



ADRC Highlights

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➤ **Follow-up Workshop on JICA's Seminar for Central Asia and the Caucasus**

Commissioned by the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) to hold a follow-up event to its Central Asia and the Caucasus Seminar, the Asian Disaster Reduction Center (ADRC) conducted a workshop in Astana, Kazakhstan from 21-23 June 2007 where returnee trainees were able to present their action plans. "Returnee trainees" refers to those government officials who attended the disaster management training seminar in Japan and then returned to their home countries. As many as 37 trainees from seven countries have participated in the training program since 2004.

The purposes of the follow-up workshop are to track the seminar results by reconvening returnee trainees, to provide opportunities for them to give reports and hear opinions on their activities back in their home countries, to ensure that their feedback is incorporated into efforts to improve future training activities, to strengthen the development of a disaster information network among the trainees, and to create a system that enables former trainees to help prepare future trainees.



Although last minute flight issues unavoidably prevented some trainees from attending, 12 participants from five countries attended and reported on the most effective practices they learned from the seminar in Japan. This resulted in a vigorous exchange of views and several significant proposals. On the final day of the workshop, Dean Yujiro Ogawa of Fuji Tokoha University, who was invited by the ADRC to speak at the event, presented an overview of the three-day workshop. He reaffirmed the significance of sharing information and disaster resources, such as educational materials, as well as establishing an information network in the region. He also emphasized that while it is helpful to seek support from organizations like JICA and the ADRC, it is critical that past participants learn to maintain their networks independently.

The results of this workshop will be taken into consideration with the start of the next Central Asia and the Caucasus Seminar on 20 August. For more information, please contact Senior Researcher Mr. Akira Yamamoto

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➤ **ADRC Visiting Researcher Report**
□ **Ms. Nwet Yin Aye from Myanmar**

I am Nwet Yin Aye, Head of the Training and Research Division of the Department of Relief and Resettlement in Myanmar. Myanmar is located in Southeast Asia to the north of



Indian Ocean. Since it has a long coastline along the Bay of Bengal, it is vulnerable to annual floods and cyclones. Other disasters such as urban fires, earthquakes, and landslides also occur there.

Myanmar suffered relatively little damage in the 2004 Indian Ocean Tsunami compared with the other affected countries. Nonetheless, this event made us ever more aware of the destructive impact of natural disasters, and provided the impetus for the government of Myanmar to establish the Central Committee on National Disaster Prevention under the chairmanship of prime minister, to effectively carry out disaster prevention and relief measures. A Management Working Committee and 10 respective sub-committees were established under the Central Committee. Our department is responsible for the Subcommittee on Rehabilitation and Reconstruction.

Under the guidance of the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement, our department actively participates in regional and international cooperative activities. Myanmar has been a member of the ASEAN Committee on Disaster Management (ACDM) since it was formed in 2002. The Department of Relief and Resettlement acts as focal point for the ACDM. Myanmar is making efforts to develop its human resources by sending officials to various capacity building programs, and I am very pleased to be an ADRC visiting researcher, the first from Myanmar, for July-December 2007.

Though Japan has suffered various natural disasters, it is well developed and has an excellent disaster management system. During my six-month stay, I will learn about Japan's disaster management practices, especially in the areas of flood and cyclone management and disaster education systems. I am confident that Myanmar will receive benefit greatly from the ADRC's visiting researcher program.