

5-3. Promoting Cooperation with International & Regional Organizations and NGOs

The ADRC places high priority on the development of institutional and personal network to share disaster information in the Asia region. Developing personal networks between professionals and their counterparts in member countries, adviser countries, and observer organizations is vital to promoting cooperation on disaster reduction efforts in Asia. Therefore, ADRC invites management level officials, including deputy directors, directors, and managers, to its annual ADRC International Meeting to encourage interpersonal exchanges.

On the other hand, ADRC has been hosting Visiting Researchers (VR) from member countries since 1999. (see 4-1 for details) ADRC updates VR-network contact list annually..

(1) ISDR Asia Partnership

The ISDR Asia Partnership (IAP) is an informal network of agencies that facilitate regional disaster risk reduction efforts in Asia and Pacific, especially in promoting national activities of HFA implementation and supporting biennial Asian Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (AMCDRR).

Established in 2003, the IAP has now over 30 members including UN, international, regional/sub-regional organizations, donor agencies, NGOs and academia in the region.

Since its conception, the Asian Disaster Reduction Center (ADRC) has served as a core member of the IAP along with the UN International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR) and the Asian Disaster Preparedness Center (ADPC), 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).

In 2009, the IAP, as a conference partner, held several meetings in order to promote and support the fourth AMCDRR in Korea scheduled in October 2010, where the ADRC will contribute to organizing several events in collaboration with the IAP members and the countries in the region. During the meetings in Incheon in September 2009, in Bangkok in December 2009 and March 2010, discussions were made over such issues as preparatory process and documentation of the coming ministerial conference.



Fig.5-3-2-(1) IAP meeting in Incheon in September 2009

(2) Collaboration with the ADRRN

Today, NGOs as well as governments and international organizations play active roles in disaster response and risk reduction in Asia. In addition to conducting rescue activities immediately after a disaster, NGOs work in close cooperation with local communities to provide support for reconstruction and rehabilitation efforts, and to promote disaster preparedness activities, such as disaster education and disaster awareness efforts during non-critical times. However, the limited resources that individual NGOs have for dealing with disasters require them to further enhance their capabilities and strengthen their ties with relevant authorities.

The Asian Disaster Reduction Center (ADRC) co-organized the “Regional Workshop on Networking and Collaboration among Non-Governmental Organizations of Asian Countries in Disaster Risk Reduction and Responses” with the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) Kobe, in February 2002. The workshop, which was held in Kobe, aimed to facilitate international networking and collaboration among NGOs involved in disaster prevention and rescue operations in the Asian region, and attracted 35 participants from disaster-related NGOs in 16 Asian countries. A consensus was reached among the workshop participants regarding the establishment of the Asian Disaster Reduction and Response Network (ADRRN) to promote cooperation among related NGOs. ADRC as well as OCHA Kobe were granted observer status for supporting the network's activities.

Especially since the Indian Ocean Tsunami of 26 December 2004, the ADRRN has been increasing its presence in Asia and actively conducting various disaster response, recovery, and mitigation activities in tsunami-affected countries.

ADRC conducted a project in Malaysia in 2007, 2008, and 2009, which targeted ADRRN-member NGOs (see 4-2-1 for details).

(3) Japan-SAARC Symposium on Disaster Prevention

Realizing the need for vulnerability maps in decision making related to disaster risk education in South Asia, ADRC and the SAARC Disaster Management Center (SDMC), with the support of the Japan-SAARC Special Fund, held a Symposium on the Framework for Regional Disaster Prevention in the SAARC Region (Japan-SAARC Symposium on Disaster Prevention) on 19-20 January, 2010 in Kobe, Japan.

Twelve delegates from eight SAARC member countries, including H. E. Mr. Minjur Dorji, Honorable Minister of Home and Cultural Affairs, Bhutan, and H.E. Mr. Abudulla Shahid, Minister, National Disaster Management Center, Maldives, participated in the symposium, along with national and local government officials from Japan, expert scientists, and representatives of international and regional organizations .

During the symposium, the participants examined the current status of efforts to develop hazard, vulnerability, and risk maps in the SAARC countries and discussed how to make the best use of those maps in disaster risk reduction activities as well as urban public policy development efforts, such as land use planning. The participants also discussed ways use these maps to raise risk awareness at the community level.

Based on their intensive discussions, the symposium participants ultimately issued a recommendation to the SAARC member countries and their development partners that hazard, vulnerability, and risk maps be created.



Fig. 5-3-2(3)-1 Symposium participants.

(4) Collaboration and Cooperation with Central Asia

The Central Asia territory is highly susceptible to the natural disasters. The complex natural climatic conditions of the region account for the high probability of the trans-boundary impacts of the potential natural disasters. Different conditions and paces of development of the Central Asian countries lead to the vulnerability of the population to various disaster risks.

Therefore, it is indispensable to share information, promote cooperation, and coordinate the actions among the countries in the region to enhance their capacity in disaster risk reduction and disaster preparedness for response. Significant progress towards the collaboration has been made in the region since the World Conference on Disaster Reduction (WCDR) in 2005, and now vigorous consultations have continued for establishing the Central-Asian Disaster Preparedness and Response Coordination Center in response to the gain of momentum.

The ADRC has supported the initiative as a regional organization and participated actively in the consultations and discussion by taking various opportunities.

In fiscal year 2009, the ADRC participated in the 2nd Consultative Meeting on Establishment of Regional Disaster Preparedness and Response Coordination Centre in Central Asia which was organized by Kazakhstan government and UN OCHA in Almaty, Kazakhstan on 15-16 April 2009.

In the meeting, the participants including representatives from Republic of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, and Republic of Tajikistan discussed specific conditions and definition towards establishing of the Coordination

Centre which has been agreed through several meetings on mutual cooperation for disaster risk reduction in the Central Asia. The delegates from the Central Asian countries were actively involved in the discussion. The documents for establishment of the Centre were gone through one article by one article for reaching consensus. Further, through the discussion, the Centre's name has been changed as "the Central Asia Coordination Centre on Disaster Response and Risk Reduction" in consideration of the aspect that the Centre would also play important role for disaster risk reduction in the area.

Further, the ADRC organized a Central Asia and Caucasus Regional Cooperation Meeting on Disaster Risk Reduction on 20 January 2010 in Kobe as a side meeting of the Asian Conference on Disaster Reduction 2010. The meeting was attended by the delegations from Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Russia, and the representatives from JICA, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, UNOCHA, and UNISDR. The meeting was aimed at further promoting of the collaboration of the region in disaster risk reduction and introducing the current initiatives for creating a regional coordination center to the participants.



Fig. 5-3-2(4)-1 2nd consultative Meeting in Kazakhstan, April 2009

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

In the meeting, the following points were highlighted: 1) High level engagement and commitment to cooperation in the sub-region should be encouraged, 2) Number of initiatives and partners in disaster risk reduction in the sub-region has been increased, and 3) Institutionalized cooperation and coordination of disaster risk management activities are required and the Central Asia Coordination Centre for Disaster Response and Risk Reduction is recognized as a means to achieve this. Further, the participants took note of the invitation to join the initiative for establishment of the Center, and were expected to extend it to other interested parties.



Fig. 5-3-2 (4) Central Asia and Caucasus Regional Cooperation Meeting, January 2010

(5) The Typhoon Committee

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

In recent years, ADRC has been involved in TC activities as an adviser, promoting and establishing the GLIDE (Global unique disaster Identifier) system that it developed. In 2009, ADRC attended the Workshop of the Disaster Prevention and Preparedness Working Group (DPP-WG) held in South Korea, and the 42nd Session of the TC, which was held in Thailand.

ADRC participated in the fourth meeting of the Working-Group on Disaster Prevention and Preparedness which was jointly organized by UNESCAP, the WMO Typhoon Committee Secretariat, and the National Emergency Management Agency of the Republic of Korea in Seoul on 8-29 April 2009. The 22 participants who attended the meeting included representatives from China, Japan, Lao PDR, Malaysia, the Philippines, the Republic of Korea, Thailand, the US, Viet Nam, Hong Kong, and the Macao Special Administrative Regions, as well as representatives from the three organizing institutions.

During the meeting, participants discussed future activities of the working group, such as upgrades to the Typhoon Committee Disaster Information System (TCDIS), which is expected to be a useful typhoon-related disaster database for Asia. ADRC gave a presentation on the role of GLIDE numbers, which are to be assigned to disasters contained in the individual databases of different organizations, and on the ADRC's contributions to the working group this year. The next meeting scheduled is the Integrated Workshop of the Typhoon Committee, to be held in the third week of September in the Philippines.

The Typhoon Committee has two other working groups on meteorology and hydrology, in addition to the working group on disaster prevention and preparedness.

The 42nd Session of the TC, held in Singapore from 25-29 January 2010, was jointly organized by UNESCAP, the WMO, and the government of Singapore. In attendance were 83 people from seven countries, including representatives of several international and regional organizations and Mr. Koresawa, ADRC Executive Director. During the session, participants discussed the TC's activities in 2009, the typhoons that occurred in 2009, and the activities planned for 2010.