



Name of Event: [Preparatory Event] South Asia Association of Regional Cooperation (SAARC) Disaster Management Centre – Launch of South Asia Disaster Knowledge Network Portal

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1) Outline

The SADKN portal was developed in response to a strong need and demand from the sub region for information sharing and cooperation amongst countries. This need arise from shared geography and hazards, and the common features of vulnerabilities, livelihoods and culture in the sub continent. In the South Asia sub region, no one country can manage disaster risk without dialogue and coordination due to the geographical inter- dependency. The SADKN portal provides a platform under the banner of SAARC to link the national governments and a range of multiple stakeholders to share information and create knowledge on DRM. In addition SAARC has also developed Vulnerability Atlas for South Asia covering 4 countries in the region; Bhutan, Nepal, India and Sri Lanka.

2) Key messages, outcomes, recommendations

- Need for awareness on the many information sharing platforms and on line portals in order to avoid duplication
- Limitations in on line access and technology in some countries in the developing world, the need to address this issue.
- How not to become redundant when there are so many similar portals and information sharing channels
- The need for definitions and terminologies which can be communicated and understood easily by all stakeholders

- Question raised: Do we need a strategy for information sharing? Do we need to develop a strategy?

3) Conclusions

Knowledge in the field of disasters is expanding, getting more and more fragmented. In this context there are 3 main challenges: Making knowledge accessible in a useful manner; managing the expanding knowledge within an integrated framework, and avoiding duplicity.

SADKN provides a structured approach to knowledge management, responding to the calls from the Global Platform and the MTR for public awareness and education.

It can capture the practical experience the governments, IGOs Civil society organisations have built over the years, and address the needs of the practitioners who require assistance in accessing knowledge in an organized manner.

SADKN can also address the issues of legitimacy and authority on information, meeting the challenge of giving out contradicting messages in disaster situations.