, biodiversity loss, deforestation, other environmental problems, etc.*

Some people might think that there is no clear relation between **“Civism in Action”** and DRR. In fact there are clear societal and scientific paradigms to support this point at issue.

Pragmatically speaking, if “Civism in Action” is defined as a set or a matrix of systematization for “good practices” which contains the following seven factors whether we remain in our

discussing context the learner will gain a new knowledge to rethink and redesign certain aspects of actions taken to reduce disaster risks

### **Contextual and Fundamental Factors of “Civism in Action”**

- 1- Attitudinal attachment to one’s community and municipal institutions.
- 2- Regular participation and engagement in one’s community solving-problem affairs.
- 3- Priority given by a good citizen to the interests of her community ailing environment on her own business very often.
- 4- Dedication to community service, business, safety and protection to guarantee a better environment where citizens can live peacefully and safely.
- 5- Collaboration to community work for decision-making in case of environmental disasters and other hazards.
- 6- Cooperation to community work and services to mitigate societal desperation after severe and huge natural hazards.
- 7- Sense of civic responsibility, that is, no matter who and what she is; so trying to be a good and efficient citizen he/she ought to recognize when being liable for participating somehow in decision-making to prevent environmental degradation, for instance.

Therefore, it is very difficult to challenge the fundamental importance of “Civism in Action” further through a usable decency of itself to tackle many issues related to disaster risk reduction, especially in a world wherein millions of people are very vulnerable and lacking basic resources to deal quickly with repetitive and wearisome ‘natural’ disasters which are actually often not ‘natural’ at all but are better interpreted as ‘man-made’.

### **There are some key questions to be asked to avoid going astray of the subject matter**

- Can a **“Decent Civism in action”** if well applied, really help people to be motivated and engaged in a given community so as to keep their eyes on how to reduce disaster risks?
- Why empowering municipal or communal government, how and for what in the context of DRR, green energy, environmental protection, and climate change?
- How to ensure fair leadership and clear legitimate representativeness for a given community or communities in the context of DRR, green energy, environmental protection, and climate change?
- Should municipality business be “a community business” especially in countries where in reality disaster risks are almost non-stoppable? Why should that be important in the context of DRR in general, green energy, environmental protection, and climate change?
- Within the context of building community leadership and management through **“strong community engagement”**: Is it possible to create sound and participative municipal governments so that they can serve as catalyst to promote de-

centralization and de-concentration of central governments to solve local ecological and environmental problems?

- Can we come up with a new establishment and commitments to edify and re-edify community environment?

In my view, if there is any clear and pure municipal and institutional framework, a prior needs analysis, the genuine seeking for inclusiveness, mutual training possibilities and a sense of common responsibility, then DRR can be learned to be understood not as a perpetual and costly burden but an optimistic opportunity to tackle vulnerability and a means to work towards long-term sustainability and societal equilibrium.

Perhaps it makes sense to tell an urban or rural citizen that his/her community environment is his/her first and main residence, that is, do not give up but try harder to make a difference together.

Collaborative efforts are well coordinated and successfully organized only if the concerned community is actively engaged in and committed to their own mission which equates to the protection of their own natural and social environment.