

CityVoices

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Disasters & Decisions in Asia-Pacific: Building Hope



Remarks by the President Fumiko Hayashi

Mayor of Yokohama

Mayor Hayashi (left) and Mayor Okuyama (right) of Sendai which was badly damaged in the March 11 earthquake and tsunami

I would like to express my heartfelt appreciation for your constant understanding and cooperation with CITYNET activities. It is my great pleasure to present to you this autumn 2011 issue of CityVoices.

The Great East Japan Earthquake devastated the Tohoku region and caused a massive loss of precious lives, and the ensuing tsunami swallowed up numerous towns and fields. The situation at the nuclear power plants remain unresolved, and I am sure that you are all concerned about the effects of radiation. However, Yokohama is located far from both the epicenter of the earthquake and the power plants, and we fortunately managed to avoid major damages. Radiation levels in the City have returned to standard levels prior to the earthquake, and we have regained safety and peace of mind in Yokohama.

We have received many warm words and condolences from CITYNET members, in addition to donations for the affected areas. I would like to express my gratitude for your kind consideration and encouraging support.

On April 3, approximately one month following the disaster, I visited the City of Sendai in the Tohoku region. I also visited particularly hard-hit coastal areas, and was speechless by the tragic sight before me. The cities and towns in these coastal areas received catastrophic damages, and the municipalities that would normally be taking the lead towards recovery have been rendered dysfunctional in this disaster.

What I discovered through our aid efforts in the aftermath of the earthquake is that it is precisely in times of emergency when the role of municipalities, which directly supports civic life, becomes important, as well as the usefulness of city-to-city networks. The City of Yokohama dispatched over 1,000 city staff to the affected areas, including firefighting teams, doctors and technical experts; and we are still continuing our assistance. We carried out immediate emergency aid such as rescue activities and

medical support, and with the passing of time, we have transitioned to long-term support such as the restoration of infrastructure. With comprehensive know-how of urban administration, from welfare and healthcare to urban planning, municipalities are the only entities that can provide long-term assistance to support the lives of citizens.

We cannot know when disaster may strike. To be prepared for any and all possibilities, minimise damages in the event of disaster and ensure the safety and security of citizens – that is the responsibility shouldered by municipalities. This issue of CityVoices also covers the City of Yokohama's disaster measures, and we hope that they prove to be useful for you.



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Editorial Board

CITYNET is pleased to introduce the members of the CityVoices Editorial Board:



Dato' Lakhbir Singh Chahl is the former Secretary General and current Special Advisor of CITYNET. Chahl has served tirelessly with the Network since 1990. He has a successful law practice and lives with his family in Penang, Malaysia.



Jack Sim is the founder of the World Toilet Organization (WTO), has worked to break the global taboos of toilets and sanitation and legitimise them for mainstream culture. WTO has a network of over 186 organisations in 56 countries. In 2008 Time Magazine named Sim 'Hero of the Environment.' Sim works from his home base of Singapore.



Mary Jane C. Ortega is the current Secretary General of CITYNET and former Mayor of the City of San Fernando, La Union in the Philippines. Over the years, she has been actively supporting a number of causes and projects for environmental sustainability.



Roman Rollnick is a former international foreign correspondent now working for UN-HABITAT where he is editor of the magazine Urban World and speech writer. He is based in Nairobi, Kenya.



Suvendrini Kakuchi is a Sri Lankan journalist for Inter Press Service based in Tokyo and is a regular commentator on Asian issues for Japanese media. Her focus is on Japan-Asia political and economic relations, environment, gender, grass-root organisations and cross cultural communication. Kakuchi works towards developing partnerships between the media and civil society.



The destruction in the Tohoku region was severe, however Yokohama City located just south of Tokyo and about 250 km from the Fukushima nuclear plants escaped major damages and was able to dispatch support to the affected areas. This picture shows some of the damages in Iwaki, Fukushima, Japan.

Cooperating with Disaster: Yokohama City

At exactly 2:46 p.m. on March 11, 2011, Yokohama City Hall began to tremble. The trembling quickly became shaking which in turn became a strong and violent swinging that lasted over four long minutes. At this point, many city officials began to feel anxious.

Yet, Yokohama City Hall, built in 1959 was able to withstand the intensity five, (Japanese scale) earthquake. Thanks to disaster planning, the building underwent seismic isolation retrofitting over two years ago. The City itself sustained relatively few damages; nevertheless, the severity and the full extent of the situation were unclear.

Immediately following the earthquake, the City of Yokohama set up its disaster headquarters. In Japan, the Disaster Countermeasures Act states that all local governments must formulate disaster plans, which are the basis for prevention, damage reduction and rehabilitation. All City officials have assigned roles and take part in periodical community training and simulations with the main priority being the safety and well-being of citizens.

On March 11 many office workers and visitors to Yokohama were unable to return to Tokyo or other areas as public

transportation was at a standstill. However, Yokohama already had several plans in place as part of pre-existing agreements within the City; convention facilities were opened for those people unable to return home and private companies in the area automatically distributed blankets and bottled water. Yokohama has taken steps to secure more than 150 such agreements covering essential needs such as emergency medical care, food, sewerage, shelter, transportation and information sharing in case of disaster.

City officials were quickly dispatched by Yokohama to the affected areas such as Sendai, Miyagi and other areas within Tohoku thanks to established official agreements with 20 cities in Japan. The agreements require the fulfillment of requests from the national government, the Japan Water Works Association (JWWA), and other rescue activities. These range from emergency firefighting, medical, surveillance and engineering support to the management of shelters and sorting emergency goods received from all over the world. Overall Yokohama has sent more than 1,711 city officials (as of May 22) to the disaster area with dispatch still continuing on a needs basis. Many local governments were also supported through sister city relationships both inside and outside Japan underlining how vital these networks are.



Yokohama City conducts regular disaster training for city officials and the public.



Cooperating with Disaster: Yokohama City

Teamwork Restores Water: Yokohama Waterworks

In times of disaster, resilient partnerships and solidarity make restoring basic services possible. The activities of the Yokohama Waterworks (YWW) Bureau are exemplary of this kind of forward thinking. YWW is both a member of the Japan Waterworks Association (JWWA) and the lead city for waterworks management in the Kanto region (Tokyo and surrounding area). Following the earthquake, YWW simultaneously checked and repaired damages in Yokohama and throughout the region. Nevertheless, it was clear that a great deal more service was needed in Tohoku, and fast.

reservoir and the damaged area. Kimiyoshi Matsumoto, head of the 10th Emergency Water Supply Team said that even though the situation was extremely difficult, no one on the team complained.

By April 11, the water supply rehabilitation rate was almost completely restored. However, on the next day, the City became the epicenter of a large aftershock and water coverage was suddenly reduced from 97 to 23 percent. Through extensive efforts engineers were able to restore coverage to 40 percent within a day, and the current supply is at 98 percent. The remaining two

YWW would like to build more networks outside of Japan to create a stronger international support system; however, this will involve concerted efforts and coordination by many stakeholders. Disaster prevention can only function with the mutual cooperation of public and private sectors. Furthermore, the capacity of local governments is limited so communities need to take an active role in their own safety and survival.

“Construction of earthquake-resistant facilities may be difficult, but planning rehabilitation systems in advance can be reasonable and effective,” says Ushikubo. “This kind of planning by other vulnerable Asia-Pacific cities would be most encouraging for Japan and its recovery.”

The City of Yokohama would like to thank all CITYNET members who made donations. Over 400 million yen (ca. \$5,213,800 USD) was collected by the City and distributed to the damaged areas.

Picture on left: Supplying water into a balloon tank for distribution of emergency water. Middle top: Citizens receive water via a water truck brought by YWW. Middle bottom: The checking of water leakage is important for maintaining water services. Right: Restoring a water line at Hitachi-Ibaraki.

“Water supply is not a special service in Japan so it is rare to receive a word of thanks. We also don’t expect it, because it’s our job. But in the disaster area, everybody said thank you. I felt very proud to be a water engineer.”

Support teams from YWW were immediately dispatched to Sendai with the first team arriving in Ibaraki on March 13. YWW requested assistance from other waterworks organisations in the region and emergency water supply and rehabilitation teams were subsequently sent to affected areas in Chiba, Tochigi, Ibaraki and Fukushima prefectures.

The focus for the Yokohama Emergency Water Supply Team was Iwaki City, located 40 km from the 1st Fukushima nuclear plant. Many citizens had already evacuated the area in fear of radiation however; those who remained were in desperate need of a reliable water supply. YWW brought along Geiger counters to have a better indication of radiation levels. Days began at 6 a.m. and involved shuttling between the water purification plant or the distribution

percent represents the tsunami-affected area, which falls under the long-term reconstruction plan.

The 5th Rehabilitation Team comprising 11 private experts and eight city officials fixed 22 water leakage points in five days and checked damaged pipes at over 3,300 houses. Yasuhiro Abe, Head of Emergency Management said some activities didn’t turn out as planned, as the magnitude of the disaster was larger than expected. However water departments from Kyushu, located over 1,000 km south of Fukushima, also joined Yokohama in their rehabilitation activities.

“We are all a waterworks family,” says Toshiyuki Ushikubo, head of the 5th Rehabilitation Team.

**Powerful Planning
& Networks Help
the City of Yokohama**

Take Action

When & Where it Counts



An Interview with Margareta Wahlström

Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General for Disaster Risk Reduction, UNISDR

“Disasters are not just things that happen.”

As Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General for Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR), UNISDR, Margareta Wahlström is in a unique position – she is essentially tasked with changing mindsets about disaster and how cities prepare for them. Wahlström nevertheless seems undaunted. She has a mission, a message and a great deal of experience having worked in emergency relief, reconstruction, development and humanitarian affairs in a number of regions throughout the world.

Q: How do you see your role as Special Representative of the Secretary-General for DRR- UNISDR?

In this position, I hope to be able to gradually help cities take action and make some fundamental realisations, namely:

Disaster risk reduction doesn't only have to do with disaster. Of course disaster is part of it, but the main point is that we also create the possibility for disaster by choosing to build cities as we do, so it has a lot to do with infrastructure as well social aspects to build the culture of prevention.

Risk reduction can also be perceived as an issue of choices. Disaster is about choices and the divide between the rich and the poor. Often cities do not see it this way. In some contexts it might be helpful to move away from talking about disaster to talking about choices. It is not helpful during or after a disaster to point out all the things that went wrong, people are obviously very emotional and it will only put people on the defensive. It may be best to wait and point out the opportunities. In the past, countries talked about 25 year development plans, but that is not happening as much anymore. Cities often think in short term investments – in two or eight years as it is often connected to political terms. I personally hope it will not continue to be this way. However, it is very true that you can achieve much in five years. Concretely, I wish that all countries invested more into schools and health-related programmes to build social resilience.

Q: How can networks like CITYNET assist with the mission of DRR?

We need to work through and with city associations, especially, since there is an enormous opportunity for outreach. City associations can provide leverage points, act as ‘megaphones’, and mobilise expertise. The resistance of some institutions is a huge burden, so creating awareness is vital. In particular, city associations like CITYNET can contribute significantly to the ISDR World Disaster Reduction Campaign on “Making Cities Resilient,” by working with us to advocate for safer cities. Scarcity of water is one of the biggest problems that we face. For many cities this is quite a costly prospect and it is of course quality that imparts and impacts health. It is important to begin awareness training and to link water and sanitation to bigger achievements. Without building institutions and a clear preventative mindset it is difficult to be effective.

Q: Japan is regarded as a well-prepared country in terms of disaster yet it was somewhat caught off-guard by recent events. What is your view on the lessons and opportunities from the Tohoku experience?

Japan is a country that has an established long history of addressing disaster due to its high exposure to multiple hazards. The country is regarded as a role model because it has invested billions of yen in Disaster Risk Management (DRM) and is well-known for its good practices in DRR and DRM. The Japanese people are disciplined and take DRR seriously, applying lessons learnt from a number of local disaster experiences. The devastating aftermath in Tohoku led some opinion-makers to question the value of DRR investment. DRR measures actually played a key role in limiting human and infrastructure losses. The destruction and death toll would have been worse had Japan not fostered a culture of preparedness through DRR measures. Indeed, the Tohoku experience emphasised the importance of DRR to the rest of the world.

The Tohoku disaster underscores the combined value of hard and soft measures in DRR. Hard measures, such as ensuring that infrastructure is resilient against natural hazards is critical but less effective if not accompanied by soft measures, such as disaster awareness and education to foster readiness among people to take immediate action. People should not rely solely on infrastructure to save themselves, they should also commit to improving their own preparedness and resilience levels. We can strengthen seawalls, flood gates or walls, and enforce building codes as part of hard measures. Strengthening infrastructure however, is not enough to save lives when large-scale or complex disasters occur.

Individual lives are saved when people can quickly evacuate to safe places, using disaster knowledge and good judgment. Communities can take responsibility by producing hazard maps, checking regular evacuation routes, reassessing the safety of evacuation centers, and preparing responsive evacuation procedures that are tailored to their local environment.

The United Nations expects that Japan will continue to contribute to global efforts on DRR by sharing its good practices and lessons learnt.

Q: Nuclear power continues to be a sensitive topic and has become a major consideration when considering DRR. What do you think are the broader implications for the international community?

The Fukushima situation has generated debate and reflection on safety with regard to nuclear power, some countries are re-examining their preferences and policies on energy sources in response to events in Japan. The international community has a key role in leading calls for countries to reassess all critical facilities, especially nuclear power plants, against large-scale hazards; and to revise or scale up assumptions within their disaster management plans. If Japan with its high level infrastructure standards and preparedness could not withstand a major disaster, other parts of the world could equally be as vulnerable, if not more, to similar or worse disasters.

To find out more about the UNISDR and their campaign: Making Cities Resilient: “My city is getting ready” please see: www.unisdr.org/english/campaigns/campaign2010-2011/.



Left: Bicycle sharing system - Changwon, Republic of Korea
Right: EcoMobility use - Tours, France

Climate Change Cluster Changwon, Republic of Korea

EcoMobility: The New Urban Transportation Solution

Mobility for Sustainable Cities by Nuno Quental and Sophie Verstraelen, ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability

Traffic jams, pollution, crowded areas, noise; current transportation systems in city centers and urban areas are not functioning efficiently and are contributing to the increase in greenhouse gas emissions. There are however sustainable alternatives to staying mobile in cities – we call this EcoMobility.

EcoMobility does not represent a new mode of transportation nor is it only a collective word to indicate heterogeneous transport. Rather, EcoMobility indicates a new approach to mobility and transport that acknowledges the importance of public and non-motorised transport, and allows for real transport options. It is environmentally sustainable and socially inclusive and combines the use of public transport and non-motorised transport such as walking, cycling and wheeling. It also incorporates the use of light electric vehicles, with charging stations providing clean energy from local renewable energy sources. EcoMobile policies are designed to give priority to these non-motorised transport forms and reduce urban congestion.

EcoMobility: the Urban Transportation Solution

EcoMobility can improve health conditions and public space can be freed up by reducing the amount of single cars moving across our cities, making room for walkers, bikers, for parks or playgrounds, and improved inner city shopping areas. Whilst citizens can save on transport costs, the city can reduce energy consumption and energy spending by, for example, reducing maintenance costs of roads. The combination of public and non-motorised transport works to make everyday transfers of people and goods easier and environmentally sustainable. Furthermore, long-term investment in a new, more energy efficient transportation system will certainly pay off in the long run.

On a more global scale, urban EcoMobility will contribute to a lower overall level of greenhouse gas emissions. Worldwide, transport accounts for 13 percent of the overall greenhouse gas emissions, and transport related emissions rose by 24 percent between 1990 and 2008. As such, finding ways of reducing automobile dependency represents a major opportunity for communities to contribute to national emission reduction pledges and sustainable development.



Non-motorised use of transport in a city park.

Changwon: EcoMobility in Action

Changwon has shown leadership in introducing EcoMobility to its citizens by implementing the NUBIJA project in September 2009. NUBIJA is Changwon's bicycle sharing system (NUBIJA is combination of "Nubida" (to move around) and "Jajeonge" (bicycle)), and has over 3,300 bikes in operation and 163 parking stations around the City.

Changwon created a bicycle system matching its own particular needs by researching other cities' bicycle programmes, analysing its own physical conditions and applying advanced technologies. The new system has led to improvements in citizens' health, job creation and has also laid the foundation for a low-carbon transportation culture. The extensive use of information technology and implementation of a cyclist's insurance system are among NUBIJA's unique characteristics.

Introducing a sustainable transportation system to a city whose planning and organisation caters to automotive transportation is a challenge. Changwon has managed to conquer this obstacle, and several others, by frequently communicating with citizens, soliciting public opinion, effective use of technology and consistent support from local policy-makers. Currently there are approximately 76,579 members and, as a consequence, 5,900 tons of CO₂ emissions are avoided each year.



Changwon's bicycle sharing system: NUBIJA.

Future plans include the increase of electric vehicles and to set up charge stations to reduce carbon emissions. Changwon aims to become a Smart Grid City with plans for a renewable energy complex and the promotion of solar energy.

Changing Mindsets

Reducing the impact of motorised transport requires the introduction of new policies, physical, spatial and technological solutions and a change in everyday habits. Such a shift implies a commitment from policy-makers, businesses, experts and users. The EcoMobility Congress 2011 October 22 - 24 in Changwon is a major platform that brings these different actors together to discuss their diverse visions.

Cooperation and reform of the transport sector is, therefore, mainly a multi-level process. Local governments, experts

and academics, civil society organisations and businesses are the principal actors in the promotion of a new mobility culture and policies. It is also important to clearly document the results and to evaluate the process of introducing EcoMobility as a coherent concept so that other cities can learn from these examples.

EcoMobility: for the Future

EcoMobility is still an evolving approach which requires more attention and a new culture for sustainable cities and solutions for the dense urban spaces of the future.

Gil Peñalosa, Director of 8-80 Cities, and opening speaker at the EcoMobility Changwon 2011 Congress, is a key expert on EcoMobility. "We are now facing a "perfect storm" of increasing global warming and environmental degradation, growing traffic congestion, an obesity crisis and other public health concerns, soaring energy costs and slowing economic growth," he said. "It is time to go beyond baby steps and take some major leaps. We must re-position walking and cycling as key parts of the solution to these major challenges."

An EcoMobile future requires political will. Several mayors including Odense will be in Changwon this October to demonstrate their

commitment to EcoMobility opportunities.

Intermodality must not be forgotten when discussing EcoMobility. A lack of choices and gaps in symbiotic transport options are still major obstacles that push people into their cars. Transportation networks must complement each other: for example, car and bike sharing stations must be located close to major transport stations, and bus systems must feed into existing metro lines. The infrastructure itself must facilitate interchange, while supporting physically impeded people and their special needs. EcoMobility not only reduces emissions, energy consumption and car transport; it also allows citizens to diversify their way of moving, increasing choices and offering healthier environments that are often missing in cities.

EcoMobility Changwon 2011 World Congress on Mobility for the Future of Sustainable Cities will take place in Changwon, Republic of Korea, on October 22 - 24, 2011. CITYNET will be co-organising workshops on urban challenges with the participation of mayors from Marikina and Surakarta. Members are encouraged to attend. The EcoMobility Congress is hosted by ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability. www.iclei.org/ecomobility2011



Climate Change Cluster Members

- Dhaka (Lead)
- Baguio
- Balikpapan
- Banda Aceh
- Bandung
- Bangkok
- Barisal
- Bogor
- Galle
- Guntur
- Hanoi
- Ho Chi Minh City
- Hue
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- Tirtanadi Water Supply and Drainage
- University of Technology, Thonburi
- Veolia
- WTO

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Naga City River Revitalisation & Adaptive Leadership

The Naga River Revitalisation Project (NRRP) seeks to renew the urban segment of Naga River, spanning 2.5 km and has been an ongoing initiative of the administration of Mayor John G. Bongat.



The procession along the Naga River highlights the annual 10-day fiesta of the Lady of Peñafrancia every September.

Aided by a training called "Leadership in Local Government: Decision, Action Results (DARE)" organised by the World Bank Institute (WBI), Mayor Bongat implemented key learning on adaptive leadership frameworks. Together with other Asian cities, Naga was selected to join the pioneering cohort of the training held in Singapore in the summer of 2010.

Adaptive leadership puts emphasis on closely working with stakeholders and local communities in identifying appropriate solutions. To bring about change, local leaders must be able to secure the three "A"s— Authority, Acceptance and Ability— which make reforms possible.

In Naga's case, Bongat immediately secured a city council resolution identifying the NRRP as a priority project of the city, and inked an agreement with the local Catholic Archdiocese and other institutional partners from government and civil society.

To promote greater acceptance, the Mayor and his project team conducted village consultations in early 2010—which affirmed overwhelming broad based support. To bridge ability gaps within the local bureaucracy, the city government sponsored an open competition for the best conceptual design—which attracted 12 entries, including seven from students from various local universities and colleges. The winning concept has been adopted, and is being used as the basis for ongoing engineering design efforts. The concept features the construction of a three meter-wide Riverwalk on both sides of the Naga River, and underneath, wastewater treatment facilities at the outfalls of the City's drainage system.

Currently biophysicochemical surveys and plotting of existing structures and private properties along the riverbanks are being undertaken—critical data to determine placement of the planned Riverwalk.

Reaching an agreement with affected residents will be central to the next round of village consultations. Funding (estimated at seven million USD) remains a formidable constraint.

There is also the need to show progress to further cement public cooperation.

However with a supportive national government not to mention invaluable technical assistance extended by the WBI as well as the German government, Bongat is confident Naga City will be successful.

Contact: Wilfredo B. Prilles Jr., City Planning Officer in Naga City / NRRP Program Officer +63 54 4732053 / cpdo@naga.gov.ph.

For more information on DARE, please see the Lee Kuan Yew School of Private Policy (NUS) website.



Left: Habitat Campus Chapter member cleans dry walls using tsunami water.

Right: Park Rehab - Habitat volunteers clean mud carried by the tsunami. The park is a priority so that children can come back to play there.

Disaster Cluster Habitat for Humanity, Japan

A World Where Everyone Has a Decent Place to Live



Habitat for Humanity and All Hands Volunteers clear debris from a rice field in Rikuzentakata, Iwate, carried inland by the tsunami wave.

So far, HFH Japan has organised volunteer teams to clear debris and mud from individual houses and local community facilities in Iwate, one of the most affected areas. In addition to clearing and cleaning homes, HFH Japan volunteers are now also working in community buildings or public spaces, like canals and parks. The biggest challenge has been building relationships with local people not very familiar with volunteers from the outside. Thanks to efforts on both sides gradually they gained support from the local community. The policy of “building together” has been put into practice and become more meaningful in Japan.

Habitat for Humanity (HFH) Japan is not just about building houses – they promote the development of self-reliance while making homes more obtainable for those who need it most. Through numerous projects and fundraising HFH Japan have helped areas across Asia recover from and be more resilient to disaster. People in Japan (Tohoku), Bangladesh, Pakistan, Haiti, Indonesia, Philippines, Sri Lanka, China, Myanmar and USA have benefitted from their projects.

Recipients of HFH houses pay back the cost of their houses with no interest and gain security through long term loans. Roughly 600-800 hours are spent building the houses with the help of volunteers. Through this system, owners can obtain their homes at prices much below market value.

Habitat’s vision is ‘A World Where Everyone has a Decent Place to Live,’ and through sustainable programming and a

vast volunteer network they are working hard to make it happen. Programmes such as “Global Village” encourage the building of the foundations of respect, friendship, knowledge and the love for local, peaceful communities.

In the devastated areas of Tohoku, HFH Japan together with HFH International is working to support families still living in evacuation centres return to clean, healthy homes and start re-building their lives. While many are focusing on efforts in Japan, HFH Japan is also committed to other Asian



Habitat Campus Chapter members remove mud and debris at a house damaged by the tsunami.

HFH’s International Coordinator Shintaro Yamamoto believes that cities can already learn a great deal from the experience of the

“Currently, Habitat for Humanity is building one house every 24 minutes, all around the world.” www.habitatjp.org

countries and is currently building 100 core houses in Sri Lanka due to finish in spring 2012 for those who have returned home after the 25-year internal war.

Tohoku Disaster. “It is now a trend to pursue an eco-friendly environment and to live what is called a “sustainable” life. But, there doesn’t seem to be any “eco” when lives are swept away by disaster. Cities should seriously

consider creating a truly sustainable society in a more holistic and comprehensive way.”

He also cautions that disasters can be quickly forgotten. “How many people remember Haiti these days? Visible progress has been painfully slow. Although it has been one year since the magnitude 7.0 earthquake about one million survivors are still displaced but living in tent camps.” Yamamoto believes that one of the greatest roles of international aid is to not only help those in immediate need but also to keep advocating for those unfortunates who remain in need and are forgotten throughout the world which could soon include Japan as well.



Habitat volunteers dig and take mud out from under floors at a damaged house.

Future plans for HFH Japan include sending 1,000 volunteers (approximately 60 teams) as part of its Global Village Programme. The Youth

Programme will establish another five campus chapters. Farther afield, HFH Japan plans to initiate a disaster mitigation project in Nepal a community development in Thailand and their human resettlement project in Sri Lanka. In Tohoku they plan to keep sending volunteers to affected areas as well as delivering home starter kits to people in need. “One of our biggest roles is to prevent disaster victims in the future, in other words, (re)creating a city which is able to save human lives.”

Yamamoto adds that well-planned housing policies are important to maintain a sound society. “People or cities cannot start rebuilding without a house, home and hope” he says, “cities have to be able to protect lives and think about the true meaning of sustainability.”

Habitat’s activities can be supported by participating in the Global Village and Tohoku volunteer programmes. Yamamoto says “many participants enter with the intention of saving others. But most leave having saved others and been saved themselves, taking home with them something much more valuable.”

For further information please contact: info@habitatjp.org / www.habitatjp.org



Disaster Cluster Members

- Makati (Lead)
- Banda Aceh (Co-lead)
- Colombo
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- Yongin

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How Can We Make Our Cities More Resilient?

The complexity of resiliency in cities represents a major challenge, especially for the Asian region which consistently experiences wide-ranging natural calamities. Yet, this complexity also creates opportunities as urban stakeholders can address resiliency using different entry points.

As the agent for change, local governments have the mandate to ensure safety and security for all constituents. Comprehensive resiliency planning, the ability to set and enforce appropriate legislation along with the active engagement of communities are no longer optional.

Long-term resilience requires expecting the unexpected as well as absorbing stresses without impeding current and future development. Resilience planning helps local governments integrate physical, social, economic, institutional and natural development across sectors. However, the ability to plan and implement the necessary adaptation measures is often lacking. Therefore, institutional reform is a critical element for the agenda of each local government. Furthermore, as most of the urban population in Asia (as well as most city members of CITYNET) live in small and medium-sized cities, stronger attention

towards these and other highly vulnerable areas needs to be emphasised.

Cities with limited resources have many opportunities to explore the benefits of regional cooperation as a strategy to improving regional safety and security. Climate change adaptation is a priority within CITYNET and the CDRI (Climate Disaster Resilience Initiative) programme introduced in 2008 by Kyoto University, CITYNET, UNISDR and other partners provided an ideal venue for information and resource sharing. CDRI helps local governments and partners assess their resiliency levels and design comprehensive action plans to reduce and mainstream risks in the planning and management processes.

Sukabumi (Indonesia) and Dhaka (Bangladesh) are two cities amongst many



Caption: Dhaka City will host the “International Seminar on Climate Change and the Role of Local Governments” including discussions on DRR (November 27-28).

that have formulated their resiliency action plans through the CDRI programme.

Sukabumi will see increased growth therefore they are concerned with issues of social cohesion and family planning. In the next two to five years Sukabumi’s plans include water treatment, network sanitation in slum areas and a more detailed strategy for healthcare during disasters.

Dhaka is one of the fastest growing cities in Asia and as a low-lying city it is exceptionally vulnerable to disaster. Their long term plans promise incorporation of disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation in their environmental policies as well as enhancement of urban water quality in lakes and rivers.

These plans require strong commitments at every level of governance; however a strong vision and roadmap are the first steps in achieving these goals. Is your city ready?

Dhaka City will host the “International Seminar on Climate Change and the Role of Local Governments” including discussions on Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) (November 27-28). For more information please see: www.citynet-ap.org



A new shelter complying with Disaster Risk Reduction requirements.

Infrastructure Cluster Yangon, Myanmar

Capacity Building through Disaster Resilient Housing (UN-HABITAT)

Myanmar, a resource rich country full of diversity and cultural traditions is also one of the world's most vulnerable countries to disasters such as earthquakes, floods and cyclones - one of the most devastating being Cyclone Nargis which struck on May 2, 2008 and affected the lives of over 2.5 million people. Despite this, Myanmar has received comparatively little attention. Yet, there is a great deal that can be shared to CITYNET members from their experience of rebuilding.

Agencies such as UN-HABITAT and other groups have been working with the Myanmar national government and the Yangon local government (a CITYNET member) to rebuild houses and sanitation systems, to provide emergency relief and promote sustainable resiliency - our best defense against certain disaster. The construction projects were aimed at providing homes and work for the millions who were affected by Cyclone Nargis.

During the two to three years of Nargis recovery, the Shelter Sector, convened by the Shelter Working Group (SWG) of UN-HABITAT, developed a variety of practical manuals, posters, guidelines in both English and Myanmar, targeted at communities, village committees, householders as well as local carpenters and artisans, the main stakeholders in the programme. The training is being funded by the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs with some support from DFID, and UNDP.

It is important to note that situations vary as housing typologies, ethnic groups in both urban and rural contexts were impacted. UN-HABITAT is finalising a shelter assessment for the area and will produce seismic resilient housing typologies that cater to different

groups to reinforce their traditional building methods.



Schools and community buildings are often the last refuge during and following a disaster - their resilience is critical.

Since 2009, training and tools have been provided to over 3000 carpenters/artisans to build more disaster resilient homes. Many have found gainful employment and supported infrastructure and construction projects of non-profit organisations with their newfound skills. Due to the success of the programme in Delta and Rakhine states, it is planned to also be extended to Shan state. UN-HABITAT also provides training to other agencies so they can transliterate these skills to their own beneficiary communities.

The programme has produced numerous benefits with increased local capacities for disaster resilient construction practices as well as improved livelihoods and employment prospects due to provision of carpenter toolkits as part of the training. The resilience of schools, hospitals and community buildings has increased with proper retrofitting; these buildings are critical as they can serve as safe shelters and deliver emergency services.

The numerous requests for training and accompanying documents from mandated shelter agencies as well as other sectors are an indication of success. UN-HABITAT maintains and shares a list of agencies, counterparts and trained carpenters with the hope to continue delivering and expanding this training nationwide.

Over the next few years UN-HABITAT, with the endorsement of the Ministry of Construction, has entered into an agreement with Myanmar Engineering Society (MES) to initiate draft structural codes for disaster resilience, which will later feed into the full national building code development.

There are many more things that can be done to deal with the increasing unpredictability of hydrometeorological

Tips for Disaster Resilient Housing

- Build houses on higher/safer ground
- Direct short face of the houses towards windward direction
- Have as a minimum, 30 degrees for the roof pitch (roof slope)
- Extend roof projection no more than 18 inches from all sides
- Cover roof firmly fixed to rafter and purlin
- Securely fix rafters, purlins, tie beams and plates to posts
- Provide bracings and anchor posts to the ground

disasters such as improved regional forecasting mechanisms. It can be argued that Earthquake Vulnerability Reduction (EVR) is the single most important and urgent intervention required as major cities such as Yangon lie on Myanmar's numerous and active earthquake belts. In parallel the drafting of disaster management law, the formalisation of

national building codes and increased public awareness on more frequent and intense disasters are also critical next steps.

For further information on major lessons learned from Cyclone Nargis please see www.dias.unhabitat-mya.org.



Infrastructure Cluster Members

- Seoul (Lead)
- AILSG (Co-lead)
- Baguio
- ACVN
- Balikpapan
- AMDA
- Biratnagar
- Ancona
- Butwal
- Bombay First
- Esfahan
- Chittagong
- Hai Phong
- Freedom To Build
- Jakarta
- HELP-O
- Kaohsiung
- HUDCO/HSMI
- Kathmandu
- MAUC
- Kuala Lumpur
- Office Tape
- Negombo
- OPPRTI
- San Fernando
- RAJUK
- San Jose
- URDI
- Suwon
- Sylhet
- Tansen
- Tomohon
- Yongin

Contact: everaft@seoul.go.kr

Challenging Minds and Communities



Tono houses with a common wooden deck.

In times of disaster, the road to recovery might be long; however victims needn't feel alone or disconnected from their community. Strategic planning that begins with people and their circumstances can lead to a smoother transition into re-gaining livelihoods. Since the March 11 disaster devastated the largely rural northeastern region of Japan, promoting people-centred temporary housing has become a major project for Toshio Otsuki, Associate Professor of Architecture from the University of Tokyo.

"The houses were like military barracks" he said, "only houses - no shops, community, or public space." These first temporary housing units consisted of 30 or 40 units; however he worried that more than 60,000 units still needed to be provided.

Following the disaster, professors from various university departments gathered and discussed what could be done. They decided to focus on housing and providing alternative models.

Otsuki felt that a new layout incorporating considerations of age and lifestyle would allow a stronger community atmosphere to be achieved. Otsuki and his team suggested lowering the houses and building facing doorways and entrances in order to promote more community interaction. Their design also included a wooden deck in front of the entrance to promote better access to healthcare. "In temporary housing often the first floor is about 40 cm higher than ground level," Otsuki explained, "so if you are in a wheelchair or carrying someone, it is difficult to enter. Also the pathways are often covered with gravel, making access for ambulances problematic."

Otsuki and his team faced even bigger challenges when it came to convincing local governments to accept this style of housing. Local governments seemed reluctant to accept change despite the benefits. In these cases, the group proposed a compromise.

important; every local government should do this. When this kind of disaster happens, land use planning has to be changed completely."



Tono houses with a single wooden deck.

"I think the role of CITYNET is very important...often local governments must handle disasters independently so exchanges of experiences and city-to-city cooperation are very helpful as decentralisation will be part of how we change after this earthquake." Tetsuo Kidokoro, University of Tokyo

Along with a team of like-minded and concerned academics from the University, Otsuki not only builds models of new types of shelter, he challenges the way many think about disaster and recovery.

In early April, the first temporary housing units were opened in the badly damaged prefecture of Iwate. Otsuki visited the site himself to assess the reconstruction efforts.

Along with traditional housing, they suggested a "community care zone," be implemented. The "zone" is designed to provide a safe space in which the community can care for itself, and easily receive services from outside.

Otsuki stresses that local governments need to think differently about disaster. "They should imagine the worst situation possible. Reconstruction planning in advance is very

Tetsuo Kidokoro, also an Associate Professor at the University of Tokyo agrees with a shift in land-use planning. Kidokoro works with the Department of Urban Engineering and research groups on city planning and the reconstruction of the Tohoku region. Kidokoro argues for less dependence on global products and energy sources and more self-reliant lifestyles. However, he points out that the sharing of information and experiences are useful especially in times of disaster.

Currently Otsuki and his team are constructing alternative housing projects in two cities in Iwate prefecture. Kidokoro continues research on reconstruction for the Tohoku region.

MDGs Cluster Galle, Sri Lanka

A Tsunami Story: How an Epidemic was Avoided in Galle City

Dr. Wenura K. Singarachchi, like most people in Sri Lanka, was shocked and in a state of disbelief at what was happening. Tsunamis were not well known, at least not within the past decade. The destruction of flooding and monsoons were things people felt more prepared for, but massive tsunamis were something of legends rarely heard.

Sri Lanka, with a population of approximately 21 million people, is essentially a continental island situated in the Indian Ocean, southeast of India. It is surrounded with about 1760 km of coastline with generally shallow waters with Sumatra and the Andaman islands about 300 km to the North East. These features led Sri Lanka to experience one of the deadliest tsunamis in its history.

At 9:30 a.m. on December 26, 2004, Dr. Wenura, a medical officer with the Municipal Council of Galle City was sitting at home when he heard the sounds of shouting and the whistling of the vehicles as they zoomed past. He went outside to see mothers carrying children and people running desperately along the roads in an utter state of confusion. It was then he learned that Galle City had been completely submerged with sea water.

“Many ran to the beach and waited to see what would come, not imagining it could get worse. It did.”

After the earthquake a spectacular but relatively small wave hit the port side of Galle. As the wave receded, many people were fascinated and wanted to have a closer look. The series of tsunamis caused waves



Galle City was almost completely submerged by the tsunami of 2004.

as high as five or six metres and the surging water swept away many of the people who



NGOs working in a resettlement site in Galle.

were curious about the strange phenomenon. Many ran to the beach and waited to see what would come, not imagining it could get worse,” said Dr. Wenura. “It did.”

The tsunami which ravaged more than two thirds of Sri Lanka's coastlines, affected

a massive area throughout the country including Galle City where more than 4,000 people lost their lives and over 128,000 more were displaced. Source: Dept. of Census and Statistics, Sri Lanka

Galle City fell into chaos. Luckily, it was a Sunday and students were not in school, or surely the devastation would have been even more catastrophic – but that was hard to imagine. Dr. Wenura's instinct was to rush to the Teaching Hospital Karapitiya to offer help. Getting there was not an easy task as the area was blocked due to a steady stream of vehicles carrying debris and people. Many doctors and medical staff were unreachable due to failed transportation and the communication systems. Finally he reached the hospital which soon filled with victims. Dr. Wenura and a skeleton staff focused on those lucky enough to make it to the hospital.

Local firefighters and citizens brought a never-ending supply of victims, it was clear that a more strategic system was needed.

Dr. Wenura made his way to his office to meet a number of other city officials who were busy organising rescue operations. As a doctor, one of his main concerns was to ensure the health and hygiene of the people. Poor sanitation, lack of healthy food, drinking water, medical care, rotting bodies, mosquitoes and masses of traumatised people are a recipe for a health epidemic.

Like many municipalities, city officials in Galle did not have a clear idea of how to handle the overwhelming situation. The main administration system was damaged and scattered. The main city office itself was destroyed, and all of the officials were affected on a personal level. Most of the municipality's vehicles, including ambulances, emergency equipment and documents were destroyed. The Mayor, Medical Officer and Municipal Counsellor along with other officials formed an emergency management committee in order to plan how to face the



disaster with the limited resources available. In addition, most of the officials and workers had no experience in disaster management and had to rely on their instincts to make hard decisions.

Yet all was not lost. The city still had a great deal of people power and together they mobilised armed police forces, municipality workers, volunteers, and NGOs to help those in urgent need. A massive coordinated operation helped put in place operations to clear bodies, search for trapped people, clear the roads, and facilitate the movement of displaced people to a more secure location.

One of the committee's first functions was to set up refugee camps. Initially they set up 44 refugee camps to serve over 20,000 refugees, the biggest camp with approximately 2,500 refugees. As well an emergency operating room was established to help the critically injured.



Galle City today - there are very few signs of the 2004 tsunami.

There were many other challenges to overcome especially providing safe drinking water and food. In addition, monitoring of sanitation and garbage disposal were vital. City officials were also concerned with the proper operation and functioning of the Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) camps where chances for the spread of communicable disease were high. The health officials worked hard to control these diseases by giving consistent health education through student nurses, establishing mobile clinics in camps, providing adequate medicine (mainly donated through NGOs) and maintaining a communicable disease surveillance and proper notification system with the help of public health officer trainees. Through these efforts, Galle was able to show a low incidence of disease for 2004 despite the more than difficult conditions.

Schemes for the long term management of resettlement for the displaced persons as well as rehabilitation and support centers for victims, specifically for orphans were also established. Despite major setbacks and challenges, perseverance, strategic efforts along with trial and error ensured that a major epidemic could be avoided.



The Dewata Community Centre, built in 2005 thanks to the support of CITYNET members.

Galle City joined CITYNET in 2009 and the Dewata Community Centre was built in 2005 thanks to the support of CITYNET members, especially the city of Yokohama. Today the community centre serves as a gathering place and facilitates maternal and immunisation clinics. It is also used as a gathering place and



MDG Cluster Members

- Barisal
- Bharatpur
- Birganj
- Bogor
- Busan
- Butwal
- Calbayog
- Changwon
- Colombo
- Da Nang
- Dhaka
- Galle
- Gorontalo
- Iloilo
- Ligao
- Naga
- Nanchang
- Nanjing
- Pangkal Pinang
- Pokhara
- San Jose
- Semarang
- Sidoarjo
- Sri Jayawardanapura Kotte
- Solapur
- Sukabumi
- Surabaya
- Tarakan
- Visakhapatnam
- Wuhan
- ACHR
- AILLSG
- AIM
- AMDA
- ASAG
- Bombay First
- Chittagong Development Authority
- CUS
- LCP
- MaRGG
- MSSS
- MuAN
- Office Tape
- PASCAL
- SDS
- SLILG
- TEI
- URDI
- YUVA

a pre school to the tsunami affected people of this area.

Today, Galle has been largely rebuilt and there is little remaining that shows the devastation of 2004. One notable exception is the Pereliya museum located about 30 km from Galle City which houses the memories of those who survived to tell their stories in order to prepare the next generation by giving them the knowledge to take action and protect themselves and their loved ones.



Dr. Wenura K. Singarachchi currently serves as Secondment Staff at the CITYNET Secretariat in Yokohama. He is working with the Sri Lanka National Chapter and projects related to sanitation and climate change.

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Barisal City, Bangladesh

Making Strides Towards the MDGs



Barisal's riverside embankment and tree plantation area creating a green belt in the city.

Barisal City was known as the "Venice of the East" in the days of British colonial rule due to its natural beauty. Now Barisal is one of the biggest river ports in Bangladesh. In 2008 the Mayor of Barisal city stated his vision for Barisal to be a child-friendly, pollution-free, and beautiful city where all citizens can enjoy healthy lives and contribute to realising the MDGs by 2015. To achieve this vision he adopted a number of projects and innovative initiatives

Barisal City Corporation is implementing a five-year work plan (2010-2014) for the Child Friendly City Initiative and the establishment and promotion of children's rights. The plan includes child health and education, protection and development of special needs children, recreation, environment and disaster management, water and sanitation, governance, management and coordination. 100 percent enrollment of all children in Barisal City in formal, non-formal or vocational education system is targeted by 2012. Barisal City Corporation has already started pre-primary learning centres in slum areas including full immunisation coverage of under-one children of slums by 2012.

Footpaths on both sides of main roads, have also been constructed allowing citizens to walk within city limits, leading to healthier lifestyles. The City has halted permissions for the installation of environmentally damaging industries in residential areas. In 2011, city buildings were declared smoke-free zones and a two km embankment on the sides of the river Kirtankhola has been constructed. The planting of trees and shrubbery has created a lush green belt along the river which runs within the City.

Barisal City Corporation has been operating four primary health care centres and one maternity centre under the Urban Primary Health Care Project run by local NGOs through a public-private partnership system. This provides free health services to the urban poor, especially those living in slums. This project has proven very successful for Bangladesh and has provided health care services to 684,349 clients, among them 379,831 poor or underprivileged people at no cost. The under-five-child mortality rate from 1991 improved from 146 to 53 and the maternal mortality rate reduced from 574 to 348, thus showing a significant achievement for the MDGs.

Through community participation, household waste management has improved significantly. By establishing house-to-house solid waste collection authorities have removed more than 120 dustbins from streets. Additionally, the city plans to construct the sanitary landfill under the urban public and environmental health development project (2010 -2015) which will further reduce GHG emissions.

Barisal City joined CITYNET in 2010 and is very interested in city-to-city cooperation on human resource development and sustainable environmental conservation as well as urban health care and poverty reduction of urban slums. City officials welcome opportunities to learn about environmental health and Clean Development Mechanisms (CDM) projects. Barisal is a member of the Climate Change and MDG Clusters and looks forward to working together for green, clean and healthy cities!



Left: A new roadside footpath for citizens.
Right: A healthy mother and child at the Barisal City Maternity Hospital.

For more information please contact:

Dr. Md. Matiur Rahman,
Chief Health Officer,
Barisal City Corporation
drrahmanchobcc@yahoo.com

YOUR VOICES: on the March 11 Disaster in Japan



Sympathy and support from
Danang City, Vietnam

"We share your sadness and sorrow." Suva City, Fiji

"Please extend the strongest sentiments of support from the children of the school at Sanwarian, Azad Kashmir that the City of Yokohama and CITYNET helped to rebuild after our earthquake of 2005."

PIEDAR, Pakistan

"Like CITYNET and Colombo, Sri Lanka and Japan are good friends. So our blessings are with you always."

Colombo, Sri Lanka

"We may be oceans away but we're with you in spirit!."

Naga City, Philippines

"Our heart goes out for those who suffered irreparably. I pray that every one there gets courage to face it."

AMDIA, India

Thank you to all members, partners and friends for the many emails and letters. Your support means a great deal.

Let Your Voices Be Heard!

CityVoices invites members and partners to share best practices, feedback or comments.
info@citynet-ap.org

CITYNET & Partner Resources



- 10 Ways of Achieving the MDGs in Cities in Indonesia
- Local Authorities in the South and 8 Ways to Change the World: MDG Case Studies from around the Asian Region
- Database of Best Practices on Implementation and Achievement of MDGs www.citynet-ap.org (Media Room - Publications)
- Urban Safety Toolkit for Asia-Pacific (UN-HABITAT) www.unhabitat.org/urbansafetytoolkit/toolkit.htm

Upcoming Publications



Annual Report 2011

Highlights of CITYNET programmes and activities for 2011

Climate Change Video by CITYNET and Yokohama

CITYNET is pleased to work with Yokohama City on the production of a new video highlighting the efforts made by Yokohama to adapt to and mitigate the effects of climate change as well as an overview of crucial issues in understanding climate change. Information will be made available at www.citynet-ap.org

CITYNET Cluster Update, Summer 2011

A compilation of reports and CITYNET Cluster activities. Released biannually.

CITYNET Event & Activities

October 11

International Conference on Heritage and Public Transport
Strasbourg, France

October 17-19

CIFAL Kuala Lumpur, (KLRTC) XXII
Solid Waste Management in Asian Cities:
Managing Green House Gas Emissions
Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

October 22-24

World Congress on Mobility for the
Future of Sustainable Cities
Changwon, Republic of Korea

November 26

The 28th CITYNET Executive Committee Meeting
Dhaka, Bangladesh

November 27 - 28

International Seminar on Climate Change
and the Role of Local Government
Dhaka, Bangladesh

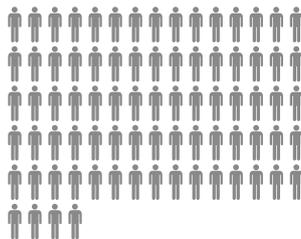
TOHOKU DISASTER IN NUMBERS

CASUALTIES



DEATHS

15,822*



MISSING

3,926*



INJURED

5,942*



♣ = 200 people

DAMAGE

HOUSES

88,873



144,300 DAMAGED BUILDINGS*

ROADS

3,970



BRIDGES

71



*as of 10/12/2011

Next CityVoices:

Spring 2012

Bright Ideas and New Perspectives on
Infrastructure and Urban Planning

Kuala Lumpur Regional Training Centre (KLRTC)



- * learn and share effective methods for sustainable urban planning (past topics: urban transport, solid waste management, climate and disaster resilience)
- * understand challenges and best practices
- * develop a strategic action plan for your city
- * meet top area experts and policy makers
- * initiate strategic city-to-city cooperation partnerships

contact: info@citynet-ap.org / www.citynet-ap.org



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United Nations Institute for Training and Research

CITYNET
THE REGIONAL NETWORK OF LOCAL AUTHORITIES
FOR THE MANAGEMENT OF HUMAN SETTLEMENTS



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ENVIRONMENTAL
SERVICES

CITYNET is an expanding network connecting local governments and urban stakeholders across the Asia-Pacific region. CITYNET promotes capacity building and City-to-City (C2C) cooperation for people-friendly cities.

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