



ADRC Highlights Vol.34

Asian Disaster Reduction Center Biweekly News

October 16, 2001

➤ ADRC Participated as Member of Advisory Panel for UN-ISDR Global Review

The United Nations General Assembly created a successor body of IDNDR to carry on the work, International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR) which started its activities in 2000. The Strategy is built on the ten-year foundation of the IDNDR and calls on the array of partners around the world to join in the disaster reduction efforts. The UN-ISDR Secretariat with the financial contribution from the Government of Japan and the cooperation of ADRC will issue its first Global Review next spring.

ADRC was asked to be one of the seven Advisory Panel members for the Global Review. The meeting was held on 4 and 5 October at UN-Geneva and the Panel agreed that the Review would highlight achievements and findings, will turn into an important tool for the ISDR partners and countries, willing to engage in disaster reduction: a "source of inspiration".

ADRC will call on its member countries to actively join in the ISDR fora.

➤ ADRC Visiting Researcher Report □ A Field Trip to Iwate Prefecture, Japan



Tsunami Observation System, Taro

The Tohoku region of Japan has maritime plains with a lot of coastal embayment where large fishing and aqua culture industries are established. Throughout history, Iwate Prefecture had its entire settlements struck and destroyed by tsunami.

A research is currently conducted by Mr. Arakida and Ms. Chinoi into the disaster countermeasures of the Prefecture and the findings of this research will enable all towns to have uniform tsunami countermeasures for managing tsunami. The research is focusing mainly on three major tsunami

prone towns; Taro, Otsuchi and Yamada.

I, an ADRC visiting researcher from Papua New Guinea, traveled with the team as an observer and was very impressed with the stories of the occurrences of tsunami in the different towns and the motivation the municipal governments had in preparing for future tsunami in their towns.

I had the opportunity to see the tsunami countermeasures used by different towns. All facilities and tools such as a big tide wall and gate, used for tsunami prevention in these towns were very complex, of very high technology and required a lot of money to be constructed.

I am happy to have been given this opportunity to see some tsunami countermeasures in Japan particularly Iwate Prefecture. However, the facilities in Iwate Prefecture may take years or even centuries to have

them installed in Papua New Guinea, the least my country can do now is to continue to educate and create awareness among its people.

I wish and hope that one-day Papua New Guinea can be equipped with such facilities and tools for tsunami prevention.

(Philomena Miria, ADRC Visiting Researcher / Training Officer, National Disaster Management Office, Dept. of Provincial & Local Government Affairs, PNG)

➤ ADRC Staff Profiles No. 7 □ Mr. Masaru Arakida, Senior Researcher

I joined ADRC in May 2000 and started a new life in Kobe, leaving my wife in Tokyo. I was born in Morioka-city, Tohoku district, Japan. I graduated from a university in Sendai, the northeast part of Japan, and worked for a consultancy company in Tokyo. As I grew up in a basin among mountains, I feel close to Kobe which is also located near mountains.



Satellite Communication Experiment

Since my childhood, I have experienced several big earthquakes, such as Tokachi-Oki Earthquake (1968), Miyagi-Oki Earthquake (1978), and Nihonkai-Chubu Earthquake (1983). In addition, I grew up near Mt. Iwate, a big active volcano, and during summer vacation, played by the seaside of Taro where it is known for the serious damages by tsunamis. Through such experiences, I naturally predisposed to enter to a career in disaster prevention study.

I majored in theoretical physics at the university for studying the scheme and mechanism of materials and events. After graduation, I entered Fuji Research Institute Corporation, and worked as a consultant for urban infrastructure, urban disaster prevention, and community information system. I realized the anguish and equation for disaster reduction such as the difficulties to take enough countermeasures at some natural disaster prone areas. Here in ADRC, I work on disaster reduction with much broader perspective in a wider regional setting.

I always keep in my mind the following two points for carrying on the works. First, is the countermeasure geared to the realities in the region or country? Second, does it utilize the progress of information technology? I approach the tasks with consideration of the regional particularities such as cultural or natural conditions.

Besides, I focus on the universal tools for disaster reduction which are independent of regional infrastructure situation. I am now promoting the development of the support tool for decision makers to get the required information of the affected site through satellite. I also proceed with "a Unique Disaster Identifier Number" project for sharing information among disaster-related information databases in the world.

I would like to visit all the 23 ADRC member countries, and do my best for mutual cooperation for disaster reduction.

If you have comments or needs for this Newsletter, please write to ADRC in the right box.

Published by : [Asian Disaster Reduction Center \(ADRC\)](http://www.adrc.or.jp/)

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