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Mongolia, due to its geography and climatic conditions, is highly prone to various natural disasters. The major disasters in Mongolia are drought, blizzards, heavy snowfall, dust storms, “zud” (winter disasters caused by extremely heavy snowfall following severe drought in summer), floods, earthquakes, and wildfires. About 90 percent of the country is vulnerable to drought, 75 percent of the total territory is classified as seismically active, and 12 of the country’s major city centers are situated in areas prone to maximum-scale earthquakes.



Since 1996 Mongolia has fought 1,035 serious forest and steppe fires, 29 major blizzards and snowstorms, 60 epidemic outbreaks of animal and human diseases, and 33 toxic spills and radiation leaks. Main factors that hinder Mongolia's economic development are the natural disasters, droughts, and hard winters. If one calculates the amount of damage to GDP caused by droughts and hard winters, the share is as follows: 15.7% of GDP in 2000, 14.8% of GDP in 2001.

Therefore, the Government of Mongolia is implementing immediate reform, renovation, and development of disaster management systems. First, we need to review international best practices and to see how to apply them in our country. In this context, we have a lot to learn from Japan’s disaster management system, although we have limited resources. Of course, Mongolia is a unique country, so in order for international best practices for disaster mitigation and management to be adopted, they will need to be adapted to circumstances in Mongolia.

I joined ADRC on January 8, 2003. Just after arriving in Japan, I had an opportunity to participate in the 5th ADRC International Meeting and the ISDR Asian Meeting. I then attended the JICA-ADRC Disaster Management Seminar, visiting many disaster related organizations and institutions in Japan. Through the seminar, I learnt about the high-level of development of disaster management systems in Japan.

Participating in these meetings and seminars on Disaster Management has been very helpful to my research. I received input on my project proposal for disaster management in Mongolia, which I will submit at the conclusion of my participation on the ADRC Visiting Researcher Program.

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