

1. Asian Disaster Reduction Center

1-1. History to Establishment

The ADRC was established on July 30, 1998 in the Chuo ward of Kobe City, Hyogo Prefecture. The history of its establishment is outlined below.

1) International Decade of Natural Disaster Reduction (IDNDR)

At its 42nd General Assembly in December 1987, the United Nations designated the 90's as the International Decade of Natural Disaster Reduction, and adopted a resolution aiming to sharply reduce damage caused by natural disasters around the world, particularly in developing countries, through joint international actions.

2) World Conference on Natural Disaster Reduction

The World Meeting of IDNDR, held in Yokohama, was sponsored by the United Nations to implement an interim review of the 10-year project and propose a plan of action for the future.

During this meeting, the "Yokohama Strategy for a Safer World" which pointed out the importance of international cooperation in regions sharing common disasters and disaster reduction measures was adopted. IDNDR activities were implemented based on this strategy throughout the world.

3) The Ministerial-level Asian Natural Disaster Reduction Conference

As the first step in regional level cooperation under the Yokohama Strategy, the "Asian Disaster Reduction Policy Meeting" was held in December 1995 in Kobe, sponsored by the IDNDR Secretariat. Participants consisted of cabinet members involved in disaster reduction from 28 countries, mainly in the Asian region. During this meeting, Japan proposed reviewing the establishment of a system with disaster reduction center functions in the Asian region, etc. The Kobe Declaration on Natural Disaster Reduction was also adopted to promote international disaster reduction cooperation.

4) Asian Natural Disaster Reduction Experts Meeting

An "Asian Disaster Reduction Expert Meeting" was held in October 1996 in Tokyo, sponsored by the IDNDR Secretariat. Participants consisted of the directors of disaster reduction bureaus of 30 countries, and discussions evolved around the topic of "creation of a system with disaster reduction center functions in the Asian region" which was incorporated in the Kobe Disaster Reduction Declaration. During this meeting, it was decided that the establishment of an Asian Disaster Reduction Center (tentative name) to serve as the secretariat for promoting the activities of the system would be reviewed.

5) Asian Disaster Reduction Cooperation Promotion Meeting

An Asian Disaster Reduction Cooperation Promotion Meeting was held in June 1997, sponsored by the IDNDR Secretariat. Participants consisted of directors of disaster reduction bureaus, etc. to discuss specific activities of a "system having disaster reduction center functions in the Asian region". It was proposed that the "Asian Disaster Reduction Center" be set up in Japan as the secretariat of the system, that the organization be established with the agreement of all countries considering its nature, and that the ADPC (Asian Disaster Prevention Center, Thailand) participate as an observer, etc.

6) Establishment of ADRC

As a result of numerous meetings between the Japanese government and related countries on the organization, running, costs, etc. of the ADRC, and with the cooperation of Hyogo Prefecture in Japan, the ADRC was set up in Kobe City, Hyogo Prefecture on July 30, 1998.

1-2. Organization and System

Initially, the ADRC was composed of 22 member countries, four advisory countries, and one non-member. Joined by Armenia in August 2000, there are 23 current member countries. (For details, refer to Tables 2-1-1, 2-1-2, and 2-1-3).

The ADRC was established as an accessory organization of the Urban Disaster Research Institute, which is supervised by the cabinet office of the Japanese government.

1-3. Action Policy and Past Activities

1-3-1. Action Policies

The ADRC is an organization which functions reliably as a disaster reduction information center aiming to share disaster reduction related information in the Asian region. Based on this fundamental function, the following five activities have been designated in past international meetings:

- *Collection and provision of disaster reduction information
- *Survey on promotion of disaster reduction cooperation
- *Collection of information on emergency aid of different countries in the event of a disaster
- *Spread of knowledge on disaster reduction, and increased awareness
- *Planning of educational and training programs on disaster reduction

The ADRC, launched on July 30, 1998, set down the following basic activities in first three years of its establishment.

- (1) Systematically collect the following information, consolidate it into a database, and share the database
 - *Disaster information
 - *Disaster reduction information
 - *Information on knowledge gained from disaster reduction, disaster reduction education, and disaster reduction training.
 - *Information on disaster reduction techniques
 - *Personnel information in disaster reduction area
- (2) Construction of a disaster reduction information network, and use of the Internet as a means to collect and send the information
- (3) Hold regular meetings with personnel in charge of disaster reduction in member countries, and develop a relationship of trust to promote international cooperation on disaster reduction
- (4) Receive a certain number of researchers from member countries every year
- (5) To enable the sharing of information between member countries in the Asian region, English was designated as the common language.
- (6) In collecting information on disaster reduction and building the database, information on the above items shall be compiled, and importance shall be placed on the following:
 - *Give priority to collecting disaster information, and disaster reduction and personnel information
 - *Share the information, provide training, and continue to collect information on disaster reduction technologies

1-3-2. Past Activities

It is of utmost importance to publicize the existence of ADRC on a broad scale, and to establish a

cooperative relationship with interested nations and organizations. The purpose of this is to gather extensive and precise disaster reduction data and other pertinent information for compilation at a disaster information center in the Asian region.

With this in mind, we have actively attended related international conferences and inspection tours in interested countries. We have also welcomed requests from related organizations to visit or train at the ADRC. During the 1999 fiscal year, we held a second international meeting in Kobe (described later) in December, following the first meeting and symposium in February 1999.

In addition, we also improved our information service system on past disasters in the world since the launch of ADRC the previous year. At the same time, we also constructed a database on disaster reduction systems in different countries, based on the information obtained from member countries at past expert meetings, in order to provide a step-by-step information service (attached separately).

Through such activities, the ADRC is gradually gaining recognition in the area of disaster reduction. At the IDNDR Programme Forum, held in July 1999 in Geneva as the conclusion of a 10-year international disaster prevention effort, we were selected as one of the success stories and given the opportunity to introduce our activities to 700 participants from 130 countries.

Furthermore, in February 2000, we launched a joint project of international disaster prevention with the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) to reinforce disaster management in the Asian region by collaborating on disaster reduction and developing a preventive system. As a result, our activities have been expanding with the establishment of the OCHA Asian Region Disaster Management Coordination Unit within the ADRC, and with the assignment of disaster management advisors. Currently we are holding discussions with the OCHA on adding functions of the Relief Web (sends OCHA disaster information) to this Unit.

We have also started participating actively in the International GDIN (Global Disaster Information Network) Conference as a member of the Asia Pacific Region Working Group since the Ankara Conference in April 2000, in an effort to further broaden our activities by contributing to global disaster reduction information sharing activities outside the Asian region.

Table 1-3-2-1 <Major Activities>

Jul. 30, '98	Opening of Center Venue: 3F, IHD Centre Bldg. Attendance: approx. 150
Sep. 1, '98	Launch of worldwide recent Disaster Information service <Disaster information of 156 cases has been distributed by March 25, 2001>
Oct. '98-	Survey of member countries (Korea, Philippines, Malaysia, Singapore, Bangladesh, Viet Nam, Thailand, Russia, Indonesia, Papua New Guinea, China)
Nov. 7, '98	Visit by Bangladeshi Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr. Abdus Samad Azad
Nov. 9-13, '98	Participation in international workshop for intensified emergency response, the WHO Western Pacific Region, Manila <Introduced establishment of ADRC>
Dec. 1, '98	Launch of human resource database for disaster reduction <Approx. 1,400 persons from 51 nations have registered>
Feb. 15, '99	ADRC International Symposium Venue: Hyogo Prefectural Hall <Attendance: approx. 250 persons from 21 countries (including non-experts)>
Feb. 16-18, '99	ADRC Expert Meeting Venue: IHD Center Bldg. <Attendance: approx. 30 persons from 21 countries and 1 organization>
Feb. 23-26, '99	Participation in ESCAP-IDNDR Regional Meeting for Asia, Bangkok and Manila <Introduced activities of ADRC>
Mar. 18, '99	Visit by Director of IDNDR Secretariat, Mr. Philippe L. Boullé
May. -Jul., '99	Databases of Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake, disaster reduction training, disaster-reduction system and comprehensive information on disaster reduction by countries made successively available on the Internet
Jul. 5-9, '99	Participation in IDNDR Programme Forum, Geneva <Introduction of ADRC's establishment and activities as an example of Success Stories; coordination of

	the session on “Information Technology for Assessment and Simulation Capacities.”>
Jul. 12-16, '99	Survey of Governments of Switzerland and France, the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, the Center for Research on the Epidemiology of Disasters, Louvain Catholic University, Brussels, etc.
Jul. 23, '99	Successively accepted researchers from member countries <Korea, Viet Nam, Nepal, Indonesia>
Sep. 23, '99	Launch of joint project with the Government of Papua New Guinea <Education for raising widespread awareness of damage from tsunamis>
Sep. 29-Oct. 4, '99	Participation in disaster relief team in Taiwan
Nov. 5, '99	MOA between CRED and ADRC on collaboration of information and data on disasters
Dec. 6-8, '99	Second ADRC Expert Meeting Venue: IHD Center Bldg. <Attendance: approx. 36 persons from 24 countries and 4 organizations>
Jan. 13, '00	Participation in the World Bank meeting, Paris
Feb. 7, '00	Opening of Asian Unit of United Nations Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA)
Apr. 26-29, '00	Participation in 3 rd International GDIN Conference (Ankara) <Report ADRC activities, VENEN system>
May 3-4, '00	Visit to Republic of Armenia NSSP <Hearing of intentions to become member of ADRC>
May 6-7, '00	Visit to Iran IIEES <Hearing of intentions to become member of ADRC>
Aug. 31-Sept. 4, '00	Participation in Disaster Reduction Fair 2000 by setting up booth. Venue: Sogo Kobe 8F
'00	GDIN Hawaii
Oct. 24-27, '00	Participation in SAGIP2000 (Manila) <Report on sharing of disaster reduction information by ADRC member countries>
Dec. 5-7, '00	Third ADRC International Meeting Venue: IHD Center Bldg. <Attendance: approx. 40 persons from 26 countries and 6 organizations>
Dec. 8, '00	Joint sponsorship of Asian Regional Forum Venue: Mita Kyoyo Hall
Jan. '01	Participation in Disaster Reduction Technology Exhibition by setting up booth Venue:
Feb. 5-6, '01	Joint sponsorship of World Disaster Prevention Conference 2001 Venue: Awaji Yume Butai International Hall
March 20-23, '01	Participation in GDIN2001 (Canberra) <Introduction VENTEN, Propose Matrix/Unique ID Project>