

SUPPORT FOR COMMUNITIES IN VIETNAM TO RESPOND TO DISASTERS

Community-level disaster responders readily available in the event of a disaster or emergency – that's the vision of a new Community Action for Disaster Response course (CADRE), being trialed in Da Nang, Vietnam 16-18 August 2010.

PRESS, BROADCAST AND ONLINE MEDIA ARE INVITED TO ATTEND THIS EVENT ON WEDNESDAY 18 AUGUST 2010, TO VIEW A MULTI-HAZARD DISASTER RESPONSE SCENARIO EXERCISE FOR REPORTING PURPOSES

Vietnam is highly prone to floods and other natural disasters, which impact directly at the provincial and local level. Communities here are often on their own, without outside assistance, immediately after a disaster. The three-day CADRE training aims to skill-up community members in Vietnam, to effectively respond to floods, landslides, typhoons, other disastrous events. During this trial course, the key elements which are vital to community needs in Vietnam will be identified. The purpose is to enhance community level disaster response training from the Vietnam National Red Cross (VNRC) and other NGOs and community-based associations. Support for this training is coming from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and American Red Cross (ARC). Participants in CADRE learn the basics of medical first response, and collapsed structure search and rescue, through practical exercises and disaster simulations. By the end of the course, they are able to assess hazards, manage mass casualties, rescue people trapped under collapsed buildings, and conduct water rescue for victims of flooding.

The CADRE course in Vietnam received strong support from senior officials at the opening ceremony on Monday, 16 August at the Bien Dong Resort, Tho Quang Ward, Son Tra District, Da Nang.

Mr. Doan Van Thai, Vice President & Secretary, Vietnam National Red Cross (VNRC) said: "CADRE is a special course, which will enhance the disaster response work of VNRC. This is also an opportunity to share the skills and knowledge of VNRC with our international supporters. We come here for the benefit of all our communities, to share these vital skills across Vietnam."

Mr. Phan Nhu Ngia, Chairman Da Nang Red Cross said: "We are very happy to welcome CADRE here in Vietnam, to enhance community response capacity in this extremely disaster-prone area of Vietnam. We are working hard with many community groups to enhance disaster response. This is appreciated by local people and local government."

Mr. Brian Heidel, Regional Advisor, USAID Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA) said: "USAID-OFDA thanks VNRC and ADPC for coordinating this important community based training. This partnership brings together people in localities, and in regional disaster management, to take on the challenges of disasters here. The response to Hurricane Ketsana showed great advances in disaster preparedness and management in Vietnam. We are now committed to building this experience."

Ms. Rebecca Scheurer, Senior Regional Advisor, ARC said: "VNRC has been working for many years to make communities safer and ARC is a strong supporter of these activities within the Red Cross Movement. This is an opportunity to enhance their capacity to develop first responders, working to save lives when disasters occur."

Dr. Marilyn Go, Team Leader, Public Health in Emergency Team, ADPC said: "ADPC is proud to work in partnership with ARC, USAID and VNRC, with the ultimate goal that every community can effectively respond to disasters. Immediately after a disaster, communities are often on their own – this is an opportunity to prepare to respond!"

Mr. Loy Rego, Chief of Party, PEER and Director ADPC said: "We work in partnership with Governments in Asia and ten Red Cross National Societies, enhancing capacity to prepare for disasters. This is a long-term US-Asia collaboration, with the strong support of the American people and the American Government. We wish all participants success in their preparedness efforts."

Twenty-four participants are joining the CADRE Pilot Course, from VNRC in Quang Nam, Hai Phong, Phi Tho, Quang Ngai, Phu Yen, Hue, Quang Ninh, Quang Binh, Thanh Hoa, Thai Binh, Quang Tu, Nam Dinh, and Nghe An. Also present are representatives from the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, the German Red Cross, and American Red Cross (ARC), to support the process of building community level capacity. Course instructors are from the Philippine Bureau of Fire Protection and the Philippine Red Cross, with many years of experience in Medical First Response, Community Search and Rescue and Disaster Management. Training is coordinated by the Asian Disaster Preparedness Center (ADPC), as part of the Program for Enhancement of Emergency Response (PEER) a regional training program initiated in 1998 by the U.S. Agency for International Development's, Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance (USAID/OFDA) strengthening disaster response capacities in nine countries in Asia.

Notes to Editors

- Please check the PEER Website for regularly updated activities, photographs and reports on CADRE Vietnam. For more information and photographs, or to come to CADRE in Da Nang and view disaster simulations for reporting purposes, please contact: Esther Lake, ADPC Communication and Information Coordinator e-mail: esther@adpc.net www.adpc.net/peer
- ADPC: Established in 1986 at the initiatives of three UN agencies – WMO, UNDP and UNOCHA, ADPC supports the advancement of safer communities and sustainable development, through implementing programs and projects that reduce the impact of disasters upon countries and communities in Asia and the Pacific. With more than 100 staffs from 20 different countries, ADPC's activities cover four thematic areas: Climate Risk Management (CRM), Disaster Management System (DMS), Public Health in Emergencies (PHE), and Urban Disaster Risk Management (UDRM). ADPC also provides 20 regional training courses.