

UCL Institute for Risk and Disaster Reduction

Summary Report of the Director for the Annual General Meeting, 22 June 2011

The UCL Institute for Risk and Disaster Reduction (IRDR) was launched on 26 May 2010 with a mission to lead research, knowledge exchange and teaching in risk and disaster reduction (RDR) across UCL, following a successful bid to the Provost's Strategic Development Fund (PSDF), strongly supported by the MAPS Faculty. Its Director is Peter Sammonds, appointed by agreement between the MAPS Dean and VP Research. This report is organized around the commitments made in the PSDF bid and covers the first twelve months of activity.

Constitution The IRDR is an Academic Unit within MAPS. The Director reports to the Deans' Oversight Committee and an Advisory Board, chaired by the VP Research, and holds an AGM. The IRDR budget has its own cost code, CQ, for which the director is responsible.

Management The IRDR Director and Deputy Director draw up 3-month planning programmes, which are presented to termly meetings of the IRDR Executive Board. The Deputy Director position is 0.5 FTE and IRDR Administrator is 0.3 FTE.

1. Coordinate RDR research at UCL and lead bids for major RDR programmes

NERC Natural Hazards theme

Following the **IRDR Natural Hazards Forum** in August 2010, 2 successful scoping studies involving UCL were submitted to the Increasing Resilience to Natural Hazards programme and Peter Sammonds was appointed Strategic Advisor. A second **IRDR Natural Hazards Forum** in April 2011 is seeking to coordinate another bid to the Probability and Uncertainty programme.

International Science & Technology Centre, Moscow

At an ISTC meeting hosted by Professor Alan Smith and MSSSL, and attended by the HE Minister, an MoU between UCL and the Institute of Physics of the Earth, Russian Academy of Sciences, was signed, which included the undertaking for an instrumentation-based project for the detection of natural disaster precursors. *This will be coordinated by the IRDR.*

2. Publish high-impact RDR multidisciplinary reports to influence public policy

Volcanic Hazard from Iceland: Analysis and Implications of the Eyjafjallajökull Eruption.

Sammonds, P., McGuire, W., Edwards, S. (eds.) 2010. London: UCL Institute for Risk and Disaster Reduction. Written and researched by 20 authors from 9 research groups/centres.

Scientific Advice and Evidence in Emergencies. IRDR report to the House of Commons Science and Technology Committee. McGuire, W. (ed.) 2010.

Webcast of the IRDR Tohoku Earthquake Event, March 2011.

3. Forge external partnerships

Aon Benfield: The IRDR negotiated a new sponsorship agreement with Aon Benfield for the Aon Benfield UCL Hazard Centre, on a rolling basis.

CAFOD: We are building on the existing MoU for research in disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation.

Academic Partnerships: Institute of Natural Resources & Natural Hazards, Crete, Greece.

Visitors Yunan Peng (Cambridge); Marta Gallucci (Italy); Salma Al Sinan (Saudi Arabia); Anna Weissenmayer (Germany); Manas Pathak (India).

4. Raise the profile of UCL RDR activities, with a high visibility website portal, keynote lectures, workshops, seminar series, e-newsletter, special reports

IRDR events highlights

IRDR Launch event. 26 May 2010

IRDR Presentations to BEAMS Research Board, June 2010; *NERC CEO,* July 2010; *Chinese delegation in civil protection,* August 2010.

IRDR Natural Hazards Forums, (i) August 2010; (ii) April 2011

IRDR Teaching & Training Forums, (i) February 2011; (ii) June 2011.

IRDR Discussion Meetings: (i) Communicating Climate Risk and the Implications for Food Security, November 2010; (ii) The Tohoku Earthquake, March 2011.

IRDR Website launched 1 June 2010.

IRDR e-newsletter (termly+) launched July 2010.

IRDR Natural Hazard Seminar Series (informal) launched October 2010.

IRDR co-hosted events

Thinking Development: UCL Haiti Development Project launch, August 2010; Haiti Week, November 2010; Haiti Anniversary event, January 2011.

ELHRA: Scientific and Humanitarian Communities, September 2010; Building Partnerships for Humanitarian Impact, October 2010.

Invitations

IRDR in Bolivia. CAFOD June 2010; *Caritas Workshop, Prague*, September 2010; *UKCDS Disasters Meeting* at the Royal Society, October 2010; *UCL Parliament* event, January 2011; *EEFIT* field investigation to Tohoku, May 2011.

5. Launch 6 IRDR fellowships in 2010-11

2 IRDR Lecturers to be appointed from September 2011.

2 IRDR Research Fellows to be appointed from September 2011.

1 IRDR Lecturer and 1 IRDR Research Fellow factored into funding for 2012-13.

6. Launch 6 PhD studentships in 2010-11, subsequently building to a UCL Doctoral Training Centre in RDR with 30 students

1 FT Tsunami Statistics research student Andria Sarri started September 2010

1 FT Earthquake Hazard research student Alexandra Cartwright-Taylor started August 2010

2 PT Earthquake Hazard research students started April 2011.

1 FT Impact Studentship with CAFOD, approved Easter 2011.

1 FT Hazard Statistics Impact Studentship supported by the UNDP is anticipated for 2011-12

IRDR Teaching & Training Forum to set up cross-research council DTC.

7. Coordinate RDR PG teaching, providing a student portal for all programmes

A web portal is under development.

8. Launch a new multidisciplinary RDR Master's programme in 2011

IRDR RDR MRes and Postgraduate Certificate programmes to be launched in 2012.

9. Develop bespoke courses for industry, commerce and humanitarian and development agencies

This objective is tied to objective 8.

10. Provide a central Bloomsbury hub and resource centre for UCL RDR activities

An IRDR bid has been made through the MAPS Faculty to integrate UCL's RDR activities by consolidating largely existing RDR space, seeking 320m² of contiguous space, distributed between staff offices, research rooms, computing space, meeting/seminar room and flexible teaching space. MAPS has prioritized this in its bid to the UCL Space Management Committee.

Peter Sammonds, Professor of Geophysics,
Director, IRDR

June 2011

IRDR Executive Board: Prof Peter Sammonds (Char, IRDR), Dr Stephen Edwards (IRDR), Ms Lucy Stanbrough (Secretary, IRDR), Prof Alan Smith (Space & Climate Physics), Dr Cassidy Johnson (Development Planning Unit, Barlett), Dr Chris Kilburn (Earth Sciences), Dr Gerald Roberts (Earth Sciences, BBK), Prof Graham Hart (Population Health), Ms Linda O'Halloran (Thinking Development), Prof Maria Lee (Laws), Dr Serge Guillas (Statistical Science), Prof Steven Bishop (Mathematics).