

Celebrating the International Disaster Risk Reduction Day in Ethiopia

Introduction

Natural hazards like earthquakes, droughts, tsunamis, heavy flooding, hurricanes or cyclones have made many people lost their lives, homes or access to basic social services such as hospitals, infrastructures, schools and so on. Some of these disasters have caused massive economic damage to some countries and the amount of loss continuous to increase as the year passes. It has been recognized that education, training, and information exchanges are effective ways to help people and communities become more resilient and less vulnerable. It is on this regard that the UN General Assembly designated the second Wednesday of October as the International Day for Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR).

As the Government of Ethiopia shifts its focus from disaster response to disaster risk management, using the International Day for Disaster Risk Reduction as the launchpad for this new government orientation and priority is very timely. Celebrating DRR would also serve well the intent of enhancing awareness amongst the people and communities, officials and NGOs on DRR and in creating a network for information exchange and synergy development to address the issue.

Objectives

The objective of this initiative is to reinforce the joint commitment made by the Government of Ethiopia and the United Nations to focus on DRR by creating a platform for bringing together different organizations on DRR and highlighting the various DRR initiatives undertaken in Ethiopia. This initiative also intends to reinforce awareness amongst the larger community on DRR and of the natural hazards that prevails in the country.

Expected Outcomes

The expected outcomes of the International DRR day celebration are as follows:

- 1) Creation of a common emphasis on prevention, mitigation and preparedness;
- 2) Creation/strengthened network amongst GOs, NGOs and the UN Agencies on DRR; and
- 3) Strengthened knowledge base on DRR.

Theme

The theme of the International Disaster Risk Reduction Day celebration in Ethiopia is: ***“Making Our Communities Resilient to Disasters”***.

Activities

Activities for celebrating the International Day for Disaster Reduction will be carried out from 11 to 15 October 2010. These activities are as follows;

1. Radio talk show for five days

A radio talk show on DRR is going to be aired nationwide between 6:00-7:00 PM from 11 to 15 October 2010. The radio talk show will be aired on FM 98.1 Radio Fana and linked to seven FM stations spread across the country.

2. Radio programme sponsorship on DRM/DRR for five days

A radio programme to disseminate a well structured information package on DRR to the general public will be prepared and broadcasted for 15 minutes each day from 11-15 October 2010. The nationwide broadcast will be between 8:00-8:30 PM on FM 98.1 Radio Fana with links to seven other FM stations across the country.

3. Public showing of DRM/DRR videos for five days

Videos on DRM/DRR will be shown on the giant Sonic Screen at Meskel Square and Piassa between 4:00-4:30 PM from 11 to 15 October 2010.

4. Raising visibility on DRM/DRR

To further raise awareness on DRM/DRR and of the International DRR Day and to enhance the visibility of government leadership on DRM/DRR, banners highlighting the International DRR Day celebration will be displayed in Addis Ababa and the regional capitals. Posters informing the public of (a) what is a disaster resilient community; and (b) what it takes to become a disaster resilient community will be posted in populated areas of Addis Ababa and the regional capitals. On the International DRR Day celebration itself, t-shirts and caps highlighting the celebration will be worn.

5. Presentation and publication of papers on DRR

Together with Bahir Dar University and Addis Ababa University, a one-day presentation of various technical/academic papers on DRR by academicians and graduate students will be conducted. The three most outstanding papers will be recognized and published with the support of the DRMFSS and UNDP.

The Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development and the UN Resident Coordinator are expected to grace the occasion. Representative from MoARD and sector Ministries, UN agencies, international NGOs, and the media are expected to attend the paper presentations.

Activity Schedule

Activities	Oct. 11 (Mon)	Oct. 12 (Tue.)	Oct. 13 (Wed.)	Oct 14 (Thurs.)	Oct 15 (Fri.)
1. Radio talk show for the whole week – National broadcast	√	√	√	√	√
2. Sponsorship of programme on DRM/DRR for the whole week - National broadcast	√	√	√	√	√
3. Public screening of DRM/DRR documentary on the Sonic Screen at Meskel Square and Piassa	√	√	√	√	√
4. Raising visibility on DRM/DRR	√	√	√	√	√
5. DRM/DRR paper presentations in Addis Ababa University (in collaboration with Bahir Dar University)			√		