

Session II-B

DEALING WITH DISASTERS FROM THE RISK MANAGEMENT PERSPECTIVE: PRACTICES FROM INDIA, JAPAN AND NEW ZEALAND

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Dealing with disasters receives major attention in the development field. Both practitioners and researchers acknowledge how vulnerability of a locality or society is influenced by how disasters are dealt with by government, the private sector and ordinary citizens. In this regard, the reduction of losses to life and property, and of environmental damage is an important goal to be met. Risk management serves to achieve this goal. Some societies have embarked on dealing with all types of risks in a generic way by way of standards. Through semi-structured interviews of practitioners and researchers and review of official documents, disaster management from the risk perspective in three countries are investigated and analyzed. Emphasis is placed on the application of risk management standards with a retrospective view of adoption and analysis of trends of application in Japan (JIS Q 20001) and New Zealand (AS/NZ4360:1999). Using this as perspective, inferences on countries like India where no such voluntary standards exist are formulated. Administrative practices bordering on bureaucratic sectoralism prove to be barriers to implementing a unified thinking about risks in general. The paper provides a scheme based on a synthesis of investigation results, to support societies, culturally different as they are, towards the common goal of disaster loss reduction from the perspective of risk management.