Public Awareness as a Cornerstone for Disaster Risk Reduction

Yerevan – Armenia

3-4 December 2013

The foundations of our disaster and crisis management role

- **189** National Societies

- More than **13** million active volunteers who work within communities in the areas of disaster response and recovery, disaster preparedness and risk reduction.

- All action is guided by the fundamental principles of independence and neutrality meeting the needs of the most vulnerable.

International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

Our approach to disaster and crisis management

Our disaster management often starts long **before** the onset of a disaster.

Volunteers and staff support their communities to identify prevalent hazards and vulnerabilities as well as local capacities and coping mechanisms.

The more prepared a community is, the more resilient it will be in the event of a disaster.

Our approach to disaster and crisis management

- As community-based responders, the volunteers and staff are often first on the scene of a disaster.

- National Societies as auxiliary to the government play a crucial role in linking up the community action with Government preparedness and response.

- Our integrated approach to disaster management means that, we aim to tailor our assistance to meet the varying needs of individuals and communities in a manner, which is holistic and complementary to the efforts of the local authorities, international agencies and local civil society organizations.

Our approach to disaster and crisis management

Thanks to our network of NSs and our global response system we are able to **mobilize resources and expertise** from around the world to complement local response when required.

Comparing two landmark disasters: Different types of media and communication media were used in both scenarios

The 1988 Spitak earthquake and the Haiti earthquake of 2010 are two of the worst in recent history.

You Tube

Disasters ↙↙↘↘ Communication

An era of Communication Revolution

Hello

Haiti
Communications
Tools

Spitak
Communications
Tools
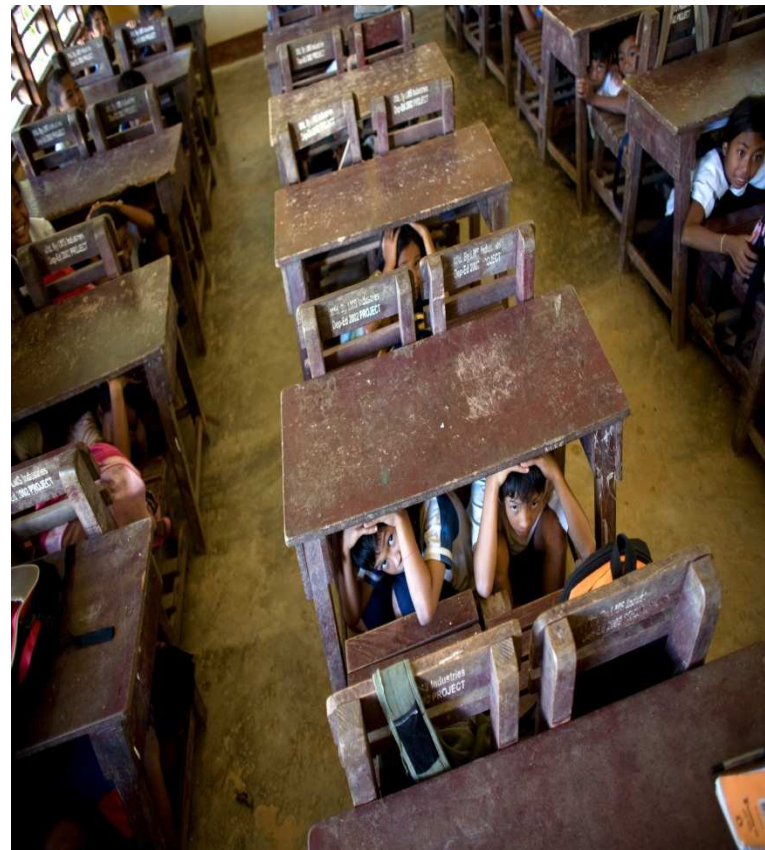
Public awareness and education for disaster risk reduction

- Long tradition of educating communities on disaster risks, increasing safety and resilience through campaigns, informal education, participatory learning and formal school-based interventions.

- Address 3 levels:

1. Assess and plan
2. Mitigate risks
3. Prepare to respond

International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

Public awareness and education for disaster risk reduction

Public awareness and public education for disaster risk reduction: a guide

Public awareness and public education for disaster risk reduction: key messages

Community early warning systems

- **Scientific advances** revolutionized forecasting and communication technology used for warnings.
How used ???
- IFRC advocates for **people centred approach** to get information out to vulnerable communities.
- **Capacity building for community disaster response** must precede EWS so communities can act on warnings.
- Community early warning systems **complement government** whose mandate it is to protect lives and livelihoods.

Community early warning systems: guiding principles

www.ifrc.org
Saving lives, changing minds.

International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

Beneficiary Communications (BenComms)

- People need information as much as water, food, medicine and shelter

- Information saves lives, livelihood and resources

- Possibilities to communicate with beneficiaries more effectively and efficiently than before

Beneficiary Communications (BenComms)

Provides avenue for more systematic two way communication:

- Giving people a voice and empowering them to participate in their own recovery
- Enhance accountability
- Information on where the needs are

Two way communication is a challenge:

- RC Movement should be ready to respond and to react to criticism
- Make sure you reach the most vulnerable (e.g. use mobile phones)

International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

The future

We have learned from major disasters. At the same time we must continue to improve and innovate to make disaster preparedness, mitigation, response and recovery more effective and accountable.

http://worlddisastersreport.org/en/

2013

World Disasters Report
Focus on technology and the future of humanitarian action

www.ifrc.org
Saving lives, changing minds.

International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PJwWJ2QzGec