"Information and Communication in Disaster Response"

Co-organizers and Co-chairpersons

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Adequate response to disasters is becoming a global need and a social responsibility in view of the seemingly growing number of regional disasters and catastrophes endangering a growing number of people. Disaster mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery are a must.. One of the key success factors for a timely, adequate, and effective response to disasters is information. This implies the ability to acquire timely, relevant, and accurate information and to disseminate it despite potential damage to communication means.

Information acquisition must be based on an understanding of the information needs and accessibility of the various stakeholder in the disaster (government agencies, first responders, emergency control centers, volunteer helpers, victims, general public, and the media). It also depends on the availability of various information sources, human (active response, feedback, passive observation of social media, passive observation of position data) and technical (sensors, pictures, automatic measuring units, …) .

Dissemination of information depends on appropriate, uninterrupted, and reliable communication channels.

We need a systemic analysis of vulnerabilities in our society and means to assess actual and impeding hazards and damages in all their dimensions. The design of communication strategies must avoid or mitigate the impact of disasters on the communication infrastructure.

Today's information and communication technologies (ICT) can support and improve above activities, often in ways not anticipated before (e.g. social media), providing speedy aggregation, simulation, interpretation, and presentation of information for the support of response activities. Therefore key issues are:

- information needs and access for all stakeholders, including alarms and instructions,
- uninhibited, seamless communication for the handicapped, the helpless, and foreigners,
- wide-area (even global) distance reconnaissance,
- estimating and simulation of immediate and long-term evolution and impact of disasters,
- analysis of the availability, vulnerability, and substitutability of communication channels,
- (semi-)automatic handling of bulk inquiries (during epidemics)

Authors are invited to submit an extended abstract for this session according to the guidelines for ISSS 2013 (http://isss.org/world/preparing-and-submitting-abstracts-and-papers) *before* June 15, 2013. Final Papers are due by June 15, 2013.

Preliminary acceptance is based on the abstract, final acceptance on the full paper. Abstracts and papers will be subjected to a peer review involving 2 refereees.

In the workshop (2 to 3 hours) we will discuss related issues in an interdisciplinary face-to-face discussion (no paper presentations) in order to identify challenges and opportunities and start sketching a roadmap for further research.

For further details and information contact the chairpersons and look into the LinkedIn discussion group "Comprehensive Emergency Management Research Network ".***http://www.linkedin.com/*** *(free registration)*