

Report on
Nepal's Participation at APMCDRR 2024



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Abstract:

Nepal's participation in the Asia-Pacific Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (APMCDRR) 2024 highlighted the nation's commitment to resilient and inclusive DRR strategies within the Asia-Pacific region. Held in Manila, Philippines, from October 14-18, 2024, APMCDRR gathered over 5,000 participants, focusing on three thematic pillars: DRR financing, gender-responsive and inclusive governance, and localization of resilience efforts. Represented by a diverse 43-member delegation from both government and non-government sectors, Nepal highlighted its multi-stakeholder approach to DRR, coordinated by DPNet as the secretariat of the National Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction (NPDRR). Key features included Nepal's showcase of DRR innovations such as accessible DRR materials in braille and an earthquake shake table demonstration, which simplified complex concepts for broader audiences. The country's position paper emphasized Nepal's challenges as a climate-vulnerable, least-developed country and advocated for enhanced access to climate financing and international cooperation. The delegation contributed actively to plenary sessions, panel discussions, and ignite stages, presenting Nepal's progress and strategies in DRR, notably in areas like resilient housing and inclusive governance frameworks. The conference's outcomes included calls for action to strengthen early warning systems, improve DRR funding mechanisms, and foster private sector engagement. Nepal's delegates gathered insights on merging indigenous knowledge with digital tools, combating misinformation, and advancing gender-sensitive DRR policies. The delegation plans to integrate these learnings into Nepal's national DRR strategies, prioritizing climate finance reforms and fostering regional partnerships to enhance resilience. Nepal's active participation reaffirmed its role in regional DRR efforts, setting a path toward strengthened community resilience and a more sustainable, inclusive future.

1. Background

The Asia-Pacific Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (APMCDRR) is an intergovernmental conference that plays a crucial role in shaping the disaster risk management strategies of the Asia-Pacific region, the most disaster-prone area in the world. Established to facilitate the implementation of the



global frameworks like the Hyogo Framework for Action (2005-2015) and, subsequently, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (2015-2030), the APMCDRR has evolved into one of the most important platforms for enhancing regional cooperation in disaster risk reduction (DRR). The first conference, then known as the Asian Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (AMCDRR), was held in Beijing in 2005. It marked the beginning of a series of conferences that have since been hosted in countries such as India, Malaysia, the Republic of Korea, Indonesia, Thailand, and Mongolia, showcasing the region's commitment to DRR.

The Indian Ocean tsunami of 2004, which devastated large parts of coastal Asia, particularly India, marked a turning point for many governments in the region, pushing them to adopt more robust DRR policies. These conferences, in partnership with the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR), have since provided a platform for countries to share lessons learned, coordinate their approaches to disaster risk governance, and work collectively toward preventing and mitigating disaster risks.



In 2022, the APMCDRR was hosted in Australia, reflecting the region's growing sense of urgency in addressing the rising frequency and intensity of natural disasters, particularly those exacerbated by climate change. The recent APMCDRR was held in Manila, Philippines, from 14-18 October 2024, with over 5,000 participants from government, civil society, academia, the private sector etc. As the host, the Philippines is a fitting choice, given its geographic vulnerability to natural disasters, including typhoons, earthquakes, and volcanic eruptions.

2. Thematic Focus of APMCDRR 2024

The APMCDRR 2024 is centered around three thematic pillars: enhancing disaster risk reduction financing, fostering gender-responsive and inclusive disaster risk governance, and strengthening localization in both urban and rural resilience efforts. These pillars are underpinned by four cross-



cutting themes: science, technology, and knowledge; multi-stakeholder coordination and collaboration; convergence and coherence of disaster risk strategies; and full private sector engagement.

During the conference's opening ceremony, President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. of the Philippines emphasized the need for international cooperation and increased investments in DRR, pointing out that climate change is intensifying the impacts of disasters, particularly in vulnerable regions like the Philippines. He called on both developed and developing nations to increase access to DRR financing mechanisms, especially for

countries that are least developed and highly vulnerable. He mentioned that The Asia-Pacific region also stands as a testament to the unwavering spirit of its people. From the tsunami in the Indian Ocean to Typhoon Haiyan in the Pacific Ocean, from the earthquakes in Nepal to floods in South Asia, our nations have conquered monumental challenges.

Kamal Kishore, Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General for Disaster Risk Reduction, reinforced the urgency of deepening regional cooperation and aligning national DRR policies with the global frameworks like the Sendai Framework. He acknowledged that while the Asia-Pacific region is a pioneer in many DRR strategies, countries are falling behind on meeting the Sendai



Framework's targets. The complexity and unpredictability of disasters are increasing, requiring not just local and national solutions but also regional cooperation and convergence of efforts.

The APMCDRR 2024 also features an exhibition booth and the Philippine Pavilion, showcasing the country's best practices in DRR. The closing ceremony wrapped up with key insights gathered from plenary sessions, panel discussions, ignite stage presentations, exhibition booths, and the Philippine pavilion with following key takeaways:

- Governments must establish inclusive disaster risk governance frameworks and invest in both structural and non-structural measures to prevent new risks and reduce existing ones, ensuring shared responsibility among all stakeholders.
- Local action is essential for building resilience, with at-risk communities participating in risk assessments and local governments allocating dedicated DRR budgets and policies, supported by improved access to finance.
- Strengthening ecological systems and protecting biodiversity through nature-based solutions are important for integrating climate change adaptation with DRR, highlighting the importance of ecosystem health.
- Private sector involvement in DRR should extend beyond corporate social responsibility, embedding resilience into business models and fostering alliances for mutual benefit.
- The Gender Action Plan calls for capacity building to ensure women's inclusion in DRR decision-making, promoting gender-responsive strategies at all levels of governance.

3. Key call for action

APMCDRR 2024 has issued urgent calls to action to enhance early warning systems globally by 2027, emphasizing the need for international support in capacity-building and financing. Key priorities include consistent DRR funding, deeper private sector engagement beyond corporate social responsibility, and stronger legal frameworks to define roles and responsibilities. Advancements in data and technology, including AI, are crucial for understanding and addressing evolving disaster risks, as outlined below:



- With three years remaining to meet the UN Secretary General's goal of early warning coverage for all by 2027, countries must assess and enhance their early warning systems, especially to reach the “last mile” and ensure inclusivity across borders. International partners are urged to bolster these efforts through capacity-building, technology transfer, and financing.
- While contingency financing, such as affordable insurance for governments, businesses, and households, remains vital, a shift toward consistent financing for DRR and prevention is essential. This includes national budget allocations, better public finance management, increased ODA for disaster risk reduction, and accessible climate financing for adaptation.
- The private sector must further integrate DRR into its models, practices, and supply chains. This can go beyond corporate social responsibility to generate resilience dividends across sectors. Supporting MSMEs and fostering DRR-focused startups is crucial, as are expanding alliances like ARISE to mobilize business leaders and networks for resilience.
- Strengthening DRR's legal framework is critical to clarify roles, responsibilities, and accountability. Inclusive governance systems are needed, linking DRR with sustainable development and climate adaptation, backed by human rights principles. An international treaty, based on the UN's Draft Articles on disaster protection, can drive cooperation and fill current legal gaps.
- Swiftly advancing our understanding of dynamic disaster risk—including hazards, exposure, and intersecting vulnerabilities—is essential. This effort should leverage scientific and technological advances such as AI, risk analytics, and local knowledge to manage disaggregated data effectively and better account for loss and damage.

4. Strategic Areas in line with the Sendai Framework Priorities for Action

APMCDRR highlights strategic areas in line with the Sendai Framework to strengthen Asia-Pacific’s disaster resilience. Key areas include robust data integration with indigenous knowledge, inclusive governance,

increased financing for DRR, resilient infrastructure, and proactive preparedness through early warning systems. Together, these priorities foster collaborative, sustainable disaster risk solutions.

4.1 Understanding Disaster Risk

Strengthening data collection using innovative technologies and integrating local, indigenous, and traditional knowledge are essential for building resilience across Asia-Pacific. High-quality, disaggregated data by gender, age, disability, and income enhances risk understanding. Key actions include developing data protocols, transforming forecasts from deterministic to probabilistic, digitalizing historical records, and ensuring National Statistical Offices lead efforts to improve official statistics. Localized climate variability requires granular, automated data collection to enhance risk tracking and impact-based forecasting. Utilizing AI and open data can deepen understanding of compounding risks. Leveraging these capacities is essential for making affordable, accessible solutions available, and the Sendai Framework Monitor plays a critical role in tracking progress.

Effective disaster risk reduction (DRR) requires learning from past events, specifically by analyzing economic and non-economic losses and damages to design informed policies and programs. Integrated DRR and climate action, backed by the Santiago network, provide sustained funding for addressing loss and damage. This foundational knowledge, combined with support for cross-disciplinary collaboration among academia, local knowledge systems, and experts, is essential for understanding risk at multiple levels. Such an integrated approach must incorporate diverse knowledge systems and bridge scientific and local approaches to address complex risk factors. Alliances like U-Inspire help build capacities and foster international cooperation.

4.2 Strengthening Disaster Risk Governance

Effective risk governance is a shared responsibility among governments, communities, and financial institutions, with a critical role for public institutions in enabling stakeholders to prevent and mitigate risks. Collaborative efforts across ministries, local communities, financial entities, and volunteers are crucial, as governance often remains too limited to disaster management organizations alone. Volunteers, central to local DRR efforts, need better support and resources. The private sector has substantial potential to influence DRR governance by integrating risk management into business models and supply chains, fostering resilience within their operations and beyond. Encouraging the growth of start-ups focused on DRR can bring innovation and support economic stability, while robust legal frameworks clarify DRR obligations, responsibilities, and accountability, supporting human rights as part of disaster governance.

4.3 Investing in Disaster Risk Reduction

To meet increasing needs, targeted investments in DRR must span international financial institutions, government budgets, and private channels. Predictable and annual financial allocations are essential to prevent disaster impacts, and strategies like DRR investment bonds and budget stress testing help integrate DRR into sustainable finance planning. Simplified access to international financial mechanisms remains crucial, especially for LDCs, SIDS, and LLDCs, where existing barriers need addressing. Infrastructure resilience underpins socio-economic stability, especially in utilities and digital services. Gray, blue, and green infrastructure approaches offer practical solutions for resilient built environments. Biodiversity and nature-based solutions also play a vital role in DRR and climate adaptation, addressing

risk from ecosystem-based approaches like Reef-to-Ridge models that support sustainable environmental resilience.

4.4 Enhancing Disaster Preparedness and Recovery

More comprehensive preparedness and recovery planning are needed to manage the rising scale of disaster displacement. Preventive measures for resilient relocation can lessen the disruptive impacts on livelihoods. Building back better (BBB) requires a holistic commitment from both public and private sectors, supported by sustainable financing and long-term planning. Strengthening early warning systems (EWS) remains a priority, with multi-hazard, inclusive systems that include feedback loops and encourage anticipatory action. Coordination across productive sectors is essential, with national roadmaps guiding robust EWS frameworks adaptable to transboundary risks. Finally, international cooperation is fundamental for resilience in Asia-Pacific. Regional partnerships, cross-country support, and multilateral aid are pivotal, enabling the region to leverage its scientific and technological expertise to successfully address disaster risk.

5. Nepal's Participation in APMCDRR 2024

Nepal's involvement in the APMCDRR 2024 highlights the country's significant role and ongoing commitment to disaster risk management in a region where natural disasters are common and often devastating. Nepal's participation in the conference, led by the Executive Chief of the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Authority (NDRRMA) Mr. Anil Pokhrel and overall delegataion was coordinated by the DPNet Chair and Member Secretary of NDPRR Dr. Raju Thapa. The team comprises a diverse delegation of 43 representatives from both government and non-government sectors. The delegation highlights Nepal's multi-stakeholder approach to DRR, involving not only government officials

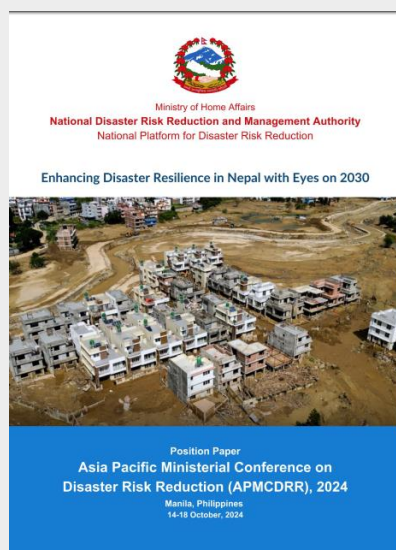


but also experts from academia, disaster-affected communities, and civil society organizations such as DPNet, which coordinated Nepal’s entire participation in the event as the secretariat of the National Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction.

Before attending the APMCDRR 2024, Nepal conducted extensive preparatory work for over six months, which involved drafting a position paper and official statements. These documents were shared with more than 5,000 stakeholders for feedback, ensuring a broad representation of perspectives. After incorporating relevant feedback, Nepal finalized its position paper, which was printed in accessible formats such as Braille to ensure inclusivity, particularly for people with disabilities. To support logistics for the Nepal delegation's presence at APMCDRR, a basket fund was raised. Generous contributions from Danish Red Cross, People in Need, Plan International, Practical Action, Save the Children, and World Vision played a crucial role in making this possible.



Nepal’s position at APMCDRR 2024 highlights the country’s vulnerability to natural disasters, particularly in the context of climate change. As a landlocked and least-developed country, Nepal faces significant challenges in managing disasters, which have become more frequent and severe in recent years. The country is particularly susceptible to extreme weather events like floods, landslides, and Glacial Lake Outburst Floods (GLOFs), all of which are exacerbated by climate change. Despite these challenges, Nepal has made progress in DRR, adopting comprehensive frameworks and policies such as the Bipad Portal and establishing localized DRRM governance structures.

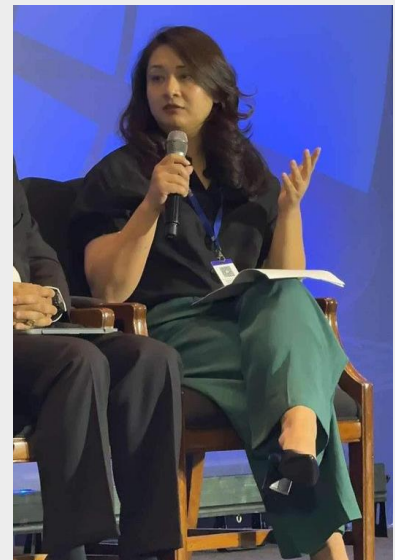


However, financial constraints and capacity bottlenecks continue to hinder the full implementation of these strategies. Nepal is therefore calling for greater international cooperation and enhanced access to climate financing mechanisms like the Green Climate Fund to support its resilience building efforts. Nepal emphasizes the importance of technology transfer, capacity building, partnerships to strengthen its disaster preparedness and response capabilities, particularly in vulnerable communities.

During the APMCDRR 2024, various participants from Nepal actively engaged in plenary sessions, panel discussions, and ignite stages, sharing their experiences and best practices in DRR. Nepal's exhibition booth attracted hundreds of visitors who were particularly impressed by the country's efforts to publish DRR documents in accessible formats like braille and demonstrate innovative tools like the earthquake shake table. The shake table, which simulates the effects of earthquakes in relation to soil structure on buildings of different heights, was praised for its ability to simplify complex engineering and geological concepts, making them accessible to the general public.



Liva Shrestha, a structural engineer from Nepal, was also recognized as a 2024 WIN DRR finalist for her pioneering work in resilient housing across the Asia-Pacific region. With over 18 years of experience, Shrestha played a leading role in post-earthquake recovery efforts after the 2015 Gorkha earthquake, helping to reconstruct and retrofit over 32,000 homes. Her work in advocating for accessible finance for low-income households has made home strengthening more feasible, improving long-term resilience for providing training for more than 4000 Nepali engineers and supporting vulnerable communities not only in Nepal but also in the Philippines and Indonesia.



Nepal's participation in the APMCDRR was successful in showcasing its disaster risk reduction initiatives and fostering valuable regional partnerships. The country plans to organize a post-APMCDRR meeting to share the learnings and explore their implications for Nepal, making the event a great learning opportunity for all Nepali participants.

6. Key Takeaways from Nepal Delegation

The Nepal delegation, consisting of over 3 dozens delegates, actively participated across multiple sessions, engaging as panelists, presenters, and participants throughout the APMCDRR. Nepal also hosted a marketplace booth, where it showcased best practices and lessons learned, including a practical demonstration of an earthquake shake table that received appreciation from numerous visitors. The Nepal team members gathered valuable insights from the conference, which were shared within the delegation's WhatsApp group and email which include the following:

1. Increased investments in Disaster Risk Reduction emerged as a top priority to strengthen resilience and minimize long-term disaster response costs.
2. DRR governance frameworks now emphasize social inclusion, prioritizing active participation from marginalized groups to create comprehensive and equitable resilience strategies.
3. Mainstreaming DRR into development plans and budgets at all governance levels is essential for sustained and institutionalized disaster preparedness.
4. Effective DRR demands robust vertical and horizontal coordination across government entities, private sector stakeholders, and civil society to fully leverage resources and expertise.
5. Clear legislative frameworks that outline roles and responsibilities are vital in promoting accountability and enhancing the effectiveness of DRR initiatives.
6. Fostering an enabling environment where all stakeholders participate meaningfully strengthens shared responsibility and community engagement in resilience efforts.
7. Merging indigenous knowledge with digital tools in early warning systems enhances local relevance and increases preparedness, especially in remote and vulnerable communities.
8. Combatting misinformation through trusted media channels improves risk communication, helping communities access reliable information and stay prepared during disasters.
9. GEDSI strategies are integral to building a more inclusive DRR landscape, ensuring resilience is comprehensive and equitable.
10. Integrating climate adaptation with DRR initiatives lays a strong foundation for building climate-resilient infrastructure, supporting both immediate and long-term preparedness.
11. Bridging scientific research, traditional knowledge, and policy-making accelerates resilience efforts and enhances the relevance of DRR strategies across different communities.
12. Establishing robust, disaggregated data systems is essential for evidence-based decision-making, risk assessment, and effective policy formulation.
13. Improved access to sustainable finance and grants supports local, community-based resilience projects, empowering grassroots efforts to build resilience from the ground up.
14. Public-private partnerships, especially with MSMEs and startups, drive DRR innovation, fostering resilience across economic sectors through new technologies and investments.
15. Using green, blue, and gray infrastructure approaches provides a holistic solution to DRR, addressing multiple dimensions of risk and reducing long-term disaster impacts.
16. Gender-sensitive, risk-informed planning ensures equitable disaster responses that address the needs of all vulnerable groups, strengthening overall community resilience.
17. Empowering youth through DRR education cultivates a culture of resilience, preparing young leaders to address evolving disaster challenges and build stronger communities.

18. Enhanced climate finance reforms and international support boost DRR capabilities in vulnerable nations, enabling critical resilience-building measures to address unique local risks.
19. Integrating anticipatory action into social protection systems provides critical support to communities, shielding livelihoods from recurrent crises and enhancing disaster preparedness.
20. Strengthened global and regional partnerships enhance resource-sharing, knowledge exchange, and disaster response coordination, creating a resilient Asia-Pacific network.
21. Prioritizing resilient urban infrastructure in high-risk areas safeguards critical services, helping maintain stability and support public well-being during disasters.
22. Strengthening DRR legal frameworks at national and international levels ensures accountability, rights-based resilience approaches, and shared responsibilities across all sectors.
23. Enhanced tracking of economic and non-economic losses informs adaptive DRR strategies, enabling context-specific approaches that address local vulnerabilities more effectively.
24. Building back better in post-disaster recovery focuses on resilience, ensuring communities emerge stronger and more prepared for future hazards.

The Nepal delegation's active engagement at the APMCDRR, 2024 showcased Nepal's commitment to resilient, inclusive DRR strategies within the Asia-Pacific region. With a delegation led by NDRRMA and coordinated by DPNET, Nepal shared key achievements and challenges through sessions, panel discussions, and its marketplace booth. By advocating for increased climate finance and regional collaboration, Nepal aims to apply these insights to strengthen its national DRR efforts and build stronger, more resilient communities.

7. Post-APMCDRR Review and Reflection Meeting

The Nepal Delegation to the APMCDRR organized a review and reflection meeting on October 29, 2024, in Kathmandu. Led by the Executive Chief of the NDRRMA, Anil Pokhrel, the session featured a presentation by Dr. Raju Thapa, who coordinated the Nepal Delegation at APMCDRR 2024. In his presentation, Dr. Thapa shared key takeaways and observations gathered from the Nepali delegation members, emphasizing the importance of aligning Nepal's disaster resilience efforts with the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction as the region prepares for 2030. The APMCDRR conference, held in Manila, marked the first conference of its kind after the Sendai Framework's Midterm Review, with a theme of "Eyes on 2030: Enhancing Ambition in Asia-Pacific." Nepal's delegation actively participated in various sessions, including main sessions, side events, the ignite stage, and a dedicated marketplace to showcase Nepal's ongoing disaster risk management (DRM) initiatives. The theme and discussions underscored the urgent need for practical disaster risk financing, inclusive governance, and coordinated resilience across urban and rural areas in Asia-Pacific.

Throughout the conference, the Nepali team promoted key DRR insights, such as the importance of inclusive governance that prioritizes marginalized groups, integrating disaster risk reduction into broader development and finance initiatives, and fostering strong partnerships between government, private sector, and civil society. The delegation also highlighted the significance of community engagement, blending indigenous knowledge with modern digital tools for early warning systems, and the crucial role of trusted media in strengthening risk communication. The transformative potential of AI, robust data

systems with disaggregated data, and public-private partnerships for innovation in DRR were discussed as essential for developing dynamic and responsive disaster preparedness and mitigation strategies. Additional focus areas included youth education in DRR to build a culture of resilience and the "building back better" approach to ensure communities are better prepared for future hazards during post-disaster recovery.



Following the presentation, Executive Chief Pokhrel applauded the Nepali delegation's achievements and strong presence at APMCDRR 2024. He highlighted Nepal's DRR GEDSI Strategic Action Plan as a model for other countries in promoting inclusive disaster management and commended DPNet's coordination among stakeholders. The delegation's advocacy for climate justice, calling for compensation for climate-induced losses, emphasized Nepal's disproportionate vulnerability to climate impacts despite minimal contributions to emissions. Recognizing the commitment and active contributions of all participants, Mr. Pokhrel closed the session with optimism, expressing confidence that the insights from APMCDRR 2024 would strengthen Nepal's DRR framework and its dedication to building a safer, more resilient future.