## **2021 GLIDE Stakeholder Meeting**

### **Zoom Virtual Conference, February 10, 2021**

## Start, opening remark by Mr Nakagawa, Director, ADRC

Mr. Nakagawa greeted the participants and thanked all for their valuable participation in the meeting.

He gave a brief historic summary of the GLIDE initiative, and the aspirations of the GLIDE community to be more involved in the initiative, noting that as time has changed, the initiative could be important in supporting both the Sendai Framework and the SDG’s.

He expressed that it is a good opportunity to improve and promote the GLIDE initiative.

## Brief self-introduction by participants

The following is the list of participants of the Meeting:

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| Name | Organization |
| Mr. Sylvain Ponserre | IDMC |
| Ms. Jitsuko Hasegama | JMA |
| Mr. Stephano Paris | EU/JRC/EC |
| Ms. Chiara Projetti | EU/JRC/EC |
| Mr. Ridwan Yunus | UNDP/Indonesia |
| Mr. Rahul Sengupta | UNDRR/Bonn |
| Mr. Yuichi Ono | Irides/Tohoku University/GCDS |
| Mr. Mio Yokota  | UNDP/BKK Regional Hub |
| Mr. Jonathan Garro | American Red Cross/IFRC |
| Mr. Daisuke Sasaki | Tohoku University/GCDS |
| Mr. Nakagawa | Director, ADRC |
| Ms. Nakamura | ADRC |
| Ms. Miki Kodama | ADRC |
| Ms. Shiomi Yumi | ADRC |

## Brief of recent updates of GLIDE by Ms. Shiomi Yumi

Ms. Shiomi provided participants with a more detailed perspective of the evolution of the GLIDE initiative, which was proposed by a number of institutions in 2001, including CRED, UNISDR, OCHA, UNDO, WMO, IFRC, OFDA, FAO, LA RED, and the WB. It has been mainly operated by ReliefWeb, IFRC, ADRC and UNISDR in a voluntary basis.

Since its inception there it has been challenged by many factors, including the progress in disaster information management, its associated technologies, but most importantly by the international agreements that happened in 2015, including the Sendai Framework, the Paris Agreement and the Sustainable Development Goals, which have made apparent the need to update and improve the GLIDEnumber system, for both internal and external reasons.

The GLIDE Stakeholder Meeting in 2019 took place at the Global Platform in Geneva, when 15 representatives of institutions gathered to share the latest situations of the GLIDE system, and to discuss the way forward with partner organizations. The meeting participants discussed issues related to the Governance of the system, as well as potential improvements and promotion of the initiative.

Some of the potential elements discussed in this meeting were the possibilities of assembling and empowering a Steering Committee to guide the GLIDE initiative to the future, the creation of an API to allow automatic interaction with the system, crowd-sourcing the disaster data entry, developing tablet and mobile versions of the system, enhancing the security of the system, adding Geographic representation of the disasters, generating Standard operation procedures (SOP’s) and other topics.

Ms. Yumi informed the participants that ADRC had made progress in several of these suggestions, including assembling the TOR for a Steering Committee, improved the hardware and security of the system, adding maps to the system and developing an API for other apps to programmatically interact with GLIDEnumber.

Ms. Shiomi also asked new institution participants to provide logos of their institutions to be displayed in the website.

## API development by Mr Julio Serje and discussion

API is the acronym for Application Programming Interface, which is a software intermediary that allows two computer applications to talk to each other.

Mr. Serje presented the newly developed GLIDE API, which allows any computer application to ‘talk’ to the GLIDE application in order to request information about disasters recorded in its database (READ API), or to create, modify or extend a disaster record and GLIDEnumber (CREATE API).

The typical flow of API requests and messages was presented to illustrate the general case of the creation of a new GLIDEnumber.

The first step is to use the READ API to verify the existence of a GLIDEnumber, in order to avoid duplicates. The READ API returns one or more records according to a set of possible parameters, as follows:

* Geographic specification: Continent, Country or bounding box (coordinates)
* Type of disaster: Hazard code
* A Range of dates (from and to year, month, day)

The READ API can also return the data for one specific GLIDEnumber, and when multiple records are returned, Sorting criteria and Pagination parameters (start hit, number of hits) can also be included.

The READ API can return the results in XML format or the equivalent JSON format.

The CREATE API supports three basic operations, CREATE, UPDATE, EXTEND, and also accepts and returns JSON or XML formatted messages.

It requires appropriate User credentials embedded in the API messages because it modifies the database.

Once the messages are received, the GLIDE server performs extensive checking of error conditions, and if everything is OK the API executes the specified operation and returns a GLIDEnumber, otherwise returns error codes indicating what prevented the operation to succeed.

CREATE API examples were presented to participants in both XML and JSON format, and particicpants were encouraged to obtain more information from the API Document.

**Discussion:**

Prof. Ono: the GLIDE number is a very useful initiative, which has shown a lor of progress in the last few years. Mr. Ono asked about the new numeric indicators of the GLIDE.

Mr. Serje advised that numeric indicators of loss have been there for some years. However, when GLIDEnumbers are created its very early to know final numbers of damage. This is why users of the API are discouraged to publish these numbers, which would require a re-visit after some time to ensure the accuracy of these indicators, something that is not currently considered. If this procedure is enhanced, the GLIDEnumber database could be much more useful for the purposes of DRR and Sendai Framework and SDG’s monitoring, something that the SC could consider in the future.

Mr. S. Paris: Noted that they have tested the API interface, and have found it easy to understand and implement. Questioned if GLIDEnumber records can be updated, as they frequently revisit the information about their disasters. Mr. Paris also recognized the very useful inclusion of a Lat-Lon bounding box to search for GLIDE numbers.

Mr. Serje confirmed that the API allows for UPDATE operations, with which records can be modified afterwards. The DELETE and INTEGRATE operations are not supported because of security reasons. Mr. Serje noted that some improvements are still needed for the geographical search to include records that have not included latitude and longitude, case in which the centroid of the country would be used.

Mr. R. Yunus: expressed that Indonesia is actively integrating the GLIDE API in their DIBI loss database and other systems. He shared his screen and gave a visual demonstration of this integration. He suggested the usage of JSON arrays for the GLIDE API.

Mr. Yunus concluded that building the API GLIDE was a very good milestone, because it allows GLIDEnumbers to be easily integrated with the database system of disaster losses and impacts in each country, especially for large-scale disasters. It is hoped that every country that already has a disaster loss and impact database will also build an API interface that can be used and integrated with the GLIDE database.

Mr. Serje confirmed that the read API uses this JSON Array format when more than one record is returned.

## GLIDE initiative Steering Committee and its Terms of Reference

Over the past few years, several stakeholders have been strongly suggesting that opening the Governance of the GLIDE system through a mechanism such as a Steering Committee will broaden the vision of the evolution of the initiative and at the same time will enhance the ownership of the GLIDE numbers and its application by external institutions.

As a result of the suggestions outcome of the GLIDE Stakeholder Meeting, and after consultation with several partners, a Terms of Reference for the GLIDE initiative Steering Committee were developed by ADRC.

The Steering Committee is a response to the community of users’ aspirations to get more involved in the direction and evolution of the initiative.

The SC Terms of Reference (TOR) draft was shared on screen, and the composition and main functions and objectives of the Steering Committee were shared with the participants:

* Initial Composition of the SC, taking into account the most active participating institutions to date, institutions which will be formally invited to be part of the SC.
* A Structure of GLIDE Steering Committee is proposed, including a Chair Institution, a Secretariat, regular Members of the SC, the possibility of Observers, and the potential creation of Subcommittees with specific functions.
* The possibilities for scheduling in-person and virtual Meetings of the SC
* The main functions of the SC, which include directing the evolution and future of the GLIDE, modifying itself, assigning specific responsibilities, defining policies regarding Participating institutions, approving SOP’s for GLIDE operations, and defining technical issues such as classification of hazards, possible definitions of inclusion thresholds, and other topics such as the set of numeric indicators to be collected and their privacy.

The Chair opened the floor for comments and discussions:

Mr. Nakagawa stated that the Steering Committee is a priority for ADRC.

Ms. Chiara Proietti said that the SC is very important for participating institutions, and the functions foreseen are clear and agreeable.

Prof. Ono stated that it is very important that the GLIDE initiative expands it reach to help countries with the work required for monitoring the SC. The Global SC database has fields to accommodate the GLIDEnumbers, and the entire set of information of databases linked with GLIDE number can play an important role in the monitoring of the SDG and SFM. It is important to recognize the different task that have to be undertaken in the short term after a disaster strikes and the more longe term information that can be gathered to improve the damage statistics.

Mr. Sylvain Ponserre noted that IDMC is wishing to participate in the SC, inquiring about other institutions like CRED and UNOCHA and their role.

Mr. Serje noted that while not present in today’s meeting, inputs and contribution from these institutions are very important.

## Presentation of Professor Y. Ono

Professor Yuichi Ono explained the background, concept, and functions of the Global Centre for Disaster Statistics (GCDS), a joint initiative with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) to help governments to develop disaster risk reduction policies based on evidence, including national disaster damage and loss data and contribute to the monitoring of the global targets of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction managed by the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR), as well as contributing to Climate Change Adaptation processes.

For a referencing purpose, GCDS had envisaged that the GLIDE’s numbering system would be perfectly match with the need, and thus both Tohoku University and UNDP are pleased with the revitalization of the GLIDE system, in particular with this proposed automated system using API operated by ADRC. Yuichi also pointed out the importance of using disaster loss and damage data collected by each government and expects that GCDS data would have GLIDE numbers as efficient way as possible in the future.

Lastly, Prof. Ono informed that the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) has started to introduce a hazard numbering system focusing on hydro-meteorological events based on National Meteorological and Hydrological Services of each country. Ideally, this database should be linked with GLIDE, and Yuichi as a member of the expert team is willing to explore the possibility in coming months.

## Recap and next steps

Mr. Nakagawa noted the progress made in the system since 2019, including a new server based on the Amazon Web Services cloud, with bigger bandwidth and more capacity, and was moved to secure communications protocol and many other exchanges.

Mr. Sengupta from UNDRR requested the latest version of the SC TOR to be sent to all stakeholders. He also inquired about how the Framework for Disaster Related Statistics (FDRS) developed by UNESCAP, and with the work of several other UN Economic Commissions are linked with the GLIDEnumber.

Prof. Ono responded that with the Sendai Framework and SDG’s monitoring system new interest has been raised in the topic, and UNESCAP has conducted pilots in some countries which revealed many countries are not yet ready to support many very strict standards set by the UN Statistical Commission, which has been incorporating the Statistical Framework as part of them, being still in the ‘infancy’ of their own statistical systems. He stated that the GLIDE initiative as well as other ongoing processes should support the establishment of the FDRS on the long term.

Mr. Serje asked Mr. Sengupta what is UNDRR doing in terms of loss databases at national level and how will be they supporting the GLIDEnumber. In the process of UNDRR supporting loss databases, DesInventar and the next generation of loss data systems do actually consider the GLIDE as standard for disaster identification.

Ms. Yumi was asked about next steps, which she said considered important the finalization of the API and SC TOR’s with inputs from participants, followed by formal invitations to those institutions that will be part of the SC.

Mr. Ponserre suggested talking with ADRC and Tohoku university about possibilities of collaboration on tracking disaster displacement. He also stated that IDMC is actively supporting and using the GLIDEnumbers in their work, and its keen on participating in the Steering Committee and other related activities.

Mr. Serje encouraged the participants to review both the SC TOR and the API document, and suggested that once that is done a first Steering Committee should be convened to start activities so that the following activities are decided by the community as foreseen. Mr. Serje suggested this first meeting should happen by this summer. He also asked the participants involved in technical activities to test and use the API, and to revert with comments and reports of problems or bugs.

Mr. Ono offered to start the communication with ADRC, UNDRR and IDMC for the purposes of looking into the displacement issues. He asked Ms. Hasegana about the WMO project of automatically identifying hazard events, which is focused hydro-meteorological hazards, and the possibility of linking with the GLIDE.

Ms. Jitsuko Hasegana stated that she is the vice-chair of the initiative at WMO, and that she would be very happy to speak with the different participants in how to use the GLIDE within the WMO project.

Mr. Serje emphasized the importance of this collaboration, noting that having the ability of linking the hazard information with the loss information is very important in generating better knowledge of disasters and vulnerability and the GLIDE number could be part of that linkage.

Ms. Proietti said that they are working on a mapping of multiple alerting, hazard and loss data initiatives within the EU in which the GLIDEnumber plays a very important role. She emphasized that given the EU’s GDACS alerting system, and many multilateral and international organizations are already using the GLIDE it would be very beneficial if WMO does it too in its event catalog database, therefore allowing the linkage and collation of multiple disaster related data sources.

## Closing remarks by Mr Nakagawa

Mr. Nakagawa thanked the participants for attending the meeting and making good contributions. He offered that ADRC will continue to finalize the documents that were discussed (the SC TOR and the API document) and will send the final versions to all interested, will invite institutions to be part of the Steering Committee, and will organize as soon as possible a first session.

He also encouraged all to continue the promotion, dissemination and use of the GLIDE initiative, which is a very good tool for DRR and assured the participants that ADRC will continue its endeavor to improve and support the initiative, looking forward to continued collaboration with the participating institutions.