



ADRC Highlights

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Asian Disaster Reduction Center

Higashikan 5F, 1-5-2
Wakinohamakaigan-dori,
Chuo-ku, Kobe
651-0073 Japan

Tel: 078-262-5540
Fax: 078-262-5546
editor@adrc.asia
http://www.adrc.asia

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● Promoting Cooperation with Member Countries

Participation in the JICA Follow-Up Seminar "Comprehensive Disaster Management"

The Asian Disaster Reduction Center (ADRC) participated in the JICA Follow-Up Seminar "Comprehensive Disaster Management" held at the Center of Emergency Situations and Disaster Risk Reduction (CESDRR) in Almaty, Kazakhstan on 14-15 August 2013. This seminar was held as a follow-up to the JICA training course entitled "Comprehensive Disaster Management for Central Asia and the Caucasus"



that ADRC has been conducting together with JICA Kansai. To facilitate the transfer of Japan's experience and expertise regarding disaster risk management, this seminar focused on a few themes of interest to the Kazakh government, namely the seismic safety of buildings, community-based disaster risk management (CBDRM), and the operation of regional disaster management centers. Approximately 40 people participated, including the deputy mayor of Almaty City, national and local government officials from the Ministry of Emergency Situations and Almaty City, and researchers from KazNIISA (Agency for Construction, Housing and Utilities of the Republic of Kazakhstan) and other institutions.

During the seminar, ADRC introduced CBDRM efforts that have been undertaken in Japan, including the activities of volunteer organizations specializing in disaster prevention, and efforts to promote disaster education and raise disaster awareness. Given the agreement reached between the governments of Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan in May 2013 regarding the establishment of the CESDRR, ADRC shared information on its own activities since it was first formed in 1998, in hopes that this might serve as useful information for the management of the CESDRR going forward.

The seminar participants seem to have had some difficulty in understanding the Japanese disaster management system, but we believe that they gained an adequate understanding of the importance of retrofitting buildings, as well as of the concepts of "self-help," "mutual help" and "public help." ADRC also learned a lot about the Kazakh DRR experience through this seminar. We look forward to working with JICA and the Ministry of Emergency Situations of Kazakhstan, as well as the CESDRR, in the near future.

● ADRC Visiting Researcher Report

Ms. Chinbaatar LKHAMJAV (Mongolia)

I am Chinbaatar LKHAMJAV, from Mongolia, and I graduated in 2006 from the Defense University of Mongolia. As a senior lieutenant in the National Emergency Management Agency of Mongolia, I am in charge of radio communications and early warning systems. With the increase in disasters in Mongolia, the government has taken steps to strengthen its disaster management system so as to minimize the damage to lives and property that would be caused by future natural and manmade disasters. As a result, the parliament passed the Disaster Management Act on 20

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May 2003.

Mongolia is a landlocked country in the center of the Asian continent, between China and Russia, and shares a western border with Kazakhstan. It has a land area of more than 1.56 million km² and a population of around 2.87 million. Mongolia has a population density of 2 people per square kilometer, and is classified as a developing country. Mongolia is comprised of 21 provinces and the capital city of Ulaanbaatar. The political system is a parliamentary democracy.

The Mongolian heartland consists of relatively flat steppes. The southern portion of the country is taken up by the Gobi Desert, while the northern and western portions are mountainous. Most of the country is hot in the summer and extremely cold in the winter, October to February. In January, average temperatures drop as low as -30°C (-22°F). Mongolia is cloudy approximately 250 days a year. Ulaanbaatar is one of the coldest cities in the world. Mongolia's economy is centered around agriculture and mining. Fortunately, Mongolia has rich mineral resources, with copper, coal, molybdenum, tin, tungsten, and gold accounting for a large part of its industrial production. However, many different kinds of natural disasters occur in Mongolia such as droughts, heavy snow and extreme cold, forest fires and steppe fires, diseases, floods, earthquakes, and technical accidents.

The disasters that have occurred over the past three years, 2010 to 2012, include 340 forest and steppe fires, 6,837 object fires, 4 cases of human and animal diseases, 145 cases of acute contagious animal diseases, 2 cases of avian influenza, 231 unfortunate losses of life caused by river and lake accidents, 62 snow and dust storms, 49 floods, 2 dzuds (summer droughts followed by severe winters), 53 earthquakes, 506 fatalities, 2,885 people with infections, steppe fires with damage valued at 9.9 million tugrugs, and the burning of 4,147 gers (felt-lined tents), houses, fences, and enclosures causing 630,384.9 tugrugs in damage to the country's economy. To save human lives and prevent economic losses, the government of Mongolia began a project aimed at implementing an earthquake early warning system on 4 July 2012. Workers on the project are now building 32 siren towers in Ulaanbaatar. Ultimately, a total of 60 siren towers must be built.

Finally, I am grateful to the government of Japan, ADRC itself as the organizer of this program, and the ADRC staff, for all the support they have given me and for allowing me to have such a wonderful experience during my stay in Japan.

**Ms. Thandar AUNG (Myanmar)**

My name is Thandar Aung and I am from Myanmar. I work in the Relief and Resettlement Department (RRD) under the Ministry of Social Welfare, and am presently posted as the Upper Divisional Clerk in the Coordination and Research Section of RRD in NayPyiTaw, a city in Myanmar. In addition, I have also worked in the RRD's Emergency Operation Center (EOC). I joined the RRD in 2010.

The population of Myanmar is nearly 60 million. The country is divided into seven primarily Myanmar ethnic regions (tain dae tha gyi) of Ayeyarwady (Irrawaddy), Bago (Pegu), Magway, Mandalay, Yangon (Rangoon), Sagaing, and Tanintharyi (Tenasserim), and seven ethnic states (pyi nay): Chin, Kachin, Kayin (Karen), Kayah (Karenni), Mon, Rakhine (Arakan), and Shan.

Myanmar is regarded as an agricultural economy. With a total area of 676,578 square kilometers, it is the second largest country in Southeast Asia. It extends about 2,200 km north to south and about 925 km east to west. Its neighbors are China to the north and northeast, Lao PDR & Thailand to the east and southeast, India and Bangladesh to the west, and the Bay of Bengal and the Andaman Sea to the west and south. Myanmar is exposed to multiple natural hazards which include cyclones, storm surges, floods, landslides, earthquakes, tsunamis, droughts, fires, and forest fires. The coastal regions of the Ayeyarwady Region and Rakhine State are prone to storm surges. Myanmar is potentially rich with natural marine



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resources while also potentially threatened by waves, cyclones, and associated weather.

As per the data from 2000-2001 to 2009-2012, fires constituted about 73% of the reported disaster events, followed by floods (11%), storms (12%), and other disasters (4%), including earthquakes, tsunamis, and landslides. Cyclone Nargis (2008) was the worst natural disaster in the living memory of Myanmar. Currently, we are applying to open the EOC under the RRD. In addition, we are starting to use an End-to-End Early Warning System by cooperating with JICA in the Ayeyarwady Region. Due to an increase in the rate of natural disasters occurring in Myanmar, a disaster management system has been developed by the government and a disaster management law was enacted by the parliament on 13 July 2013.

I would like to conclude by expressing my deepest gratitude to the government of Myanmar and ADRC for giving me the great opportunity to participate in this program. I am sure it will help me grow professionally. I would also like to express my deep gratitude and admiration to the ADRC staff for taking such good care of all of the visiting researchers.

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