

## Summary Assessment

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### Committee on Disaster Risk Reduction Seventh Session 25-27 August 2021

#### I. Introduction

The seventh session of the Committee on Disaster Risk Reduction took place from 25-27 August 2021 in a virtual mode due to the COVID-19 and related travel restrictions in many countries in the Asia-Pacific region.

A questionnaire assessing the relevance, effectiveness and quality of the meeting was distributed to each delegation of ESCAP members and associate members. The main purpose of this assessment is to support the secretariat's ongoing efforts to improve its servicing of the session.

#### II. Attendance

The seventh session of the Committee on Disaster Risk Reduction was attended by 60 per cent of all ESCAP members and associate members (36 of 62). Some 29 of delegations (80 per cent) were headed by officials from the respective capital, including 4 participants at ministerial level. In total there were 237 individual participants, of whom 95 were female (40 per cent).

A number of other entities (27) participated, including United Nations bodies and agencies, intergovernmental organizations, and non-governmental organizations. From these entities, there were 77 participants of whom 36 were female (47 per cent). Therefore, the total number of participants from both governments and other entities was 314 individuals and the total number of female participants was 131 (42 per cent).

#### III. Respondent's Profile

A total of 61 individual respondents from 25 member countries shown in the table below completed the questionnaire virtually. 45 percent of respondents were female.

<b>SEA</b>	<b>SSWA</b>
Cambodia, Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Viet Nam	Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Iran, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka
<b>ENEA</b>	<b>Pacific</b>
China, DPRK, Russian Federation	Australia

NCA	Others
Armenia, Azerbaijan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan	

#### IV. Preparatory dry-test session (for the participant via online platforms)

More than half of the respondents personally participated in the dry test session organized by the secretariat. More than half of the respondents used the same equipment in both dry test session and the Committee session, and joined the meeting using earphones as advised in the Technical Guide.

Please rate your agreement of the following statements	YES	NO
I personally participated in the dry test session organized by the secretariat	56.7% %	33.3%
Someone from my office/team participated in the dry test session organized by the secretariat	45.2%	54.8%
The same equipment was use in dry test session and in the Committee session	72.4%	27.6%
I joined the meeting using a headset/earphone as advised in the Technical Guide	62.5%	37.5%

#### V. Relevance

Overall, respondents highly agreed that the agenda items reflected the present development trends and issues in the Asian and Pacific region. The respondents also agreed that the issues discussed were useful for their government/organization. The rating is slightly lower on the discussion related to gender issues and concepts.

Please rate your agreement of the following statements	Ratings
The issues discussed reflected the present disaster, climate and resilience trends/issues in the Asia-Pacific region	Average: 4.3
The issues discussed were useful for my government/organization	Average: 4.2
The meeting discussed related gender issues and concepts	Average: 2.5

#### VI. Effectiveness

The respondents agreed that the meeting effectively enhanced their knowledge of the issues discussed; promoted regional cooperation and networking among participants; the facilitators effectively engaged with participants in discussion; and the meeting documents and presentations were of high quality, concise and clear. However, the respondents gave a slightly lower rating on time available for discussion.

Please rate your agreement of the following statements	Ratings
The meeting effectively enhanced my knowledge of the issues discussed	Average: 4.2
The meeting effectively promoted regional cooperation and networking among participants	Average: 3.8
The facilitators effectively engaged with participants in discussions	Average: 3.7
Enough time was available for discussion	Average: 3.6
The meeting documents and presentations were of high quality, concise & clear	Average: 3.9

## VII. Efficiency

Generally, the respondents rated positively on the efficiency of the meeting, in particular, they highly agreed that the meeting was organized in a timely manner and according to the programme; and that the communications from ESCAP to the member States on the preparation for the meeting were effective.

Please rate your agreement of the following statements	Ratings
I am satisfied with the administrative and logistical arrangement of the meeting	Average: 3.9
The meeting was organized in a timely manner and according to the programme	Average: 4.2
The communications from ESCAP to the member States on the preparation for the meeting were effective	Average: 4.3
The duration of the meeting was appropriate	Average: 4.1

## VIII. Performance of the virtual tool

Overall, the respondents were satisfied with the technology, in particular the technical support from the secretariat during the meeting. The rating was lower on the Internet connectivity, including audio and video quality.

Please rate your agreement of the following statements	Ratings
The virtual tool was easy to use	Average: 4.1
I was able to hear others clearly (audio quality)	Average: 4.1
I was able to see other clearly (video quality)	Average: 4.1
Internet connectivity is satisfactory	Average: 3.7
The duration of the virtual meeting was appropriate	Average: 4.1
The screen sharing feature was effective	Average: 4.2
Interaction tools (live polls, Q&A etc) were used effectively	Average: 3.6
Adequate technical support from ESCAP was provided during the meeting	Average: 3.9

## IX. Comments and suggestion received

The results achieved through this meeting indicated by respondents included:

- Many participants expressed that the seventh session of the Committee on disaster risk reduction was very fruitful and effectively organized, despite the COVID-19 situation.
- Participants reported a better understanding of the cascading risks (climate, biological and health) in the Asia Pacific and their impact on socio-economic development through the highlights of the Asia Pacific Disaster Report 2021. Participants further noted better understanding of effective regional cooperation on multi-hazard early warning systems, data and technology, and sharing of knowledge and experience associated with disaster risk reduction, particularly in line with ESCAP resolution 77/1.
- Participants had clearer awareness and increased knowledge on current activities and initiatives, which were carried out by the secretariat and the member States. Participants noted the usefulness of the recommendations and the discussions based on the Asia Pacific Disaster Report 2021 and expressed the need for a framework for greater collaboration and action on coherence of disaster, climate, and health related risks in the region.
- Participants supported the need for enhancing regional cooperation and experience sharing in disaster risk reduction and country officials noted that the meeting was relevant to operations and effectively advised on policies. In particular, participants noted the new ideas on possible cooperation in terms of geospatial investigations, earth observations and early warning.
- At the national level, the Committee recommended that the secretariat continue to support member States, upon request, to develop policy initiatives and capacities.

Suggestions:

- ✓ Run meetings on the same platform instead of using KUDO, MS Teams and Zoom and provide more user friendly apps as some countries may not have full capacity to use KUDO platform
- ✓ Circulate relevant documents in a more timely manner, especially drafts for discussion
- ✓ Provide platform for small group discussions and facilitate discussion forums
- ✓ Issue a directory for the attendees to encourage attendees to interact with one another through messaging/chatbox

## **X. Conclusion**

Overall, delegations agreed that the seventh session of the Committee on Disaster Risk Reduction was well organized and fruitful. The session was highly relevant to the needs of the region, especially in highlighting issues of cascading disaster risk, climate change, understanding recent trends and key issues, and the need for regional cooperation in disaster risk reduction particularly in response to cascading risks from COVID-19 and other natural hazards. The efficiency of the session also received positive feedback, in particular, the servicing and organization of the session by the secretariat, as well as the communications between the secretariat and member States. Some issues such as gender balance in the field of disaster risk reduction and the allocated time for discussions during the session may need more consideration in future sessions.

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