



# ADRC Highlights

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## TOPICS

### Announcement

¶ Greetings from New ADRC Executive Director, Mr SASAHARA Akio

¶ Personnel Change

### Promoting Cooperation with Affiliated Institutions

¶ 3rd GLIDE Steering Committee Meeting

¶ Messages from the ADRC Online Tsunami Seminar 2022

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## ● Announcement

### Greetings from New ADRC Executive Director, Mr SASAHARA Akio

I am SASAHARA Akio, the recently appointed Director of the Asian Disaster Reduction Center (ADRC), which was established 24 years ago on 30 July 1998. I would like to thank the member countries, advisor countries, and relevant organizations for their support for nearly a quarter century.

A disaster strikes when people lose their memory of the previous one. In Japan, this is an proverb that we have heard since childhood. How can we prepare for a disaster that strikes suddenly when we have forgotten about previous occurrences? In the past, people tried to pass on disaster information to future generations through folklore and stone monuments. Even today, with the development of information and communication technologies, the same basic principle applies: information is important in order to prepare for disasters that occur without warning. In particular, information sharing that transcends organizational silos, generational gaps, national and regional boundaries, and other barriers will be of great use. Of course, objective data can be shared, but there is often great value in subjective information held by people. It all comes down to the importance of day-to-day, people-to-people relationships that transcend boundaries.

ADRC is a network of member countries for improving disaster resilience in the Asia Pacific region. It has accumulated a network of officials and leaders within each member country and in other countries. Although the coronavirus has made it difficult to meet in real life in recent years, improvements in web conferencing and teleworking have allowed for increased opportunities for face to face conversations with people far from home, even if online. On the other hand, there are still significant benefits to meeting in real life and actually seeing various sites. Thus, we intend to resume accepting visiting researchers to ADRC, while keeping an eye on the COVID-19 situation.

We will further enhance the ADRC network by making good use of online and real world interactions, and we will continue to improve the disaster management capacity of our member countries through the sharing of disaster management information and human resource development.

SASAHARA Akio  
ADRC Executive Director



## Personnel Change

Mr NAKAGAWA Masaaki as Former Executive Director retired from ADRC at the end of June 2022. All of us at ADRC offer our best wishes for his continued success.

## ● Promoting Cooperation with Affiliated Institutions

### 3rd GLIDE Steering Committee Meeting

On 16 June 2022, the 3rd GLIDE Steering Committee Meeting was held online. A total of 15 members from 10 organizations participated in the meeting and discussed various issues related to GLIDE management and future activity policies, as well as shared examples of GLIDE applications.

At the meeting, the decision was made to reappoint Professor Ono Yuichi IRIDEs, Tohoku University, as Chair of the Steering Committee, and he expressed his desire to promote GLIDE in more concrete ways.

The subcommittees on SOP, API, and Product Development then reported on their activities and plans for this year. It was agreed that the subcommittees would work together on overlapping issues.

During the meeting ADRC and UNDP presented examples of the use of the GLIDE API and invited member institutions to cooperate.

### Messages from the ADRC Online Tsunami Seminar 2022

In recognition of the recent challenges in tsunami disaster risk reduction, ADRC adopted the theme “Understanding Tsunami Risk and Enhancing Practical Countermeasures” for the tsunami seminar that was held on 15 June 2022. One of the challenges is how to further reduce tsunami disaster risk. Although tsunamis occur only rarely, their impacts are deadlier (e.g., over 230,000 people were killed in the Indian Ocean Tsunami of 2004) and costlier (e.g., the economic impact of the Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami of 2011 was about USD235 billion – the highest in world history) than other hazards. Another challenge is how to improve knowledge of tsunami risks, especially with regard to non-earthquake sources of tsunamis (e.g., the Sunda Strait Tsunami of 2018 and the Tonga Volcanic Eruption and Tsunami of 2022) so that early warning systems and other preparedness measures can be likewise improved. Furthermore, there is the ongoing challenge of how to augment physical countermeasures (e.g., levees) with practical countermeasures (e.g., awareness-raising, actionable early warnings, and simple evacuation procedures) at the community level.

For this seminar, ADRC invited three experts to share their experiences and insights:

- (1) Dr Teuku Alvisyahrin, Professor at Syiah Kuala University and Former Head of the Professional Services Division of the Tsunami and Disaster Mitigation Research Center, Banda Aceh, Indonesia;
- (2) Mr Somneuk Swatteuk, Disaster Early Warning Specialist at the National Disaster Warning Center of the Department of Disaster Prevention and Mitigation, Ministry of Interior in Thailand; and
- (3) Mr ARAKIDA Masaru, Director of the Research Department, ADRC



Figure 1. IDSL for Tsunami Early Warning, Indonesia

Below are among the messages that came up during the discussions.

**Continued**

- (1) Tsunami risks are dynamic. As shown in the experiences of Thailand and Indonesia, tsunami risks can increase or decrease depending on the community's ability to reduce vulnerabilities. At the time of the Indian Ocean Tsunami of 2004, the risk was high since tsunami knowledge, understanding, and countermeasures were limited. In Thailand, the establishment of the National Disaster Warning Center (NDWC) has been one of the efforts in reducing tsunami risk through the use of early warning system (EWS) technologies. Similar efforts have been reported in Indonesia, with the installation of cheap but effective tsunami early warning systems (TEWS) such as Inexpensive Devices for Sea Level Monitoring (IDSL), which are designed to reduce tsunami risk.
- (2) Practical countermeasures may be scaled up to enhance community resilience. With tsunami early warning systems (TEWS) in place, the authorities can now issue tsunami early warnings and determine the lead time needed for evacuation. However, since practical countermeasures at the community level differ in Indonesia, Thailand, and Japan, it is important to exchange experiences (e.g., how to evacuate the pregnant, disabled, and elderly during a tsunami) so that communities can further learn and improve their respective countermeasures.
- (3) Space-based technology augments response efforts during a tsunami disaster. As highlighted particularly in the experience of Japan, images taken by space satellites during the Great East Japan Earthquake were valuable in assessing tsunami disaster impacts by comparing before and after photos. During the Tonga Volcanic Eruption and Tsunami of January 2022, satellite images were useful in creating pre- and post-disaster vegetation maps. These augmented the disaster response and recovery efforts from the tsunami event, where ground-based technologies were disrupted.



Figure 2. Tsunami Early Warning System, Thailand

Overall, the discussions implied that in order to reduce the impacts of tsunami disasters in the future, it is essential to learn more about tsunami risks and continue sharing information and experiences. Most importantly, the knowledge and skills of tsunami countermeasures must be passed on to the next generation so that they are not forgotten.

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