



Avoidable Deaths Network

Newsletter

Issue No. 1

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Letter from the Editor-in-Chief

December 2019

Dear readers and the ADN community,

Welcome to our first newsletter for the Avoidable Deaths Network (ADN). ADN is a global membership network, dedicated to finding theoretical and practical solutions to reducing deaths from disasters.

The newsletter will include: a) news of activities carried out by the ADN Regional Coordinators (RCs) located across five continents; b) original research papers that address ADN's mission and objectives; c) transcripts or interviews with experts on the field of reducing disaster deaths; d) reflective notes from the practitioners from the front line; e) updates on the UN's Sendai's Framework's first two Global Targets A and B; and f) a promotional page for events and announcements.

Disaster-related deaths can be from natural hazards, naturally triggered technological hazards, biological hazards and human-made hazards. In the past 50 years, hydro-meteorological hazards (storms, heat, cold, drought, floods) were responsible for 45% of all disaster deaths; geophysical

hazards (landslides, earthquakes, tsunamis) caused 30% of deaths; and biological hazards (outbreaks and epidemics) caused 5% of all disaster-related mortality (Keim, 2016). Reducing disaster deaths is a global challenge. This global challenge cannot be addressed by one discipline or sector. It requires an examination at the seams of different disciplines (Midgley 2014; Ray-Bennett 2018) and trans-disciplines to resolve complex problems (Stock and Burton, 2011) such as disaster-related deaths.

Since 2005, the UN's disaster risk reduction (DRR) framework has advocated inter-sectoral, multi-sectoral and multi-stakeholder approaches to disaster risk management. This framework is complex, and the complexity of this framework arises when the decision to save lives during and after disasters sits across different governmental departments and organisations (Grint 2008; Rittel and Webber 1973; Ray-Bennett, 2017, 2018; Ray-Bennett and Shiroshita, 2019). By engaging with government and non-government organisations, political leaders, civil society, at risk communities and researchers, this newsletter will highlight different perspectives on disaster management, development and sustainability as they related to avoiding disaster deaths. The central theme of this newsletter is to collect, share, reflect and advocate good practices (some of which are drawn from an understanding of bad practices) on how to avoid deaths.

Deaths in disasters can be direct deaths and secondary deaths. Direct deaths are caused by the direct impact of the disasters. Secondary deaths are caused as a consequence of injury, or morbidity arising from the impact disasters (IRDR, 2015; Ray-Bennett, 2017, 2018). In 2017, the UNISDR (based on the Open Report from the Open-ended Intergovernmental Expert Working Group (OIEWG)) recommended including the missing persons as direct deaths, however, direct deaths and missing/presumed dead are mutually exclusive. The missing person is one "whose whereabouts is unknown since the hazardous event. It includes people who are presumed dead, for whom there is no physical evidence such as a body, and for which an official/legal report has been filed with competent authorities" (UNISDR, 2017: 8).

Reducing deaths in disasters received important traction when the UN's 'Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction' declared its first two Global Targets in 2015, which are to: (a) Substantially reduce global disaster mortality by 2030; and (b) Substantially reduce the number of affected people globally by 2030. In 2015, the UN also adopted the 'Sustainable Development Goals' (SDG). There are 17 Goals, and Goal 1 (No Poverty), Goal 2 (Zero Hunger), Goal 3 (Good Health and Well Being), Goal 6 (Clean Water and Sanitation), Goal 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities) and Goal 17 (Partnerships for the Goals) are directly connected in reducing disaster deaths and the number of people affected by disasters.

To the best of our knowledge, there are no existing national or international networks dedicated to finding theoretical and practical solutions to avoiding disaster deaths at the interface with sustainable development. This newsletter will bring the perspectives of grassroots practitioners

and responders to the fore. It will also bring novel ideas, fresh stories and voices from the sector to inform, learn, educate and motivate our global and local readers, practitioners and followers.

The year 2019 has once again been challenging for the disaster risk reduction community. Of the many small- and large-scale disasters seen so far, three are particularly noteworthy. Cyclone Idai in March and Cyclone Kenneth in April in Mozambique, Cyclone Fani in May in Odisha/India, and Hurricane Dorrain in September in the Caribbean. More than 2,000 people died in Cyclone Idai and 41 in Cyclone Fani. I am very proud to say that our Regional Coordinators (RCs) in Kenya and Odisha were at the front lines managing relief and rapid assessment in the aftermath of Idai, Kenneth and Fani. The reports on rapid assessments are available on the ADN's website.

I would like to thank Dr Hideyuki Shiroshita, Mrs Denise Corsel, Mr Bede Wilson and Mr Matt Merry for their tireless efforts to put this newsletter together. I hope that you will enjoy reading it. I also welcome your comments and suggestions on our first newsletter, which we shall feature on our next edition, due in March 2020.

Yours sincerely,

Dr Nibedita S. Ray-Bennett

President and Editor-In-Chief for the Avoidable Deaths Newsletter

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ADN News

The Launch of [Avoidable Deaths Network \(ADN\)](#): Dr Nibedita Ray-Bennett, Dr Hideyuki Shriroshita, and Mrs Denise Corsel officially launched the Network at the 4th Summit of Global Alliance of Disaster Research Institutes (GADRI) at Kyoto University on 12 March 2019.



The launch of the India Chapter for ADN: The ADN's Advisory Board Member, Dr Ambika Prasad Nanda and the Regional Coordinator of Odisha, Mr Dillip Patnaik launched the India Chapter on 3 September 2019. The event was chaired by the Speaker of the Odisha State Legislative Assembly the Honourable Shri Surjya Narayan Patro, in presence of Ms Monika Oledzka Nielsen, Chief of Field Office, UNICEF Bhubaneswar, and members from INGOs, UN agencies, corporate, civil society representatives, academicians and activists. Dr Nibedita Ray-Bennett delivered her keynote virtually.



Dr Nibedita Ray-Bennett presented the ADN on the IGNITE Stage at the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) in Geneva, Switzerland on 17 May 2019.

Her presentation can be viewed on the next page or at the following link:
<https://youtu.be/PzFOv9Vg8Q8>.



The ADN Community: As of November 2019, ADN has attracted 215 followers from 36 different countries on Facebook (of which 40% are female and 60% are male) and 254 followers from 11 different countries on Twitter (of which 42% are female and 58% are male). Additionally, the ADN has 20 organisational partners, 49 affiliates and 9 interns.



Dr Nibedita Ray-Bennett in collaboration with Mr Maqbul Bhuiyna from Data Management Aid launched the IPPF-funded project report entitled: 'Exploring the Challenges and Opportunities around Reproductive Health in Disasters in Belkuchi Upazila, Bangladesh' at Dhaka University on 23 April 2019. The project's film can be viewed below (or at <https://youtu.be/s9uMeNsUZhC>) and the project's report and policy briefs can be found at <https://www.ippf.org/resource/improving-quality-and-availability-post-abortion-care-humanitarian-crisis>



The ADN team has made four peer reviewed publications. Two contributing research papers for the UNDRR's Global Assessment Report 2019, one article for the journal: *Disaster Prevention and Management*, and one for *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Natural Hazards Science* (forthcoming). The weblinks of the publications are listed below under the heading titled: Disasters and Deaths Related Publications.

News from the Regional Coordinators and Advisory Board Members

Mr Daniel Mendez, the Regional Coordinator of Belize developed a protocol for UNICEF called 'The Protocol for the Integrated Protection of Children and Adolescents in Disaster Situations in Belize'.

Mr Dillip Patnaik, the Regional Coordinator of Odisha worked with the Inter-Agency Group of Odisha to develop the rapid assessment report for the post cyclone Fani on 7 May 2019. The rapid needs assessment report can be found [here](#).

Dr Nibedita Ray-Bennett hosted Dr Edris Allam for three months at the University of Leicester. Dr Alam was funded by the Leicester Institute of Advanced Studies Rutherford Fellowship.

Mr Samuel Akera, the ADN's Regional Coordinator for Kenya and East Africa, has been providing technical assistance to the UN, the Government of Mozambique and other humanitarian-development community to conduct a comprehensive Post Disaster Needs Assessment (PDNA) for Cyclone Idai. This will help Beira to Build Back Better and prevent avoidable deaths in the future.

Mr Samuel Akera has also developed a National Framework and Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for DRM Planning in Zimbabwe. He also developed guidelines and templates for: Disaster Risk Profiling; Disaster Risk Mitigation and Adaptation Planning; Emergency Response Preparedness Planning; and Mainstreaming DRR and CCA in development.

Mrs Pamela Kumojini, the Regional Coordinator of Uganda, attended the UNDRR's [Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction in Geneva](#).

Dr Ambika Prasad Nanda, the ADN's Advisory Board Member for India, and Mr Dillip Patnaik the Regional Coordinator of Odisha, took part at the Global Platform for DRR in Geneva virtually.

Dr Sophie Hebden, the UK's Regional Coordinator has taken up the Research Coordinator position with Future Earth Harwell. She will link projects and programmes within European Space Agency and Future Earth to maximise the use of Earth Observations for sustainability.

Ms Andrew Patience, ADN's Advisory Board Member from Nigeria, joined over 150 emerging leaders from 51 countries to shape the future of civic leadership at the Global Pathfinder Summit in

Virginia USA from 20 to 24 May 2019. Please see her presentation titled: 'This is Not a Poem About Race' at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a8yJyffE4-Q>



Mr Dillip Patnaik, the Regional Coordinator of Odisha organised a round table meeting on Linking Climate Change and Migration in Coastal Odisha post Cyclone Fani in June 2019.

Mr Mihir Bhatt, Advisory Board Member from India, has initiated a national-level initiative to promote accountability for avoidable deaths. Mr Bhatt has said:

“All India Disaster Mitigation Institute (AIDMI) finalized Pan-India Study on the Existing Mechanisms of Ensuring Accountability to the Affected Population in India: Experiences from Emergency Responses in the Assam, Odisha and Kerala for the Core Group of Save the Children, Christian Aid, Caritas and Islamic Relief and held national consultation where the challenge of Avoidable Deaths came up in discussion. Who must lead the concept of Avoidable Death in India, at what level, and in which sectors. It has decided to initiate an additional initiative to look at aspects of accountability around avoidable deaths. Interested individuals are welcome”.



News from the Organisational Partners

Equal Asia Foundation, founded and directed by Mr Ryan Figueredo, has now officially been launched and has joined ADN as an Organisational Partner. For more information, please click [here](#).

Barker-DeStefano & Co, directed by Ms Camilla Barker-DeStefano, has launched an emergency management and response learning and training platform, called The Crisis Academy. For more details, please click [here](#).



Disaster Resilience Network Ghana, founded and directed by Mr Victor Folihas, advocates the importance of multi-hazards early warning systems as a major contribution to building resilience and saving lives and properties. Recently, they have collaborated with Accra Metropolitan Assembly (AMA) to organise a Makola's market fire safety workshop to train group leaders to be first responders.

Doers, a humanitarian non-governmental organisation in India, conducted a Workshop at Loreto Convent School in Shimla on 13 and 16 August 2019. More than 450 students were given vital tips on earthquake preparedness, fire safety, non-structural risk mitigation, road safety and first aid. Please see the pictures of the Workshop taking place below.



Doers has been facilitating the formation of District Inter Agency Groups (IAGs) and state-level IAGs for effective disaster response and coordination between governmental and non-governmental organisations in order to reduce deaths and destructions. Please see the below picture of Team Doers participating in Building a Better Response Workshop.



Research and Reflective Articles

Samuel Akera, the Regional Coordinator for Kenya and East Africa, has written a short article titled: *The Paradox of Identical Disaster Events Causing Different Impact: The case of Tropical Cyclones Idai and Fani*. To read this article, please click [here](#).

David Wales has written a short article titled: *Saving Lives Is Not Enough: More is Needed in the UK*. To read this article, please click [here](#).

Krishna Clarke, the Regional Coordinator for the Caribbean, has written a short article titled: *Hurricane Dorian*. To read this article, please click [here](#).

Pamela Komujuni, the Regional Coordinator for Uganda, has written a short article titled: *The Moment of Global Moment of Global Engagement on Risk Management: Reflections from the 2019 Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction, Geneva, Switzerland*. To read this article, please click [here](#).



Multiple Perspectives on Avoidable Deaths

Short interviews were conducted to gain multiple perspective on avoidable deaths:



Interview with Mrs Pamela Kumojini, Sr. Disaster Management Officer at the Office of Uganda's Prime Minister

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DB4uuCsnX6w&feature=youtu.be>



Interview with Dr Manu Gupta, Executive Director at SEEDs, India

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UEHEuV2X3UM&feature=youtu.be>



Updates on Sendai Goal 1 and 2

For an update on the United Nations Office on Disaster Risk Reduction's (UNDRR) Effort to Reduce Deaths, written by the ADN's Presidents, Dr Nibedita S. Ray-Bennett and Dr Hideyuki Shiroshita, please click [here](#).



Upcoming Events and Announcements

2-13 December 2019: Santiago Climate Change Conference (COP25), organised by the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). For more information, please click [here](#).

13-14 January 2020: ICDEM 2020: International Conference on Disaster and Emergency Management in Zurich, Switzerland. For more information, please click [here](#).

23-26 June 2020: Asia-Pacific Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (APMCDRR) in Brisbane, Australia. For more information, please click [here](#).

8-10 July 2020: VII Regional Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction in the Americas and the Caribbean (RP20), in Montego Bay, Jamaica. Theme: Building Resilient Economies in the Americas and the Caribbean. For more information, please click [here](#).



Disasters and Deaths Related Publications

Ray-Bennett, N.S. and Shiroshita, H. (2019) Disasters, Deaths and the Sendai Framework's Target One: A Case for Systems Failure in Hiroshima Landslide 2014, Japan. Input paper for the: *UNISDR's Global Assessment Report on Disaster Risk Reduction 2019*. Click [here](#) to read the full paper.

Ray-Bennett, N.S., Corsel, D., Goswami, N. and Jackson, P. (2019) 'Challenges and opportunities around reproductive health during a flood: Insight from Belkuchi upazila, Bangladesh', Input paper for the: *UNISDR's Global Assessment Report on Disaster Risk Reduction 2019*. Click [here](#) to read the full paper.

Ray-Bennett, N.S., Corsel, D., Goswami, N. and Ghosh, A. (2019) 'Understanding reproductive health challenges during a flood: insights from Belkuchi Upazila, Bangladesh', *Gates Open Research*, 2019(3): 788. Click [here](#) to read the full paper.

Ray-Bennett, N.S., Corsel, D., Goswami, N. and Jackson, P. (2019) 'Challenges and opportunities around reproductive health during a flood: Insight from Belkuchi upazila, Bangladesh'. Contributing Paper to *Global Assessment Report (GAR) 2019*. Click [here](#) to read the full paper.



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