# 1. Asian Disaster Reduction Center

## 1-1. Background for the Establishment of the ADRC

The Asian Disaster Reduction Center (ADRC) opened offices in Kobe, Japan, on July 30, 1998. The major steps leading up to ADRC's creation are outlined as follows:

### 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 those in developing countries, through joint international actions.

### World Conference on Natural Disaster Reduction

In May 1994, the UN hosted the World Conference on Natural Disaster Reduction in Yokohama, Japan, to conduct an interim review of the 10-year project and propose a plan of action for the future. At the meeting, the "Yokohama Strategy for a Safer World", which pointed out the importance of international cooperation in regions that share common types of disasters and disaster reduction measures, were adopted. IDNDR activities have since been promoted throughout the world based on this strategy.

### Ministerial-level Asian Natural Disaster Reduction Conference

As the first step in regional level cooperation as per the Yokohama Strategy, the IDNDR Secretariat hosted a meeting in Kobe in December of 1995 to formulate a policy on disaster development cooperation in Asia. The meeting was attended by cabinet members involved in disaster reduction from 28 countries, who adopted the "Kobe Disaster Reduction Declaration", which contained ideas for promoting international cooperation in disasters including a proposal by Japan to launch studies into the possible creation of a system that could act as the disaster reduction coordinator in the Asian region.

### Asian Natural Disaster Reduction Experts Meeting

The IDNDR Secretariat hosted a meeting of experts in October of 1996 to hash out how a central disaster reduction system as written into the Kobe Disaster Reduction Declaration might be created for the Asian region. Key personnel from disaster reduction bureaus of 30 countries attended. Parties agreed to study the creation of an "Asian Disaster Reduction Center" (tentative name) that would serve as the secretariat for promoting the activities of the conceptualized system.

### Asian Disaster Reduction Cooperation Promotion Meeting

The IDNDR Secretariat hosted a meeting in Tokyo in June of 1997 to discuss specific activities of the conceptualized central disaster reduction system. Once again attended by key personnel from disaster reduction bureaus of 23 countries, the overall goal was to promote cooperation in disaster reduction efforts through concrete action. It was proposed at the meeting to create an office in Japan as the secretariat for the conceptualized system.

### ADRC's Official Start

With momentum gathering on this series of meetings, the Japanese government discussed organization, budget and other aspects of the proposed office with other countries. Then, with the cooperation of Hyogo Prefecture, the Asian Disaster Reduction Center was officially established in Kobe on July 30, 1998.

## 1-2. Organization

At the onset, ADRC consisted of 22 member countries, 4 advisor countries and 1 observer, but Armenia joined in August 2000 bringing the number of member countries to 23. (For details, refer to Tables 2-1-1, 2-1-2, and 2-1-3).

## 1-3. Policy and Past Activities

### 1-3-1. Policy

ADRC operates as a center for sharing disaster reduction information in the Asian region. With this the fundamental purpose, the following five activities were adopted at past international meetings.

- ☐ Collection and dissemination of disaster reduction information
- ☐ Research into ways to promote cooperation in disaster reduction efforts
- ☐ Collection of information on emergency aid that differing countries can make available in a disaster situation
- ☐ Publications and programs to increase awareness and knowledge of disaster reduction
- ☐ Planning of educational and practical programs in disaster reduction

ADRC has pursued the following basic goals since its inception.

(1) Information Sharing

ADRC provides the following information through its website.

- ☐ Disaster information
- ☐ Disaster reduction news
- ☐ Insights gained from disasters, education in disaster reduction and emergency drills
- ☐ Disaster reduction technology
- ☐ Human resources for disaster reduction fields

ADRC holds regular meetings for personnel in charge of disaster reduction in member countries and works to build trust amongst members as a means for promoting international cooperation in disaster reduction efforts.

ADRC welcomes a limited number of researchers from member countries every year.

(2) Capacity Building in Member Countries

In order for member countries to build their disaster reduction capacity, ADRC imparts awareness, education and training programs with them and international organizations.

(3) Cooperative Projects

ADRC takes part in joint projects with member countries targeted at building disaster reduction capacity.

### 1-3-2. Past Activities

It is of utmost importance to make ADRC well known and to establish cooperative relationships with concerned nations and organizations. The purpose of this is to gather extensive and accurate data on disaster reduction for use and dissemination in the Asian region.

With this in mind, we have actively attended related international conferences, visited various countries to conduct surveys, and welcomed related organizations and researchers for tours and study programs. And, since 1999, we have held an ADRC international meeting every year for member countries, advisor countries and international organizations like the UN. With the cooperation of member country India, the fourth ADRC international meeting (described later) was held in Delhi in January, 2002.

We also strengthened our information services that were launched the year of ADRC's inception to provide information on disasters around the world. We are continuing to build a database of disaster reduction systems and other relevant information (described later) provided by member countries through past international meetings and are making that information

available as we receive it.

Through these activities, ADRC is gaining recognition in international circles. In fact, we were even named one of the ten success stories at the IDNDR Programme Forum held as the conclusion to the 10-year international disaster reduction effort in Geneva, Switzerland, in July of 1999. This gave us the opportunity to introduce our activities to some 700 participants from 130 countries.

Furthermore, in February 2000, we launched a joint international project in cooperation with the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), aimed at reinforcing disaster management in the Asian region by building a cooperative framework for disaster reduction and response. As a part of this initiative, OCHA opened an Asian Region Disaster Management Coordination Unit within the offices of ADRC and assigned advisors on disaster management to head up that office. Our two organizations are sharing information and working closely together to promote activities. One such effort was to bring OCHA's Relief Web to Japan in August 2001 with their operations for providing humanitarian and disaster relief information to the world over the Internet. Their ability to promote information sharing in the Asian-Pacific region is helping to strengthen disaster reduction, emergency aid and humanitarian support.

ADRC has also been a participant in the Global Disaster Information Network (GDIN) since the Ankara Conference of April 2000. At the Canberra Conference in March 2001, ADRC made the proposal to introduce a standardized ID number for disasters worldwide (GLIDE), which we are jointly developing with Relief Web and the Center for Research on the Epidemiology of Disasters of Louvain Catholic University in Brussels, Belgium, as a means to effectively utilize disaster information archived around the world. ADRC continues to broaden its scope of activities to help the effort to share disaster reduction information on a global basis.

Moreover, at the Consultative Meeting on Regional Cooperation in Natural Disasters, which we sponsored in Katmandu, Nepal, in July 2001, in cooperation with OCHA's Kobe office, we advocated the importance of "Total Disaster Risk Management" and, in the process, promoted greater awareness of the importance of "Total Disaster Risk Management" from disaster reduction to response on all levels of operation from central governments to local communities. These efforts were applauded by participants to the international meeting (members' meeting) (Jan. 2002) in India and the Asian NGO symposium held in Kobe this past February, spurring hopes that more people are becoming aware of total risk management concepts.

Table 1-3-2-1    Major Activities

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| Jul. 30, '98 | Opening ceremony at IHD Center Bldg. Attended by approx. 150 persons. |
| Sep. 1, '98 | Launched worldwide disaster Information. <Issued 156 bulletins as of March 25, 2001. > |
| Oct. '98 - | Surveyed member countries. (Korea, Philippines, Malaysia, Singapore, Bangladesh, Vietnam, 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 | Participated in WHO international workshop for intensified emergency response, in the Western Pacific Region (Manila, Philippine). <Announced start of ADRC. > |
| Dec. 1, '98 | Launched database of disaster reduction human resources. <Approx. 1,400 persons from 51 countries are registered. > |
| Feb. 15, '99 | ADRC International Symposium at Hyogo Prefectural Hall. <Attended by approx. 250 persons, from 21 countries. > |
| Feb. 16-18, '99 | Held ADRC International Meeting at IHD Center Bldg Kobe, Japan. <Attended by approx. 30 persons from 21 countries and 1 organization. > |
| Feb. 23-26, '99 | Attended ESCAP-IDNDR Regional Meeting for Asia (Bangkok, Thailand). <Introduced activities of ADRC. > |
| Mar. 18, '99 | Visit by Director of IDNDR Secretariat, Mr. Philippe L. Boullé. |

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| May-Jul., '99 | Databases of Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake, disaster reduction training, disaster-reduction systems and comprehensive information on disaster reduction by countries available on the Internet. |
| Jul. 5-9, '99 | Participated in IDNDR Programme Forum (Geneva, Switzerland). <Introduction of ADRC's establishment and activities as example of Success Story, and coordinated session on "Information Technology for Assessment and Simulation Capacities."> |
| Jul. 12-16, '99 | Surveyed Governments of Switzerland and France, UN OCHA, Center for Research on the Epidemiology of Disasters, Louvain Catholic University, Brussels, etc. |
| Jul. 23, '99- | Launched program for accepting researchers from member countries. <From Korea, Vietnam, Nepal and Indonesia. > |
| Sep. 23, '99 | Launched joint project with government of Papua New Guinea <To raise awareness of damage from tsunamis> |
| Sep. 29-Oct. 4, '99 | Participation in relief team to Taiwan |
| Nov. 5, '99 | Signed Memorandum of Understanding in disaster information collection with Center for Research on the Epidemiology of Disasters, Louvain Catholic University. |
| Dec. 6-8, '99 | $2^{nd}$ ADRC International Meeting at IHD Center Bldg Kobe, Japan. <Attended by approx. 36 persons from 24 countries. > |
| Jan. 13, '00 | Participated in the World Bank meeting (Paris, France). |
| Feb. 7, '00 | Opening ceremony for Asian Unit of OCHA. |
| Apr. 26-29, '00 | Participated in $3^{rd}$ International GDIN Conference (Ankara). <Introduction of ADRC activities, VENTEN system. > |
| May. 3-4, '00 | Visited Republic of Armenia NSSP. <Hearing of intentions to join ADRC. > |
| Aug. 31-Sep. 4, '00 | Participated in Disaster Reduction Fair 2000 in Kobe |
| Oct. 24-27, '00 | Participated in SAGIP 2000 (Manila, Philippines). <Reported on sharing disaster reduction information amongst ADRC member countries. > |
| Dec. 5-7, '00 | $3^{rd}$ ADRC International Meeting at IHD Center Bldg Kobe, Japan. <Attended by approx. 40 persons from 26 countries and 6 organizations. > |
| Dec. 8, '00 | Jointly sponsored Asian Regional Forum on Disaster Prevention in Tokyo. |
| Jan. '01 | Participated in Disaster Prevention Technology Exhibition in Kobe. |
| Feb. 5-6, '01 | Jointly sponsored World Disaster Prevention Conference 2001 at Awaji Yume Butai International Hall. |
| Mar. 20-23, '01 | Participated in GDIN 2001 (Canberra, Australia). <Reported on VENTEN and proposed Unique ID Project which was approved. > |
| Apr. 14-27, '01 | Participated in Japanese government mission to survey earthquake damage. <in Gujarat, India> |
| Jun. 4-8, '01 | Co-sponsored multinational mission (ADRC member countries) with Indian government to research earthquake damage in Gujarat, India. |
| Jun. 18-23, '01 | Participated in internation al conference on disaster reduction sponsored by WHO Western Pacific Office. <Launched joint project with WHO Health Mapper and ADRC VENTEN. > |
| Jun. 28-29, '01 | Participated in APDIN Working Group Meeting (Bangkok, Thailand). |
| Jun. 28, '01 | Signed Memorandum of Cooperation with ADPC Bangkok, Thailand . |
| Jul. 4-6, '01 | Co-sponsored Consultative Meeting on Regional Cooperation in Natural Disasters with OCHA in Katmandu, Nepal. |
| Aug. 16, '01 | Opening ceremony of OCHA Relief Web office. |
| Aug. 16, '01 | Visit by UN Under Secretary-General, Mr. Oshima. |
| Aug. 28, '01 | Visit by Philippine Chairman of the National Disaster Coordinating Council and Secretary of National Defense, Mr. Angelo T.Reyes. |

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| Aug. 27, '01 | International Symposium on GIS in Kobe, Japan. |
| Oct. 4-5, '01 | Participated in ISDR meeting (Geneva, Switzerland). |
| Oct. 6-20, '01 | Imparted urban relief training to operatives from member countries in cooperation with Singapore Civil Defense Force. |
| Nov. 6, '01 | Participated in the 1st International Seminar on Disaster Prevention (Seoul, Korea). <Keynote address delivered by Deputy Executive Director, Satoru Nishikawa. > |
| Nov. 13-15, '01 | Attended JUSTSAP (Hawaii, USA). |
| Nov. 27-29, '01 | Participated in the World Summit on Sustainable Development (Cambodia). <Statement included disaster reduction as indispensable element of sustainable development. > |
| Nov. 29-30, '01 | Participated in the Typhoon Committee meeting (Hawaii, USA). <Proposed use of ADRC website to provide typhoon information. Motion was adopted. > |
| Dec. 1-17, '01 | Imparted training in disaster reduction to operatives of member countries in cooperation with Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology. |
| Jan. 9, '02 | Visit by Indian Vice Chairman of the National Committee on Disaster Management, Mr. Sharad Pawar |
| Jan. 17, '02 | Visit by Japanese Minister, Mr. Jin Murai. |
| Jan. 22-23, '02 | 4th ADRC International Meeting (Delhi, India). Attended by 80 persons from 22 countries and 10 organizations. |
| Jan. 24, '02 | ISDR Asian Meeting (Delhi, India). Attended by 80 persons from 22 countries and 10 organizations. |
| Jan. 21-Feb.22, '02 | JICA seminar for disaster reduction managers. <Implemented approx. 1 month of training to 14 persons from 12 countries. > |
| Feb. 5-7, '02 | Attended OCHA Symposium (Geneva, Switzerland). <Reported on ADRC activities and Unique ID GLIDE Project. > |
| Feb. 14-15, '02 | Exhibited at 6th Earthquake Technology Expo in Kobe, Japan. |
| Feb. 20-22, '02 | Co-sponsored Regional Workshop on Networking and Co with OCHA Kobe , Japan. <Attended by approx. 80 persons from NGOs in 16 countries, UN organizations, Japanese Cabinet office and Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Hyogo Prefecture. > |
| Feb. 21, '02 | Visit by ISDR Director, Mr. Salvano Briceno. |
| Feb. 24-28, '02 | Participated in Japanese government mission to WTC in New York, USA. |
| Feb. 27-Mar. 1, '02 | Participated in International Expo in Kazakhstan. <Introduction of ADRC activities and internet disaster reduction gallery>. |
| Mar. 12-13, '02 | Attended Cyclone Committee meeting co-sponsored by WMO and ESCAP. (Myanmar) |
| Mar. 15, '02 | Tested use of satellites in disaster reduction in cooperation with NASDA and Cabinet Office of Japan |