

FOREWORD

A great number of natural disasters have occurred in the world in the past decades, and NGOs have been playing an important role as a bridge between governments and local communities. The Asian Disaster Reduction Center (ADRC) implemented a project entitled “NGO Training for Disaster Risk Reduction in Asia” from 2007 to 2009 as part of the JICA Partnership Program (JPP) in order to strengthen the capacity of these NGOs, especially the Asian Disaster Reduction and Response Network (ADRRN). ADRC has developed this practical booklet to provide information on all of the studies conducted on disaster reduction in Asia during this project.

As all of you know, the Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake struck Hyogo Prefecture on 17 January 1995. As a result of this disaster, many NGOs were organized and grassroots activities were launched. These all helped us recognize the importance of networking and collaboration between governments and NGOs in community-based disaster risk management. At the United Nations World Conference on Disaster Reduction held in Hyogo in January 2005 as well as the Asia Disaster Prevention Forum held in April 2009, the importance of building the resilience of nations and communities to disasters was discussed. One of the strategic goals set during the conference was to develop and strengthen institutions, mechanisms and capacities at all levels, in particular at the community level, so they can systematically contribute to building resilience to hazards. Thus, we are very grateful that the project participants that completed this booklet, as it will make a significant contribution to community-based disaster prevention efforts.

Finally, we are deeply grateful to all the stakeholders who helped make it possible to implement this project and compile this booklet. Although the project concluded this year, we believe that the lessons learned by the project participants will spread from person-to-person, helping many different countries improve their disaster resilience.

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Communities are the first responders in any disaster situation. Recognizing and strengthening the immense inherent capacities of local communities is the overarching theme of this publication, which contains simple yet effective tools for disaster risk reduction that can be implemented locally. It has been produced as an outcome of the project “NGO Training for Disaster Risk Reduction in Asia,” conducted as part of the JICA Grassroots Technical Cooperation Project with the Asian Disaster Reduction and Response Network (ADRRN). The range of DRR tools described herein have been developed and tested in six Asian countries: Afghanistan, Bangladesh, India, Malaysia, the Philippines and Sri Lanka.

The ADRRN has been constantly endeavoring to build capacity in disaster reduction and response through mutual learning, networking with experts, institution building and, most importantly, by gathering and disseminating hands-on experience at the front lines. Each major disaster presents new challenges and ADRRN-member organisations must, therefore, continuously strive to further their knowledge and capacity to respond accordingly. This publication, which has been made possible by the painstaking efforts of participating organisations in testing, validating, and documenting field-practice tools, is sure to enrich the efforts of disaster reduction practitioners.

On behalf of the ADRRN, I would like to thank the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) and the Asian Disaster Reduction Center (ADRC) for their generous support and for the trust and confidence they have placed in the ADRRN. Ms. Maki Yoshida and Ms. Yumi Shiomi of the ADRC have facilitated activities throughout the course of this project, while the Secretariat of the ADRRN, managed by Ms. Takako Izumi, has provided constant support to ensure its success. I would like to record with great appreciation the contributions made by the following representatives of ADRRN-member organisations: Moloy Chaki (BDPC), Jesusa Grace J. Molina (CDP), Hamidullah Saljuqi (CHA), Wendy Neoh Siew Ping (MERCY Malaysia), Jun’ichi Hibino (FMYY), Indika Somratne (Sarvodaya), and Shivangi Chavda (SEEDS). Lastly, I would like to thank our former Chairperson Dr. Jemilah Mahmood for her support, as it was during her tenure as chairperson that this project was initiated.

We do hope that this publication will make positive contributions towards strengthening the resilience of communities at risk.

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