

Ms. Rujira Chariyaphan from Thailand



My name is Rujira Chariyaphan. I am working for the Disaster Victim Assistance Bureau, Department of Disaster Prevention and Mitigation (DDPM), Ministry of Interior, Thailand. My office is in charge of directing and managing the approval of government budgets and finances used to address and solve problems related to disasters. My responsibilities include giving primary assistance and relief to victims as well as coordinating victim assistance and relief efforts.

In 2002, Thailand established the DDPM, under the Ministry of Interior, to serve as the principal agency for disaster management and coordination. Shortly after a disaster strikes, DDPM activates relief operations to provide immediate assistance to those affected. These operations have been conducted jointly by both government and private agencies to mitigate the suffering of victims. All basic necessities such as food, first aid supplies, clothes, and drinking water are ready for distribution. Other components of relief operations include the provision of temporary shelter, efforts to prevent epidemics, the provision of medical treatment, and public health services.

The disasters that occur in Thailand are growing more intense every year due to global climate variability. Moreover, disasters are exacerbated by the lack of urban development planning, the destruction of natural resources, and globalization.

While at ADRC, I am interested in studying the tracking and management of donated goods in Japan because of the lessons learned from the great floods of Thailand in 2011. One lesson we learned was that the involvement of many agencies in tracking and distributing donated goods creates potential confusion. The National Disaster Prevention & Mitigation Plan BE 2553-2557 (2010-2014) mentions that the responsibilities for receiving and tracking international assistance are shared by different agencies, including DDPM which is the central government agency in charge of disaster prevention and mitigation. The problem, however is that Thailand does not have a database or system in place for receiving and tracking international donations. There appears to be no common national database system for receiving and tracking donations of goods. Even at the department level, the processes used to track goods depend on the individual official. As a staff member of DDPM, I foresee a growing interest in studying this issue. This challenge should be addressed so that donations can be effectively used to meet the needs of disaster victims in Thailand in the future.

Since Japan is considered to be a leader in the field of disaster management, I look forward to learning about the good practices in disasters management and risk reduction

developed here, particularly in light of lessons learned from Tohoku earthquake. What I learn during my time here should be useful to the future development of a system for tracking and managing donated goods in Thailand. Lastly, I am grateful to ADRC for the opportunity to do research in Japan. In addition to learning about disaster management, I am also learning about Japanese society and culture through a basic course on Japanese language and through everyday experiences, like my use of the enjoyable and efficient local train service. Furthermore, I would like to give many thanks to the staff who have facilitated our visit and made our stay in Japan so comfortable and enjoyable.