

Country Report

Ministry of Government Administration
and Home Affairs

Republic of Korea

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I. Disaster Prevention and Preparedness Activities

1. Implementation of the Disaster Prevention Plan

○ To cope with disasters which are taking more diverse forms and larger in scale and to define basic guidelines for the national disaster prevention policy, the government has formulated the Basic Five-Year Disaster Prevention Plan and the Yearly Disaster Prevention Action Plan.

- By the local Disaster Prevention Council, Local Plans for Disaster Prevention have been formulated in accordance with the Basic Disaster Prevention Plan and local conditions.
- Designated government agencies and public institutions have formulated the Detail Disaster Prevention Operational Plan to reduce disaster damages.

○ During the Sixth Basic Disaster Prevention Plan Period (2002–2006) in which “Establishment of Disaster Resistant Country” is employed as the policy concept, the government funneled more than about \$24 billion to 27 key areas such as forestation, flood control, disaster prevention technology development, and etc.

– Consistent with the Yearly Disaster Prevention Action Plan, the government has invested more than \$5.2 billion to forestation, river improvement, disaster prevention countermeasures, disaster prevention technology development, and etc. in 2002.

2. Introduction to Special Disaster Area Declaration

○ To cope with the disasters due to the heavy rains and the 15th typhoon 「RUSA」 in 2002, the Special Disaster Area declaration was introduced. The declaration is for the areas where an ordinary support may not be enough for the appropriate recovery and response activities.

– Through the comprehensive supportive ways, that is, including the administrative and financial supports, the government intends to encourage the citizen's self supporting intention, recover the damaged infrastructures rapidly, and stabilize the livelihood of the sufferers at the damaged area .

3. Strengthening Safety Countermeasures against Large Scale Disasters

(1) Strengthening the facility safety countermeasures

○ To be secure the structures against the heavy rains which exceed the design criteria, facility inspection and maintenance are tightened up.

(2) Designating the SOP against Large Scale Disasters

○ To establish the entire operation system of disaster countermeasures management, that is, securing the equipment, facilities, manpower, and resources against devastating disasters, the standard operation process against large scale disasters is designated.

(3) Securing the Communication Network

○ To cope with the communication problems due to the loss of transmission line and wire network which causes the blocking of disaster information dissemination and delays the disaster response activities, vulnerable network and base facilities are inspected and repaired, and various wireless communication network are established.

4. Implementation of Disaster Prevention and Preparedness for summer season.

○ To reduce the loss of life, property damage, and economic hardship caused by natural disasters, the Korean government has designated the period from March 1 to May 31 in 2002 as the "Disaster Preparedness Period." Several action plans were put into practice during this period.

(1) Inspection and Maintenance of Large-Scale Construction Sites

○ For large-scale construction sites, such as subways, golf courses, dams, and residential development sites, Disaster Preparedness Plans are arranged and maintained, in which assigning multiple government officials to monitor large-scale construction sites and setting construction priority.

(2) Inspection and Maintenance of Disaster Prevention Facilities

○ Plans for repairing disaster prevention facilities including retaining walls, embankments, and reservoirs are established and inspection and repairs for the facilities are to be completed before the rainy season.

(3) Securing Equipment and Facilities for Emergency Countermeasures

○ Equipment and facilities for emergency countermeasures have been secured according to the need averaged over the last ten years and local conditions.

(4) Special Fund for Natural Disaster Countermeasures

○ For proactive disaster prevention activities and emergency recovery during severe natural disasters, the Special Fund has been allocated in 16 cities and 232 districts from 1997.

5. Establishment of rapid disaster response activities

(1) Establishment of disaster response system

○ Equipment, resources and flashlight signals for rescue activities have been secured and emergency countermeasures against the transportation cut-off and isolation situations were prepared.

○ Manpower mobilization plan and Mutual Aid System are prepared according to the need averaged over the last ten years and local conditions.

(2) Strengthening the Agency Cooperation System

○ Comprehensive cooperation system, that is, early knowledge on weather information (KMA), rescue activities (fire service, police, and military force), and relief activities (the Relief Corps of the Red Cross Society and Medical Associations) are established to encourage the citizen's participation into the disaster reduction countermeasures.

(3) Establishment of Evacuation Plan

○ Areas in which inundation, isolation, landslides, and collapsing of reservoir are suspected, evacuation plans for reducing the casualties are established.

(4) Selecting Disaster Warning Areas

○ 182 disaster vulnerable areas which include river and mountainous valley were designated. In stormy weather, people are not allowed to enter these areas and warned to take shelters to reduce the casualties.

6. Establishment of Disaster Information System

(1) Operating the Automatic Warning Facilities against Heavy Rainfall

○ Automatic warning facilities which provide sirens to the campers or hikers in mountainous valley will be installed at 46 areas until next year. Facilities at 72 areas which were already installed are inspected and repaired regularly. Since automatic warning facilities are effective to reduce the number of casualties, the schedule has been rearrange to finish earlier from 2004 to 2003.

(2) Operating the Automatic Voice Warning Facilities

○ The automatic voice warning facilities which provide disaster status to the citizens by phones and town speakers will be installed in 232 municipals from 2000 to 2002 with investment of \$8.6 million

7. Disaster Prevention Education, Drills, and Public Relation

○ To cope with disasters, each local government implements full readiness and close coordination in disaster situations, disaster prevention education and drills.

○ Especially in the "Disaster Prevention Day", May 25, a comprehensive disaster prevention drills at the national level is held, which includes life saving exercise, emergency relief, recover measures, and etc.

(1) Disaster Prevention Education

○ Staff members related to the disaster prevention are educated during the Disaster Preparedness Period to enhance their ability to cope with natural disasters. The program includes planning, managing critical situations, damage investigation method, and studying relevant laws.

(2) Emergency Drills and Practice

○ In order to enhance rapid responses to the disasters, exercises under computer-simulated disaster conditions, a comprehensive exercise for disaster prevention, and emergency drills specific to each region are carried out in each local districts.

– Exercise under computer-simulated disaster conditions: to develop the ability for disaster management, the exercise hosted by national and local disaster prevention headquarters are carried out.

– Emergency drills specific to each region: local governments carried out their own emergency drills for conditions that are specific to their own regions.

(3) Comprehensive Exercise for Disaster Management at National level

○ On May 25, 2002, a comprehensive exercise for disaster management was carried out at Jin-Ju City, Kyung-Sang-Nam-Do Province. Most of disaster prevention related staffs are participated in the exercise.

○ This exercise focused on strengthening the close coordination between the related agencies and developing the ability in disaster situations management.

(4) Public Relations for Disaster Prevention

○ Following the recommendation by UN, Korea has designated May 25 as "National Disaster Prevention Day" to promote the public participation and awareness of disaster prevention.

○ For promoting awareness of disaster preparedness, several events for the "National Disaster Prevention Day" such as inspection of disaster prevention facilities and equipment, drills, a campaign for disaster prevention, photo display of disaster stricken areas, and a contest for disaster prevention posters were held.

○ Especially, TV broadcasting stations are put under a obligation to send disaster preparedness program on the air. Additionally, for awareness of disaster preparedness to the people, several media such as large-scale advertising sign, sticker on disaster preparedness, educational video tapes are used.

8. Implementation of Improvement of Disaster Prone Areas

○ Korea identified 537 sites most susceptible to inundation, collapse, and isolation by typhoons and floods, and labeled them as Disaster Prone Areas. A total of \$1.1 billion will be invested for wide-ranging improvements for seven years from 1998 to 2004.

○ Under this plan, \$416 million has been invested to improve 397 disaster prone areas since 1998, and \$80 million is being invested to 91 areas in 2002.

9. Improvement of Safety of Small Rivers

○ Small rivers in Korea are vulnerable to overflow. Thus, the first step of the improvement for vulnerable small rivers is to refurbish from 2000 to 2009 at the cost of about \$3.9 billion.

○ Since 2002, small river sites totaling 800km were refurbished at the cost of \$32 million, and \$11 million is being invested to 278km in 2002.

10. Disaster Impact Assessment (DIA)

○ To protect lives and property in downstream areas from the impact of large scale development, facilitating disaster prevention facilities such as retention reservoir in the development area, the DIA has been introduced since 1996 and the subject range of DIA is expanded in 2001.

- Subject Categories : 6 field 16 categories → 6 field 24 categories
- Subject Range : over 1.8 million m² → over 0.3 million m²

○ For small-scale project less than 0.3 million square meters, mayors of the local government are responsible to assess the disaster impact. The subject categories are same as those of the central DIA's.

11. National Institute for Disaster Prevention

○ For the recent destructive natural phenomena and disasters which are taking more diverse forms and larger in scale, National Institute for Disaster Prevention (NIDP) has conducted systematic and scientific research in the field of disaster prevention. The research results have been adopted as national disaster prevention policies through pilot projects.

○ NIDP has spearheaded 85 research projects such as 「Introduction of Flood Insurance」, 「Standard for Small River Facilities」, 「Evaluation of Soil Mass Waste」, etc.

○ NIDP is currently involved in 15 research projects such as 「Development of Rain Fall Restoration Facilities」 and 「Development of Early Response System against Heavy Rainfall」.

II. Disaster Statistics (Sept. 2001 ~ Aug. 2002)

1. Summary

○ During the period of September 1 to December 31 in 2001, \$15.5 million worth of property damage was incurred due to typhoons and torrential rains.

○ During the period of January 1 to August 31 in 2002, 271 people died and approximately \$4.9 billion worth of property damage was incurred due to 3 major disasters, that is, typhoon and torrential rains.

○ Hence, during the period from September 1, 2001 to August 31, 2002, the total damage caused by 5 natural disasters was 271 casualties and \$4.9 billion in property damage. (Detailed damages are given in Table 1).

Table 1. Total Damage caused by Natural Disaster during the Period from Sept. 2001 to Aug. 2002

Classification	Units	Sep.- Dec., 2001	Jan. - Aug., 2002	Total
Casualties (Dead or Missing)	Person	-	271	271
Displaced Person	Person	21	76,204	76,225
Farmland Lost or Buried	ha	40	17,265	17,305
House Destroyed or Damaged	Unit	5	8,640	8,645
Property Damage	U.S.\$ million	15.5	4,883	4,898

