



ADRC Highlights Vol.127

Asian Disaster Reduction Center Biweekly News

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➤ Disaster Management Training Course for Central Asia and the Caucasus

Asian Disaster Reduction Center (ADRC) conducted a training course on disaster management in Russian for Central Asia and the Caucasus from 22 August to 17 September 2005, in cooperation with the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA). 13 officials responsible for disaster management in the central or local government from Armenia, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan participated in the training course.

Having taken over the disaster management system and structure from the former Soviet Union, each country needs to develop their own comprehensive disaster management system which responds to disaster prevention, response and recovery, and enhance the development of human resources. The training course was designed to share the Japan's disaster management system, knowledge and disaster experiences in order to enhance the disaster reduction capacity of the region.

At an earlier stage, participants made presentations on their countries including disaster trend, impacts of disasters and disaster reduction activities. Most of central Asia and the Caucasus regions are mountainous countries prone to different kinds of disasters, especially those triggered by floods, drought, landslides and earthquakes. Half of the total recorded disasters in Central Asia during the period of 1992-2002 occurred in Tajikistan, while many disasters affected neighboring countries as well.

Visit to various institutions provided the opportunity to learn the roles of the central and local governments, private sector, mass media, hospitals, international organizations, academia and schools. They visited Hyogo Institute for Traumatic Stress and recognized the importance of the psychological care in post-disaster period in terms of trauma and PTSD (posttraumatic stress disorder). They also had the chance to join an emergency drill in Hyogo and the trainees realized the importance to involve local people for effective disaster risk management, not just army or disaster relief organizations. With respect to awareness raising for disaster reduction, the participants visited the Kyoto City Disaster Prevention Center and understood the needs of such facility for raising the awareness of the general public. Although some countries own the same kind of public facility, some trainees said that it is necessary to develop and improve further in their countries on the model of Kyoto's. Town Watching was conducted to learn the method and understand its effectiveness of raising awareness of people through the



Exercise of Hazard Mapping

creation of a hazard map.

This 4-week training course was concluded with the presentations of action plans consisting of concrete proposals developed by the trainees to promote and enforce effective disaster reduction activities in their own countries, applying what they have learnt in Japan. For instance, a participant from Kyrgyz made a proposal, which would consist in reforming the disaster management organizations, as the Ministry of Ecology and Emergency single-handedly takes an initiative of post-disaster recovery without local authority's involvement.

ADRC wishes to extend sincere appreciation to all of those who contributed generously to make the training course successful. For further information of this training course, please contact Mr. Yamamoto (yamamoto@adrc.or.jp) or Ms. Tsunozaki (tsunozaki@adrc.or.jp).

➤ ADRC Staff Profiles (No.21) □ Mr. Akira Yamamoto, Senior Researcher

I joined ADRC as Senior Researcher since August 2005, seconded from Japan's major construction company named Obayashi Corporation. At Obayashi, I spent over 20 years overseas to supervise construction of transportation facilities including Bangkok's first subway, in which I was engaged as the Project Manager. While construction works in overseas countries are challenging and place more accountability and difficulties, they are interesting and rewarding as every effort in the process is fairly reflected to the results. I have also been involved in a number of domestic projects, including 1981 reconstruction of Shirahige shrine's gateway (torii) which today stands in Japan's largest lake named Biwa.



Throughout my career, I have been aware of significance of disaster reduction, especially on building sites. When a hotel building in Singapore collapsed in an accident, I used my wit to mobilize my team to dispatch personnel and heavy equipments to the accident scene immediately to assist the rescue operation.

Assigned to ADRC, I was firstly involved in organizing the training course on disaster management for Central Asia and Caucasus conducted with the support of JICA, and renewed my recognition that partnership between all the relevant sectors is a vital factor to undertake effective disaster reduction operations, since it covers a wide range from preparedness to reconstruction. In this context, I will make efforts to promote TDRM (Total Disaster Risk Management) concept to contribute to disaster reduction in Asia.

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