

Holistic Approach to Disaster Reduction

– Total Disaster Risk Management (Part3)

“Accumulation and Sharing of Disaster Information and Impact Assessments: by Use of GLIDE (GLobal unique disaster IDentifier number)”

(English only)

15:40 - 17:30 (Wednesday, 15 January 2003)

Venue: Room 401/402

At present, numerous organizations operate their own disaster databases and open them to the public through their web sites. Also, when a new disaster occurs, it is being reported on the web not only by the organizations of the affected country, but also by various organizations and mass media in other countries. However, in searching disaster information on the Internet, the following problems exist: (1) It is necessary to search the database of each organization individually in every disaster occurrence; (2) In some cases, it is impossible to find the relevant data by search engine because each organization uses different name for the same disaster; (3) The linkages to the information of the other organization are not automatically updated with the change of the structure of database and website in each organization. GLIDE (GLobal unique disaster IDentifier number) has been devised to overcome these problems by assigning unique ID codes, so that information related to a particular disaster can always be referenced with a unique ID code.

The session was intended as an introductory guide to GLIDE, and as a means to facilitate discussion on the GLIDE concept, as well as to seek ideas on how the common agreement among various data owners of GLIDE could be turned into practical applications to be shared by database managers.

The session took stock of existing initiatives in the development of disaster databases and discussed the potential of GLIDE as an enabling standard for sharing of data. Based on the overarching principle that disaster information management was a tool to support holistic decision-making from damage estimation, response and recovery to analysis, it was generally recognized that the GLIDE concept as a shared standard was sound, and merited further refinement for wider acceptance. Key challenges were recognized in areas related to the implementation of the GLIDE scheme itself, as well as the gaps between existing disaster databases particularly in relation to those dealing with large-scale and small and medium-scale disasters, and the fundamental issue of reliability and accessibility of data itself.

Coordinator: Mr. Kamal Kishore, Regional Disaster Reduction Advisor, UNDP BCPR Delhi

Rapporteur: Mr. Shuichi Odaka, Information Manager, OCHA/ReliefWeb/Kobe

Speakers:

- Dr. Hector Babayan, Vice-President of NSSP, Armenia, "Structure and organizations of the Disaster Information System (DIS/Earthquake) of Armenia"
- Dr. Dugkeun Park, Senior Analyst, National Institute for Disaster Prevention, Korea, "The Current Disaster Classification in Korea and Future Direction with GLIDE"
- Mr. Katsuhiro Abe, Chief of Tropical Cyclone Programme Division, WMO, "The Name of Tropical Cyclone"

- Mr. Masaru Arakida, Senior Researcher, ADRC, “The Concept of GLIDE (GLobal unique disaster IDentifier Number) and Goal for Disaster Management”
- Mr. Kamal Kishore, Regional Disaster Reduction Advisor, UNDP BCPR Delhi, “Improving the Quality, Coverage and Accuracy of Disaster Data: A Comparative Analysis of Global and National Datasets”
- Mr. Julio Serge, Founder Member –Technical Architect, LaRED, “The use of Disaster Inventories as part of the Risk Mitigation Process”
- Mr. Shuichi Odaka, Information Manager, OCHA/ReliefWeb/Kobe, “Humanitarian information management and exchange”
- Mr. Masahiko Murata, Project Manager, DRI, “Effective information sharing by use of GLIDE in JAPAN”

Questions and Comments from the Floor

Session Summary

Mr. Hector Babayan (National Survey for Seismic Protection, Armenia) and **Dr. Dugkeun Park** (Senior Analyst, National Institute for Disaster Prevention, Ministry of Government Administration and Home Affairs, Republic of Korea) presented the disaster information systems developed and utilized by their respective governments. Both speakers underlined the important supporting role played by disaster information systems in the holistic management of disasters from preparedness, damage estimation, response, recovery and analysis, and also emphasized the consideration for the characteristics of the affected localities as well as the need of training of disaster management personnel for effective use of the systems. Dr. Park also raised the issue of consistent application of hazard types for complex disasters. He also reflected on the issues of accessibility, as the data accumulated in his system was not openly available to the public.

Mr. Katsuhiko Abe (Chief, Tropical Cyclone Programme Division, World Meteorological Organization) introduced the global naming system for the identification of storm-related hazards, in particular tropical cyclones. With respect to GLIDE, he identified the coordination of terminology as a significant challenge, and proposed an additional sub-code to indicate the cause-effect relationships of complex disasters.

Mr. Masaru Arakida (Senior Researcher, ADRC) gave an overview of how GLIDE was conceived as a simple mechanism to address the difficulties in identifying disasters, and described the structure of the GLIDE. He agreed that the structure of the GLIDE needed to be reviewed to incorporate cause-effect relationships of hazards as pointed out by Dr. Park and Mr. Abe. Mr. Arakida also showed materials to promote the application of GLIDE, and a search engine “GLIDE Search” for GLIDE being developed by ADRC.

Mr. Kamal Kishore (Regional Disaster Reduction Advisor, Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery, UNDP) presented the findings of a study undertaken by ISDR Working Group 3 to illustrate that global disaster databases were not sufficiently capturing the losses caused by small and medium-scale disasters. He recommended a multi-tiered global system of disaster reporting and datasets, with GLIDE as the means to establish links between the tiers of data. He also encouraged the development of national datasets as well as common reporting standards and methodology, and underlined the importance of capacity building and training for effective implementation.

Mr. Julio Serge (Technical Architect, La Red) provided an overview of DesInventar, a system that deals with information on small and medium-scale disasters in 9 Latin American countries. As with

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Mr. Kishore, Mr. Serge stressed the importance of recording losses caused by small and medium-scale disasters, and announced La Red's decision to support and implement GLIDE. He identified the development of a common methodology, ways to ensure data consistency, and delineation of ownership between global and regional datasets as challenges that would need to be overcome.

Mr. Shuichi Odaka (ReliefWeb Information Manager, OCHA) introduced the ReliefWeb project, an Internet-based information system dedicated to humanitarian issues. He introduced the information sharing initiatives undertaken by ReliefWeb, demonstrated ReliefWeb's implementation of GLIDE, and invited participants to benefit from content made available via the easy-to-implement GLIDE mechanism.

Mr. Masahiko Murata (Project Manager, DRI) provided an overview of DRI as a coordinating agency of disaster information in Japan, and described the difficulties associated with consolidating existing national disaster data, including the issue of language restrictions as mentioned earlier by Dr. Park. He emphasized that GLIDE should be understood as merely a key to enable linking of data, and that discrepancies between databases was at times unavoidable. Mr. Murata announced that DRI would adopt GLIDE and encourage other relevant Japanese organizations to follow.

With the floor open, discussion centered on issues at three levels: the refinement of GLIDE scheme, the coordination between global and small/medium-scale disaster databases, and reliability/accessibility of data.

On the GLIDE scheme itself, there was a wide acceptance of the concept and a will to improve the mechanism to enable the system to act as an effective universal standard. The questions related to complex disasters and how cause/effect relationships should be encoded in GLIDE was clearly recognized as an important issue that required further consideration.

Analysis of large-scale and small to medium-scale disaster databases led to the recognition of issues of common methodology, criteria and standardization of data. One of the testing questions was to what extent data should be disaggregated, and suggested the need for hierarchical disaster events. It was recognized that a clear intention on the purpose of data should guide the methodology of complementary and systematic compilation of data, supported by a multi-tiered system.

Issues related to the reliability of data and accessibility were repeatedly raised, reflecting the fundamental importance of the issue. In addition to the existence of contradictory datasets, political imperatives in disaster situations could also affect the accuracy of data, undermining the efforts to improve early warning systems based on historical data. One of the steps being taken was ISDR's initiative to take stock of existing national datasets, which would be feed back to EM-DAT to contribute to reliability of available datasets.