

INFORMATION NOTE

In May 2015, the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), adopted its resolution 71/11 to establish the Asian and Pacific Centre for the development of disaster information management (APDIM) in the Islamic Republic of Iran as a regional institution of the Commission. APDIM's key aim is to build disaster resilience in the Asia-Pacific region through information management.

Asia and the Pacific is the most disaster-prone region in the world. Floods, cyclones, earthquakes, and sand and dust storms lead to tragic loss of life, trap people in poverty over generations while economic costs are on the rise. Furthermore, as climate change effects intensify increasingly disasters know no borders.

On 30 January 2018, ESCAP and the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran signed an Agreement to establish the new APDIM Centre in Tehran. The Centre will strengthen regional cooperation in Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) and promote effective policies for inclusive, sustainable and resilient development in the region.

APDIM's program is focused around three service lines. Firstly, it will serve as a knowledge and information repository for all disaster related data in the region. Along with its partners, APDIM will create a metadata platform to deliver its services as the regional repository of multi-hazard risk information. The platform will pool data and information on disaster risk and support improved risk informed decision-making processes.

Secondly, APDIM will lead on capacity development, drawing on the experiences of ESCAP's other regional institutes to impart training and knowledge sharing. This is very much demand driven and delivered on-line as well as through mechanisms on the ground. Developing e-learning platforms for disaster risk resilience with specific training modules covering multi-hazard risks is necessary for risk informed investment, preparedness, recovery, impact based forecasting and early warning systems.

Thirdly, APDIM will deliver information services for cross-border disasters in the region. While free-for-use data and imagery on disaster risk is widely available, the challenge is to contextualize existing information using geo-referenced data and link this to social and economic parameters. There are critical gaps at the regional level in understanding the seismic risks that cover parts of South-West and Central Asia. With its partners, APDIM will work to fill these information gaps to deliver regional mapping of seismic risk; establish a sand and dust storm alert system based on transboundary risk assessments; and set up an Asia-Pacific Sand and Dust Storm Network.