



ADRC Highlights

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Happy New Year 2011

Happy New Year!

We hope that natural disaster risks will continue to diminish this year, allowing people to live lives that are safer and more secure.

Last year, we were faced once again with numerous natural disasters, starting with the Haiti earthquake in January, followed by an earthquake and tsunami in Chili, an earthquake, flood and landslide in China, flooding in Pakistan, and an earthquake, tsunami, and volcanic eruption in Indonesia, to name just a few. Together these disasters claimed a tremendous number of precious lives and destroyed people's valuable assets. Weather-related risks in particular have been on the rise, and even Japan has been experiencing such unprecedented disasters as extremely high temperatures and record torrential rainfall on Amamioshima Island. Last year's global series of earthquakes, tsunamis, and volcanic eruptions also reminded us of the importance of taking necessary measures to prepare for such geophysical disasters.

The Incheon Declaration on Disaster Risk Reduction in Asia and the Pacific 2010, one of the principal outcome documents of the Fourth Asian Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (AMCDRR) held in Incheon, Korea in late October, underscored the importance of raising awareness and building capacity for disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation (DRR and CCA), sharing information, technology, sound practices, and lessons learned, and promoting the integration of DRR and CCA into development efforts for the achievement of green growth. In the process of implementing the actions mandated by the Incheon Declaration, ADRC will further collaborate with countries across Asia, as well as international organizations, through a variety of forums that will include the Third Session of the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction to be held next May and the Asian Conference on Disaster Reduction 2011.

The entire staff of Asian Disaster Reduction Center (ADRC) will do their utmost to ensure the safety and security of people in Asia throughout this New Year.

Atsushi KORESAWA, Executive Director of ADRC

● Participation in International Conferences

The Fourth Asian Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (4th AMCDRR) in Incheon, Republic of Korea

The ADRC participated in the 4th AMCDRR held in Incheon, Republic of Korea from 25 to 28 October 2010. More than 900 participants comprised of ministers of disaster management from 53 Asia-Pacific and European nations, as well as representatives from UN agencies, international organizations, and NGOs attended the conference. The prime ministers of the Republic of Korea and the Kingdom of Bhutan were among the most notable participants.

Technical Session 1 and High Level Round Table 1 (HLRT1)

Technical Session 1, chaired by ADRC and co-chaired by the ASEAN Secretariat, BDPC, IFRC/BRCS, EMI, and Practical Action, discussed how “Raising Awareness and Building Capacity for DRR-CCA” could be best reflected in the three outcome documents: the Incheon Declaration, Incheon Regional Roadmap or REMAP, and Incheon Action Plan. The technical session recognized two key concerns of the discussions. One is the need for training for both government officials and civil society organizations (CSOs), as the latter can provide some consistency over time even when there is turnover among government officials. The other is the need to learn from the poor and from indigenous peoples how they manage risk, and also the need to support their efforts. A number of countries offered examples from their own experience on engaging community members in DRR and adaptation. To address these concerns, it was also emphasized that DRR and CCA should be framed within local and national development planning, and that resources must be mobilized to implement activities at different levels.

ADRC co-chaired the Plenary Session of HLRT1. During this session, ministers described specific problems in their respective countries, highlighting the need for solutions to be localized. To address problems at the regional level, delegates expressed their national and local commitments to work together to share technical knowledge. The delegates recognized that the issues raised are well covered in the outcome documents, particularly the issues of raising awareness and building capacity for DRR and CCA.

IRP-ADRC Side Event “A Tool for Better Recovery: Introduction to Guidance Notes on Climate Change Adaptation in Recovery”

This event explored how DRR-CCA can be incorporated into the recovery process to enhance value, resilience, and the life of investments. IRP and ADRC raised issues related to the enhancement of climate-resilient livelihoods and infrastructures as well as such other issues as institutional support, community-based approaches, and human health. The overarching challenges of raising awareness and building capacities for DRR-CCA in the context of recovery were commonly reported by Hyogo Prefecture, the Maldives, Nepal, and the Philippines. There were questions about whether recovery should be pursued quickly after a disaster.

Presenters outlined initiatives to address identified issues and gaps. Hyogo Prefecture promoted the use of computerized hazard maps with following features (i) hazard information for five different kinds of natural disasters shown on one web site, (ii) real time information on the amount of rainfall and water level of rivers, (iii) easy-to-use hazard information using maps and search tools using addresses or postal codes, and (iv) the provision of disaster images, photos, and videos. The Maldives introduced various climate change adaptation measures in different sectors such as its infrastructure, health, water resources, and food. It instituted various policies and strategies such as the National Environment Action Plan (NEAP) and National Adaptation Plan for Action (NAPA), which included efforts to climate-proof its



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infrastructure. The Philippines has passed a Law on “Mainstreaming Climate Change in Government Policy Formulations,” thereby establishing the framework strategy and program on climate change and creating the Climate Change Commission. Nepal mentioned the impacts of climate change on the Himalayan ecology, which directly affects access to water for 1.6 billion people.

Based on inputs from the participants, the IRP-ADRC Side Event concluded that a wide variety of tools are available for integrating DRR, CCA, and recovery. The improved dissemination of these tools will enhance the resilience of governments and communities. Additionally, capacity building for achieving the integration of DRR, CCA, and recovery will improve dissemination of these tools.

Asian Film Festival on Disaster Risk Reduction

The First Asian Film Festival on Disaster Risk Reduction was held during the 4th AMCDRR. It was launched with keynote speeches by Mr. Atsushi Koresawa, Executive Director of ADRC and Dr. Bhichit Rattakul, Executive Director of ADPC, followed by the presentation of a video message prepared by Mr. Anil Kumar Sinha, Founder Director of the Global Forum for Disaster Reduction (GFDR).

Following these opening presentations, several disaster reduction films collected from the Asian region were shown, including documentaries and narratives with music. The audiences watched the films with great interest.

The International Conference and the GLOF Project in Bhutan

The International Conference on Disaster Management and Cultural Heritage "Living in Harmony with the Four Elements" was held on 12-14 December 2010 in Thimphu, Bhutan. This was the first large-scale international conference to be held in Bhutan; it attracted 55 international participants from 23 countries, as well as 98 participants from around Bhutan, including His Excellency the Prime Minister Lyonchhen Jigmi Y. Thinley, and Ms. Margarita Wahlström, the United Nations' Assistant Secretary-General for Disaster Risk Reduction and Special Representative of the Secretary General for the implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action. This conference was organized by the Department of Disaster Management and the Department of Culture, Ministry of Home and Cultural Affairs, Bhutan, and was supported by UN/ISDR, UNESCO, UNDP, GFDRR, and the World Bank. During this conference, participants discussed the following five themes. The results are reported in the Thimphu Document.

- a. Policy and Institutional Framework for Disaster Management
- b. Technical Aspects of Disaster Management
- c. Traditional Practices for Disaster Risk Reduction
- d. Post-Disaster Recovery of Cultural Heritage
- e. Capacity Building and Networking

This document will be reported to the next Global Platform in Geneva on 8-13 May 2011, and the Climate Summit for a Living Himalayas Bhutan 2011.

The ADRC dispatched Mr. Masaru Arakida, Senior Researcher, to introduce historical disaster management techniques and community-based early warning systems, and to propose an implementation strategy for Bhutan. After the conference, he visited Punakha and paid a courtesy call on the provincial governor, investigated damages caused by flooding in 2009, and visited candidate sites for rain gauges along the upstream areas of the Mo-chu River. ADRC will hold a workshop on disaster education and disaster drills for residents, including students and monks, in the Mo-chu area, and also will hold a class to teach people how to make rain and river gauges that can be managed by the local community.

● Announcements**Launch of the DRR Project Portal**

The DRR Project Portal, a knowledge-sharing mechanism to improve collaboration on DRR throughout Asia and the Pacific, was launched during the 4th AMCDRR. This portal was developed by the ISDR Asia Partnership on Disaster Reduction (IAP) under the guidance of the IAP Working Group on Regional Stocktaking and Mapping of DRR Interventions in Asia and the Pacific. The development of the portal has been supported by the Asian Development Bank, and the Asian Disaster Preparedness Center (ADPC) has used its technical expertise to serve as the implementing agency of the initiative on behalf of the IAP.

For more information, please visit the website (www.drrprojects.net) or contact ADPC. You can also access the portal through ADRC's website (www.adrc.asia).

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