



ADRC Highlights

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●Promoting Cooperation with Member Countries

Workshop on Recovery Planning for Local Governments Impacted by Typhoon Haiyan was Held on 19-21 February 2014, Cebu City, Philippines

The International Recovery Platform (IRP) and Asian Disaster Reduction Center (ADRC) facilitated a Workshop on Disaster Recovery Planning, held on 19-21 February 2014 in Cebu City, Philippines. The main objective of the workshop was to provide technical assistance in the formulation of recovery plans by local governments impacted by super typhoon Haiyan. IRP/ADRC shared a collection of global experiences and lessons on disaster recovery, which served as reference material in establishing a temporal link between preparedness, recovery, and sustainable development. The workshop also aimed at strengthening local capacities for integrating disaster risk reduction (DRR) and climate change adaptation (CCA) in disaster recovery planning and long-term development programming.

More than 50 local government officials from the provincial governments of Cebu, Leyte, and Samar, and the municipal governments of Tacloban, Palo (Leyte), and Basey (Samar) participated in the workshop to explore strategies and actions for achieving recovery and reconstruction from the super typhoon. Additionally, partners from UNISDR-GETI (South Korea), Office of Civil Defense (OCD, Philippines), and GIZ-Philippines also participated to further contribute to the discussions and to ensure that their knowledge and experiences would be shared with the impacted local governments. The acting administrator of OCD General Romeo F. Fajardo, along with the Administrator of the Province of Cebu Atty. Mark Tolentino and OCD-Region 7 Director Ms. Dina Morante, were present at the opening, inspiring participants to work collaboratively and effectively. During this event, the participants were exposed to various options for "building back better" after a disaster. A wide array of strategies and actions from the Guidance Notes on Recovery provided options that the local governments might adopt, if suited to their specific contexts. The lessons on recovery, as compiled by IRP/ADRC from various experiences around the globe, provided additional input for building on the existing initiatives of local governments. At the end of the workshop, each local government drafted a recovery plan outline, including a list of strategies, actions, and offices/organizations responsible for



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implementing the proposed actions.

Going forward, the local governments intend to further refine their recovery plans together with local stakeholders, and specifically with their communities. They will form working groups to fine tune the output from the workshop. The revised draft will then be shared with other departments for comments and suggestions. After gathering feedback, each working group will incorporate that feedback into their drafts. The final versions of the recovery plans will be submitted to local councils for discussion and adoption by the individual local governments. Once adopted, the plans will be submitted to and discussed with the Philippine Reconstruction Czar General Panfilo Lacson, who is the Presidential Assistant for Reconstruction from Typhoon Yolanda (Haiyan), to determine further amendments and funding. ADRC, together with IRP, would like to promote its activities and promote recovery efforts made by the Philippines. For more information, please contact Mr. Kouchi (kouchi@recoveryplatform.org) or Mr. Potutan (gerald@recoveryplatform.org).

●ADRC Visiting Researcher Report **Mr. Pema Thinley (Bhutan)**

I work for the Department of Disaster Management (DDM), Ministry of Home and Cultural Affairs of Bhutan as an Information and Communication Technology/ Geographic Information System (ICT/GIS) Officer. I am an ICT professional by training, but also have experience working with GIS technologies because of their broad applications in the field of disaster management. I work in the Response and Relief Division, which is responsible for ensuring the institution of effective disaster response measures and early warning systems in Bhutan and for building local capacity, especially for search and rescue operations.

Inspired by Japan's use of GIS technologies, remote sensing, and ICT for disaster risk reduction, I applied to participate in ADRC's 2014 Visiting Researcher Program. I am excited to work with the other three Visiting Researchers from Cambodia, Bangladesh, and Iran. During my stay, I would like to focus on studying the functioning of Japan's systems for managing disaster management information, emergency communications, emergency operation centers, and emergency response, and would like to take information on best practices in these areas back to my country.

Bhutan, like the rest of the world, has not been spared by the fury of natural hazards and is susceptible to many disasters. Geo-physically, Bhutan is located in one of the most seismically active zones in the world. Given its location, and as proven by past seismic activities, earthquakes are the most imminent hazard in Bhutan, followed by glacial lake outburst floods (GLOF). In fact, the GLOF threat is more imminent today than ever before due to the rapid increase in the earth's temperature caused by global warming, and the rapid retreat of its glaciers. Other hazards such as landslides, flash floods, windstorms, and fires also frequently occur, causing significant losses of life and property. These seasonal hazards particularly affect people in rural Bhutan, where subsistence farming is prominent. This is why the government is working on mainstreaming disaster risk reduction strategies in all its development activities and in all aspects of socioeconomic life in Bhutan.

Touching on the institutional setup of disaster management in Bhutan, the Disaster Management Division was a division under the Department of Local Government, in the Ministry of Home and Cultural Affairs, until the beginning of the 10th Five Year Plan (2008). Until then, all activities related to disaster management were implemented on a reactive basis. Recognizing the importance of an effective disaster management system, the government of Bhutan upgraded the division to its current status as the Department of Disaster Management (DDM) in 2008. Until early 2013, the department had been following the National Disaster Risk Management Framework (NDRMF) as one of its main guiding principles in policy making and the planning of its disaster management programs and activities. The roles and responsibilities of the department became even clearer with the enactment of the Disaster Management Act of Bhutan on 18 March 2013.



Mr. Ali Bakhtiari (Iran)

As a Senior Expert for the National Disaster Management Organization (NDMO) of Iran, I am currently serving as a Visiting Researcher at ADRC in Kobe. Over the course of my work, I have been involved in several international and domestic projects related to disaster risk management. I also have been a lecturer at the University of Applied Science and Technology (UAST) of Iran since 2010.



My main responsibilities at NDMO are to oversee the international coordination and administration of all activities related to DRR, to disseminate technical documents on DRR, and to conduct disaster trainings. During my time in Japan, I am expecting to study special programs typical of ADRC-member countries in the field of mainstreaming DRR into development planning at the national and local levels.

Geographically, Iran is located in West Asia and borders the Gulf of Oman, the Persian Gulf, and the Caspian Sea. With an area of 1,648,000 km² (636,000 sq. mi), Iran ranks 18th in size among the countries of the world. Iran shares its northern border with three nations: Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Turkmenistan. Its western borders are with Turkey in the north and Iraq in the south. The Persian Gulf and Gulf of Oman lie along its southern border. To the east, Afghanistan lies to the north and Pakistan to the south. The population of Iran is estimated at over 77 million as of 2013. The capital and largest city is Tehran.

Located along the world's dry belt, most of Iran is covered with mountains; the central parts of the country are comprised of desert and are largely uninhabited. It is also located in the high seismic hazard zone of the Himalayan belt, one of the most famous earthquake-hazard regions of the world. Due to its location, Iran is a disaster-prone country. Earthquakes, floods, droughts, and wild fires are its most common natural disasters. Iran has suffered severe economic and social damage resulting from seismic activities within its borders. Earthquakes are therefore a high priority for both the public and the authorities.

During my stay in Japan, I have visited various research institutions and governmental organizations along with my fellow Visiting Researchers from other member countries. Lessons learned from the Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake of January 1995, the Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami of March 2011, and other disasters that have caused enormous damage led the government of Japan to change its Earthquake Disaster Management Strategy, which calls for efforts to be made to reduce fatalities and economic damage. After the Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake, 11 major redevelopment projects were undertaken around Kobe and all were completed in 10 years. The progress achieved by Kobe after such a major disaster was one that astonished the world.

I would like to express my profound gratitude to the governments of both Iran and Japan for affording me the opportunity to participate in this program, as well as my appreciation to everyone, especially at ADRC, who has made my time in Japan an experience that thus far has surpassed my every expectation. Finally, I extend my deepest admiration to all those who continue to devote their time and efforts to reducing human suffering and to providing a safer tomorrow for us all.

●Announcement**ACDR 2014 Draws to Successful Conclusion (FLASH)**

The Asian Conference on Disaster Reduction (ACDR) 2014 was held in Tokyo, Japan on 4-6 March 2014. The ACDR2014 was organized jointly by the government of Japan, the United Nations Secretariat of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UNISDR), and ADRC. Detailed conference coverage will be presented in the next issue, Vol. 253. (http://www.adrc.asia/acdr/2014_index.html)

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