

# Call for Applications: Advanced Institute on Forensic Investigation of Disasters (FORIN) – Southeast Asia

12-18 March 2012 – IRDR International Centre of Excellence, Taipei, Taiwan



Knowledge of the causes of disasters and how to effectively manage disaster risks has grown considerably in recent years. The most recent 50 years have brought substantial expansion in understanding of the potential magnitude and frequency of many natural events and the places in which they are more likely to occur. Judging by the results of this knowledge, however, it remains seriously inadequate.

*Why, when so much more is known about the science of natural events, including extremes, and when technological capacity is so much stronger [than in the past], are large-scale and even small- and medium-scale disasters apparently becoming more frequent and losses continuing to increase at a rapid rate?*

- IRDR, 2009; White, Kates & Burton, 2001

## Background

Often, growth in disaster related losses is attributed to increases in human population and material wealth and their expansion into more hazardous locations. This is part of the explanation. It is also true that scientific knowledge and modern technology are not uniformly distributed across the globe, and the considerable amount of information that is available is neither being adequately deployed nor effectively used and implemented. In many developing countries, there is lower capacity to utilize or introduce the science and technology that is available because of institutional and social capacity constraints, resource scarcity and/or cultural reasons. Though each of these factors is undeniably important, the fact that disasters continue to occur even in developed countries suggests that there *must* be more to the explanation. This points to a deficit and a deficiency in existing research on disasters, particularly with regards to how science is used to shape social and political decision-making in the context of hazards and disasters.

Addressing this deficit requires integration of research and policy-making across all hazards, disciplines and geographic regions. The **Integrated Research on Disaster Risk (IRDR) program**, a decade-long program of international research and related activities, aims to bring together the natural, socio-economic, health and engineering sciences in coordinated efforts to address the challenges brought about by natural disasters, mitigate their impacts and improve related policy-making mechanisms. One of the initial research components of the program is a set of internationally organized, in-depth case studies (the **Forensic Investigation of Disasters (FORIN)** project) that investigate how natural hazards do – or do not – become disasters. FORIN studies are uniquely designed to approach disaster risk research from the perspective of at least one of four basic hypotheses, each of which values success stories as well as failures in understanding the root causes of disasters and disaster risk.

## **Advanced Institute on FORIN – Southeast Asia**

The **2012 Advanced Institute on FORIN** will provide approximately 15-20 young to middle-career researchers and practitioners from Southeast Asia with the enhanced understanding, skills and resources to design, organize and carry out FORIN related studies in their own countries. The 7-day, intensive training event is hosted and organized by the IRDR International Center of Excellence (ICoE) in Taipei, Taiwan (<http://irdr-icoe.sinica.edu.tw/>), in partnership with START ([www.start.org](http://www.start.org)), the International Council for Sciences ([www.icsu.org](http://www.icsu.org)) and IRDR ([www.irdrinternational.org](http://www.irdrinternational.org)). Institute sessions will include educational modules, hands-on interactive exercises and field visits. **Special attention will be given to disasters that have impacted cities in Southeast Asia.** All Institute participants will conceptualize an individual or collaborative project, to be presented in plenary at the conclusion of the Institute, which may later be submitted for competitive funding to support follow-on activities. Travel support is available for those individuals selected to participate and will include round-trip economy class airfare, accommodations and modest daily subsistence while in Taipei.

## **Applying to Participate**

Individuals from Southeast Asia who are interested to participate in the 2012 Advanced Institute on FORIN, should submit the following materials to the IRDR ICoE (Taipei) **no later than 16 February 2012:**

- A **Participation Statement** (*2 pages maximum*) that clearly articulates
  - Why the applicant desires to participate in the Institute;
  - Relevant background knowledge and experience that the applicant can share with other Institute participants;
  - Current projects, activities and responsibilities in which the applicant is involved that are applicable to and might benefit from training in FORIN-related approaches to disaster research; and
  - Any unique ideas, skills and/or foreseeable opportunities for advancing follow-on activities subsequent to Institute participation, including the identification of potential partner organizations.
- And an updated **Curriculum Vitae or résumé** for the applicant.

Both documents should be submitted by email to the IRDR ICoE at [siyuyu@gate.sinica.edu.tw](mailto:siyuyu@gate.sinica.edu.tw). Applications that are not received, in full or in part, by the deadline stipresulated above will not be considered for participation. Applicants will be informed of participant selection by 24 February 2012.

## **For More Information**

More information about FORIN can be found on the IRDR ICoE website at <http://irdr-icoe.sinica.edu.tw/>. Questions about the Advanced Institute on FORIN or this Call for Applications may be directed to the IRDR ICoE at [siyuyu@gate.sinica.edu.tw](mailto:siyuyu@gate.sinica.edu.tw) or to Clark Seipt at START at [cseipt@start.org](mailto:cseipt@start.org).

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