

Reporting Disaster and Disaster Risk Management

Natural hazards can occur almost anywhere anytime



How does a natural hazard become a disaster?

Reporting Disaster and Disaster Risk Management

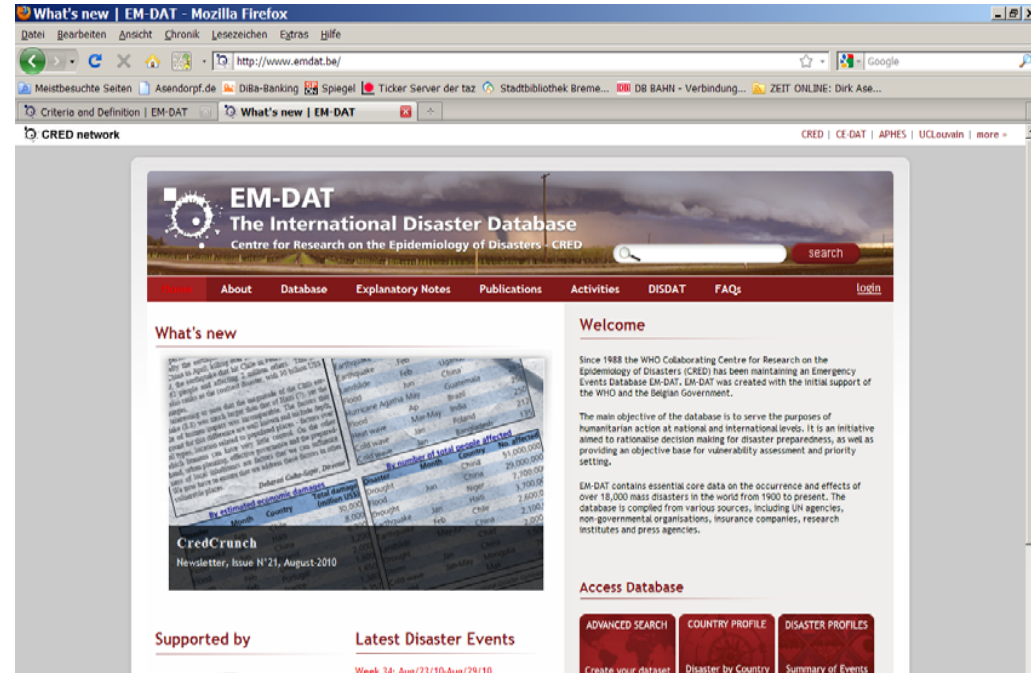
$$\text{Disaster} = \text{Hazard} \times \frac{\text{Vulnerability}}{\text{Mitigation}}$$

Disaster Risk Management

What is a disaster?

For a disaster to be entered into the database at least one of the following criteria must be fulfilled:

- Ten (10) or more people reported killed.
- Hundred (100) or more people reported affected.
- Declaration of a state of emergency.
- Call for international assistance.



The screenshot shows the EM-DAT website interface. The header includes the logo and title "EM-DAT The International Disaster Database" and the subtitle "Centre for Research on the Epidemiology of Disasters - CRED". A search bar is located in the top right. The navigation menu includes links for "About", "Database", "Explanatory Notes", "Publications", "Activities", "DISDAT", "FAQs", and "Login". The main content area features a "What's new" section with a table of recent events, a "CredCrunch" newsletter link, and a "Welcome" section with introductory text. The "Access Database" section includes buttons for "ADVANCED SEARCH", "COUNTRY PROFILE", and "DISASTER PROFILES".

By the number of total people affected	
Month	Country
March	China
April	China
May	Guatemala
June	Guatemala
July	Guatemala
August	Guatemala
September	Guatemala
October	Guatemala
November	Guatemala
December	Guatemala

By the estimated economic damages	
Month	Country
March	China
April	China
May	Guatemala
June	Guatemala
July	Guatemala
August	Guatemala
September	Guatemala
October	Guatemala
November	Guatemala
December	Guatemala

[\(EM-DAT – The International Disaster Database\)](#)

EM-DAT contains core data on over 18,000 disasters from 1900 to present.

How does a natural hazard become a disaster?

- In an industrialised country on average 22 people are killed in a disaster, the figure rises to 1,052 in the developing world.
- A simple rule: the poorer the population of the affected country, the bigger the negative social and economic impact.
- The only long term solution: poverty reduction, social and economic development, good governance
- Thus reducing vulnerability and increasing mitigation
- Journalists have an important role to play

Disaster Reporting

Relief process hampered by rain

Statesman News Service

KENDRAPARA, Sept. 21: With consummate ease, four-wheelers carrying relief pass the national highway to reach areas ravaged by overflowing rivers. Then begins the serpentine turn to the bumpy river embankment road towards Bedari in Patkura area. With this unfolds the visible signs of devastation wrought by the Chitropala river whose turbulent waters had ripped apart the vulnerable embankment yesterday morning.

The speeding lorries are brought to a halt at the embankment-breach spot as the water has gobbled up human settlements. Motorists' drive to the devastated territory come to a predictable end at the embankment breach point. As the road link gets severed, so does the flow of relief material.

The relief-laden trucks predictably get stranded, with few boats to ferry the goods to thousands of people still perched unprotected on roof-tops. Stormy weather conditions aggravate the plight of the stranded



Villagers take shelter on the embankment of Daya river, near Phulpal village of Puri district on Sunday.

■ PRAHLAD MAHATO

affected," said officials in charge of relief and rescue operation.

lakh people scattered over these areas are affected by the watery ingress," said Mr Hamant Sharma, disaster

Marshghai, Mahakalpada, Kendrapara and Derabish blocks. The official flood

at a snail's pace, adding to the misery of the isolated. The government mechanism is not to be

"Our party is carrying out relief operation. I have personally covered many of the marooned areas. Till now relief has not reached the marooned people in a number of villages. We succeeded in reaching people only because our party cadres had procured 12 country boats a day before the disaster. The boat owners were local residents and they ferried us to most of the uncovered areas," Mr Mohapatra said.

Non-governmental organisations were the first to reach the affected, no government agencies were seen working at the ground level of the flooded areas. Not a single polythene sheet has been supplied as yet. There is no semblance of drinking water or halogen tablets. Residents of flood-affected areas are being exposed to water-borne diseases which could have disastrous consequences.

Loopholes in the relief and rescue operation are too glaring to escape notice. The collector today has suspended three officials who were in charge of relief supervision.

Meanwhile the NH-5 (A) besides the Haldiagada-Garadapur Road continues to be the temporary shelter for thousands of flood victims.

Inadequate staff hampers relief distribution

Statesman News Service

JAGATSingHPUR, Sept. 22: Although abundant relief material are ready to be distributed amongst the flood victims here, the district administration is reportedly facing an acute shortage in staff needed to distribute them. This apart, shortage of adequate number of boats, recent continuous rains and above all, alleged mismanagement and lack of coordination among the officials are hindering the smooth and timely disbursement of much-needed relief items in the affected district.

Though the people of this coastal district are heaving a sigh of relief following receding of water at Daleighai, non-reaching of relief items have added to their misery, sources said. While the danger mark at Daleighai was 57-feet, water was flowing at a disturbing 63-feet level. However, it has now receded to 61 feet, official sources said.

The timely supply of relief material including food, polythene sheets, medicines, drinking water pouches, lantern, candles and matchboxes could have alleviated the woes of affected people who have taken shelter in relief camps, embankments and roof tops, but inordinate delay has frustrated them.

More than 50 children have been affected with fever, diarrhoea and vomiting without proper food and by consumption of contaminated water.



Relief material being loaded in an IAF chopper at Biju Pattnaik Air Port in Bhubaneswar on Monday. ■ SNS

Mrs Malati Dei of Kathokoa said that her two-year old son is suffering from fever, but she could not avail medicines. There are a dozen instances like Malati, sources said.

In some pockets, while kerosene has been distributed, there is no lantern. The affected people alleged that they have to live in dark despite having kerosene as they do not have lanterns. "Does the administration suppose us to drink kerosene," they sarcastically remarked.

The additional district magistrate Mr BV Ekka admitted that only kerosene and no lanterns and candles have been supplied to affected people. He said that the reported staff shortage has been solved as additional staff and officials of non-hit areas have been sent to

Kujang, Tirtol and Biridi areas.

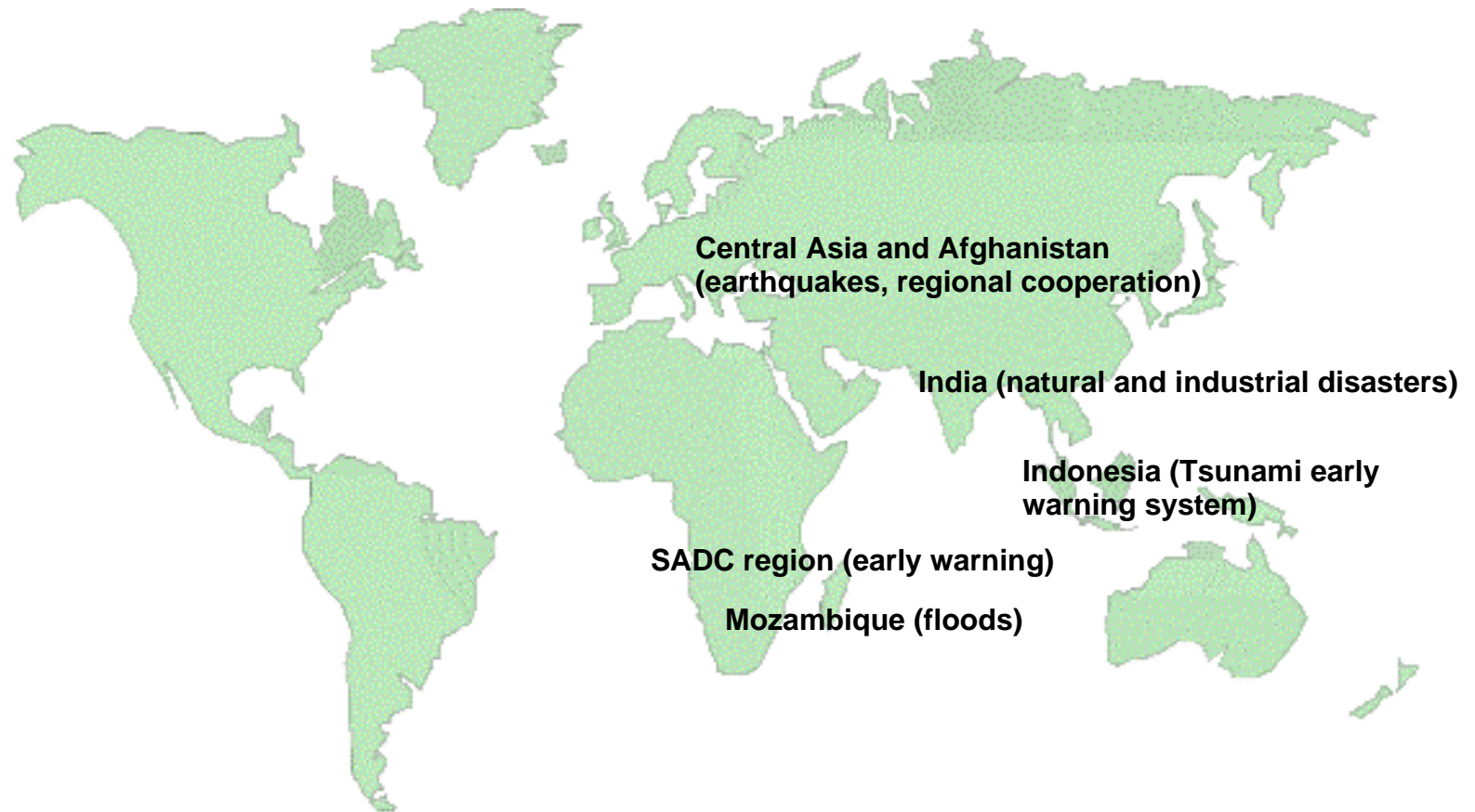
The officer on special duty and former collector Mr Pradipta Kumar Mohapatra has visited Daleighai and other flood affected areas of Biridi and Tirtol areas to inspect relief and rescue operation. Air-dropping of relief items took place in seven panchayats of Tirtol block and 42-mouza area of Biridi.

Official sources said that about 1.41 lakh residents of 188 villages of 61 panchayats have been affected in this district, while relief has been supplied to 38,579 people in 44 camps of this district.

Sources said Lilipita Mohapatra, an employee of Hanusura branch of a nationalised bank has been swept away by flood waters while he was returning home in last afternoon.

Critical journalism doesn't stop in a disaster situation

Training for Journalists



Disaster Risk Reporting = Environmental Reporting

Reporting Disaster Risk

pre disaster

- Do research and report on disaster risk management measures, such as early warning systems, evacuation plans, mock up drills etc.
- Inform community members regarding hazards
- Show possible means for disaster preparedness
- Keep a watchful eye on government preparations and of other involved institutions
- Beware of concocted disasters

Reporting Disaster Risk

post disaster

- Become the ears and eyes of the public in discovering any misuse of funds and logistics
- Have a watchful eye on government as well as NGO actions
- Help to reunite families and to rebuild trust and self confidence in the communities
- Publish stories to heal victims' psychological trauma, interview trauma counsellors
- For radio: provide call in or talk-back programs for people to people interactions
- Cover reconstruction and rehabilitation activities
- Become the watchdog regarding preparedness for the next disaster to come

Reporting Disaster Risk

Press Relation Officers should ...

- produce and distribute comprehensive brochures and other information and educational material on disaster prevention for general public, stakeholders, schools, etc.
- present their institutions policies and actions to journalists and general public
- keep journalists informed, answering their questions
- in a disaster situation give journalists access to the field and to officials from relevant institutions
- become professional in crisis and emergency risk communication

Journalists should ...

- do research and report on disaster risk management before, on relief aid during and on lessons learned after a disaster
- cooperate and network internationally
 - stick to the facts and try to avoid rumours and sensationalizing
- fulfil a watchdog role before, during and after a disaster
 - after a disaster help to reunite families and rebuild self confidence

Common Obligation

- rise public awareness of possible risks, prevention and mitigation measures
- agree upon standards of operational procedures in a disaster situation
- disseminate warning messages as quick and reliable as possible
- keep the population well informed thus avoiding rumours and panic in a disaster situation

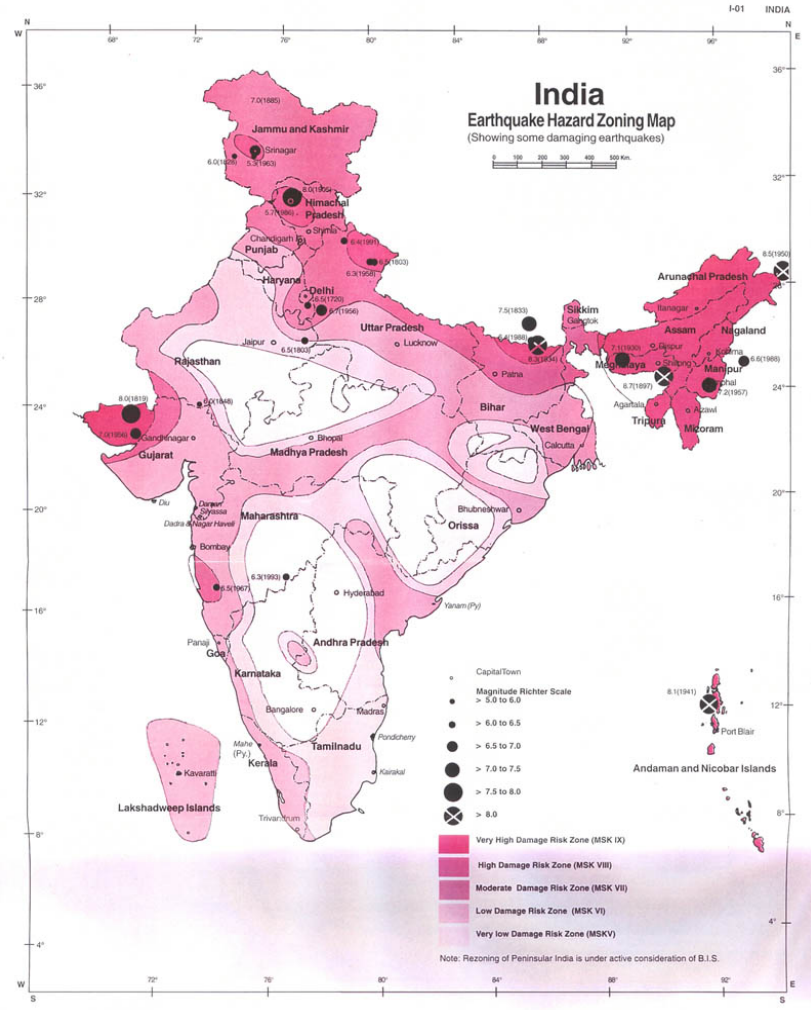
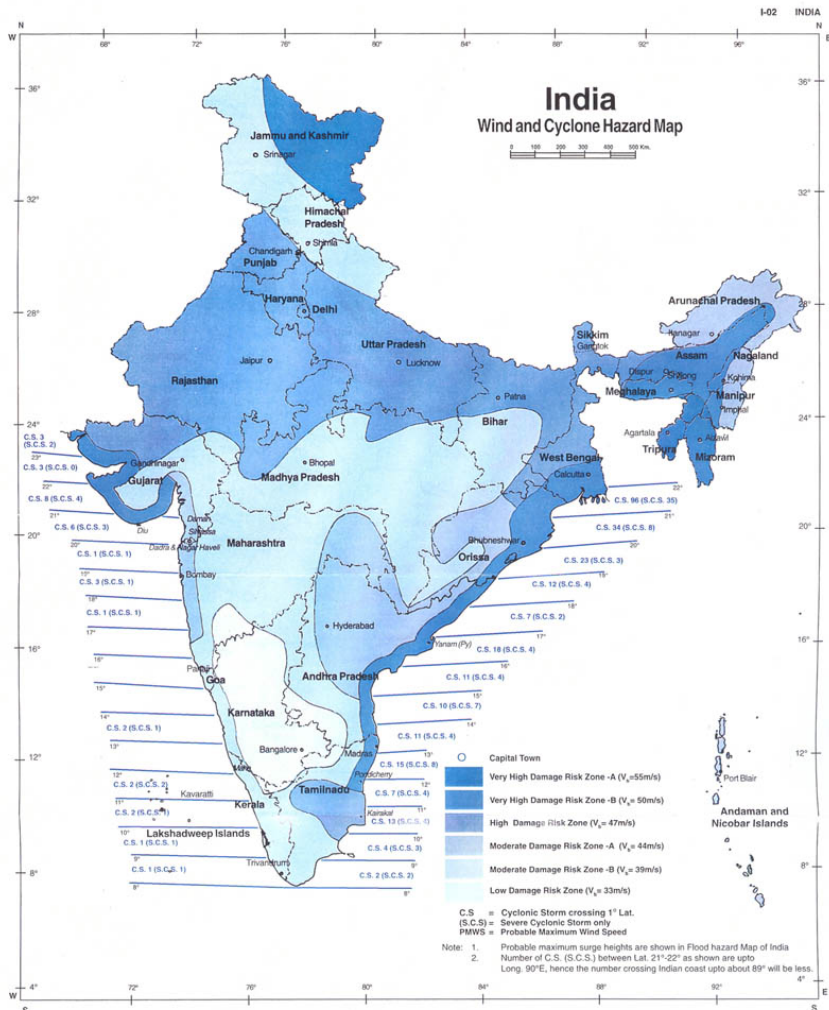
Disaster Risk Management and the Media

Training for Journalists



Media Orientation Workshop in Disaster Risk Reduction, Mamallapuram, July 22-23, 2010

Training for Journalists in India



Training for Journalists

Top 10 Natural Disasters in India for the period 1981 to 2010 sorted by numbers of killed

Disaster	Date	No Killed
Earthquake (seismic activity)	26-Dec-2004	16,389
Storm	28-Oct-1999	9,843
Earthquake (seismic activity)	29-Sep-1993	9,748
Epidemic	May-1984	3,290
Epidemic	Nov-1988	3,000
Storm	9-Jun-1998	2,871
Extreme temperature	26-May-1998	2,541
Flood	May-1994	2,001
Flood	Aug-1998	1,811

Training for Journalists

**Reporters
own
experience**



Training for Journalists

Experience

**Disaster Risk
Science and
Institutions**



Training for Journalists

Experience

Disaster Risk

Role of Media



Training for Journalists

Experience

Disaster Risk

Institutions

Role of Media

Excursion



Training for Journalists

Research in Kalpakkam



Training for Journalists

**Kalpakkam
before Tsunami**



Training for Journalists

Kalpakkam

**5 years after
Tsunami**



Training for Journalists

Kalpakkam

Rebuilt at the
same spot



Training for Journalists

Kalpakkam

**Discussing
disaster
preparedness**



Training for Journalists

Kalpakkam

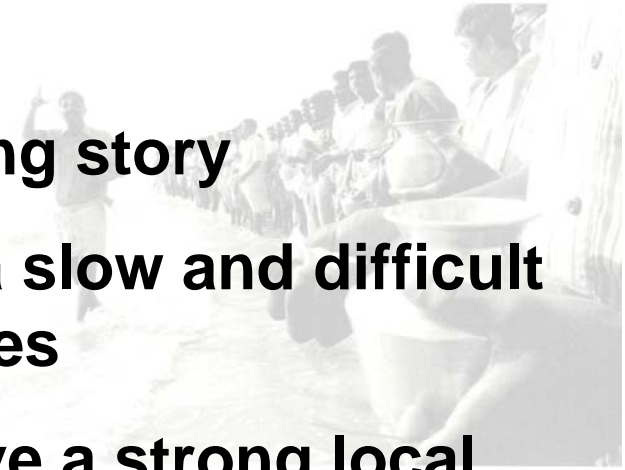
**Next disaster
in the making**



Reporting Disaster and Disaster Risk Management

- **Journalists are good in covering events – but often fail covering processes**
- **A disaster always makes for a gripping story**
- **Disaster Preparedness, however, is a slow and difficult process rarely offering catchy headlines**
- **Disaster Risk Reporting needs to have a strong local focus – coverage must be done by local journalists**

How to make disaster risk management a juicy story?



Reporting Disaster and Disaster Risk Management

[Journalism]

Disaster reporting

Natural and industrial disasters are always covered by the media, but reporters could do far more than merely assume the role of observers. They should raise people's awareness of imminent dangers, warn of risks and cover technologies that help to prevent catastrophes.

[By Christina Kamlage and Dirk Asendorpf]

→ A dozen colourful fishing boats are lying on the beach; nets are spread out to dry; a cow is dozing in the shade of a thatched roof. This setting is not as idyllic as it seems. "We haven't been able to go out for three days," says the village chief of Mayurkuppam. "The swell is too dangerous and there was a storm warning. They announced it on the radio and we also received a warning by mobile phone."

For the fishermen in the South Indian state of Tamil Nadu, another day will pass without income. Nonetheless, they are happy they have a reliable early warning system. In small groups, they are talking to journalists from Chennai, the state capital, explaining how modern information technology has made their work a little less dangerous. The visitors take pictures and fill their notepads – 21 journalists are taking part in a workshop on the media's role in disaster risk management.

governmental and non-governmental prevention programmes – and critically assess their suitability at the same time?

- How do they ensure that important lessons from the past are not simply forgotten again? In order to tackle these issues in a real-life setting, the workshop spends one morning of its two-day programme in Mayurkuppam.

Multiple risks

This village is exposed to several disaster risks. It was flooded by the tsunami on Boxing Day 2004. Twelve people drowned; the wooden houses and many boats were destroyed. Five years on, all the families now have a roof over their heads again. The Indian government and aid agencies built stone and concrete houses, paved the paths and set up emergency shelters.

point out risks, for instance, or inform people of emergency plans.

As elsewhere in the world, such coverage matters in Tamil Nadu. Despite being required by law for quite some time, this Indian state does not even have an emergency management agency. This is what Nagma Firdaus tells the journalists' workshop. The UN expert is familiar with the technical and administrative specifics of disaster risk management in India.

At a mock editorial conference after returning from the village, several journalists agree that, combined with a report from the fishing village, this information would make a great feature story. By publishing such articles, their newspapers would thus serve as watchdogs and part of an early warning system. This is precisely what Sashi Kumar, the head of the Chennai-based Asian College of Journalism (ACJ), had demanded in his brief welcoming speech. The ACJ prepared the workshop in cooperation with InWent's International Institute for Journalism and Department of Environment, Energy and Water. The ACJ also invited several participants to the workshop.

"These ideas are great, but they hardly ever materialise," warns Nitjanand Jayaram, a senior environmental journalist. "Our media are good when it comes to events, but they shy from reporting slow

be taught not only how to describe this vicious circle, but even to help to break it down in the long term through good reporting.

In cooperation with InWent, the ACJ is designing a training module and a manual, drawing on experience from media workshops in various Indian regions. The workshop participants in Tamil Nadu had the opportunity to discuss an early version of the manual. It contains background information and practical tips. It also lists the phone numbers of important persons the journalists will need to contact in order to report before, during and after a disaster. There even will be a short version printed on water-proof paper that reporters can put in the trouser pocket in case of an emergency.



Hindu fishermen grieving the dead in 2004. The media typically report disasters, but do little to prevent them.

"Back in 2004, we stumbled into the disaster zone without any plan at all," recalls Papi Sriman during the workshop. She covered the tsunami for the news agency Reuters. "There was no early warning at all. I first realised that something must have gone badly wrong when suddenly all mobile phones started ringing simultaneously while I was standing in a queue at a ticket office." Her colleague Sanjay Ghosh from All India Radio, the national broadcaster, says he still feels "the pain of having to report the suffering of the people personally affected by the

tsunami". At the time, journalists were not offered any counselling.

The younger participants in the workshop listen eagerly. In their evaluation they will later state that they rated the personal exchange among colleagues very much – topped only by the field trip to Mayurkuppam. Speaking on behalf of all the participants, Noorullah of the daily newspaper Tamil Sudar, expresses his regret: "In everyday life, we practically never leave the city."

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Reporting Disaster and Disaster Risk Management

The new buildings, however, are located exactly where the old village was, less than 100 metres away from the surf. A cyclone would flood it once more, not to mention a tsunami. “Relocating was out of the question,” the village chief says, “we have to be close to our boats.” Unlike before, however, the village will now get early warnings over the airwaves.

There is another kind of danger, however. Three kilometres north of Mayurkuppam, a security fence blocks the beach. Behind the fence, two reactor blocks of a nuclear power plant tower into the sky. A third block is scheduled to become operational next year. Next to the power plant are an interim storage facility for nuclear waste and a reprocessing plant. “We don’t know whether there is an emergency plan in case of an accident, or whether we are meant to be warned or evacuated,” says the chief of the fishing village. The journalists busily take notes.

Industrial accidents can cause catastrophes too, as was evident in the BP oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico this year. Internationally, the names of the towns of Chernobyl and Bhopal became synonyms of mass suffering after terrible accidents in the past. Of course, the media are relevant in such contexts too. They can point out risks, for instance, or inform people of emergency plans.