



ADRC Highlights

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● Promoting Cooperation with Member Countries

Study Visit to the 2023 Türkiye Earthquake-Affected Areas

Asian Disaster Reduction Center (ADRC), in collaboration with the Disaster and Emergency Management Presidency (AFAD) of Türkiye, University of the Ryukyus, and Hacettepe University, organized a study visit to 2023 Türkiye-Syria earthquake-affected areas in Türkiye on 21-23 October 2023. The study visit was aimed at: i) observing the impacts, challenges, and lessons from the earthquake disaster; ii) gaining insights on improving the DRR plans of ADRC member countries; and iii) facilitating knowledge and information exchange.

The study team comprised officials from Mongolia, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Singapore, and Vietnam. In addition, academics from the University of the Ryukyus and Hacettepe University as well as AFAD officials from Türkiye and ADRC staff members participated in the study visit. The team learned more about the mechanisms, damage, and disaster response of this earthquake in Türkiye. The study team also visited three of the eleven provinces impacted by the earthquake—Gaziantep, Kharamanmaras, and Hatay—to observe the housing recovery process in these areas.

The team learned that the tectonic plates in Türkiye include the Anatolian Plate, the African Plate, the Arabian Plate, and the Eurasian Plate and that during the 2023 earthquakes, “a relative slip between the Arabian and African plates caused westward movement of the Anatolian plate.” This large slip combined with the following factors caused many buildings to collapse or become heavily damaged: i) lack of implementation of seismic codes in structural design, ii) construction mistakes, negligence, and lack of moral, iii) poor workmanship, iv) soft floors, v) resonance phenomenon due to ground conditions, vi) pounding of adjacent buildings, and vii) liquefaction of the ground. Regarding housing recovery, the team observed that the reconstruction is contractor-driven and that the permanent houses are being built in relocation sites. Also, the citizens can own the house with payments maturing in 20 years (2 years free and 18 years covered 60% by subsidy from the government).

ADRC would like to thank AFAD, Dr Omer and Professor Ulusay to make this visit possible, and all the participants from the member countries who actively took part in this study visit.



Visit to a landslide site



Members of the Study Visit

● Promoting Cooperation with Affiliated Institutions

ADRC Online Tsunami Seminar 2023

ADRC's Online Tsunami Seminar held on 15 November 2023 dwelt with the "State and Challenges of Community-Based Tsunami Preparedness." It is essential that communities living in tsunami-prone areas prepare for tsunami disaster through awareness-raising, evacuation drills, and early warning systems (EWS). The speakers at the seminar concluded that if tsunami preparedness is integrated in the daily lives of residents, it helps save lives and reduce the impacts on properties and livelihoods.

Mr Gerry Potutan, ADRC Senior Researcher, moderated the session to achieve two key objectives: 1) share community-based tsunami preparedness programs and activities; and 2) discuss challenges in implementing community-based tsunami preparedness activities in different countries. Three speakers from ADRC member countries were invited to broaden and deepen the discussion.



Speakers of Tsunami Seminar

Ms Thai Minh Huong, Officer of International Cooperation Science and Technology Department, Vietnam Disaster and Dyke Management Authority, Vietnam, reported that while Vietnam has not experienced tsunami disaster yet, the government has been mobilizing the communities and schools to prepare. The activities include: awareness-raising on tsunami at schools and commune, regular organization of tsunami drills, and installation of tsunami early warning system. Ms Huong noted that tsunami disaster-preparedness in Vietnam is a proactive approach, stressing that "although there was no prior tsunami experience in Vietnam, it does not mean it will not occur." In the same light, the government is facing a challenge to convince communities in areas where tsunami may occur to actively participate in the preparedness programs.

Mr Ranjith Alahakoon, Assistant Director at the Polonnaruwa District under the Ministry of Defence, District Disaster Management Unit, Sri Lanka, said that some coastal communities in Sri Lanka were impacted by the Indian Ocean Tsunami of 2004. With that experience, the government has been implementing a tsunami preparedness program, including the establishment of the community organizations (VDMC). However, one of the challenges VDMCs face is that they do not have any "legal status", therefore there had been cases where the government could not provide them financial supports. As a result, VDMCs do not have "active engagement" in the preparedness programs introduced by the government for lack of "ownership." One lesson from this experience is that "top-down" approach with no legal fund transfer could be challenging.

Dr NAKANO Genta, Assistant Professor, Research Center for Disaster Reduction Systems, Disaster Prevention Research Institute, Kyoto University, Japan, reported that the community-based preparedness efforts have evolved through past tsunami experiences. Recently, a more organized approach that adopts a "collaborative model" to community tsunami-preparedness has been promoted in Japan. Showing the case of Okitsu community in Shimanto Town of Kochi Prefecture, he explained that this model assigns responsibility to every collaborating partner, where: 1) volunteer organization links the school, municipality, and expert; 2) elementary school educates the children to protect themselves from tsunamis; 3) town

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government implements infrastructure improvements; and 4) university provides specialized information on earthquake and tsunami disaster. One example of the collaborative activity is the elaboration of “bosai map,” wherein students are taught to think about necessary tsunami evacuation measures.

In the closing remarks, Mr SASAHARA Akio, ADRC Executive Director, stressed the importance of regularly conducting awareness-raising activities on tsunami disaster so that knowledge is transferred, shared, and not forgotten.

You can visit the webpage for the Tsunami Online Seminar 2023 in ADRC website for more information: <https://www.adrc.asia/acdr/2023tsunami.php>

● Participation in International Conferences

Participation in the Typhoon Committee events in Bangkok, Thailand

ADRC participated in the three events organized by ESCAP/WMO Typhoon Committee (TC) and jointly hosted by the Typhoon Committee Secretariat (TCS) and United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) on 28 November to 1 December 2023 at the United Nations Conference Centre (UNCC) in Bangkok, Thailand.

The first event was the 4th Training and Research Coordination Group (TRCG) Forum, where specialized topics of research interest such as Artificial Intelligence and potential operational applications related to tropical cyclone monitoring, forecasting, and warning were presented. The second event was the 18th Integrated Workshop (IWS), which is an annual integrated event of the four working groups: Advisory (AWG), Meteorology (WGM), Hydrology (WGH), Disaster Risk Reduction (WGDRR) to assess the work done in the past year and develop work plans for the next year. The third event was the Working Group on Disaster Risk Reduction (WGDRR) parallel meeting, where its 12-member countries and 2 regions assess the year-end progress of implementing the Annual Operation Plans (AOPs).

ADRC participated in the WGDRR meeting on behalf of the Cabinet Office Japan, which is the focal point for Japan. ADRC presented the member’s report of Japan highlighting the disaster risk reduction activities on information-sharing, capacity-building, and technology transfer, particularly the Quasi Zenith Satellites System’s Disaster and Emergency Crisis Report (QZSS-DC Report) service. Moreover, ADRC presented an overview of the GLIDE number system. After the presentation, the WGDRR members proposed to include the GLIDE number system as part of the Annual Operations Plans (AOPs) subject for review by AWG and the Typhoon Committee Secretariat.



At the meeting venue (UNCC)

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