



# ADRC Highlights

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### Asian Disaster Reduction Center

Higashikan 5F, 1-5-2  
Wakinohamakaigan-dori,  
Chuo-ku, Kobe  
651-0073 Japan

Tel: 078-262-5540  
Fax: 078-262-5546  
editor@adrc.asia  
http://www.adrc.asia

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## ● Participation in International Conferences

### 50th Session of UN-COPUOS and 4th UN-SPIDER Regional Support Offices (RSO) Meeting

The Asian Disaster Reduction Center (ADRC) participated in the 50th Session of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (UN-COPUOS), which was held at the United Nations (UN) Office in Vienna, Austria and in the 4th UN Platform for Space-based Information for



Disaster Management and Emergency Response (UN-SPIDER) Regional Support Offices (RSO) Meeting, which was held in conjunction with that session. During the plenary session of COPUOS, participating countries discussed many issues, including inter-regional cooperation and technical assistance, space technology and space science and their practical applications, and capacity building for developing countries. Held from 11 to 12 February, the meeting was attended by more than 30 of the world's RSOs. During the meeting, the following subtopics were eagerly discussed:

- 1) Review of 2012 activities
- 2) Proposed activities for 2013-2014
- 3) Detailed review of ongoing projects
- 4) Emergency response imaging needs
- 5) Technical support for developing countries
- 6) Workgroups were formed to discuss specific disaster activities (floods, droughts, forest fires, etc.)

At the UN-SPIDER RSO Meeting, ADRC gave a presentation on its 2011 activities and accomplishments as well as its plans for 2012, and discussed many ideas with the secretariat and other RSOs.

## ● ADRC Visiting Researcher Report

### Ms. Rujira Chariyaphan (Thailand)

My name is Rujira Chariyaphan. I am working for the Disaster Victim Assistance Bureau, Department of Disaster Prevention and Mitigation (DDPM), Ministry of Interior, Thailand. My office is in charge of directing and managing the approval of government budgets and finances used to address and solve problems related to disasters. My responsibilities include giving primary assistance and relief to victims as well as coordinating victim assistance and relief efforts.

In 2002, Thailand established the DDPM, under the Ministry of Interior, to serve as the principal agency for disaster management and coordination.

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Shortly after a disaster strikes, DDPM activates relief operations to provide immediate assistance to those affected. These operations have been conducted jointly by both government and private agencies to mitigate the suffering of victims. All basic necessities such as food, first aid supplies, clothes, and drinking water are ready for distribution. Other components of relief operations include the provision of temporary shelter, efforts to prevent epidemics, the provision of medical treatment, and public health services.

The disasters that occur in Thailand are growing more intense every year due to global climate variability. Moreover, disasters are exacerbated by the lack of urban development planning, the destruction of natural resources, and globalization.

While at ADRC, I am interested in studying the tracking and management of donated goods in Japan because of the lessons learned from the great floods of Thailand in 2011. One lesson we learned was that the involvement of many agencies in tracking and distributing donated goods creates potential confusion. The National Disaster Prevention & Mitigation Plan BE 2553-2557 (2010-2014) mentions that the responsibilities for receiving and tracking international assistance are shared by different agencies, including DDPM which is the central government agency in charge of disaster prevention and mitigation. The problem, however, is that Thailand does not have a database or system in place for receiving and tracking international donations. There appears to be no common national database system for receiving and tracking donations of goods. Even at the department level, the processes used to track goods depend on the individual official. As a staff member of DDPM, I foresee a growing interest in studying this issue. This challenge should be addressed so that donations can be effectively used to meet the needs of disaster victims in Thailand in the future.

Since Japan is considered to be a leader in the field of disaster management, I look forward to learning about the good practices in disasters management and risk reduction developed here, particularly in light of lessons learned from Tohoku earthquake. What I learn during my time here should be useful to the future development of a system for tracking and managing donated goods in Thailand. Lastly, I am grateful to ADRC for the opportunity to do research in Japan. In addition to learning about disaster management, I am also learning about Japanese society and culture through a basic course on Japanese language and through everyday experiences, like my use of the enjoyable and efficient local train service. Furthermore, I would like to give many thanks to the staff who have facilitated our visit and made our stay in Japan so comfortable and enjoyable.

**Mr. Agustian Rizal (Indonesia)**

My name is Agustian Rizal and I am from Indonesia, where I work for the National Agency for Disaster Management (BNPB). The BNPB, established in 2008, is mainly responsible for managing disasters starting with pre-disaster preparations, and extending to emergency response and rehabilitation and reconstruction. The BNPB is directed at the head office level by the minister.

The Republic of Indonesia is a country in Southeast Asia and Oceania. Lying along the equator, Indonesia has a tropical climate, with two distinct monsoonal wet and dry seasons. Indonesia is an archipelago comprised of approximately 17,508 islands. Indonesia is a republic of 33 provinces, with an elected legislature and president. The nation's capital city is Jakarta. The country shares land borders with Papua New Guinea, East Timor, and Malaysia. Its total area is 5.2 million km<sup>2</sup> (1.9 million km<sup>2</sup> of land and 3.3 million km<sup>2</sup> of ocean), and it extends 5,110 km east to west. According to the 2010 national census, the population of Indonesia is 237.6 million, with high population growth of 1.9%. A total of 58% of the population lives on Java, the world's most populous island.

Indonesia is located in a disaster prone area that might be considered a kind of "disaster laboratory" due to its geographical, geological, and demographic conditions. Indonesia is susceptible to various types of natural hazards due to its geographical location and physical environment. It is situated in the so-called

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Pacific Ring of Fire, an area encircling the Pacific Ocean where frequent earthquakes and volcanic activity result from the movements of three tectonic plates (Indo Australia, Eurasian, and Pacific). In fact, the country experiences an average of 20 earthquakes per day (most are too weak to be felt). Tropical cyclone events cause secondary disaster, such as landslides, floods, typhoons, drought, and heavy/monsoon rains, and there are also about 500 volcanoes, 128 of which are active and have a history of erupting.

BNPB's vision of achieving a nation that is resilient against disasters is consistent with the ADRC's mission of building disaster-resilient communities and establishing networks among countries through programs that include personnel exchanges in this field. The ADRC's coordinating efforts in the fields of risk and hazard assessment, risk reduction, and disaster management for the Asian region are important for member countries.

The ADRC's visiting researcher program offers me a unique opportunity to enrich and deepen my knowledge in the field of disaster management. I expect to learn about disaster prevention and preparedness, disaster management measures, and community-based early warning systems. Also, if possible, I'm planning to visit some of the areas that were damaged by last year's earthquake and tsunami disaster. I'm sure my experience as a visiting researcher with ADRC will be very beneficial and useful for me in my work in the future.

I am thankful to ADRC for the efforts made to make my stay in Japan comfortable, as well as to the government of Japan for providing me the opportunity to spend time here and learn from the vast experience of governmental and other disaster management institutions in Japan, as well as other ADRC member countries. I would also like to thank the government of Indonesia for allowing me to benefit from Japan's practical experience in the field of disaster management and disaster risk reduction.

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