



**The significant role of Mass Media in promoting education, creating awareness and achieving sustainable preparedness for tsunamis and other marine hazards.**

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Several mega-tsunamis in the last decade have caused unprecedented deaths and destruction in many countries bordering the Pacific and Indian Oceans. Many other areas in the Atlantic Ocean and in the Caribbean and Mediterranean Seas remain highly vulnerable to future destructive events. To this day the entire world is still feeling the effects of the great tsunamis of 2011, 2010 and 2004. The combined impacts of tsunamis and of collateral hazards have caused hundreds of thousands of deaths and billions of dollars in damages. As a result, much attention has been given to planning for future tsunamis and for the collateral impacts of landslides, fires, hazardous material spills and nuclear plant accidents. In spite of the great attention that has been given, many regions of the world still remain unprepared and are highly vulnerable if similar disasters strike again. However, mass media can play a very important role in creating continuous awareness of potential threats and in achieving effective preparedness for tsunami and other marine hazards and thus minimize future losses of lives and destruction of property. Media contributions could include frequent educational programs, as well as anniversary tributes for the thousands of victims of the recent tsunamis. Such educational and commemorative programs, if repeated with frequency, will have significant long-term benefits for all the areas devastated in the past, would help enhance to a greater extent awareness and preparedness, but would also serve as paradigms in mitigating the future impact of tsunamis and other marine disasters. A multi media approach could be used in providing products for such Tributes – perhaps to be repeated annually and to serve as constant reminders of future potential disasters and of the need for adequate preparedness. Such effort could include photojournalistic exhibitions, picture handbooks and radio documentaries on disaster management. Multi media products – when completed - should receive distribution throughout the potential vulnerable areas, but particularly in the South East Asia region. Countries that would particularly benefit from mass media efforts would include the most vulnerable countries, specifically, Japan, Philippines, Indonesia, Thailand, India, Bangladesh, Malaysia, Myanmar, Sri Lanka, Yemen, Oman, Maldives, Kenya, Tanzania, Seychelles and South Africa. In summary, this presentation provides strategies, guidelines and integrating programs that mass media

can employ to help ensure that local actions are taken that would enhance marine disaster education and of factors related to preparedness, overall resiliency and post-disaster recovery.