

TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION FOR DISASTER RESILIENCE



Photo (Left to right): ARISE Philippines Co-chair, Adm. Alexander Pama; SM Development Corporation's Vice President, Ms. Jessica Sy; UNICEF Representative in Vietnam, Ms. Rana Flowers; Asian Institute of Management Crisis and Resiliency Head, Ms. Cynthia Diaz; Asian Institute of Management Asst. Professor, Dr. Marqueza Reyes; and National Resilience Council Executive Director, Mr. Silvestre Barrameda.

Whole-of-Society Approach to Advance Technology and innovation for Disaster Resilience

Brisbane, Australia - ARISE Philippines hosted a partner event on the third day of the 2022 Asia Pacific Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (APMCDRR). The event on the 21st of September was held in partnership with the National Resilience Council (NRC), Asian Institute of Management (AIM), SM Development Corporation (SMDC), UNICEF, and the International Finance Corporation (IFC).

Mr. Silvestre Barrameda, Jr, Executive Director of the National Resilience Council (NRC), opened and moderated the event with its speakers representing sectors exemplifying inclusive public-private collaboration.

In her talk, Dr. Marqueza Reyes (Assistant Professor - AIM, Resilience and Change Management Consultant - Climate Change Commission), Board Member of ARISE Philippines, laid out the event's objectives. She acknowledged the private sector as the

technological fountainhead in our society. Adopting innovative and advanced technologies and practices increases companies' productivity, expands their operations, and protects them from and mitigates the adverse impacts of climate change and disasters. The session underscored the importance of technology and innovation in improving the practice of disaster risk reduction and management through PPP.

Testaments of the power of inclusive and strategic partnerships and maximizing technology and innovation in DRR

Vice Admiral Alexander Pama (Ret.), Co-Chair of ARISE Philippines, took the stage to highlight a whole of society's approach to developing shared responsibility and commitment to resilience. He opened his speech by saying that climate change, with its impacts and consequences, is a shared experience. In this essence, it's all the more consequential that we take meaningful, significant, and crucial steps to creating collective responsibility, commitment, and actions toward climate and disaster resilience. VAdm. Pama rallied to co-owning the challenge of disaster risk reduction and co-creating solutions with the joint participation of governments, the private sector, civil society, and other vulnerable groups toward a sustainable and resilient future.

Mr. Ommid Saberi, Global Lead and Product Manager of Building Resilience Index (BRI) emphasized that disasters are costly and assets are mostly uninsured. BRI is an innovation of IFC, a member of the World Bank Group, developed together with the private sector. It showcased the benefits of understanding the disaster risk for small, medium, and large enterprises and local governments and households.

Saberi shared how the BRI tool aims to help the built sector identify, manage and disclose risks. He also wanted the public and private sectors to understand that investments in resilience bring higher savings. As of August 2022, 2 million square meters of space were pledged in the Philippines, with ten construction developers, 46 projects, and 9,689 housing units reviewed by the BRI.

The next panelist was Ms. Cynthia Diaz, Crisis Resiliency Head of ePLDT and an Executive Masters in Disaster Risk and Crisis Management graduate at AIM in the Philippines. While in AIM, she and her group mates developed Padayon. This donation-matching application bridges donations of individuals and corporations to areas that need it the most in times of disaster. Donations are matched to the specific needs of the affected communities to ensure that they receive what is required on the ground. The app capitalizes on transparency and equitable allocation of donations ensuring that no affected community gets left behind. Padayon is an example of an innovation bridging private individuals, organizations, and affected communities in times of disaster. The app is in its prototype stage, with a trial run soon to commence with identified communities.

The partner event also featured the talk by Ms. Rana Flowers, representing UNICEF Vietnam, highlighting the necessity of working with and for children and young people in DRR and innovation. DRR efforts will have to go beyond PPP. Thus, it is imperative to recognize, harness, and collaborate with the efforts of other national and regional DRR initiatives that are specifically oriented to those most vulnerable such as PWDs and children.

Ms. Flowers shared that children and youth are often the most severely impacted when disasters strike. The impacts can be seen in the children's entire life. UNICEF has worked closely with private sector partners to develop innovative DRR programs and act on climate change for every child. They also want society to recognize the youth sector's capacity to co-create solutions for DRR. An example in the Philippines is UNICEF's program with the National Meteorological and Hydrological Agency to engage students in DRR under an innovative initiative called the School Hydro-Meteorological Information Network (SHINe). Under the initiative, school students in the remote islands of Gigantes and Calagnaan were trained and engaged as part of the community-based Early Warning System. In closing, Ms. Flowers enlightened the audience that children should be allowed to create, as they can bring amazing solutions when we include them in co-creating solutions.

Ms. Jessica Sy, Assistant Vice President/Project Director of SM Development Corporation (SMDC), presented SM's inclusive and sustainable urban development through adopting technological applications. SM Prime Holdings, Inc. is one of Southeast Asia's largest integrated property developers, building innovative and sustainable lifestyle cities. As part of their sustainability initiatives, they ensure properties are designed for solid waste management, energy, water efficiency, and air conservation to reduce its effects on the natural environment and combat climate change. The company's initiatives align with the UN Sendai Framework for DRR through partnerships with the national government and civil society groups in risk-based assessment and implementation and internal capacity building. They use data and employ practices supported by technology in developing sustainable communities. An example of their effort in preparing tenants in DRR is offering a remote online data storage service for their essential business and insurance documents via the SM Business Continuity Program (SMBCP). More than developing properties, they also aim to be nation-building conduits and create resilient communities through programs such as "The Good Guys" and "SM Cares." Both support stakeholders like MSMEs, children, women, and other vulnerable communities in building back better through key partnerships with NGOs and government offices. SM Prime Holdings, Inc. is committed to being steadfast in being one of the leaders in the private sector to embrace new technological advancements to safeguard a better quality of life for future generations.

Mr. Barrameda ended the event with a reminder that resilience is everybody's business. Both the public and private sectors play vital roles in a resilient future. Science, technology, and innovation are fundamental drivers to creating solutions for disaster risk reduction and climate resilience. Guided by the SDGs and Sendai Framework, we must make it work for the people and most vulnerable sectors.