

**17-18
NOVEMBER 2009**

**WITS UNIVERSITY,
JOHANNESBURG**



DISASTER RISK MANAGEMENT (DRM) WORKSHOP

DISASTERS: TRUE OR FALSE?

'The correct response to disasters is to immediately send international relief *materiel*, such as tents, blankets and drugs'; 'Foreign volunteers with any kind of medical background are needed'; 'Disasters are random killers'; 'Unburied corpses of disaster victims cause the spread of contagious diseases'.

BACKGROUND

Natural and human-induced disasters, including, but not limited to droughts, floods, epidemics, extreme temperatures and fires commonly occur in South Africa and in South African cities. Such events negatively impact communities and individuals, livelihoods and infrastructure and cause social and economic losses at all scales. Disasters also compromise (sustainable) development and the implementation of city strategies.

In order to mitigate the negative impacts of disasters, cities must be constantly prepared to deal with a variety of disasters and must be able to ensure speedy and appropriate action, both before and after disasters. Despite legislation designed to coordinate government bodies and minimize the impacts of disasters in SA, officials have historically been unprepared to deal with disasters and their actions have been uncoordinated, with government often having to rely on civil society to manage most of the after-effects of disasters. South Africa has typically been overly focused on disaster *response and relief*, instead of on *reduction of risk and vulnerability*. Effective management of disasters places a heavy burden on many institutions, especially those at the local or metropolitan level, who need to develop, coordinate and implement appropriate disaster risk management strategies.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this workshop is to:

- Consolidate disaster risk concepts and strategies amongst municipal officials, with an emphasis on preparedness and mitigation strategies;
- Review the current legislative and regulatory framework in SA;
- Learn lessons in DRM from public and private experience (both local and international);
- Discuss the key challenges facing municipalities in anticipating and mitigating disasters and then workshop strategies to improve South Africa's disaster reduction.

The event is highly participative and will be facilitated by Dr Krisno Nimpuno (Director of the Office of Disaster Preparedness in Africa at Wits University and ex-UN Disaster Official) and Brian Boshoff (Senior Lecturer in the School of Architecture and Planning at Wits University). The facilitators have extensive international and local lecturing/training and practical experience in Disaster Risk Management and in Development and Environmental Planning. There will also be guest lecturers from the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRCRCS): Farid Aiywar: Disaster Management Manager for Southern Africa and Mehari Semere: IFRCRCS Programme Evaluator.

Attendees will be provided with documentation.

SCHEDULE

DAY 1	DISASTERS: ARE WE ALL ON THE SAME PAGE?	ANALYSIS and INTERPRETATION
9h30	REGISTRATION	
10h00-10h15	WELCOME and INTRODUCTIONS	Issues Addressed
10h30-13h00	LECTURES and DISCUSSIONS	Disasters, Some Disaster Statistics, Hazards, Vulnerability, Coping with Disasters, Mitigation, Factors Exacerbating Disasters, Disaster Myths, Case Studies, Tools and Approaches, the Southern African Scenario
13h00-14h00	LUNCH	
14h00-17h00	GUEST LECTURERS: DISASTER RESPONSE and DISCUSSION	Identifying and Dealing with Hazards and Disasters
17h00	ASSIGNMENT ISSUED	.
DAY 2	WHAT NOW?	FROM ANALYSIS TO ACTION
9h00-11h00	GROUP PRESENTATIONS, CRITIQUE and DISCUSSION of ASSIGNMENT	The Way Forward, Disasters and Development and Environmental Planning, Towards "Safe" and "Sustainable" Cities
11h00-13h00	CLOSING and WAY FORWARD	Consolidation, identification of Training and Other Needs, Conclusions.
13h00-14h00	LUNCH	