



Side Event
**“Building Disaster Resilience through South-South Cooperation: Perspectives
from Asia-Pacific”**

21 March 2019, 08:00-10:00
Sala de Prensa, Palacio San Martín
Buenos Aires, Argentina

**Organized by the Government of Thailand in collaboration with the United Nations Economic and
Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) and other development partners.**

Background

Today, a person living in Asia-Pacific is still five times more likely to be affected by natural disasters than a person living outside the region. Climate change magnifies the risk of disasters and increases their costs. As the climate system has warmed, the number of weather-related hazards globally has tripled, and the number of people living in flood-prone areas and cyclone-exposed coastlines has doubled – and this trend is expected to increase. Since 1970, over 2 million lives were lost from natural disasters with an average annual economic loss of US\$ 50 to 60 billion. By 2030 these losses are expected to jump to over US\$ 160 billion. Risk is outpacing resilience and we need to change the risk drivers to protect the region’s development prospects.^[1] The link between resilience and sustainable development is clearly recognized in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 and other global development frameworks.

By providing the opportunity for an in-depth discussion, the side event will show how South-South and triangular cooperation initiatives have contributed to climate and disaster resilience in the Asia-Pacific region. In particular, the event will showcase how with an initial contribution of US\$ 10 million to the Fund, by the Government of Thailand, ESCAP’s Multi-Donor Trust Fund for Tsunami, Disaster and Climate Preparedness (Trust Fund) supported the improvement of climate preparedness, multi-hazard early warning and disaster response in the region. The event will also show how the Fund leveraged on other cooperation mechanisms notably the Regional Space Application Programme for Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific (RESAP).

Since its establishment in 2005, the Trust Fund has helped develop science-based knowledge and sharing of technology innovations across Asia-Pacific to address the gaps and unmet needs of early warning. It

^[1] ESCAP (2017), Asia-Pacific Disaster Report 2017

serves as an example of how, through South-South cooperation, developing countries have emerged as donors and promoters of technical cooperation. Operating in a regionally coordinated way, the Trust Fund helped reduce the total cost of establishing and maintaining disaster early warning systems substantially. Notably, the Trust Fund helped set up the Regional Integrated Multi-Hazard Early Warning System for Africa and Asia (RIMES) which has been most effective in increasing access to and sharing of data, tools, expertise to support disaster resilience across Indian Ocean Rim countries. More recently, the Trust Fund has supported coastal communities in the North West Indian Ocean, an area highly exposed to the threat of near-field tsunamis due to its short distance to the Makran fault line.

Furthermore, through, inter alia, the RESAP network, the Trust has supported downscaled and customized climate projections that have helped mitigate slow-onset disasters. By sharing space-based data and geospatial services among advanced space-faring countries and high disaster-risk, low capacity countries, RESAP has enhanced drought risk management. The mechanism has facilitated the replication of needs-driven best practice by developing tailored systems through its service nodes in China, India and Thailand. Furthermore, the mechanism has provided continued support in capacity- building through intensive one-month training courses, nine-month fellowships and policy seminars. The mechanism has both strengthened institutional coordination at the country level and built a strong network through regional and South-South cooperation.

Objectives

The objective of this side event is to share specific disaster risk reduction initiatives from the Asia-Pacific region, which:

- Helped high disaster-risk developing countries to obtain knowledge, expertise and technologies from the more advanced countries of Asia and the Pacific;
- Leveraged South-South and triangular cooperation to empower people in disaster-prone countries in the region through early warning and climate preparedness;
- Could serve as good practice examples for other disaster-prone regions around the world.

The side event will be organized as a high-level panel discussion. The panel will be comprised of representatives of member States that received assistance from or provided support to these initiatives.

Provisional Agenda/Structure of the side event (8:00-10:00 hours)

8:00 – 8:30 hrs.	Networking breakfast reception
8:30 – 8:35 hrs.	Opening Remarks by H.E. Mr. Vijavat Isarabhakdi, Special Envoy of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Thailand
8:35 – 8:40 hrs.	Opening Remarks by Head of Delegation of India
8:40 – 8:45 hrs.	Opening Remarks by Ms. Tiziana Bonapace, Director, ICT and Disaster Risk Reduction Division, ESCAP
8:45 -8:55 hrs.	Presentation of short videos from the ESCAP Multi-donor Trust Fund for Tsunami, Disaster and Climate Preparedness and Regional Space Application Programme for Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific (RESAP)
8:55 – 9:35 hrs.	Panel Discussion Moderator: Ms. Tiziana Bonapace, Director, ICT and DRR Division, ESCAP The high-level panel will share experiences and best practices from disaster risk reduction initiatives from the Asia-Pacific region.
9:35 – 9:45 hrs.	Q & A session
9:45 hrs.	End of programme

Participants

This event is open to all participants of the BAPA+40 Conference. However, due to limited capacity of the venue, participation is on first-come-first serve basis. Interested participants are requested to register online at <https://goo.gl/forms/jwtFlkqv16mgbc402> or scan this QR code by 16 March 2019 in order to access Palacio San Martin in accordance with the Host Country guidelines.



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