



Workshop on Disaster Risk Reduction in SAARC Region

26 - 27 April 2018, Gujarat, India

Background

SAARC covering eight nations (Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka) is one of the most disaster prone regions of the world. Most of the natural disasters in South Asia are rooted in the geo-physical and hydro-climatic conditions of the sub-continent that connect several countries of the region. Countries in the region share similar risks and challenges as well as the same threats inherent to climate change.

Realizing the importance and need for the timely provision of relief support in humanitarian emergencies, South Asia Association of Regional Cooperation (SAARC) Disaster Management Centre (SDMC-IU) has been re-established in November 2016 at GIDM Campus, Gujarat, India for expanded role by merging four erstwhile SAARC Centres viz. (1) SAARC Disaster Management Centre (SDMC – New Delhi, India); (2) SAARC Meteorological Research Centre (SMRC – Dhaka, Bangladesh); (3) SAARC Forestry Centre (SFC – Thimphu, Bhutan); (4) SAARC Coastal Zone Management Centre (SCZMC – Male, Maldives) with the mandate to support Member States in their Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) initiatives through application of Science & Technology, knowledge from multiple disciplines, exchange of best practices, capacity development, collaborative research and networking in line with the Global Priorities / Goals and other relevant frameworks adopted by Member States.

Since, its inauguration at new campus at GIDM, Gandhinagar on 24th May 2017, SDMC (IU) has organised seven capacity building programs as scheduled during the Month of May 2017 to January 2018. In addition, SDMC (IU) has also celebrated 33rd SAARC Charter Day on 8th December, 2017 by organizing expert Panel Discussion.

Since the adoption of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction in 2015, countries and regions around the world are undertaking preparatory steps for its implementation. The Asian Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (AMCDRR) held in New Delhi, India in November 2016, brought together more than 50 countries and adopted the Asia Regional Plan which sets biennial milestones at the regional level for the implementation of the Sendai Framework.

It is very important to share and understand the activities/ best practices being undertaken in the Member States in Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR). It is desirable to assess the needs of the South Asia region as a whole and to chalk out the strategy for monitoring process of the

implementation of SFDRR in the SAARC Member States, SDMC (IU) has decided to organise a workshop during 26 – 27 April 2018 in Gujarat, India. It is a step towards a collective regional approach to support Member States in their efforts to build community resilience and reduce disaster risk and impacts. SDMC(IU) will further facilitate implementation of the Sendai Framework in the SAARC Member States through the identification of regional initiatives that contribute to one or more of the Sendai Actions. This approach will help Member States to collectively build upon the Guiding Principles established in the Sendai Framework, in particular those aimed at fostering a whole-of-society approach, in line with the groups and stakeholders identified in the Sendai Framework and coherence across the DRR, Climate Change and Sustainable Development Frameworks, as well as the Regional Actions listed in the “Asia Regional Plan for Implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030”.

Considering the increasing scale and frequency of natural disasters in the SAARC Region, “SAARC Agreement on Rapid Response to Natural Disasters” has been signed with an aim to provide effective regional mechanism for rapid response to disasters, to achieve substantial reduction of losses in lives and in social, economic and environment assets of the Member States and to jointly respond to disaster-emergencies through concerted national efforts and intensified regional cooperation. There is a need of brainstorming the strategy for development of Regional Response Mechanism and Protocols regarding the same. This workshop is also aimed to provide a platform for deliberation on other related programs of the erstwhile SAARC centers like STORM Project of SMRC, etc. for effective management of natural disasters at a regional level.

Objectives of the Workshop

- To take stock of DRR Initiatives taken up by the Member States and share the best practices amongst each other;
- Understand the needs of the Member States to be addressed in the coming years by the SDMC (IU);
- Develop some kind of monitoring mechanism for implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction in the Member States;