

2011 OUTCOMES REPORT

APEC Senior Disaster Management Officials Forum
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Asia-Pacific
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Background

The Asia-Pacific region makes up 52 percent of the earth's surface and 40 percent of the world's population and experiences over 70 percent of the world's natural disasters. Scientists warn that the intensity and frequency of disasters in the Asia-Pacific region will increase in the decades ahead because of urbanization, poor land-use management, and climate change.

Emergency preparedness is one of the key elements of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum's human security agenda. Disasters that affect one member economy can have significant spill-over effects in other economies. APEC Senior Officials therefore established the Task Force for Emergency Preparedness in 2005. In 2009, APEC Leaders reaffirmed the importance of enhancing human security and reducing disruption to business and trade caused by natural disaster in the Asia-Pacific region. Because of the importance of its work, in 2010 the task force was upgraded to working group status. The Emergency Preparedness Working Group (EPWG) plays a constructive role in enabling APEC members to prepare for, mitigate, and respond to emergencies and disasters by sharing expertise. Every year since 2007, the EPWG has brought together the heads of emergency management agencies in the Asia-Pacific region in Senior Disaster Management Officials Forums to help APEC's 21 member economies prepare for and respond to disasters, individually and collectively.

The EPWG held the fifth Senior Disaster Management Officials Forum in San Francisco September 21–23, 2011. Over 60 participants from 18 member economies participated. The theme of the 2011 forum was public-private partnerships in response to APEC leadership's call for the EPWG to focus on the nexus between emergency preparedness and trade, strengthen business and community resilience, enhance public-private partnerships, and reduce disaster risks. Sessions included panels, presentations, and dialogue on: experiences and lessons learned from recent disasters; collaboration with other APEC fora and regional and international organizations; public-private partnership case studies; preparing for volunteers in disasters and coordination with voluntary organizations; and social media in emergency management.

On the final day of the forum, participants visited the Google.org Crisis Response team in its offices to learn about Google tools and resources for crisis response. Participants also visited Autodesk to learn about the company's 3-D design software and its use in emergency management. The forum concluded with senior disaster management officials' endorsing principles on public-private partnerships and disaster resiliency and plans for high-level dialogue on disaster resiliency during the November 2011 APEC Leaders Meeting in Hawaii.

The sixth Senior Disaster Management Officials Forum will be held in Vladivostok, Russia, in 2012. The theme will be national crisis management centers and their integration into international networks.

Summary of Themes Discussed

Experience and Lessons Learned

Participants shared experiences and lessons learned from recent Asia-Pacific disasters: the March 2011 Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami; the February 2011 Christchurch, New Zealand Earthquake; and Australia's 2010-2011 disaster season. The session was a reminder of the impacts disasters have on business, trade, and economic growth. Emerging trends identified during the session include the increasing severity and cost of disasters and growing public expectations for information and warnings from a variety of sources. Participants also engaged in dialogue on the challenges involved in relocating residents after disasters and deciding whether to permit redevelopment of affected areas.

Shared experiences and lessons learned emphasized the following.

- Adhering to building codes, retrofitting buildings and infrastructure to protect against hazards (e.g., earthquakes, floods), and conducting research to continually improve upon these efforts
- Issuing rapid public alerts and warnings through technology (e.g., Area Mail, which delivers emergency information to mobile phones)
- Educating the public about disasters and appropriate response actions through emergency drills
- Learning from experience and taking action to reduce risks following lessons learned from past disasters, while also planning for emergencies that have no precedent
- Establishing legal frameworks and other support to enable an economy to receive and direct international assistance (such as search and rescue teams) effectively after a large-scale disaster
- Rapidly restoring transportation systems to enable the delivery of emergency relief supplies and minimize disruption to trade
- Promoting business continuity planning (BCP) for large, small, and medium enterprises
- Contributions of volunteers, neighbors, and community groups to disaster response, recovery, preparedness, and mitigation
- Sharing experiences and lessons learned from disasters with the international community.

The forum also identified the following needs:

- To strengthen community resilience through preparedness and mitigation and by sharing responsibility and increasing individual self-reliance
- To increase BCP in the Asia-Pacific region.



Report on the July 2011 Facing the Abnormal Flood Disaster Workshop in Viet Nam

In July 2011, the *APEC Workshop on Facing the Abnormal Flood Disaster: New Vision for APEC Member Economies*, co-sponsored by Australia, Canada, Chinese Taipei and Viet Nam, was held in Viet Nam. Workshop participants networked and shared information on abnormal floods in the Asia-Pacific region, identified needs and gaps in capabilities (e.g., understanding flood hazard assessment), and exchanged preparedness and response-related good practices and lessons learned (e.g., undertaking both structural and non-structural flood mitigation measures). Participants also made recommendations for individual APEC member economies and for APEC collective action. The following recommendations were made for collective action:

- Identify medium and long-term goals on APEC cooperation in natural disaster response
- Improve coordination and enhance intra-APEC cooperation
- Develop APEC best practices on emergency preparedness
- Set up an APEC network for flood risk management
- Formalize public-private partnerships in APEC
- Consider a support fund for emergency preparedness
- Strengthen coordination between APEC and other regional and international institutions.

Collaboration with Other APEC Fora and Regional and International Organizations and Initiatives

Participants shared information on the actions and initiatives of others in the Asia-Pacific region to enhance knowledge of potential opportunities for EPWG collaboration with other APEC fora and non-members. In dialogue, participants talked about how to approach collaboration in such a large, diverse environment. Suggestions included developing generic frameworks that can be modified easily and engaging at the grassroots level.

UNISDR

The **United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UNISDR)** works to strengthen the international system for disaster risk reduction and implement the Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA); convene, coordinate, and support multi-stakeholder platforms to promote disaster risk reduction; advocate for increased action for disaster risk reduction (e.g., through the Making Cities Resilient campaign); and analyze risk trends. The UNISDR works with the private sector through its **Private Sector Advisory Group (PSAG)**, established in December 2010, which aims to bring together a wide range of private sector entities into a global partnership for action. The PSAG is composed of four working committees: communications, metrics, partnerships, and corporate support. The role of PSAG is to provide practical expertise and ideas to the UNISDR, assist in capacity building, review and provide counsel on UNISDR publications, and support the UNISDR in securing funds from the private sector for future projects. The PSAG's Statement of Commitment by the Private Sector for Disaster Prevention, Resilience and

Encourage businesses in your economy to sign the **Statement of Commitment by the Private Sector for Disaster Prevention, Resilience and Risk Reduction**.¹ Help the PSAG meet its goal of 1,000 signatories by May 2012.

¹ http://www.unisdr.org/files/19873_statementofcommitmentbythepriatese.pdf

Risk Reduction calls on businesses to agree on five essentials for disaster risk reduction: (1) promote and develop public-private partnerships, (2) leverage sectoral private sector expertise and strengths, (3) foster collaborative exchange and dissemination of data, (4) support national and local risk assessments, and (5) support the development and strengthening of national and local laws, regulations, policies and programmes.

In dialogue, it was recommended that the EPWG consider collaborating with the UNISDR PSAG.

Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Regional Forum (ARF) Disaster Relief Exercise (ARF-DiREx) and Regional Cooperation

EPWG Co-Chair Mr. Tabrani, observed the ASEAN ARF-DiREx 2011 in March. The purpose of the exercise was to strengthen confidence and mutual understanding among participants, cooperation in enhancing civilian and military interoperability, and participants' ability to provide coordinated and effective disaster relief. The main activities of the exercise were field training, a tabletop exercise, and humanitarian civil action. A total of 4,293 participants from ASEAN member economies, international organizations, and the private sector were involved. Sixteen of the member economies that participated are also APEC member economies.

The EPWG Co-Chair observed that the ARF's focus on emergency response complements APEC's work on preparedness and resilience. He recommends the EPWG explore cooperation and collaboration with ARF, especially to address large-scale disasters, and suggests undertaking a study on how APEC and ARF processes for disaster cooperation can be synergized. The Co-Chair recommends the EPWG consider having, and perhaps institutionalizing, an exchange of information between the EPWG and the ARF International Meeting of Disaster Relief (ISM-DR). Furthermore, if economies consider it important, the Co-Chair recommends raising the issue of synergy between APEC and the ARF in emergency response to Ministers and Leaders to strengthen momentum and obtain political direction for Asia-Pacific collaboration.

Kuala Lumpur Initiative on Public-Private Partnership

The Kuala Lumpur Initiative on Public-Private Partnership was adopted by the 48 economies that participated in the 2008 Asian Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (AMCDRR). The initiative has been incorporated into the HFA's Implementation Regional Action Plan (HIRAP) 2009-2015, which identifies national and regional actions, such as including business leaders as members of committees on disaster preparedness and risk reduction, and supporting agencies for implementation, APEC included. The objectives of the initiative are to promote corporate social responsibility, BCP, and fiscal policies that enhance disaster risk management, encourage the establishment of multi-stakeholder mechanisms for promoting public-private partnerships, and creating enabling environments that provide financial incentives for disaster risk reduction.

Strengthening regional coordination and engaging with the private sector

A representative from the Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance at the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID/OFDA) discussed the importance of strengthening regional coordination, engaging the private sector and taking a whole of government and whole of society approach to disaster risk reduction and disaster resiliency. A representative from the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and the Forum for Policy Innovation noted that disaster response is increasingly complex

and involves a range of sectors, economies, and legal considerations. Meanwhile, disaster costs are rising: catastrophic disasters cost almost twice as much in the 2000s than in the 1990s. While there is a tendency to focus on short-term response and relief, there is a need for work in disaster preparedness and community resiliency. The private sector should play a key role in disaster preparedness and community resiliency, but better cross-sector coordination mechanisms are needed to engage the resources and expertise of the private sector. Specifically, the private sector needs to be better engaged with government and non-governmental work in (1) crisis response, (2) steady-state operations, and (3) planning and evaluation. The U.S. Chamber's Business Civic Leadership Center and USAID are currently exploring how to better coordinate for disaster preparedness and community resiliency, and are developing an online platform to pull current resources together in a hub to serve all sectors.

APEC Small and Medium Enterprises Working Group (SMEWG)

The APEC Small and Medium Enterprises Working Group (SMEWG) is proposing a cross-fora multi-year project, Improving Natural Disaster Resilience of APEC SMEs to Facilitate Trade and Investment. This project, to be implemented by the APEC Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) Crisis Management Center (SCMC) aims to improve the disaster resilience of SMEs through two approaches: (1) by building a better policy environment for SMEs' disaster preparedness through formulating policy framework models (PFMs), and (2) by enhancing SMEs' knowledge and capabilities to prepare for and respond to natural disasters through benchmarking BCPs in information and communications technology (ICT), logistics and auto parts industries. These three industries are important to the APEC region and have been seriously damaged by major natural disasters.

During Phase I, beginning in 2012, a Focal Point Network (FPN) meeting will be held. Research will be jointly conducted to investigate the status of APEC SMEs and their needs for responding to natural disaster and to collect policy frameworks and best practices. Phase II in 2013 will take this research and formulate PFMs and BCPs. Training of trainers will also take place. During Phase III in 2014, the PFMs and BCPs will be applied and training workshops will be held for SMEs to develop customized BCPs. Three voluntary economies will build their own policy frameworks by utilizing PFMs built by this project. In all three phases, assistance and contribution from the EPWG are essential to complete the project (e.g., members of the FPN will come from both the SMEWG and the EPWG).

Public-Private Partnerships

Public-private partnerships were a major theme of the APEC Fifth Senior Disaster Management Officials Forum. Keynote speaker David Saenz, Vice President of Worldwide Security for Levi Strauss & Co. shared what Levi Strauss & Co., a global apparel company based in San Francisco, has learned about emergencies. He highlighted the importance of having plans with clear objectives; maintaining communication; building relationships before a crisis; thinking globally and acting locally; and regarding individuals, families, businesses, and government as one community. He also warned against complacency. He stressed the importance of preparing for emergencies in accordance with an organization's culture and capturing stories to emphasize the importance of emergency preparedness so that people will take action.

Dialogue among participants highlighted the opportunities disasters can provide to expand outreach and partnerships, and the challenges member economies face maintaining interest and momentum in preparedness activities when the memories of disasters fade. Summaries of two recent APEC EPWG workshops focused on public-private partnerships were provided.



APEC Workshop on Public-Private Partnerships and Disaster Resilience

Australia and Thailand co-hosted this workshop in August 2010. Its main objective was to improve knowledge of and opportunities for public-private partnerships for disaster resilience. Examples and case studies were shared by speakers from DHL, which discussed logistics; Coca-Cola, which addressed bottled water and distribution; the Thai Motorcycle Enterprise Association, which talked about road safety; and others from the public and private sectors. Workshop participants endorsed 14 draft APEC principles on public-private partnerships and disaster resilience. These principles were condensed and endorsed by APEC Fifth Senior Disaster Management Officials Forum participants.

Access the workshop summary report, the EPWG publication *Public-Private Partnerships and Disaster Resilience* online at http://publications.apec.org/publication-detail.php?pub_id=1133.

APEC Workshop on Private Sector Emergency Preparedness

Japan and the United States co-hosted this workshop in August 2011. It marked the first government-level international conference held in disaster-affected Sendai since the March 2011 tsunami. The workshop focused on BCP and included a case study of and visit to Suzuki Kogyo, a waste management business, which, because of its high level of preparedness and BCP, was able to resume business operations two days after the tsunami. The workshop was informed by research in which 37 percent of 229 businesses surveyed responded that they do not know about BCP, 28 percent indicated they have a written BCP, 26 percent responded they do not have a written BCP, and 9 percent have a BCP in progress. The workshop explored legal, market-oriented, and social mechanisms for promoting BCP, along with regional resources for BCP, including guidelines and standards.

Access the workshop's *Summary of Proceedings and Resource Guide* at <http://www.apec-epwg.org/>

Case studies from Thailand, the U.S. Pacific Northwest, Canada, and Mexico emphasized the importance of public and private sector engagement and partnership in the following:

- Investing in preparedness, mitigation, and protection to minimize disaster losses and sustain development and economic growth
- Understanding the interdependency between critical infrastructure and an environment of trust where concerns and vulnerabilities can be shared

- Conducting workshops and assessments and developing and executing emergency exercises, drills, and action plans together
- Establishing agreements with businesses before a disaster occurs for rapid utilization during emergency response and recovery.

Preparing for Volunteers in Disasters and Coordination with Voluntary Organizations

Participants shared public and private, nongovernmental sector experience with volunteers in disasters. The session highlighted the importance of volunteers in emergency preparedness, protection, response, recovery, and mitigation. It also identified challenges such as coordination, recruitment and retention, spontaneous or unaffiliated volunteers, training, legal protection, funding, and recognition. Participants also engaged in dialogue on legal protection of volunteers.

The shared experiences and lessons learned emphasized the importance of the following.

- Recognizing the abilities of volunteers and non-profit and non-governmental organizations to respond rapidly and offer creative solutions to crisis challenges
- Building partnerships between the public sector, businesses, and non-profit and non-governmental organizations to support volunteerism
- Establishing agreements before a disaster occurs to provide legal protection and reimbursement to volunteers
- Leveraging ICT, such as social media, to support disaster response and recovery communications and connect volunteers
- Leveraging volunteers to recruit new ones (As the Australian Emergency Management Volunteer Forum remarked, “The best recruiter is a satisfied volunteer.”)
- Recognizing the contributions of volunteers in order to retain them.

Social Media in Emergency Management

Participants also shared information, experiences, and lessons learned in the use of social media in emergency management. The session highlighted the growth of this technology and how it is being utilized to support disaster response and preparedness. An overarching issue participants discussed was the accuracy of information shared using social media. It was noted that social media tends to be self-correcting and that users tend to correct inaccuracies as new information becomes available. Accordingly, several participants opined that during a disaster, a lack of information is a greater concern than the presence of inaccurate information on social media. Attributing information to its source can also help.

Shared experiences and lessons learned emphasized the importance of the following.

- The potential value of social media tools and mobile applications for hazard alerting and notification as well as for conducting emergency preparedness outreach
- Engaging in social media conversations, including responding to and correcting posts to foster transparency
- The potential value of social media tools for crowdsourcing information
- Ensuring the public can easily understand hazard alerting and notification information and appropriate actions to take according to the risk context
- Providing clear parameters for staff who communicate through social media on behalf of an organization so that information can be shared expeditiously during a crisis
- Anticipating spikes in social media and mobile applications usage during crises
- Ensuring policies remain abreast with new technology.

Follow the Pacific Disaster Center on Twitter and Facebook and obtain the center's free *Disaster Alert* mobile application at <http://www.pdc.org> or by snapping this QR code with your mobile phone.



The application provides a listing and an interactive map of hazards occurring around the globe.

Learn about free Google tools and resources such as Person Finder, My Maps, Earth, Fusion Tables, Docs and Spreadsheets, and Sites to help crisis responders and those affected by crises at

<http://www.google.org/crisisresponse/resources.html>.



Endorsements

Participants endorsed the following **APEC Principles on Public Private Partnerships to Promote Disaster Resilient Businesses and Communities**.

In recognizing the importance of public-private partnerships in promoting business and community resilience to disasters, APEC economies will be guided by the following broad principles:

1. Adopt a whole-of-society approach to developing and strengthening public-private partnerships that support business and community resilience to disasters. This includes involving all levels of government, non-government, and the private sector.
2. Through public-private partnership programs, encourage a greater role for women in supporting disaster-resilient businesses and communities.
3. Strengthen public-private partnerships by sharing information, drawing on best practices and learning from experience.
4. Leverage existing programs and resources and strengthen partnerships that develop during disasters to sustain long-term public-private collaboration and avoid duplication of effort.
5. Establish partnerships based on shared responsibilities and resources, with mutually agreed upon roles and tasks.
6. Cultivate public-private partnerships that are open to flexible and innovative ways of working together to build business and community resilience to disasters.

Participants also endorsed plans to hold a high-level policy dialogue on disaster resilience in the Asia-Pacific during the November 2011 APEC Leaders Meeting in Hawaii.

Evaluation

At the end of the two-day event participants evaluated the workshop sessions. Twenty-two participants completed the survey, and when asked how informative each session was, ranked all sessions highly (a 5 on a scale of 1-6). Participants indicated they would like to have spent more time on Experience and Lessons Learned Sharing from Recent Disasters (Session 1) as well as on the sessions on Public Private Partnerships (Sessions 3 and 4).

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