

Ms. Josefina Tan Porcil from the Philippines



I am Josefina Tan Porcil from Quezon City, Philippines, and I am serving as a Visiting Researcher at ADRC for the term August to December 2009. I was a grade school teacher of English, mathematics, and science for four years before I started working for the Office of Civil Defense-National Disaster Coordinating Council (OCD-NDCC).

I have been working for the OCD-NDCC for nine years, and am now a Civil Defense Officer (CDO) assigned in the Planning Division. My division renders secretariat services to the NDCC and its various committees. I am currently serving as a Special Disbursing Officer in the "READY Project" or the "Hazards Mapping and Assessment for Effective Community-based Disaster Management" project. This project covers 27 vulnerable provinces in the Philippines and is being funded by the UNDP and AusAID. It is being implemented through partnerships with the NDCC, the Department of Science and Technology, and the Department of Environment and Natural Resources.

I am also a member of the Technical Working Group of the NDCC and am involved in a Department of Education Project with the Asian Disaster Preparedness Center (ADPC) and the UNDP entitled "Phase II of Mainstreaming Disaster Risk Reduction into Education and Development." This project receives funding and support from the European Commission Humanitarian Aid Office (ECHO).

As a CDO, I also serve as a staff duty officer two to three times a month at the Operations Center of the OCD-NDCC, which is staffed on a 24/7 basis for monitoring disaster events, coordinating response actions when needed, preparing disaster reports and updates, and relaying information to higher authorities.

I assist and support the OCD-Planning Division in all its activities, including the organization of workshops and seminars; the coordination of disaster risk reduction/disaster risk management projects with local agencies, non-governmental organizations, and international organizations; the monitoring of agency compliance with directives; and the preparation of necessary reports to various government agencies, private institutions, and other partner agencies.

Japan, as an independent, highly-industrialized nation, with its honest, nationalistic, loyal, and disciplined people has always amazed me. It is a model country with capable personnel and effective systems worthy of emulation by developing countries like the Philippines. I believe Japan's journey to success is an impressive and inspiring achievement to which any nation might aspire. I have always been interested in learning the "secret" to Japan's advanced and rapid development, its effective and strict implementation of rules, laws, and other management systems, and its best practices and experiences. I am fascinated to learn how the country and its competent leaders were able to manage and direct the nation and populace toward further development and progress.

Aside from studying Japan's disaster management system, I am particularly interested in learning more about its climate change mitigation and adaptation measures. Since the Philippines, as a developing country, is currently experiencing some of the worst effects of climate change, I believe that lessons from Japan could prove very useful for our future efforts in this area.

This is why I feel so honored to have been chosen as a Visiting Researcher for this term, and I am looking forward to taking full advantage of this valuable opportunity.