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Concept note

1. Background

Countries in Asia and the Pacific are highly exposed to natural hazards and the exposure is increasing. For instance, recent data shows that occurrence of disasters in Asia and the Pacific for 23 year-period of 2000-22 increased by about 90% compared to the previous 23-year period (EM-DAT database). The main contributors to this increase have been floods (which have more than doubled in incidence), earthquakes, storms and landslides.

Examples of recent catastrophes in Asia and the Pacific include the 2011 Mekong River flood that inundated almost 97 000 square kilometres of Thailand killing over 800 and causing approximately USD 40 billion in damages, and Tropical Cyclone Amphan which struck India in May 2020, killing approximately 90, affecting 18 million others and causing USD 13.5 billion in damages. Typhoon Haiyan caused USD 10 billion worth of damages in the Philippines in 2013, and a 2018 earthquake and tsunami in Central Sulawesi, Indonesia killed 4 402 people and caused over USD 1.3 billion in damages. In addition, pandemics of influenza in 1957, 1968 and 2009, SARS in 2003 and COVID-19 have caused major damages in the region.

Reducing catastrophe risk is vital for development in countries in Asia and the Pacific. The sharp increase in disaster incidence requires a comprehensive strategy for disaster risk management that includes mitigation, rapid response (including near-term macroeconomic policies), plans for medium-term recovery and development, necessary public investment for restoration of infrastructure and livelihoods as well as plans for financing these efforts.

2. Objectives and focus of the Asia Regional Meeting

The Asia Regional Expert Meeting on Development, Disasters and Catastrophes (Am-DC) provides opportunities to discuss policy priorities, analytical approaches and data challenges, and contributes to narrowing the gap between policy research and practical policy implementation in disaster mitigation and response. Despite significant progress in terms of analytical approaches and methodologies in recent years, these developments have not been fully reflected in policy implementation. Likewise, despite advancements in identifying and addressing practical challenges of policy actions, analytical and theoretical frameworks often overlook these. In addition, there is a room to improve disaster related data collection and use to conduct analysis and policy decision making. Am-DC will provide an opportunity to discuss these issues.

Am-DC brings together researchers, policy makers and businesspeople to discuss development, including public policy, economic issues, and financing for disaster responses and to share lessons on potential policy solutions. Am-DC can provide a useful platform for collaboration among people with different backgrounds, exchanges of views and strengthened policy dialogue on how to mitigate disaster risks at the regional level. This platform also promotes networking between researchers and policy makers in Asia and Pacific economies with the hope of spurring further dialogue beyond the events.

The main goals of Am-DC are:

- Discussing policy priorities, new analytical approaches, and data challenges.
- Providing opportunities for open and promoting knowledge sharing between researchers, policy makers, and businesspeople in Asia and Pacific countries, Europe, the US, and the rest of the world.
- Exploring discussions in diverse social sciences, including international development, public policy, economics, finance, sociology, history from interdisciplinary or multidisciplinary perspectives.
- Narrowing the gap between policy research and practical policy implementation.

3. Schedule of 2023 Am-DC

The 2023 Am-DC meeting will be held in Singapore on **25 & 26 April 2023**.

The next Am-DC meeting will be held in Asia or/and Europe in the second half of 2023, in co-operation with a partner institution in the region.

4. Target participants

Experts from research institutes, think tanks, international organisations, universities, policy makers, and representatives from both the public and the private sector in Asia and Pacific countries, Europe, the US, and the rest of the world.

5. Issues for discussion (examples)

There are several key issues for discussion at the *Asia Regional Meeting on Development, Disasters and Catastrophes*.

- Disasters and development
- Public policy for disaster mitigation and post-disaster response
- Disaster risk financing and insurance
- Budgetary framework and fiscal measures
- Institutional framework, local governments and urban planning
- Macroeconomic and long-term disaster-resilient growth policies
- Disasters, human capital development and education
- Disasters and climate change
- Disasters and supply chain
- Quality of data, big data and measurements of disaster costs
- Disasters and history – super long-term perspectives
- Other issues raised by participants

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