

10 December 2008

Natural Hazard Update:

7 Dec: Thousands more displaced as rains continue in eastern Philippines

Incessant rains caused heavy flooding, hitting three towns on Samar Island in the eastern Philippines that have displaced thousands of families and damaged crops and properties worth millions of pesos, authorities told the Inquirer. The mayors of the three affected towns, Jipapad and Oras in Eastern Samar and Las Navas in Northern Samar, have all asked for assistance from their national governments. Oras Mayor Neil Alvarez told the Inquirer during a phone interview on Monday (December 8) that their calamity fund had already been depleted, adding that in Oras alone, 30 barangay were flooded, displacing 3,421 families or more than 20,500 people. The families affected by the floods have been relocated to higher ground with the assistance of the 801st Infantry Brigade, the Inquirer stated.

<http://newsinfo.inquirer.net/breakingnews/regions/view/20081208-176795/Thousands-displaced-in-Samar-floods>

<http://newsinfo.inquirer.net/breakingnews/regions/view/20081208-176842/2-fishermen-missing-in-Catanduanes>

<http://newsinfo.inquirer.net/breakingnews/regions/view/20081208-176758/Low-pressure-areas-to-bring-rains>

6 Dec: Floods in Indonesia's West Java leave one dead, 63,000 affected

At least one person has been killed and thousands of houses inundated by floods triggered by heavy seasonal rains in Indonesia's West Java province, local media. According to the Jakarta Post, the Citarum River, which runs through the province, has burst its banks, forcing thousands to seek safety on higher ground. The floods have mainly affected Bandung regency in West Java and the three worst-hit districts, Dayeuhkolot, Baleendah and Rancaekek, according to the Jakarta Post. In Dayeuhkolot, more than 3,800 houses have been inundated, affecting 22,800 people. In Baleendah, the floods have damaged 3,278 houses and affected 19,775 people. Seasonal rains trigger landslides and flash floods annually in Indonesia. Earlier this month, the UN said that over population, people inhabiting vulnerable areas, deforestation and urbanization have exacerbated the situation for many during the country's rainy season. Indonesia's rainy season typically runs from November to March and peaks from December to February. <http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/rwb.nsf/db900SID/MUMA-7M39YH?OpenDocument&rc=3&cc=idn>

6 Dec: Four killed after rains trigger landslide in Malaysia's capital

After enduring heavy days of rains in the area, a landslide struck a suburb near the capital, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, killing four people, flattening 14 houses, forcing thousands out of their homes and cutting electricity supplies, Reuters reported. The incident comes just over a week after two sleeping sisters were killed by a mudslide nearby and after two other slides in the capital. On Sunday, shifting earth had earlier hindered the search and rescue effort, which the police told Reuters, had involved a thousand emergency personnel on the 10 acre site. Additionally, the state electricity company, Tenaga Nasional said in a statement that progress on restoring power to 1,500 houses had also been slowed due to the rain and earth movements.

<http://www.alertnet.org/thenews/newsdesk/L7464119.htm>
<http://in.reuters.com/article/worldNews/idINIndia-36911120081207>
http://news.yahoo.com/s/afp/20081207/wl_asia_afp/malaysialandslide
<http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/rwb.nsf/db900sid/MYAI-7M4646?OpenDocument&RSS20&RSS20=FS>

4 Dec: Search for Papua New Guinea (PNG) landslide survivors called off, 10 killed

Extreme rainfall triggered a landslide in the vicinity of the Kainantu gold mine site in Eastern Highlands province of Papua New Guinea (PNG), killing five mine exploration workers in their rooms and five local villagers that were traveling through the area, Xinhua news agency reported. Reuters noted that three children were among the dead and all had been recovered from the site, an Australian government official said. On Saturday (December 6), more than two days after the incident, an Australian rescue team flew to PNG in hopes of finding as many as 40 people missing, Reuters reported. However, Alastair Wilson, spokesman for Emergency Management Australia said, "we still don't know how many are buried. They think that the village itself had about that many people," referring to the given figure of 40 missing. The following day (Monday, December 8) the search for potential survivors was called off as the Australian search and rescue team found no signs of life after conducting a comprehensive search of the 30 by 50 meter site. According to Xinhua, PNG's Highlands are prone to landslides due to the area's often heavy rains and mountainous terrain.

<http://www.darithdeng.com/?p=8308>
<http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/rwb.nsf/db900sid/MUMA-7M37HR?OpenDocument>
<http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2008/12/06/2439578.htm>
<http://www.alertnet.org/thenews/newsdesk/B529364.htm>
<http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2008/12/08/2440332.htm>

5 Dec: Cyclone-hit S.Asia mops up, new storm on way

Aid agencies are picking up the pieces in the wake of Cyclone Nisha, which has reportedly displaced more than 1 million people in southern India and Sri Lanka - and are bracing themselves for a second round of storms heading towards the region. At the end of last month, while most of the media's attention was on the Mumbai bombings, the cyclone swept over the coastal areas of the Indian state of Tamil Nadu, submerging homes, fields and disrupting power supplies.

http://members.alertnet.org/db/an_art/40453/2008/11/5-153731-1.htm

5 Dec: Cyclone Seven heads towards northern tip of Sri Lanka

Tropical Cyclone 07B (Seven) is a fairly weak tropical cyclone in the western Bay of Bengal, which is heading more or less westward toward the area between Sri Lanka and southern India, the Hawaii-based Pacific Disaster Center (PDC). The latest Joint Typhoon Warning Center (JTWC) warning #8 shows this gradually strengthening tropical depression, soon to briefly attain tropical storm status. The sustained winds associated with this system were 30 knots (35 mph), with gusts to near 40 knots (46 mph). 07B is moving near westward (280 degrees), at 11 knots (13 mph). On its present track, this cyclone will brush by the northern tip of Sri Lanka, just to the north of the northernmost point, called Point Pedro, the PDC reported. It will proceed toward the southeast coast of southern India, along the coast to the south of Chennai. This would have it making landfall, after crossing the Palk Strait, in the Palk Bay near Arantangi. This entire area will find strong and gusty winds, especially where the airflow is accelerated, due to any physical terrain features, and any stronger winds associated with thunderstorms, according to the PDC. <http://metocph.nmci.navy.mil/jtwc/warnings/io0708.gif>

2 Dec: UN says 370,000 affected by flooding in Sri Lanka

Floods triggered by monsoon rains in Sri Lanka's north have left more than 71,00 people displaced and affected a total of some 370,000 people. The hardest hit area is the northern Jaffna peninsula, with some 62,000 displaced and 5,900 houses damaged. On Thursday (November 27), officials had reported two soldiers killed and more than 230,000 displaced in the north due to the floods and a cyclone. According to the BBC, Sri Lanka's meteorology department has said that the rains were the worst since 1918.

http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south_asia/7759602.stm

<http://asia.news.yahoo.com/081202/afp/081202131226asiapacificnews.html>

Events:

Disaster Management 2009: Call for Papers

23 - 25 September 2009

New Forest, UK

Organised By: Wessex Institute of Technology, UK & University of Toronto, Canada

Sponsored By: WIT Transactions on the Built Environment

Themes covered are:

Global risks and health, Chemical emergencies, Extreme weather events, Food and water safety, Natural disasters, Pandemics and biological threats, Radiation emergencies, Terrorism, Offshore disasters, Remote areas response, Emergency preparedness and planning, Risk mitigation, Surveillance and early warning systems, Disaster epidemiology and assessment, Disaster mental health, Business continuity, Human health economics, Recent incidents and outbreaks, Public health preparedness

<http://www.wessex.ac.uk/disman2009rem2.html>

Climate Change now the main driver of Natural Disasters:

Ministers from more than 40 Asia-Pacific countries gathered in Kuala Lumpur from 2-4 Dec 2008 at the Asian Ministerial Conference (AMC) in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia seeking ways to reduce the social and financial impact of natural disasters in the region - many of them linked to the rising global temperature. The ministers are developing regional cooperation systems for disaster preparedness and early warning systems.

The Asia-Pacific ministers are meeting as half-way across the world in Poznan, Poland some 11,000 participants in the annual UN climate conference are negotiating an agreement to limit greenhouse gas emissions that will kick in when the current Kyoto Protocol expires in 2012. Most natural disasters today are linked to climate change, says John Holmes, UN emergency relief coordinator and head of the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA).

OCHA today launched a campaign to raise awareness of the humanitarian implications of climate change, calling for improved disaster preparedness and response measures in countries that suffer most from extreme weather events. <http://www.ens-newswire.com/ens/dec2008/2008-12-02-01.asp>

News:

School Disaster Safety Programme in Sri Lanka: Initiation for Creating Culture of Safety

The Disaster Management Centre, Sri Lanka intends to implement School Disaster Safety Programmes at identified disaster prone schools at each district in Sri Lanka, according to the newly formulated 'National Guidelines' prepared by Ministry of Education, National Institute of Education and Disaster Management Centre with the assistance of GTZ. Building capacity for planning and implementation of School Disaster

Safety Programmes in line with National Guidelines was the core objective of the workshop. Accordingly, District Coordinators were expected to organize awareness workshops for identified schools.

Preparing "School Disaster Safety Plans", forming sub committees for different activities such as creating awareness, hazard assessment, First Aid, Early Warning, conducting evacuation mock drills, search & rescue are some of the activities planned for the school programmes in future. Regular mock drills were to be conducted in schools to prepare for emergencies. In addition, the schools on 26th, despite pouring rain, Bedroc, Nagapattinam, presented their study ""Strengthening Local Leadership for Disaster Management and Risk Reduction" to a select audience of people from the government, NGO sector and those concerned with disaster management. <http://www.dmc.gov.lk/>

Warning system is about people

Can scientists create an Early Warning System (EWS) for the Tsunami Early Warning System (TEWS)? Can an early warning system have an early warning system of its own, alerting the beneficiaries of such things as its failures, effectiveness, efficiency and if there is an absence of system sustainability? Can scientists and policymakers create a self-reflective and robust EWS which guarantees accuracy, credibility, reliability, timeliness and transformability of information, resulting in a better response? These are important questions for everyone who has an interest in a disaster risk-reduction policy -- but especially in Indonesia. <http://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2008/11/27/warning-system-about-people.html>

Tsunami siren raises no alarm

PADANG, W. Sumatra: The Tsunami Early Warning System (TEWS) siren that was tested in Padang, West Sumatra, on Wednesday failed to succeed in warning people because of its difficulty in being heard over the sounds of the city. Many people around the Haji Agussalim sports hall, where the siren was installed, said they did not hear the alert as they were engaged in their own activities. A senior official from the West Sumatra administration, Ade Edward, said the TEWS test was conducted jointly by four provinces across the country. <http://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2008/11/27/tsunami-siren-raises-no-alarm.html>

Typhoon Nisha: Aid agency ACT says 800,000 people have been affected by Typhoon Nisha in India's Tamil Nadu state. The cyclonic storm hit south India and Sri Lanka last week, bringing flooding and suffering to towns and villages in the coastal areas. <http://members.alertnet.org/thenews/fromthefield/222031/122829549032.htm>

Climate Change: The United Nations and aid groups are pushing for an urgent increase in international funding to help the world's poorest countries cope with climate change. Aid experts say tens of billions of dollars are needed to prepare for more extreme weather and other effects of global warming like rising seas. A group of 43 small island states is calling for tougher goals for fighting global warming than those being considered at U.N. climate talks, saying that rising seas could wipe them off the map. Meanwhile, aid agency Oxfam says developed countries could raise more than 50 billion dollars a year to help poor countries adapt to climate change if they auctioned off emissions rights that will be allocated under a new global pact after 2012. http://members.alertnet.org/db/an_art/20316/2008/11/2-201927-1.htm, <http://members.alertnet.org/thenews/newsdesk/LT73416.htm>

Aid agencies say overwhelmed by rising climate disasters

The humanitarian community is overwhelmed by rising weather-related disasters and tens of billions of dollars are needed each year to reduce the risks from global warming, aid officials at U.N. climate change talks said on Wednesday. http://members.alertnet.org/db/an_art/20316/2008/11/3-140700-1.htm

What are the expectations in Poznan? A guide to the ongoing negotiations on climate change

The climate change talks in Poznan, under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), is the last chance for major progress before the COP 15 in Copenhagen in 2009, where a new global climate change agreement to succeed the Kyoto Protocol in 2012 will be finalised. The UN hopes that the 11 day conference will provide a platform to move from discussion to negotiation on key issues for 2009. While there is much work to be done in Poznan, issues focusing on financial resources, scale of countries commitments and need for a change in the institutional framework will be some of the main areas of dialogue and negotiations. The UNDP document 'The Bali action plan: key issues in the climate negotiations' provides a concise overview of these issues.

<http://www.eldis.org/go/topics/resource-guides/environment/climate-change&em=261108&sub=wnew>

Afghanistan: Drought, poverty lead children to abandon school

Eight-year-old Ahmad Shafi and his younger brother spend many hours a day fetching drinking water for their family in the drought-stricken Chemtal District of Balkh Province, northern Afghanistan. They have been unable to attend school as a result. "We start around eight in the morning and finish by midday," Ahmad told IRIN, adding that their job was "difficult" and "long". Ahmad's uncle, Abdul Samad - with whom his family has been living since his father died two years ago - sells vegetables at a local bazaar, and sometimes helps Ahmad and his brother when more than the usual volume of water is needed. <http://members.alertnet.org/thenews/newsdesk/IRIN/06236bdc4223cdefaf74a2ea6dbb4c6b.htm>

Information Resources:

Document: Child voices: children of Nepal speak out on climate change adaptation, How does climate change affect children in Nepal?

Authors: D. Gautam; K. Oswald

Publisher: Children in a Changing Climate, 2008

In 2008 Children in a Changing Climate's research programme worked with ActionAid Nepal, and its partner organisations, to help poor children in the plains, hills and urban areas of Nepal make short films about how climate change is being experienced by their communities. Making these films allowed the children to explore how the changing climate is impacting them and their families, how they are coping and what they need in order to adapt to a changing climate. This report is based on the findings of the participatory video project and additional research with children in the project communities.

<http://www.eldis.org/go/topics/resource-guides/environment/climate-change&id=41182&type=Document>

Document: Many strong voices: outline for an assessment project design

Climate change adaptation in small island developing states

Authors: ; UNEP/GRID-Arendal

Publisher: Center for International Climate and Environmental Research, Oslo , 2008

This document defines, guides, and supports the development and implementation of a full assessment of vulnerability and adaptation to climate change in Small Island Developing States (SIDS), under the Many Strong Voices (MSV) programme. A summary of impacts of climate change on SIDS is provided along with a literature review and analysis of vulnerability and adaptation to climate change in SIDS, supplemented by consultations with SIDS partners, to indicate data availability and quality along with how to fill in data gaps. The authors provide an initial structure for the assessment is with recommendations for implementing a SIDS assessment of climate change vulnerability and adaptation.

<http://www.eldis.org/go/topics/resource-guides/environment/climate-change&id=40782&type=Document>

Publication: Tiding over Tsunami – Part II. Government of Tamil Nadu, October 2008.

In December 2005, the TN government brought out a summary report of the impact of the tsunami and the relief and rehab measures that it had undertaken subsequently. This new publication is to capture the sector-wise changes that have been brought about by the overarching Tsunami Rehabilitation Programme. The volume discusses what has been happening in the four major sectors – Shelter & Infrastructure; Health, welfare and social safety; Livelihoods, and Disaster Risk Management. Take shelter for example. The focus has been to ensure multi-hazard resistant houses. www.tn.gov.in/tsunami

A practical guide to restoring agriculture after a Tsunami, 2008

This guide presents information that would be useful in responding to a tsunami event or a major storm surge that inundates coastal areas with seawater. This guide is a compilation of lessons learned by Australian-Indonesian projects funded by the Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR) in Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam (Aceh) between 2005 and 2008. The ACIAR projects focused on restoring soils on agricultural land inundated by the December 2004 tsunami so that landholders could once again grow food. Consultations during development of the ACIAR projects highlighted the need to build the technical capacities of existing government agricultural services and within NGO agricultural projects. The consultation also found a need for soil and crop management strategies that at least restored productivity to pre-tsunami levels, and a communication strategy to promote regular exchange of information between government and non-government sectors about agricultural restoration.

http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/___data/assets/pdf_file/0005/255506/A-timeframe-for-agricultural-recovery_chapter1.pdf

World Development Report 2009: Reshaping economic geography

This report is the flagship publication by the World Bank. The overview says: Economic growth will be unbalanced, but development still can be inclusive—that is the message of this year's World Development Report. As economies grow from low to high income, production becomes more concentrated spatially. Some places—cities, coastal areas, and connected countries—are favored by producers. As countries develop, the most successful ones also institute policies that make living standards of people more uniform across space. The way to get both the immediate benefits of the concentration of production and the long-term benefits of a convergence in living standards is economic integration. <http://go.worldbank.org/O4MD5RGAF0>

25 Nov: World Bank lead environmental economist highlights South Asia's vulnerability to Climate Change

Speaking ahead of the UN Climate Change Conference in Poznan, Poland, Richard Damania, World Bank Lead Environmental Economist for the South Asia Region, described the climate-related challenges in South Asia as daunting. Noting population growth and poverty levels will increase resource demands on an already stressed natural resource base, he underscored that “even small climate shocks can cause irreversible losses and tip a large number of people into destitution.” He stressed the need to make Asian megacities climate resilient, highlighting that “without a substantial investment in basic amenities and infrastructure in these large cities, climate change will exacerbate existing vulnerabilities.”

<http://www.climate-l.org/2008/11/world-bank-lead.html>

A satellite image derived map of floods in Jaffna peninsula, Sri Lanka. The map is produced in the context of the International Charter Space and Major Disasters.

http://www.unosat.org/asp/prod_free.asp?id=32

Mine and ERW Risk Education - A Project Management Guide (November 2008) *The Mine and ERW Risk Education: A Project Management Guide* is intended to give managers an easy-to-use tool to support their efforts – from the design and planning of a project to its conclusion. The Guide reflects and supports an evolution in mine risk education over the last decade from awareness-raising and dissemination of

printed materials with basic safety messages towards a more constructive engagement with affected communities. This emphasizes problem-solving and risk reduction. This publication updates the *Guide to Improving Communication in Mine Risk Education Programmes*, published in 2005, and builds on GICHD's work in supporting good practice in MRE, especially through the use of effective communication and community liaison.

[http://www.gichd.org/gichd-publications/mine-and-erw-risk-education/?utm_medium=email&utm_source=Email+Marketing+Software&utm_content=37839337&utm_campaign=Newsletter+%7c+GICHD+Close-up+%7c+December+2008+\(yklus\)&utm_term=more](http://www.gichd.org/gichd-publications/mine-and-erw-risk-education/?utm_medium=email&utm_source=Email+Marketing+Software&utm_content=37839337&utm_campaign=Newsletter+%7c+GICHD+Close-up+%7c+December+2008+(yklus)&utm_term=more)

Network: The **Linking Climate Adaptation (LCA) Network** is a community of over 900 practitioners, stakeholders, researchers and policy-makers exchanging information on climate adaptation research and practice around the globe. Membership of the Network is free. To join simply send this email. Email: lyris@lyris.ids.ac.uk with the message: Subscribe LCA <http://community.eldis.org/.599266eb/>

Video: Brazil reels from flood damage

<http://members.alertnet.org/thenews/newsdesk/122786104791.htm>

Video: Fatal flooding in Colombia

<http://members.alertnet.org/thenews/newsdesk/122786114458.htm>

For archived DRM updates:

ADPC Website:

<http://www.adpc.net/v2007/IKM/EVENTS%20AND%20NEWS/DISASTER/2008/DISASTER-NEWS-2008.asp>

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