

Mr. Sisira WANNINAYAKE from Sri Lanka



I am Sisira Wnninayake, and I work as the Assistant Director of Kurunegala District in the Disaster Management Centre (DMC) of Sri Lanka. The DMC is the mandated body for disaster management in SriLanka, and operates under the Ministry of Disaster Management. I joined to the DMC in 2006 after eight years working as a Land Use Planning Officer in the Land Use Policy Planning Division of the Ministry of Lands. I earned my undergraduate degree in Geography in 1996 my master's degree in Natural Resource Management in 2006, both from the University of Peradeniya, Sri Lanka. I also pursued a master's degree in Disaster Management at that university in 2010.

With the increase in disasters in Sri Lanka, the government took steps to strengthen its disaster management system so as to minimize the damage to lives and property that would be caused by future natural and manmade disasters. As a result, the parliament passed the Disaster Management Act on 13 May 2005. The National Disaster Management Council (NDMC) and the DMC were established under the provisions of this Act. The DMC functions with a vision for achieving "Safer communities and sustainable development in Sri Lanka." Its mission is "To create a culture of safety among communities and the nation at large through the systematic management of natural, technological and manmade disaster risks." As the District Assistant Director, I am responsible for implementing activities to enable the DMC to fulfill its mission in my district.

The Visiting Researcher Program at ADRC affords me and my country a great opportunity to learn about disaster countermeasures. Japan's role in the field of disaster management is particularly impressive given its vast experience in facing serious disasters. The development Japan has achieved, even amidst such devastating disasters, is nothing short of amazing. During my stay, I also expect to immerse myself in Japanese culture by participating in various festivals and enjoying many Japanese foods, as well as by forging friendships with many students and other local residents. I would like to express my deep gratitude to the government of Japan and the ADRC, and also to the Disaster Management Center and the Sri Lankan government, for giving me the opportunity to have such a fruitful experience in Japan.