

CONSULTATION

EMERGING DRRR NEEDED IN CHANGING CONTEXT OF MYANMAR

2nd April 2012, Central Hotel, Yangon

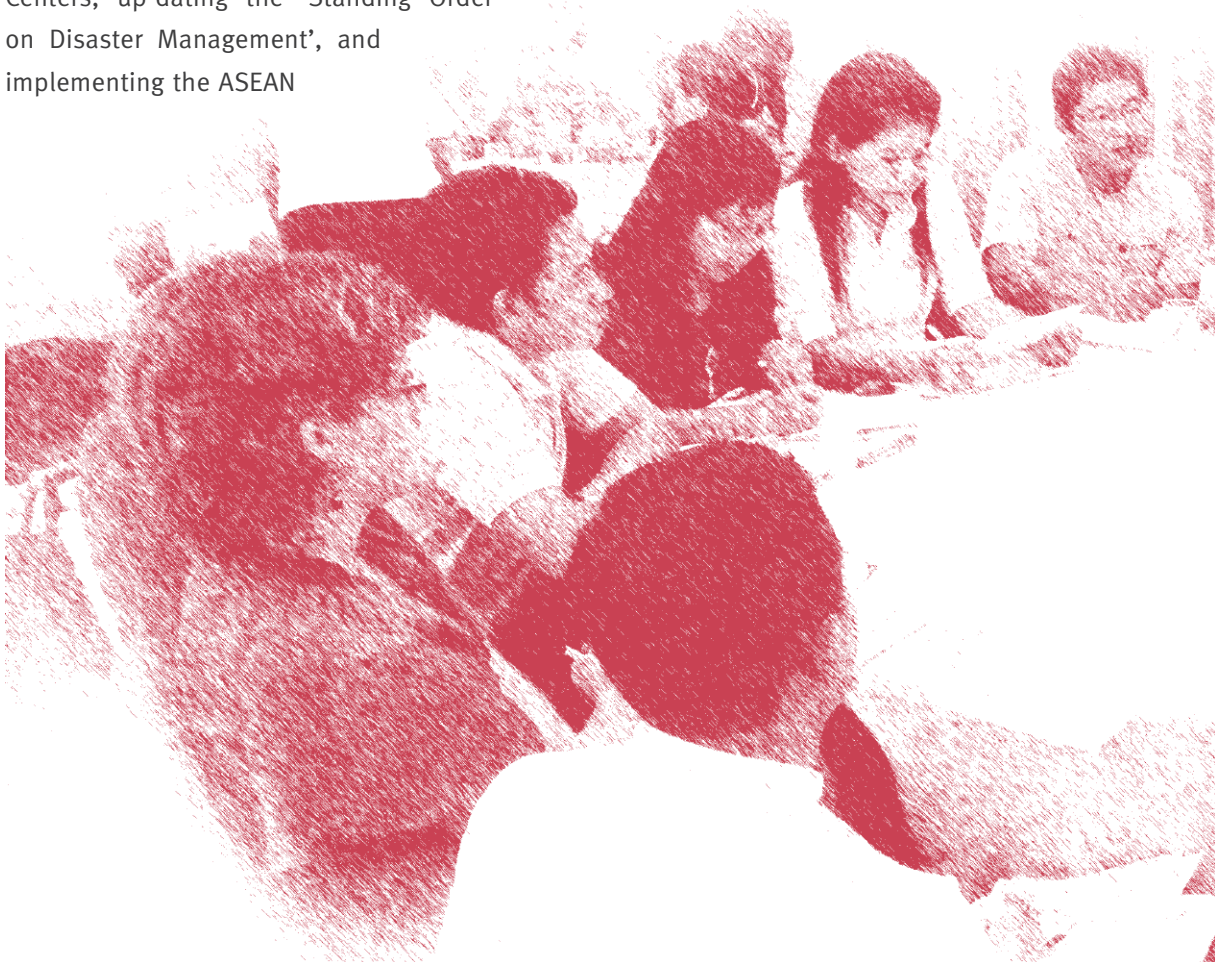
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Introduction

For several years, Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) initiatives have been undertaken in Myanmar and they got momentum in the aftermath of the 2008 Cyclone Nargis. UN Agencies, the Red Cross, NGOs and CBOs have been implementing and supporting DRR interventions in Myanmar which often complement the effort of the government at national, regional and local levels. Some of the key DRR interventions in the last couple of years include drafting the Myanmar Action Plan on Disaster Risk Reduction (MAPDRR), the ‘Standing Order on Disaster Management’ and the Multi-hazard risk assessment of Rakhine State and Delta, developing the Guideline for Township Disaster Management Plan, the DRR Working Group Information Portal, the Manuals on Community level DRR, the Post-Nargis Response and Preparedness Plan (PONREPP), and the Civil Society Forums on DRR, and setting up a DRR Working Group.

Currently, a number of DRR policies and strategic decisions are underway which will change the context of intervention in the country. Some of the priorities include drafting the first Disaster Management Law of Myanmar, implementing the MAPDRR, revising the Disaster Management Course for Governmental authorities, implementing the Guideline for Township Disaster Management Plan, mainstreaming DRR into development plan, finding consensus on a minimum standard for CBDRM plans, setting-up Disaster Management Training Centers, up-dating the ‘Standing Order on Disaster Management’, and implementing the ASEAN



Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response (AADMER) and the Standby Arrangements and Standard Operating Procedure (SASOP). Moreover, Myanmar is under a transition and it is most likely that a number of investments on different sectors will be done in the coming years, which will have a direct impact on DRR as un-intentionally unplanned development can create risk. Finally, Climate

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The changing context of Myanmar may reshape the risk as well as Disaster Risk Reduction priorities. Thus, a realignment of the DRR strategy and interventions by Governmental Bodies, UN Agencies, the Red Cross, NGOs and CBOs requires better understanding and response to the future needs of Myanmar. Recognizing that it

is the critical time to have a wider consultation on DRR in this changing context in Myanmar, the Myanmar Red Cross Society (MRCS), the French Red Cross (FRC), Asian Disaster Preparedness Center (ADPC) and United Nation Development Programme (UNDP) organized a consultation on ‘Emerging DRR needs in changing context of Myanmar’. The forum was part of the Civil Society Forums on Disaster Risk Reduction started in 2009. The Consultation was organized at Central Hotel in

Yangon on 2nd April 2012. The participants were approximately 50 from Government Departments, UN Agencies, the Red Cross, International and Local NGOs.



objectives of the Consultation

The overall objective of the Consultation was to discuss the future DRR needs in Myanmar at national and local (field) levels in the changing context of Myanmar. It aimed to identify emerging issues, which needs to be further deliberated, and suitable actions to be identified to contribute towards a resilient development in Myanmar.



opening session

The Consultation was opened with a speech delivered by U Thein Htay Aung, Head of Yangon Region Office of Relief and Resettlement Department, Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief & Resettlement.

In his opening speech, U Thein Htay Aung appreciated the collaborative efforts of different agencies in DRR intervention in Myanmar since the early recovery phase of Cyclone Nargis. He also highlighted the impact of more frequent and intense disasters during the recent years and emphasized the importance of this Consultation. He thanked the organizers for facilitating it at the right time to review the existing DRR intervention, opportunities and challenges. He encouraged the participants to share their views actively to make the Consultation fruitful and productive.



Forum Session

The Forum Session was composed of three presentations: DRR interventions and implications for the future at Regional (global) level, at National level and at Field level.

Mr. Sudhir Kumar, Senior Project Manager from ADPC, presented the “Emerging DRR Needs in Changing Context of Myanmar: Global and Regional Context” under 4 components: (i) Changing DRR landscape in ASEAN region and linkages with Myanmar, (ii) Post-2015 Framework for DRR at Global level, (iii) Increased economic activity vis-à-vis disaster risks, and (iv) Climate Change: re-configuring disaster risks. In his presentation, he highlighted that, with ratification and endorsement of AADMER in 2009, DRR development has been taken place at regional level with the preparation of SASOP (SOP for Regional Standby Arrangements and Coordination of Joint Disaster Relief and Emergency Response Operations), AADMER Work-plan (2010-2015), and the establishment of the ASEAN Humanitarian Assistance (AHA) Center. Upon these changes, Myanmar government would need to increase regional cooperation on Disaster Risk Management especially on disaster response among ASEAN members to fulfill its commitments and support for operationalization of AADMER, including policy and administrative procedures to be realigned, institutional strengthening, capacity building of officials and others. At global level, Post HFA discussions are ongoing. Future DRR interventions in Myanmar need to be aligned with the trends of Post HFA directions. Following the changes in economic policies in Myanmar, there will be new investments, economic aids and Mega-projects (including infrastructure projects). Thus, Myanmar government should carefully formulate DRR inclusive development planning and implementation in all sectors. Finally, Mr. Sudhir Kumar highlighted the global phenomenon of climate change, which is re-configuring the disaster risks profile of Myanmar. In such context, future DRR interventions in Myanmar should incorporate consideration on climate change impacts.



The second presentation of the Forum Session was on the “National level DRR interventions and implications for the future”. Lat Lat Aye, Programme Analyst from UNDP, started with the current DRR interventions at national level covering the reconstitution of the National Level Disaster Management Agency, the dissemination of the Standing Order and Contingency Plans, the drafting of the Disaster Management Law, the Myanmar Action Plan on Disaster Risk Reduction and the Risk Assessments, and the development of Early Warning Systems, Guidelines on mainstreaming DRR into development sectors and public awareness activities on DRR. Then, she briefly highlighted the recent political, social and economic changes

as well as the changes in the natural environment, which could impact Myanmar in shaping future DRR interventions. Finally, she suggested some implications for future consideration such as promoting Climate Change Adaptation along with DRR, strengthening national institutions for effective community-based intervention, advocating mainstreaming DRR into development programmes, and promoting public awareness programmes through media.

The final presentation of the Forum Session was made by U Maung Maung Khin, Head of Disaster Management Unit from MRCS, on the topic: “Local level DRR needs”. He first introduced the current status of DRR at field level, presenting the local institutions in charge of DRR and Disaster Response: Disaster Management Committees (DMCs) at Township, Village Tract, Village and School levels. Then, he highlighted some gaps (inactive DMCs, weak linkages

between School DMC, Village DMC, Village Tract DMC and Township DMC, weak coordination between UN, RC and NGOs, rare gender inclusion and limited financial resources for local level DRR implementation) where future implications should be considered. U Maung Maung Khin concluded his presentation with some possible future DRR needs at local level which should be considered for discussions. The proposed needs were to include VDMC and SDMC in the revised standing order, to create a DRR sub-committee in TDMC and VTDMC, to standardize the trainings for VTDMC, SDMC and VDMC, to set clear roles and responsibilities for DMC at Township, Village Tract, Village and School levels, to better coordinate between DRR stakeholders at field level, to improve communication between all levels DMC, and to disseminate Township Disaster Management Plans in all townships.



Working Session: Group Discussions

Mr. Renaud de Calan, DRR Program Coordinator from FRC, facilitated the Group Discussions Session. The participants were divided into four groups on the following themes:

- I. Policy, Institutional arrangements and Mainstreaming DRR into other sectors
- II. Hazard, vulnerability and risk assessment and Public Awareness
- III. Early Warning Systems, Preparedness and Response Activities
- IV. Community-based DRR and School-based DRR

The participants developed a list of DRR needs for each component and identified ways to address these DRR needs. The outcomes were then presented in plenary and some additional discussions were done with all the participants.

I. Policy, Institutional arrangements and Mainstreaming DRR into other sectors

The first discussions focused on “Policy, Institutional Arrangements on DRR” and “Mainstreaming DRR into other sectors”. The discussions were presented by U Min Zaw from Social Development Initiatives (SDI). In the changing context of Myanmar, many investments are flowing into the country. The government is also reviewing the laws and regulations relating to investment. The Foreign Direct Investment Law should be reviewed and incorporated DRR measures to have accountability of the investors on climate change and environmental issues as well as to mainstream DRR in the future investments. The existing DRR related policy documents, such as MAPDRR, Standing Order, Disaster Management Law and Building Codes should have strong linkages among them, ultimately to strengthen DRR institutions. Mapping of who is doing what and where (3W) should be updated periodically in the context of MAPDRR, and the Task Force should facilitate this mapping for the whole country. To fulfill the DRR needs in this favorable changing context of Myanmar, a number of new agencies are going to implement DRR projects in the near future. To hand up with new comers in the DRR, a set of minimum guidelines on implementation of DRR needs should be prepared.

Capacity building of the governmental focal departments, such as RRD and GAD, is recognized as the key for strengthening DRR institutions in Myanmar. Mainstreaming DRR into development planning has been initiated by the Planning Department and the Relief and Resettlement Department, where ADPC act as a technical partner. This is still not enough, and there is a need to promote the mainstreaming of DRR into development project implementations and into private sector cooperation.

Disaster Management Law is the overall legal framework for Disaster Management, which needs to be reinforced by proper rules and regulations. The Law should strengthen the linkages among DRR focal points in each governmental department. In addition, the role of community should be included in the Standing Order, which is now in process of revision.

The discussions also highlighted the need to have clear and specific roles and responsibilities to strengthen linkages between stakeholders. As an example, MSWRR was the lead for response in the past disaster events. As per the formation of Search and Rescue Committee at national level, the Ministry of Home Affairs is now the chair. This needs to have more discussions to define clear and specific roles and responsibilities among the focal departments, aiming an effective response in the event of disasters.

To ensure sustainability of DRR programmes in the future, a certain percentage of development budgets should also be allocated for DRR activities (e.g. 5% in the Philippines). Last but not least, more interagency coordination should be organized among all DRR stakeholders.

U Than Myint from MES added that the focal department for DRR, RRD, needs to build capacity, including strengthening organizational structures in order to fulfill the country's commitments and support in operationalization of AADMER.

II. Hazard, Vulnerability and risk assessment & Public awareness

The second discussions were presented by Lat Lat Aye from UNDP. The outcomes were separated in two parts: “the Hazard, Vulnerability and Risk Assessment” and “the Public Awareness”.

The discussions recognized the importance of hazard risk assessments, which could be considered as diagnosis of the country's exposure to hazard risks and should be the basis for Disaster Risk Reduction programmes. In Myanmar, multi-hazard risk assessments have been conducted in some hazards prone areas, such as the delta and Rakhine State (assessment carried on by UNDP). These initiatives should be extended to other hazards prone areas to cover the whole country. Taking into consideration climate change, multi-hazard risk assessments should also cover climate change risks.

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In addition to hazard risk assessments, specific hazard related issues should be addressed by independent researches. As an example, the sudden change of landscape in Taung Dwin Gyi Township in 2011 should be researched and technically investigated. The researches on meteorological and geological hazards should be also promoted and the findings should be used in development projects to ensure the mainstreaming of DRR.

In the context of climate change, environmental degradation and rapid urbanization, the researches on water and air pollution were also identified as a priority during the discussions. In order to promote researches in those areas, the focal governmental departments and institutions need to be strengthened through capacity building, which includes not only trainings but also technical and material supports such as laboratory, equipment and tools. Department of Water Resources and Improvement of River System performs river dodging (river training) to prevent embankment erosion. Testing the water quality of the rivers is also included in the department's related work. The department has limited resources in performing its functions which are related to DRR. Technical and financial resources are urgently needed to strengthen researches and laboratory works of DWIR.

Lat Lat Aye also presented the discussion points on Public Awareness. Public awareness on disaster risks, as well as the need to mainstream DRR into other sectors, should be promoted among the general public at the same time than among the different development partners, including the governmental departments. One option, suggested to be advocated to the governmental departments, would be that the basic DRR concepts and the DRR mainstreaming notion should be included in the core curriculum of the civil service training course.

Raising awareness on DRR through school curriculum has been started by the Ministry of Education in collaboration with UNICEF. DRR is now included in the life-scale curriculum of primary and secondary schools. In addition, school-based DRR programmes should also



be promoted especially in different hazards prone areas. It should include organizing school disaster management committees, preparing school disaster preparedness plans, identifying safe evacuation routes, organizing drill exercises and making awareness sessions on disasters for the school children, teachers, and communities associated with the schools.

Since 2010, International Day for Disaster Reduction is commemorated by the government and many DRR stakeholders. Some of them also use this event for raising public awareness

in different communities under their projects. However, this event could be expanded nation-wide, led by the government, to get more participation of stakeholders and communities. Nargis Memorial Day could also be used to remind the public on the destructive disaster and advocate to better prepare for future hazards.

Many stakeholders, government as well as UN, Red Cross, INGOs and local NGOs, publish IEC materials on different DRR themes. These IEC materials targeting communities should reach them effectively and in a coordinated manner.

The media is also an effective means to raise public awareness on DRR. Different media types, such as TV, Radio and Journals, could also include Disaster Risk Reduction information (articles, cartoons, etc.).

Upon this presentation, the participants provided additional points. U Than Myint from MES suggested that Environmental Impact Assessment and Social Impact Assessment should be done before any development projects start. Researches for meteorological and hydrological hazards need to be improved. Department of Meteorology and Hydrology (DMH) has a system for weather forecasting with some agencies' supports for trainings, equipments and tools. Unfortunately, there is no particular support for researches. Meteorological and hydrological researches should be equally considered as geological hazards. The representative from Ministry of Education mentioned that teacher trainings



and IECs materials should also be promoted to make an effective use of DRR curriculum and to raise awareness of the students on disaster.

III. Early Warning Systems, Preparedness and Response Activities

U Phyto Hlaing Bwa from Social Vision Services presented the discussions on “Early Warning System” and “Preparedness and Response”. He first presented the possible sources for providing early warning at regional, national and community level. At regional level, the relevant organizations are ADPC, UNDP, IFRC, RTSP, AHA, PTWC, JMA, MOB and TMD. At national level, the key stakeholders are DMH, RRD, NDPCC, Myanmar Medias, UN agencies, MRCS and some reliable websites. At local level, GAD, local DMH stations and MRCS would be the main organizations to involve. It was added that the Department of Meteorology and Hydrology is the nodal agency for early warning in Myanmar.

He also briefed on how the participants understood the existing early warning system flow from regional to local level. From regional level to national level, early warning comes via Internet-based communication, fax and phone. At national level, the DMH, focal agency for issuing early warning, sends information to Government authorities, GAD, NGOs and Medias (FM radio and MRTV) through fax, phone and e-mails. To expedite the flow of early warning, various kinds of resources such as human, technological and financial are needed as well as efficient communication channel. Through different administrative and governmental channels, early warning is again disseminated to the different stakeholders at local level. At local level, General Administration Department, RRD, Department of Health, Red Cross, and ideally Township Disaster Preparedness Committee, send early warning to communities through Village Tracts and village administrations, ideally with the support of VTDMC and VDMC. The different means for dissemination of early warning at this level include phone, messenger, hand speaker, etc. Medias are also used to reach communities which have access to Radio or TV. To improve early warning dissemination and effective preparedness at this level, priorities should be given to active PoA, communication equipments, emergency shelters and SoP.

At community level, VTDMC and VDMC send EW to the communities for effective preparedness, evacuation and response. They usually use hand speakers, loud speakers, colored flags and sirens (warning signal). Ideally, prerequisites at this level for taking effective actions are awareness, simulation exercises and communication equipments.

Concerning Preparedness and Response, there are several mechanisms at regional level, including AADMER, SASOP, AHA and resource mapping. At national level, the government has emergency relief funds available. The government has also implemented some

infrastructure development projects. In addition, DM Plan / Contingency Plan (CP), SoP and Standing Order are prepared to ensure a timely effective response. Relief stocks and emergency response teams are also made available in RRD offices in most disaster prone areas. At local level (township), some initiatives are undertaken by some stakeholders including DM Plan / CP and SoP development, shelter / infrastructure construction, community awareness, climate change adaptation, mitigation projects implementation, DP stock set up, simulation exercises organization, search and rescue training and emergency kits distribution.

U Maung Maung Khin from MRCS added that the lead-time could be decreased by improving EW dissemination and by getting information from the regional sources quicker. Thus, reliable sources for EW dissemination from regional level should be identified in advance. U Than Myint from MES also shared his view that dissemination of early warning should be dealt by the authorized agency which is DMH in Myanmar. Mr. Sital Kumar from DRC concluded that the best option to improve early warning forecasting and dissemination is to strengthen the authorized governmental focal department(s).

IV. Community Based DRR and School Based DRR

Daw Thin Hlaing Oo from SEEDS Asia presented the discussions on “the urgent needs for Community-based DRR and School-based DRR”. As a first step, the coverage area and capacity of existing Village DMP/DMC should be identified, and the linkages between Township DMC, Village DMC and School DMC should be strengthened. The Parent Teacher Association should be the core unit to set up SDMC.

The linkages between the plans and the community should also be promoted. The community infrastructures ensuring safe evacuations are also critical for effective CBDRM. Early warning system and public awareness on DRR should be reviewed and strengthened to involve VDMC and SDMC.

When VDMC and SDMC are formed, the emphasis should be given to the inclusion of various stakeholders. The resources including funding should be balanced among the geographical locations. Proper shelters should be provided for communities in vulnerable areas. Analysis, Planning and Climate Change Adaptation should be promoted along with Disaster Risk Reduction activities.

U Than Myint from MES also suggested to prepare a checklist for the minimum requirements of CBDRM/SBDRM activities in the context of Myanmar. This checklist should be endorsed by RRD and disseminated through the DRR Working Group.



Closing Session

In the closing session, the Consultation organizers mentioned that the discussions were very fruitful and they thanked all participants for their active involvement.

They mentioned that following this Consultation, a documentation on the findings will be done and shared with all DRR stakeholders involved in Myanmar. The future DRR needs will be also advocated to relevant governmental department for a resilient development in Myanmar.

Finally, they mentioned that the needs identified during the Consultation were not only important but also had to be discussed at length, and they suggested that these issues should be taken up in future forums.

Agenda

8.30 to 13.00, 2nd April 2012

Central Hotel, Yangon

Time	Program Details	Presenter
8:30 - 9:00	Arrival and Registration	
Opening Session: Welcome and Keynote Speakers		
9:00 - 9:10	Opening Address	Relief and Resettlement Department
Forum Session: Presentations		
9:15 - 9:30	Presentation (1) – DRR at Regional (global) level and implication for Myanmar	ADPC
9:35 - 9:50	Presentation (2) – Current National level DRR interventions and implications for future	UNDP
9:55 - 10:10	Presentation (3) – Filed level DRR interventions and implications for future	MRCS
10:15 - 10:30	Tea/Coffee Break	
Working Session: Group Discussion		
10:30 - 11:20	Group work – future DRR needs at National and Local levels	Participants
11:20 - 12:20	Plenary : Future DRR needs at National and Local levels	Group Representatives and other participants
Evaluation and Feedback		
12:20 - 12:30	Closing Remark	Red Cross

Participants' list

No	Name	Position	Agency
1	Daw Than Than Myint	Project Associate	ADPC
2	Daw Lat Lat Aye	Programme Analyst(DRR)	UNDP
3	Daw Phyo Zin Mar Wai	DRR Program Coordinator	MRCS
4	Daw Chan Myat Thu	M & E Officer	MRCS
5	Daw San San Maw	Dy.HoD DM	MRCS
6	Ei Ei Htwe	Project Coordinator	IOM
7	U Htun Htun Oo	Deputy Director	Irrigation Department
8	Krishna Racoal	Program Manager	Lutheran World Federation(LWF)
9	Sudhir Kumar	Senior Project Manager	ADPC
10	Thin Hlaing Oo	Administration Officer	SEEDS ASIA
11	Mitsuko Shikada	Project Manager	SEEDS ASIA
12	Aye Yu Thwe	Program Officer	SDC
13	Khaing Thazin Myint	Operation Manager	SDC
14	Dr. Tin Maung Chit	Humanitarian Response Coordinator	UNFPA
15	Aye Sapay Phyu	Senior Reporter	The Myanmar Times
16	Daw Khin Cho Cho Shein	Deputy Director	DMH
17	Kim Warren	CPM Deputy	Help Age
18	John Aung	Program Coordinator	ACTED
19	U Thein Htay Aung	Deputy Director	RRD
20	Aloysius James	Adviser Asia IECT	Action Aid
21	Polly Newall	Program Coordinator	CWS-A/P
22	Aung Aung Kyaw	CBC (OPS @ Tech)	World Vision
23	Bernd Schell	Head of Delegation	IFRC
24	Cing Sawm Lun	Program Assistant	ADRA
25	Kyaw Thu Mya Han	Tutor,Y.U	Yangon University
26	Mu Mu Kyi	Program Officer	UN-Habitat
27	Khual Tawna	DRR-Coordinator	World Vision
28	Peter Thang Khat Maung	Programme Assistant	BAJ
29	Thanda Thatoe Nwe Win	Assistant Director	Directorate of Water Resources & Improvement of River System
30	Soe Than Htaik	Lower Divisional Clerk	R.R.D
31	Lu Zaw	Program Officer	French Red Cross
32	Yin Yin Han	Project Assistant	ADPC
33	Mr. Sital Kumar	PM	DRC
34	U Than Myint	Chairman	MES,MEC
35	Tar Wan Yang	Hird Water Associate	Hire Water
36	Nway Htet Soe	Youth EC	Compass
37	Tin Htun Win	PA	ECHO
38	May Hnin Tin	A.P	YECO
39	Agate Piloan	Student	KalinProject
40	Phyo Hlaing Bwa	Jufo Officer	Social Vision Service
41	Aung Min	Member	CSF,W.G
42	Renaud de Calan	DRR Coordinator	French Red Cross
43	Khin Ma Ma Lat	DRR Program Analyst	UN-Habitat
44	Tauhid Ibne Farid	DRR Manager	Action Aid
45	Min Zaw	Chairman	SDI
46	San Shwe Aung	Wash Coordinator	Malteser International
47	Richard Aung Nan	Project Coordinator	KMSS
48	Aye Aye Khine	Program Support Admin Officer	French Red Cross
49	U Maung Maung Khin	Head of Division(DM)	MRCS

