

## CALL FOR PAPERS

### “Public Administration and Disaster Management: Reducing Risks, Delivering Services, Spearheading Recovery”

When urban cities and rural villages are invaded by floodwaters, when earthquakes strike and ruin buildings and infrastructures, when landslides take away homes (and even lives), the role of governments as emergency providers become most relevant. Of course, this is not to exact that governments become relevant only during disasters.

Governments, as well as other societal institutions (e.g. private sector, civil society, etc.), take on the shoes as agents of relief and rescue operations and provide evacuation facilities, among others, during these difficult times. These activities are obviously a response or reaction to an already ongoing disaster, but these form only a part of the wide-range character of disaster management.

While it is important to respond to disasters while they are incumbent, it is also equally important to look at ways and means to prevent or, at least, minimize the possible hazards of disasters and calamities. This is through disaster preparedness and risk reduction, in which disaster preventive measures (e.g. waste segregation, flood control infrastructure development, anti illegal logging, effective disaster management structure, etc.) are carried out. Disaster management is a major take-off from the traditional “relief and rescue operations” systems, because it covers disaster preparedness and risk reduction, response to disasters, and recovery from disaster or community rehabilitation.

As an integrated activity, disaster management does not stop with preventive mechanisms and relief/rescue operations. While the havocs of natural calamities, as well as the spread of viruses and diseases, are unavoidable, communities become distressed as effects of the disaster. It is therefore an imperative to aid to the needs of the community after such incidents take place. Community rehabilitation apparently becomes very important to bring back the normal life situations of the people. This includes working to build (or rebuild) decent homes for those who have been displaced, schools, and other affected infrastructures, as well as helping people restore affected livelihood.

#### **Why Disaster Management?**

Every country aims for development where people have more choices, and these choices allow them to have more freedom. Any disaster, a calamity or an epidemic, is a hindrance to a country's efforts towards development. Homes and schools are destroyed, agricultural productions are affected, infrastructures are ruined. Resources are allotted to address disasters and crises instead of being allotted to development projects, educational programs, etc. This is not to say that resources should not be allotted to address disasters. Of course, they should be, particularly because many disasters, particularly those natural ones, are unavoidable and resources must be available in such incidents. The point, however, is how to manage resources efficiently,

and this can be done with the presence of an equally efficient and effective disaster management system. By managing resources efficiently, better services (both during and outside of disasters) can be provided to the citizens.

Aside from the preceding ideas, disaster management is even very much relevant in the Asian region, geographically speaking. This is because Asia is prone to natural calamities and disasters such as earthquakes, landslides, typhoons, wind storms, volcano eruptions, and other similar incidents. With the advent of climate change, it is even claimed by experts that the worst of disasters is yet to come. This has been the message of the UN International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UNISDR) to the Philippines after the country was powerfully battered by the wraths of super typhoons Ketsana and Parma, which brought massive and terrible floods in the country's national capital region and the northern provinces, respectively, and made the said regions under “state of calamity.” This only means that the country has to be more prepared with whatever natural disaster will come in the future, and this entails a good disaster management structure to cope with such disasters easily. This warning, however, should be taken seriously not by the Philippines alone, but by other countries as well because disasters and natural calamities are not selective on their “targets.”

The Philippines' case is among the most recent disasters of the modern times, and the two typhoons, actually, also affected other Asia-Pacific countries such as China, Vietnam, Thailand and Taiwan. More recently, the earthquake in Samoa which generated a tsunami affecting the country and nearby American Samoa and Tonga resulted in the death of hundreds and wiped-out villages. The earthquake in Haiti was disheartening given that thousands of lives have been taken and buildings and homes collapsed in an instant. Looking back at history, these are not the only cases of major disasters. In this and that part of the globe, we remember how disasters have crippled many among us.

In 2008, in China, an 8.0 magnitude earthquake shook Sichuan province, leaving thousands of deaths and rendering millions of people homeless. In the same year, cyclone Nargis left more than a hundred thousand deaths and millions homeless in Myanmar.

In 2007, the South Asian flood was experienced by Nepal, India, Bangladesh, Bhutan and Pakistan, as a result of constant rainfall, triggered by the melting of snow that increased water levels. This resulted in the death of thousands of people and the displacement of millions from the above-mentioned countries.

Thailand was not spared. One of the major disasters which occurred in the country was the tsunami, caused by the Indian Ocean earthquake, which hit Phuket and adjacent areas days before the end of 2004. The said incident caused the death of thousands of individuals, including citizens of Thailand and tourists who were supposed to enjoy the beauty of Phuket as a tourist spot. In addition, businesses and resorts in the areas were greatly damaged, thus affecting the economic activity of the country, particularly the tourism industry.

On that same day when Phuket was hit, the Indian Ocean earthquake also caused the earthquake in Indonesia which recorded more than a hundred thousand fatalities and more than 500 thousand displaced. The effects of the Indian Ocean earthquake also reached other Asia Pacific countries including India, Sri Lanka, Malaysia and Bangladesh.

In 2003, Iran's ancient city of Bam experienced a 6.6 magnitude earthquake which killed and injured thousands of people.

There are other disasters which are man-made, including fires (with the exception of naturally occurring forest fires), plane crash, terrorism attacks, ship accidents, etc. However, it seems obvious that natural disasters are the most severe in human history.

As the majority of Asian countries face these disasters, the Himalayan region has also a challenge to deal with. Given the complex, fragile and unique features of the Himalayan region, the melting Himalayas is likely to be a great challenge for a billion of people in the future. It has a direct bearing on 1.9 billion people residing along the 9 river basin zones. It has significant impacts on different aspects of human life such as farming systems, land use, seasonal variations, water resources, river systems and health conditions of a large number of people in the region. Study has shown that 1400 glacial lakes are likely to burst in the near future. Therefore, we feel, this could be a pertinent issue of disaster management particularly in this region.

The continuous occurrence of these natural disasters should be a caveat to us on the need to establish effective disaster management systems and structures. It is true that there is no way to prevent natural disasters, but there are means to mitigate their impacts through **disaster preparedness and risk reduction**. Further, the government can lessen the burden of the affected people through the **traditional relief and rescue operations through delivering services**. We can help them rebuild their lives by making disaster management work for **recovery and rehabilitation**.

The EROPA Seminar 2010 aims to be a venue for the discussion and sharing of effective practices on disaster management as a response to the threats of climate change and natural disasters. Specifically, it aims to do this by encouraging various countries to share their experiences in terms of disaster preparedness and mitigation, response to the disaster, and community rehabilitation after the disaster. This shall include discussions of policies, programs, coordination structures, and frameworks which resulted in effective disaster management. Disaster management programs that failed may also be presented in the seminar so as to allow the sharing of lessons learned why the programs did not succeed.

#### **Disaster Preparedness and Mitigation: Reducing Risks through Effective Disaster Management**

This panel shall be a venue for the discussion of efforts of various countries in terms of disaster preparedness and mitigation. Papers and presentations may focus on policies, programs and projects like reforestation, development of strong flood control infrastructures, proper

information dissemination and clear communication flow, and the role of technology in policy and implementation, and other activities that would result in disaster risk reduction.

### **Disaster Response: Public Service to Disaster-Stressed Communities**

This panel shall focus on government efforts and interventions when disasters have already broken through communities. Papers and presentations in this panel may focus on evacuation procedures, effective and orderly rescue and relief operations, responsiveness of officials and availability of health and emergency facilities, proper communication, the role of the private sector and civil society in the name of service to the people, and other issues relevant to actors' performance of these functions.

### **Community Rehabilitation: Public Administration Towards Recovery and Continuity**

This panel shall discuss issues, policies and programs concerning community rehabilitation after a disaster and these shall include building or rebuilding of homes, infrastructures (damaged bridges, dikes, etc.), and schools, providing stop-gap livelihood to the affected community, and other long-term services.

### **Special Session on "Federalism as a Structure of Government"**

This special session shall examine how government works in a federal set-up and try to answer the following questions. How is federalism implemented? How is government structured in federalism? What are the advantages and disadvantages of such set-up, and what conditions should be present in order to make federalism effective? This may also look into the lessons learned and challenges faced by countries with federal set-up such as Australia, Malaysia, India, Pakistan, Canada, Switzerland, and United States, among others.

### **FIRST ASIAN LEADERSHIP FORUM**

The Asian Leadership Forum (ALF) is a new enterprise in EROPA which aims to bring together leading government practitioners and personalities in the region to discuss important issues in Public Administration and Governance. For the 1<sup>st</sup> ALF, EROPA and the Ministry of General Administration adopted the theme "**The Need for Leadership Development.**" The forum shall look at the importance of developing good leaders in different sectors such as the government, private sector, voluntary sector, and youth, among others. This is in view of the idea that good leaders have the capacity to bring people to the direction of development, in addition to being their "representative" in the society in general.

### **REGISTRATION**

The registration fees are as follows:

EROPA Member	USD 200
Non-EROPA Member	USD 250
For each accompanying person	USD 150

Registration fees should be paid during the registration proper at the Soaltee Crown Plaza Hotel, Tahachal, Kathmandu.

21 November 2010, 1:00 PM – 5:00 PM

22 November 2010, 8:00 AM – 5:00 PM

### **VENUE**

The 56<sup>th</sup> Executive Council meeting (for Council Members only) is scheduled at 6:00 PM, 21 November 2010 (Sunday), and the seminar on 22-25 November 2010. Both activities will be held at the Soaltee Crown Plaza Hotel.

### **VISA REQUIREMENTS**

Individual visas can be obtained from the Nepalese Embassies in respective or neighboring countries. The organizing committee will extend an invitation to each participant upon completion of pre-registration. The organizer will design a new website related to the EROPA Seminar 2010. Until designing such website, details and information about visa procedures can be obtained from [www.immi.gov.np](http://www.immi.gov.np).

### **BUSINESS HOURS**

Banks are open from Sunday to Friday, 10:00 AM to 3:00 PM. Department and Shopping stores are open from 10:00 AM to 7:00 PM. Some banking counters and ATM Services are also open out of office hours.

### **TRANSPORTATION**

There are multiple modes of transportation, including buses, taxis, and minibuses. Taxis are recommended for the international participants. Participants should bear the cost of private journey around the city. The transport facility for overall official programs will be available free of charge.

### **AIRPORT TRANSFER**

The organizers will arrange the transport of participants from the airport to the hotel. Only participants who indicate their flight details in advance are eligible for the free airport transfer.

### **CURRENCY**

USD 1.00 is equivalent to 72.00 Nepalese Rupees as of May 2010.

### **WEATHER**

The temperature in Kathmandu in November usually ranges from 7 to 23 degrees Celsius.



## **AIDE MEMOIRE**

## **EROPA SEMINAR 2010**

# **PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION AND DISASTER MANAGEMENT**

*Reducing Risks  
Delivering Services  
Spearheading Recovery*

21-25 November 2010

Kathmandu, Nepal

*Hosted by*

Government of Nepal  
Ministry of General Administration

**Eastern Regional Organization for Public Administration**  
National College of Public Administration and Governance  
University of the Philippines  
Diliman 1101 Quezon City