



ADRC Highlights

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Asian Disaster Reduction Center

Hitomiraikan 5F, 1-5-2
Wakinohamakaigan-dori,
Chuo-ku, Kobe
651-0073 Japan

Tel: 078-262-5540
Fax: 078-262-5546
editor@adrc.asia
http://www.adrc.asia

● Promoting Cooperation with Affiliated Institutions JICA Training Course: "Comprehensive Disaster Risk Management," January to February 2010

ADRC conducted a training course entitled "Comprehensive Disaster Risk Management," with sponsorship from the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), from 15 January to 26 February 2010. This course aimed to help participants formulate and further develop disaster management plans in their own countries based on the concept of total disaster risk management by enhancing their understanding of the disaster management systems adopted by the central and local governments of Japan.

Seventeen central/local government officials involved in disaster management attended the training from Bhutan, China, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Grenada, Haiti, Macedonia, Pakistan, the Philippines, Thailand, Tonga, Uganda and Viet Nam.

Participants attended a series of lectures on such topics as the Japanese disaster management system at the central and local levels, Japanese measures against flooding, sediment disasters, and earthquakes, school disaster risk reduction, community-based disaster risk management, the role of the media in disaster risk reduction, gender issues, lifelines and natural disasters, and business continuity planning. The participants' other activities included a disaster management drill, a Kaeru Caravan event, a town watching activity, a lecture and community radio program at FM YY, a site visit to Sayo-cho (a town that flooded in 2009), and an exchange of ideas with university and high school students at Kobe Gakuin University and Maiko High School.

These experiences provided an invaluable opportunity for the participants to see how Japanese government agencies, NGOs, and the private sector are promoting disaster risk reduction in Japan. The trainees were excited to utilize what they learned in Japan to contribute to efforts aimed at promoting disaster risk reduction in their respective countries.

ADRC would like to express its sincerest gratitude to all of those who contributed to the success of this course.



● Letter from a Former Visiting Researcher

Ms. Lyudmila Albertovna Harutyunyan from Armenia

My name is Lyudmila Albertovna Harutyunyan, and I am a former ADRC visiting researcher, currently serving as head of the Seismic Station at the National Survey for Seismic Protection (NSSP) of the Republic of Armenia. I was a visiting researcher at ADRC from January to March 2006. During that time, I studied the Japanese disaster management and education systems, and acquired knowledge about the advanced methods and technologies used in Japan in the field of disaster risk reduction.

I took part in numerous seminars and symposia, attended high-level training courses, and visited government institutions, schools, medical institutions, and disaster related museums.

During these visits, I received important educational tools and manuals. Now these materials are being widely used in the development of new strategies, plans and programs in Armenia. The rich experience and many valuable lessons I learned during my stay in Japan are of particular importance not only in my work, but also for the NSSP as a whole.

Upon my return to Armenia, I started to utilize what I learned in Japan. Numerous seminars, presentations, and special trainings were organized for the NSSP staff in order to spread knowledge about disaster risk reduction technologies. Through these special trainings, Japanese teaching methods were introduced to our schools.

In addition to its seismic and geophysical monitoring activities, the seismic station staff teaches students and school teachers, local governments officials, and members of the communities of Parakar, Tairov, Merdzavan, Gukasavan, and Darakert. To conduct these trainings, we use Japanese teaching tools and manuals as well as Japanese methods of community-based disaster risk management.

“Town-Watching” activities are being extensively conducted in training courses, and they are attracting the participation of students, leaders, and community residents. These activities are being used to draw up maps of seismic risk for the communities of Parakar, Tairov, Merdzavan, Gukasavan, and Darakert, and to look for potential ways to reduce those risks.

I took advantage of the NSSP office area and made a special display to highlight Japanese methods of disaster risk reduction. I also participated in two cooperative projects implemented jointly by the NSSP and ADRC. I handed over all the educational and informational materials I received to the relevant government agencies and to experts in the fields of community education, seismic reinforcement of buildings, rescue activities, fire service, dam construction, and landslide prevention.

In my work I strive to achieve our common goal: to reduce the risk of natural disasters. I would like to express my appreciation to ADRC and the Japanese government for giving me the opportunity to participate in such an important program and to expand my knowledge of the disaster risk reduction field.



● ADRC Visiting Researcher Report

Mr. Amirzudi Hashim from Malaysia

Hello everyone, my name is Amirzudi Hashim, and I am from Malaysia, a geographically unique country located in Southeast Asia. Malaysia shares borders with Thailand, Indonesia, Singapore, Brunei, and the Philippines, and is comprised of two land masses separated by the South China Sea. One consists of peninsular Malaysia, while the other consists of two states on Borneo Island. Malaysia has a total area of 329,847 sq. km (127,355 sq. miles) and a population of 28 million. Malays comprise 57% of the population, with the remainder comprised of Chinese, Indian, Bumiputeras, and individuals of other races. The diversity of races, religions and cultures is a significant characteristic of Malaysia, a

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multiracial country with a rich cultural heritage. The stability and peace enjoyed by Malaysia are also distinctive. Malaysia's many cultures live harmoniously in a country where there are no wars or internal conflicts. The 1Malaysia concept was introduced by our Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak, who said "The government is committed to carrying out a transformation program as its main agenda based on the approaches and philosophy of 1Malaysia - people first, performance now." This initiative is about helping all Malaysians of different ethnic backgrounds and religions to fully understand and respect one another's cultures, to live together, and to work hand in hand, sharing responsibility for creating a better future for Malaysia in terms of its socio-economic and political stability.



At present, I am working as the Principle Assistant Director of the Central Forecast Office (CFO) in the Malaysia Meteorological Department (MMD). Weather forecasting is one of the main services of the MMD. The Central Forecast Office (CFO), located at the MMD's headquarters in Petaling Jaya, is the primary provider of public weather services and operates 24 hours a day. The MMD is a scientific department under the Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation, and is tasked with the job of delivering early warnings related to weather, climate, seismic and water-related hazards. Although our country is shielded to some extent from major natural hazards such as typhoons, major earthquakes, and volcanic eruptions, our territories and coastal waters are not immune to the threat of heavy monsoonal rains that can lead to severe floods, very severe thunderstorms, tropical storms, climate and weather extremes, and other natural hazards. The early warning system has helped the disaster mitigation and management agencies, in particular the National Security Council, the Royal Malaysian Police, the National Civil Defence Department, the Department of Drainage and Irrigation, and the Department of Environment to reduce the impacts of floods, flash floods, drought, haze, and other natural hazards on the community.

I am spending four months from January to April as a visiting researcher with ADRC. I am excited to learn how Japan lives with its disaster risks and to gain knowledge and experience regarding good practices in Total Disaster Risk Management (TDRM). I would like to take advantage of this opportunity to express my deep thanks to the government of Japan and ADRC for funding and organizing this visiting researcher program. This program offers visitors with a useful platform for exchanging information, ideas, experiences, and lessons learned from our own disaster management work in our respective countries. I plan to share the information and knowledge I have gained with the disaster mitigation and management agencies in Malaysia. My aim is to build disaster resilient communities in Malaysia and to increase the capacities of those communities to withstand hazard events.

● More information on Disaster Management of Malaysia

<http://www.adrc.asia/nationinformation.php?NationCode=458&Lang=en&NationNum=16>

Mrs. Phurimon Puneam from Thailand

I am Phurimon Puneam from the Department of Disaster Prevention and Mitigation (DDPM) of Thailand. I am spending four months as a visiting researcher at ADRC (January to April 2010) to learn about Japan's disaster management system.

Thailand is located between 5 and 21 degrees north latitude and 97 and 106 degrees east longitude, bordering Laos, Myanmar, Cambodia, and Malaysia and covering an area of 513,115 sq. km. The country is divided into four regions: northern, central, northeastern, and southern. Thailand has a

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warm and rather humid climate, with an average high temperature of 34°C and a low of 23°C. Thailand has a population of about 66 million, with 31.1% comprised of an urban population living in the capital city, and 94% comprised of Thai-speaking Buddhists.

Thailand is vulnerable to many natural disasters, including floods, landslides, droughts, cold spells, fires, and wind storms. The northern region is mountainous and thus is vulnerable to flash floods, landslides, and debris flows. The northeast is an arid area that suffers from flash floods and inundations during the rainy season, as well as severe drought and cold spells during the summer and cool seasons. The central region is a vast fertile land that is vulnerable to riverside flooding and urban inundations during the rainy season. The southern region is hilly along the west coast but flat in the east. It occasionally experiences flash floods, mudslides, tropical storms, and forest fires.

Prior to coming to Japan, I was working in Thailand as an official involved in plan and policy analysis for the Research and International Cooperation Bureau of the DDPM in the Ministry of Interior of Thailand. My primary responsibility was to gather information and conduct research on natural and man-made disaster management systems.

I believe that Japan provides the best model of effective flood management, and I am interested in learning about Japanese flood prevention systems. I believe that my studies here will prove very useful to my future work in Thailand. I want to thank the ADRC staff for sharing their knowledge, expertise, experience, and kindness, and for giving me an experience that I will remember for the rest of my life.

●More information on Disaster Management of Thailand

<http://www.adrc.asia/nationinformation.php?NationCode=764&Lang=en&NationNum=09>

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