



ADRC Highlights

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● Promoting Cooperation with Affiliated Institutions

International Recovery Forum 2014 Draws to Successful Close

Every January the IRP Secretariat and the Asian Disaster Reduction Center (ADRC), with the cooperation of the government of Japan, invite overseas policymakers, practitioners, experts, and businesspeople involved in disaster recovery to participate in an international forum held in Hyogo Prefecture. The purpose of this meeting is to share experiences and lessons learned during the recovery process and to share information and knowledge to help promote better recovery from future disasters. This year's forum, which was held on 21 January 2014, focused on the "Role of the Private Sector in Disaster Recovery" and addressed the importance of the private sector in recovery efforts. Presentations and discussions were held on recent initiatives and partnerships with the government developed in response to the Great East Japan Earthquake and Typhoon Haiyan in the Philippines.

Attended by more than 155 participants from national governments, international organizations, businesses, and universities around the world, this event featured keynote speakers from IBM Japan/Keidanren, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) of the US, and the Department of National Defense (DND) of the Philippines, all of whom conveyed the importance of engaging the private sector in disaster risk reduction and recovery to avoid greater economic losses. In addition, speakers from the International Organization of Employers (IOE), the Development Bank of Japan, the South Asia Association of Regional Cooperation Disaster Management Center (SDMC), El Colegio de Mexico, the World Bank, Tohoku University, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), and JICA presented specific initiatives that promote collaboration between the private and public sectors. The lessons learned from these initiatives should be shared with and applied to Japan and other regions facing similar situations.

The panel discussion, which covered the role of the private sector in the implementation of the recovery component of HFA2 (post-2015 global framework for DRR), facilitated the exchange of new ideas and strategies to ensure that recovery is adequately reflected in the next global framework adopted after the HFA. The panelists, who were experts from FEMA, DND, IOE, Tohoku University, and JICA, highlighted the importance of the private sector in disaster



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prevention and recovery, the importance of platforms designed to facilitate information sharing, and the need to strengthen business continuity planning (BCP). The outcomes of the discussions will inform the recovery component of the HFA2 which will be presented at the Third World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction to be held on 14-18 March 2015 in Sendai City, Japan.

The key dignitaries who also delivered relevant messages on recovery and reconstruction included Mr. Katsuju Sasaki (Deputy Director-General of the Cabinet Office of Japan), Mr. Toshizo Ido (Governor of Hyogo Prefecture), and Mr. Yukimoto Ito (Deputy Mayor of Sendai City).

For more information, please contact Shingo Kouchi or Gerald Potutan at the IRP (kouchi@recoveryplatform.org or gerald@recoveryplatform.org). For access to the forum's presentation files, please visit the IRP website (www.recoveryplatform.org).

● ADRC Visiting Researcher Report

Dr. Mohammad Manirul Islam (Bangladesh)

My name is Mohammad Manirul Islam, and I have come from Bangladesh where I work as a Senior Assistant Secretary for the Ministry of Disaster Management & Relief (MoDMR). I hold BS and MS degrees from the Department of Geography & Environment of Jahangirnagar University, and I recently conducted PhD research on "Problems and Prospects of the Land Tenancy System in Bangladesh: A GIS and Remote Sensing-Based Study." One of my main responsibilities as Senior Assistant Secretary in the Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief is to coordinate emergency responders on behalf of the MoDMR and to manage humanitarian assistance operations as well as safety net programs for vulnerable populations. I am also responsible for liaising with regional and international organizations. I also play a role within the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC), where I am responsible for sharing real-time data related to natural hazards and for developing systems and procedures for establishing an effective Community Alerting System. I also support communications with relevant national, regional, and international institutions, and develop and implement disaster management training, education, research, and awareness programs. I am therefore in a prime position to support the implementation of disaster management programs in Bangladesh.



Bangladesh is considered to be one of the most disaster-prone countries in the world. A considerable portion of the development initiatives and investment made in Bangladesh are jeopardized by unwanted incidents. The government of Bangladesh therefore acknowledges the cost effectiveness of promoting pre-disaster mitigation and preparedness over the conventional approach of focusing on response measures taken after a disaster strikes. Thus, priority has been placed on promoting community-level preparedness, response, recovery, and rehabilitation by emphasizing incident communication systems that can ensure the implementation of national and regional strategies and frameworks. The government, in coordination with NGOs and international organizations, has done a commendable job in terms of its cyclone preparedness and flood risk management efforts, but when it comes to most of the remaining major environmental incidents, such as earthquakes, additional work is still needed in the areas of prediction, emergency response, and risk reduction. Due to its geophysical location, Bangladesh is potentially vulnerable to earthquakes. The history of higher intensity earthquakes in this region, along with recent, milder earthquakes, highlight the need to focus on earthquake risks in the major cities of Bangladesh.

My research at the ADRC will focus on the development of an integrated framework for earthquake preparedness in Bangladesh by assessing the applicability of Japanese experiences, as Japan has extensive experience and a renowned level of technical expertise when it comes to managing different aspects of earthquake disasters. My research will help the government of Bangladesh align its strategies for earthquake preparedness with national priorities and international commitments.

Finally, the VR Program is a great partnership tool by which Bangladesh, Japan, and ADRC can work together to address disaster risk reduction in Bangladesh, and my country is sure to gain short, mid- and long-term benefits from the insights gained through this program.

Mr. Leng Heng An (Cambodia)

Cambodia is geographically situated in the Southeast Asian region, and approximately 80% of its population makes a living by farming paddies and growing crops. Thus, the Cambodian economy is largely dependent on agricultural production. Over the last decade, Cambodia has experienced increasingly frequent and severe natural disasters, mainly floods and droughts, and these have had a serious, negative impact on people's livelihoods. The Royal Government of Cambodia is therefore paying a great deal of attention to this critical issue. In 1995, it created a national disaster management coordinating agency called the National Committee for Disaster Management (NCDM). Operating under the chairmanship of the Prime Minister of Cambodia, the NCDM's mandate is to lead and coordinate disaster management work throughout the country.



I have been working as Assistant to the Secretary General of the NCDM since 2009. Prior to that, I was a communication official in the Press and Communication Department of the Office of the Council Ministers. I am currently a visiting researcher at ADRC in Kobe, Japan, where I will conduct research from January to April 2014.

Japan, a country known for its strong disaster resilience and remarkable culture of preparedness, has developed effective disaster management mechanisms and human resources and has accumulated useful experiences and lessons learned that enable it to engage in increasingly effective natural disaster, preparedness, response, and recovery. My research topic at ADRC is “Collaboration between the NCDM and NGOs in Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) and Disaster Management (DM) Work.” During my time at ADRC, I would like to learn first-hand about disaster management work, particularly DRR/DM coordination and collaboration between all DM stakeholders. I look forward to learning from ADRC researchers and other lecturers, to participating in workshops and conferences, to conducting field visits in Japan, and to sharing experiences and information about DRR/DM in Cambodia with my fellow visiting researchers.

During my stay in Japan, I will seek to learn more about the Japanese culture and economy, and hope that I am able, both personally and professionally, to foster cooperation and friendship between Japan and Cambodia and to boost the partnership and collaboration between NCDM and ADRC.

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