

Report on ADRRN Annual General Meeting

Meeting Duration: 11-14 December, 2018

Venue: Windsor Suites Hotel, Bangkok, Thailand

Introduction:

Asian Disaster Reduction and Response Network (ADRRN) is a network including different NGOs which are working in the field of disaster risk reduction in Asia Pacific region. We got the membership from ADRRN in 2007. From that period we are attending in the annual meeting of ADRRN. Every year ADRRN secretariat organizes an annual meeting. In 2018 the secretariat organized meeting in Bangkok, Thailand during 11-14 December, 2018 where I was one of the participants on behalf of COAST. Other organization like Dhaka Community Hospital Trust, Bangladesh, Dwip Unnyan Shangstha, Bangladesh, SEEDS India, MERCY Malaysia, Japan Platform, UN-OCHA, ICVA, National Society for Earthquake Technology (NSET), Nepal, STAR Afghanistan, HIF, IFRC and Centre for Disaster Preparedness, Philippines. The meeting was organized by UNOCHA, Bangkok.

This year the meeting was called as the Asia-Pacific Regional NGO Partnerships Week-2018. The main agenda were, Launching Sphere Hand Book 2018, Localizing the Nexus in Asia-Pacific, Achievements of Regional Innovation Forum, Strengthening Regional Response in Asia-Pacific, ADRRN AGM and The Grand Bargain Reflections on Progress in the Region.



Launching the Sphere Hand Book 2018: What is Sphere

The Sphere Project, now known as Sphere, was created in 1997 by a group of non-governmental organizations and the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement. Its aim was to improve the quality of other humanitarian response and to be accountable

for their actors. The Sphere philosophy is based on two core benefits:

- People affected by disaster or conflict have the right to life with dignity and, therefore, right to assistance and
- All possible steps should be taken to alleviate human suffering arising out of disaster or conflict.

The Humanitarian Charter and minimum Standards put these core beliefs into practice. The Protection Principles inform all humanitarian action, and the core Humanitarian Standard contains commitments to support accountability across the sector. Together, they form The Sphere Handbook, which has developed into one of the most widely referenced humanitarian resources globally.

The Handbook:

The principal users of the Sphere Handbook involved in planning, managing or implementing a humanitarian response. This includes staff and volunteers of local, national and international humanitarian organizations who are involved with the humanitarian responses in the crisis. The Handbook was first piloted in 1998 with revised editions published in 2000, 2006, 2011 and now 2018. Each edition was revised through the consultations with the respective professionals.

The Code of Conduct: 10 Core Principles:

1. The humanitarian imperative comes first.
2. Aid is given regardless of the race, creed or nationality of the recipients and without advance distinction of any kind. Aid priorities are calculated on the basis of need alone.
3. Aid will not be used to further a particular political or religious standpoint.
4. We shall endeavor not to act as instruments of government foreign policy.
5. We shall respect culture and custom.
6. We shall attempt to build disaster response on local capacities.
7. Ways shall be found to involve program beneficiaries in the management of relief aid.

8. Relief aid must strive to reduce future vulnerabilities to disaster as well as meeting basic needs.
9. We hold ourselves accountable to both those we seek to assist and those from whom we accept resources.
10. In our information, publicity and advertising activities, we shall recognize disaster victims as dignified human beings, not hopeless objects.

Application of standards:

The standards will be applied in the following stages for the humanitarian response:

Assessment and analysis

The Sphere Minimum Standards provide a basis for needs assessment and analysis in each sector, with assessment checklists available in the book.

Strategy development and program design:

The Core Humanitarian Standards and the Minimum Standards support the planning of responses to provide the right humanitarian assistance in right time to those most in need.

Implementation

If the Sphere standards cannot be met for all or some groups from the affected population, then the investigation should be conducted for finding out the gaps as well as what needs to change. The negative implications should be identified and assessed for the remedies.

Monitoring, evaluation, accountability and learning

Monitoring, evaluation, accountability and learning (MEAL) supports timely and evidence based management decisions. It allows the humanitarian programs to adjust to change contexts. MEAL will have to be applied to monitor for determination whether they are being achieved, whether they are being achieved equitable for all segments of population or how more needs to be done for the people affected by crisis.

Localizing the ‘Nexus’ in Asia-Pacific:

At the global level, discussions are going on for the Humanitarian-Development-Peace Building: Nexus and the New. Way of working have been prioritized protected and complete refugee settings. But the

discussions were being about what do these approaches mean for humanitarian actions in the Asia-Pacific region. The dialogue and roundtable



discussions will unpack the current thinking for applicable to both preparedness and ongoing crisis in the region.

Discussions on Regional Innovation Forum (RIF):

ADRRN members and partners, who have taken active role in formulating and implementing the Sendai Framework and Agenda for Humanity, recognize expectation from international society to take the lead to enhancing ‘adaptive capacity, strengthening resilience, and reducing vulnerabilities to climate change’ stated in the Paris Agreement Article 7.

This year, RIF discussed the following issues actively:

Integrating local evidence into scientific research

Current research conducted by scientists through IPCC has established strong base for inter-state dialogue. It has been impacted in the regional level with significant achievements. The observations found n the ground level should be disseminated widely in the region. Local actions should also be aligned with policy level discussions to ensure the intervention successful.

Enhancing sustainable risk communication



Without proper understanding of disaster risks and their consequences at the local level, the evacuation

will not be possible quickly and adequately and the victims cannot be protected and saved. The communication should be local languages the information will make available for accessing to the people affected by crisis. Early warning messages need to link with actual actions. The points should be identified which make the early warning messages fruitful and communicable and understandable by the affected community.

Understanding and creating awareness on cascading impact

There are significant health risks due to extreme weather impact in the region. On the other hand force displacement will also affect the education continuity. Effects on irrigation schemes would have significant impact on agriculture outputs. Such cascading impacts to various sectors need to be analyzed, understood and if possible taking measures for undertaking the domestic adaptation. Such information should be embedded in the education curriculum of the respective country and efforts should be taken to reach to such flexible and adaptable education policy. Connection to be made in easy-to-understand. Effectiveness of such needs is to be built on evidence through research and analysis.

Referring community voices on policy making process

In the National Agriculture Action Plan need more citizen perspective, together with other stakeholders like academia, private sector and media. Adaptive communication in simple language should be core of effective decision making and community level actions. For example, every community needs to ensure having a safe evacuation and shelters, and for this budget should be allocated through people's participation.

Promoting innovation

For local responders to effectively adapt to 'new normal' with limited resource with more efficient approach to serve community should be sought out. In order to establish such approach, there should be space to explore and resources need to be provided. Collaborative actions by all stakeholders including the government and international society will be required to promote and upscale innovation projects. In this issues the successful cases should be

shared with others for dissemination within other community.

More collaborative with private sector

Application for new technologies are key driven for innovation and private sector will be the source of such technologies. There is such potentials for collaborative with the private sector for the new technologies. These technologies will also be shared with the local practitioners as well as other sectors. When the CSOs are will be the better position to develop and provide customized services that meet the local needs. Partnership will private sector would pave to widely dissemination of the technologies in the grass root level.

Strengthening Regional Response in Asia-Pacific:

Recent emergencies in the region have highlighted the changing nature of humanitarian responses. Strong government leadership is increasing with factors with a localization and changing the ways international agencies are engaging the government and local partners. In particular this is implication for UN and INGOs surge the mechanism for promoting thinking of new ways of strengthening and initiating the humanitarian capacities in both major and localized emergencies.

ADRRN AGM:

The meeting was inaugurated by the Chairperson of ADRRN Dr. Amod Mani Dixit with the theme "**Towards 2020 : Resilience Engagement via ADRRN Hubs**" He described his messages for strengthening the bondage of communication among the ADRRN members. All the members of ADRRN should address the vulnerable people in respect of climate change impact. The Chairperson of expressed his extra commitment for making the network more effective and active and also keeps the network in place for the betterment of disaster and climate change victims. He also told that the disaster risk reduction can be minimized if there will be strengthened local government, community people and skill development of NGOs. He mentioned that, born in 2002 at a meeting of Asian CSOs in Kobe, Japan, ADRRN is helping bridge the gaps. Since then, it has rapidly evolved from an awareness raising network to a prominent regional voice in advocacy and capacity building. Today, it is known as the civil society voice of Asia. Over the year, ADRRN's work has focused around local leaders, accountability and

innovation-the very issues currently being championed in the sector globally. It is now also working for raising the voices in the localization process in the Asia-Pacific region.

Annual Report and Accounts 2017:

The representative from ADRRN Secretariat presented the ADRRN the major achievements during the year. The major achievements for 2017 are i) Establishing country hubs, ii) joining Asian Ministerial Conference on DRR in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia iii) contribution to regional IASC meetings, iv) strengthening of SFDRR in the region, v) conducting external evaluation, vi) developed fund raising strategies vii) inclusion of four new members i.e. HAMI, Iran, DPNet Nepal, DiMaNN, Nepal and Friends Service Council, Nepal viii) quality and accountability of hub services, and ix) coordination meeting with secretariat and Executive Committee members. The accounts were presented and the closing balance is \$ 11,692. About these issues, there was a inclusion discussion and the house finally

approved the annual report and final accounts for the year of 2017.

The Grand Bargain Reflections:

The definition of localization

Localization refers to recognizing, respecting and strengthening the leadership by local authorities and the capacity of local civil society in humanitarian action, in order to better address the needs affected populations and to prepare national actors for future humanitarian responses.

Why this is important

- There is little evidence of the impact of a shift to a more localized approach to humanitarian actions in the Pacific
- In the Pacific, the challenges and opportunities for localization are distinct.
- Current tracking and interpretation of localization is driven by an international narrative

Specific priorities and impact indicators

Priority	Indicators
Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • International actors support and strengthen national leadership • Local and national actors lead response and dominate decision-making • International actors work with the respective in-country leadership structures and mechanisms
Participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of community/contextualized standards for all actors working in that context • Communities have increased opportunities to change programing including evaluation INGO work
Coordination and complementarity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National representation and engagement in the coordination forums and meetings. • Clearly defined parameters for international actors complementing local and national actors in humanitarian response
Partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partnerships are based on equitable and ethical partnership practices • Longer term strategic partnerships that aim to build systems and processes that mirror the ambition and goals of the local and national partner
Policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policies are informed by local and national voice including communities • National actors are recognized as key stakeholders in national debates about policies and standards that may have significant impact on them
Capacity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National and regional surge capacity and use of local over international expertise • Actors do not undermine the capacity of national actors in emergency response • Contextualized humanitarian standards, tools and policies are available
Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local and national actors have access to direct funding with limited or no barriers • Increase in the amount of humanitarian funding to local and national actors • Local and national level have increased decision making over financial matters

My learning

- i. Communication strengthened through the sharing of knowledge and information with other participants.
- ii. Conceptual clarity of localization and its process and priorities
- iii. Relation with the international persons like OCHA, UNDP, HIF has been improved and I think I will maintain all the communications with them.

Closing session:

The fourth day is concluding day of the meeting. The Chairperson gives the vote of thanks to all participants and he draws attention of all to be more active in their respective areas for reducing the vulnerability of people in respect of climate change and other disaster. He also wishes to all to participate in the next Annual General Meeting.

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