



# ADRC Highlights

Asian Disaster Reduction Center Monthly News

Vol. 189  
December  
2008

## TOPICS

### Promoting Cooperation with Member Countries

¶ Asian Conference on Disaster Reduction 2008 a Great Success

¶ ADRC's Cooperative Project with Armenia

¶ ASEAN Project: Capacity Building for Local Government Officials in Disaster Management in Vietnam

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## ● Promoting Cooperation with Member Countries

### Asian Conference on Disaster Reduction 2008 a Great Success



The Asian Conference on Disaster Reduction 2008 (ACDR 2008) was held from 12-14 November 2008 in Bali, Republic of Indonesia. It was organized by the government of the Republic of Indonesia (State Ministry of Research and Technology (RISTEK)/National Disaster Management Agency (BNPB)), the government of Japan (Cabinet Office), the United Nations Secretariat of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UN/ISDR), and the Asian Disaster Reduction Center (ADRC), in cooperation with the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UN/OCHA) and the World Meteorological Organization (WMO). A total of 106 participants from 24 countries, mainly ADRC member countries, and from 14 organizations, including the UN, other international organizations, NGOs, and academic institutions, attended ACDR 2008.

At the opening ceremony on the first day of the conference, H.E. Dr. Kusmayanto Kadiman, State Minister of Research and Technology for the Republic of Indonesia, and H.E. Mr. Masayoshi Namiki, Vice Minister of the Cabinet Office of Japan, delivered opening remarks as co-chairs of the conference. A message by UN/ISDR Director Mr. Salvano Briceno, who was unavoidably prevented from attending in person, was read by Mr. Jerry Velasquez, Regional Coordinator of UN/ISDR for Asia and the Pacific. ADRC Chairman Prof. Shigeru Ito also gave remarks expressing his expectations for the ACDR 2008. In his keynote speech, Mr. Koji Suzuki, Executive Director of the ADRC, gave a presentation entitled "Progress on Regional Cooperation in the Field of Disaster Risk Reduction in Asia: ADRC in the First Decade" and

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reported on the ADRC's efforts reflecting each HFA Priority for Action.

During the breakout sessions, reports were given on each country's progress with regard to the HFA, and participants discussed the issues that need to be examined and the direction that future efforts need to take. Also, in light of the ADRC's 10th anniversary, participants gave reports on the activities the ADRC has undertaken thus far and discussed the direction for its future activities. They also discussed public-private partnerships for disaster risk reduction (PPP), disaster management tools, and collaborative activities in anticipation of the Third Asian Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction.



In addition, Mr. Shambhu Prasad Marasini from Nepal and Mr. Vu Thanh Liem from Vietnam reported on the ADRC's Visiting Researcher Program, as well as the activities they have been engaged in during their time in Japan on this program.

At the closing ceremony, ADRC Executive Director Mr. Koji Suzuki read a summary of the conference, and closing remarks were given by Mr. Sugeng Triutomo, Deputy for Prevention and Preparedness, BNPB. Mr. Triutomo concluded the conference by promoting the HFA in the Asian region and emphasizing the need to respond to climate change.

We would like to express our sincerest gratitude for the outstanding efforts and kind cooperation provided by the government of the Republic of Indonesia, including RISTEK and the BNPB, in hosting ACDR 2008. The ADRC remains dedicated to promoting the HFA as part of its efforts to reduce the damage caused by disasters in the Asian Region.

## **ADRC's Cooperative Project with Armenia**

On 24 and 25 November 2008, the Armenian National Survey for Seismic Protection (NSSP) and the ADRC held a seminar entitled "Knowledge: Achieving Safer Communities Through Education and Training in Disaster-Prone Mountainous Areas" in Syunik Prefecture and Vayot' Dzor Prefecture. This was a cooperative project between the ADRC and the government of Armenia.

Like Japan, Armenia is prone to earthquakes. A seminar for school teachers and public school children was held in Syunik Prefecture in 2006 with the goal of raising awareness of earthquake disasters (see Vol. 155). This year, Mr. Takaaki Shiratori of the Takenaka Corporation, a leading private construction company in Japan, was invited to give a seminar focusing on measures for coping with the damage caused by the collapse of school buildings, reservoirs and dams



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triggered by earthquakes.

The workshop held on 24 November in Syunik Prefecture was attended by 25 students and several teachers from Kapan No.7 High School. Mr. Shiratori described examples of school buildings that have been retrofitted in Japan and discussed earthquake countermeasures. The workshop held on 25 November in Vayot' Dzor Prefecture drew 28 public officials as well as the governor. Mr. Shiratori gave a lecture on the seismic reinforcement measures taken at dams in Japan and made proposals regarding seismic retrofitting. The participants were highly interested in both lectures, as Armenia and Japan share similar geographical features, including mountainous terrain, and both were followed by active question-and-answer sessions. The active sharing of information on disaster reduction measures for school buildings and dam construction will be particularly important for disaster reduction efforts in Armenia.

The ADRC would like to continue working closely with the NSSP to further disseminate knowledge about earthquake disasters and to improve disaster risk reduction capacity in Armenia.

**ASEAN Project: Capacity Building for Local Government Officials in Disaster Management in Vietnam**

As seen in the previous issue of ADRC Highlights, the ADRC has launched an ASEAN project entitled "Capacity Building for Local Government Officials in Disaster Management." Following kickoff meetings in Lao PDR and Cambodia in October 2008, a kickoff meeting was conducted in Hanoi, Vietnam on 19-21 November 2008.

The Disaster Management Center (DMC), Vietnam's national disaster management organization, and the ADRC discussed the topics, materials, and schedules that would be used for training local disaster management officials, based on the country's disaster record and disaster management system. A training event for trainers and subsequent training events for local government officials are scheduled to be held in 2009. This project is also slated to be launched in Brunei, Malaysia, the Philippines, and Thailand in the second fiscal year of the program.

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