
4-5. Promoting Cooperation with Member Countries, International Organizations, and NGOs

4-5-1. ISDR Asia Partnership

The ISDR Asia Partnership (IAP) was established in 2003 based on a proposal by the UN International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR) Secretariat in Geneva. The IAP aims to promote disaster risk reduction efforts of the national level with the expertise and mechanism of member organizations with the ISDR Bangkok Office serving as the IAP secretariat. The Asian Disaster Reduction Center (ADRC) was involved in its establishment, along with the ISDR and the Asian Disaster Preparedness Center (ADPC), and thus far has served as a core member of the IAP together with the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UN/OCHA), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and Pacific (UNESCAP).

The IAP is currently engaged in promoting and supporting ① the Global Platform and the implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA) in the region, and ② the Asian Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction. The IAP has held meetings, workshops, and other events on these topics every year since its establishment.

To promote and support ① the Global Platform and the implementation of the HFA, meetings were held in Colombo, Sri Lanka, and Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia in May and September of 2008, respectively, where members gave presentations on the current activities related to HFA implementation in preparation for the Second Global Platform in June 2009. These reports were reflected in the Global Assessment Report released in May, and served as basic documents for the Second Global Platform

To promote and support ② the Asian Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction, the IAP, as a conference partner organization, held meetings regarding the event, which was held in Kuala Lumpur in December 2008. Furthermore, during the ministerial conference, the IAP organized a session to further discuss its future role and course of action, as well as its current activities for HFA implementation.

At the meeting in September, ADRC worked with UNESCAP to give a presentation on current activities aimed at HFA implementation related to the application of space technologies, specifically regarding Sentinel Asia. In its role as a member of Regional Task Force on Urban Disaster Risk (RTF-URR), ADRC reported on its activities after the establishment in January 2008 as well as the situation on the survey on urban risk reduction in Asia.

Since the Asian region experiences disasters every year, thereby requiring donor agencies to establish partnerships in the region, the IAP continues to expand. As of December 2008, its membership included more than thirty organizations, including those mentioned above as well as other UN and international organizations (e.g., the World Bank, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), United Nations Centre for Regional Development (UNCRD)), regional organizations (e.g., the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC), Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), and Mekong River Commission (MRC)), donor agencies (e.g., Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), United States Agency for International Development (USAID), and the Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID) and NGOs (e.g., Asian Disaster Reduction and Response Network (ADRRN) and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC).

4-5-2. The Typhoon Committee

The Typhoon Committee (TC) is an inter-governmental body that was organized in 1968 under the joint auspices of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) and the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) to promote and coordinate the planning and implementation of measures required for minimizing the loss of life and property damage caused by typhoons in Asia and the Pacific. The founding members of the Committee were China, Hong Kong, China, Japan, the Republic of Korea, Lao PDR, the Philippines, and Thailand. Cambodia (1972), Malaysia (1976), Viet Nam (1979), Macao, China (1993), People's Democratic Republic of Korea (1993), Singapore (1997), and the USA (1998) joined later, bringing the present membership to 14 nations.

The TC works on reducing the damage caused by typhoons and floods in the region by:

- a) Regularly reviewing the progress made in the fields of typhoon damage prevention
- b) Recommending plans and measures to participating governments regarding the improvement of meteorological and hydrological facilities needed for typhoon damage prevention
- c) Recommending plans and measures to the participating governments regarding the improvement of community preparedness and disaster prevention
- d) Promoting the establishment of programs and facilities for training personnel from countries in the region in typhoon forecasting and warning, as well as hydrology and flood control, and arranging for training outside the region, as necessary
- e) Promoting, preparing, and submitting plans to participating governments and other interested organizations regarding the coordination of research program and activities concerning typhoons
- f) Considering, upon request, possible sources of financial and technical support for such plans and programs
- g) Preparing and submitting, at the request and on behalf of participating governments, requests for technical, financial, or other assistance offered under the UNDP and by other organizations and contributors.

In carrying out these functions, the TC maintains and implements action programs in three categories: Meteorology, Hydrology, and Disaster Prevention and Preparedness. It is supported by an Advisory Working Group, a Training and Research Coordination Group, and a Resources Mobilization Group, as well as by contributions from its member countries, and enjoys the cooperation and assistance of the UNDP, ESCAP, WMO, and other agencies.

4-5-3 Support and Cooperation for the UNDP in the Context of the Earthquake Risk Reduction and Recovery Preparedness(ERRP) Program

Natural disasters, especially earthquakes, cause a great deal of damage in South Asia, and seriously impede development efforts within the region. The Earthquake Risk Reduction and Recovery Preparedness (ERRP) Program strives to reduce the damage caused by earthquakes and to promote more rapid recovery by promoting building reinforcement, focusing on efforts to strengthen skills in the field of disaster reduction. The ERRP covers India, Nepal, Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Bhutan, five member countries of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC). The UNDP is implementing this program with funding from the Japanese government's Grant Aid for Disaster Prevention and Reconstruction. It is expected to last for two years starting from its launch date in May 2008.

The ERRP is divided into "regional programs," which extend across the five countries to achieve the goal of promoting information sharing and South-South cooperation, and "country programs," which are tailored to meet the needs of individual countries. ADRC supports the formulation and implementation of disaster prevention planning and retrofitting guidelines in both types of programs by sending Japanese experts knowledgeable in earthquake preparedness policies to the areas where they are needed most.

The first workshop, which served as the kickoff event for the regional program of the ERRP, was co-organized in Katmandu, Nepal on 10-12 August 2008, by the Asian Disaster Reduction Center (ADRC), the government of Nepal, the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), and the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SARRC) Disaster Management Center (SDMC).

This recent workshop was attended by a total of about 200



Fig 4-5-3-1 Inaugural session, the first Regional Workshop

representatives from the five target countries. ADRC Executive Director Mr. Koji Suzuki gave remarks at the opening ceremony of the workshop in which he committed ADRC's full support to the successful implementation of the ERRP and emphasized the importance of community disaster reduction efforts in the disaster management field.

At the knowledge-sharing session held on the second day of the workshop, Japanese expert Dr. Tatsuo Narafu, Senior Coordinator for International Cooperation of the Building Research Institute (BRI), gave a presentation on "Opportunities and Challenges for the ERRP Project and Inputs from Japanese Technical Assistance." Additional presentations were also given by Mr. Masato Ohori, ADRC Senior Researcher, on "Lessons Learned from the Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake" and "The Importance of Total Quality Management in Construction: Lessons from Projects Overseas." The afternoon strategy session featured discussions about the importance of regional cooperation and methods of achieving it, as well as a presentation by Dr. Narafu on the kinds of technical assistance that Japan might be able to provide. This was followed by reviews of the country programs. There are plans to hold three more ERRP regional workshops in the future, in a way that is consistent with the progress made on the program. The second regional workshop, which will include a mid-term review of the ERRP, is scheduled to be held in spring or summer of next year.

After the first workshop, ADRC received technical assistance (TA) requests from the target countries through the UNDP. In November 2008, government departments (Nepal and Bhutan), UNDP, and ADRC were discussed about a Japanese Proposal.

The Japanese proposal is comprised of the following elements:

- 1) Advice and seminars on the formulation and implementation of earthquake disaster prevention plans and the management of contingency plans
- 2) Support for the establishment of guidelines regarding the evaluation and assessment of building earthquake vulnerability, and seminars aimed at teaching professionals about these guidelines.
- 3) Advice and seminars on retrofitting techniques.

In the area of seismic retrofitting, the Japanese authorities proposed that a pull-down test be conducted using an existing brick-masonry or confined-masonry building. In this experiment, researchers will monitor the horizontal resistant strength of an existing building and will review the effects of the proposed retrofitting techniques. The experiment, which will be facilitated by a Japanese specialist to be stationed in Nepal until September, will be conducted in cooperation with the government of Nepal and UNDP at Katmandu, Nepal in April 2009.

The outcome of this experiment will be shared not only with experts in Nepal, but also with experts in all the target countries to enhance their use of retrofitting techniques. To facilitate this, we plan to hold a workshop that is designed to combine the experiment with the seminar. Experts and specialists from the targeted countries will be invited to attend the workshop. ADRC regards this "visible" experiment as a flagship project for Japanese TA proposal.

In addition to its support of programs for Nepal and Bhutan, ADRC is starting its support a country program for Pakistan. The TA requests from Pakistan are purely academic in nature, such as the development of a curriculum for a graduate school in seismic engineering. Given this, ADRC will develop the course materials in collaboration with Japanese universities and academic institutions. With regard to Bangladesh, TA support will be based on future on-site studies to be conducted by the UNDP and other relevant stakeholders. There have not yet been any direct TA requests from India. However, ADRC is trying to establish cooperative South-South relationships.

In the context of the ERRP, ADRC does not necessarily regard Japanese TA support as an opportunity for the dissemination of brand-new knowledge or for the transfer of cutting-edge technologies. Instead, ADRC promotes a localized approach that promotes the use of local knowledge, techniques, and human resources for the creation of disaster-resilient communities. ADRC therefore has a policy of implementing its support in a way that is tailored to local needs and respectful of the diverse views of stakeholders.

4-5-4 Promoting Cooperation with the Arab Red Crescent and Red Cross Organization

Focusing on the possibilities for launching regional disaster reduction activities in the Arab region, a delegation from the Arab Red Crescent and Red Cross Organization (ARCRCO) visited the Asian Disaster Reduction Center (ADRC) to learn about its extensive experience in developing projects in the field of disaster reduction in Asia. The delegation members consisted of ARCRCO representatives from Kuwait, Sudan, Jordan, and Saudi Arabia.

The ADRC gave a presentation on its organization and activities, but the projects of greatest interest to the ARCRCO were the ADRC's human resource development activities, including the visiting researcher program. ADRC Executive Director Mr. Koji Suzuki and Senior Researcher Ms. Etsuko Tsunozaki then gave their advice on the importance of capacity building, including human resource development.

In addition to visiting the ADRC, the delegation visited the United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UNISDR) Hyogo Office, the UN Center for Regional Development (UNCRD), the International Recovery Platform (IRP) Secretariat, the Disaster Reduction and Human Renovation Institution (DRI), and the Hyogo Emergency Medical Center, all members of the Disaster Reduction Alliance (DRA). They also paid a courtesy call on Japanese Red Cross Kobe Hospital.

Through their visit to this cluster of institutions located in the New Eastern City Center of Kobe (called HAT Kobe), delegation members learned about the DRA's multifaceted efforts to engage in cooperative disaster risk reduction. It is hoped that the ADRC's experiences and activities, which emphasize international collaboration and regional cooperation, will be beneficial for future disaster management efforts in the Arab region.