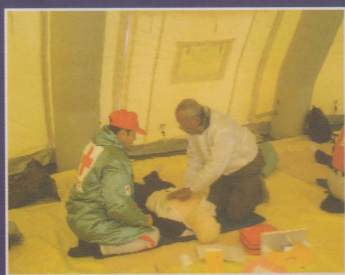




Second National Symposium
on
Disaster Risk Reduction
& Climate Change Adaptation

13th & 14th October 2010
at
SLFI - Colombo



*Organized by Disaster Management Centre of the Ministry of Disaster Management
In collaboration with Environment Committee of the Sri Lanka Association for the Advancement of Science (SLAAS)
& National Disaster Management Coordinating Committee (NDMCC)
Supported by United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)*



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Community Based Tsunami Early Warning System: A Case Study in Peraliya, Galle

Aslam Saja

Red R – United Kingdom and Consortium of Humanitarian Agencies, Colombo

One of the community based early warning systems that exists in Sri Lanka is the Community Tsunami Early warning Centre (CTEC) at Peraliya on the south-west coast of Sri Lanka. The critical analysis on the existing mechanism of CTEC Peraliya, for its effectiveness, affordability and sustainability within the tsunami early warning system in Sri Lanka to alert, warn and evacuate the communities at risk shows that, there is a need for a community based system to properly disseminate the Tsunami early warning threat.

The study emphasizes the need for the CTEC system to continue not only as a multi hazard early warning/dissemination system, but as an integrated component of the multi purpose entity. The CTEC should also be named as “Community Tsunami Early Warning Dissemination System” to clearly define its limitations in early warning.

The community survey reveals that the community has benefited from the activities of CTEC in the past in educating the public and providing the necessary information before and during the tsunami threat. However CTEC finds it difficult to sustain its operation as Tsunami is not a frequent threat to Sri Lanka. Hence different possible options need to be explored recognizing the need for a community based system.

Moving to multi hazard approach, using the existing public entities for early warning purposes will ensure its sustainable operation. CTEC should also be registered by the District Disaster Management Centre to be part of the early warning dissemination system in district.

Linking the CTEC system with the National Early Warning System is also another task for CTEC to successfully implement the end to end early warning system in Sri Lanka.

Abstracts of the Second National Symposium on
Disaster Risk Reduction & Climate Change Adaptation

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Advancement of Science, 120/10, Vidya Mandiraya, Vidya Mawatha, Colombo 07.

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ISBN: 978-955-9321-11-8

Printed by : Printel (Pvt) Ltd.,
21/11, 4th Lane, Araliya Uyana, Depanama, Pannipitiya, Sri Lanka.