



ADRC Highlights

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Chairman, ADRC

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Happy New Year 2019

At the beginning of this New Year, I would like to express my sincere appreciation to everyone from our 31 member countries who are involved in our work for their great support and contributions to the activities of the Asian Disaster Reduction Center (ADRC).

Last year marked the 20th anniversary of the founding of ADRC. Over those two decades, thanks to the strong support of all of you, our stakeholders, ADRC has seen its activities and impact grow significantly. We are deeply grateful to you for the trust you have placed in us by providing that support.

In October, the 2018 Asian Conference on Disaster Reduction was held, with support from the Cabinet Office, in Hyogo Prefecture in honor of our 20th anniversary. Conference participants reflected on the activities of the past 20 years, while also discussing approaches to handling the increasing occurrence of weather-related disasters and other natural disasters producing cross-border impacts. Discussions also covered the ongoing challenges involved in promoting the Sendai Framework. Through these discussions, participants had a chance to reexamine the role that ADRC has played in reducing natural disasters in Asia through programs like the GLIDE (Global unique disaster Identifier) system, which has been promoted by and disseminated by ADRC, and activities like Sentinel Asia, which has been pursued in cooperation with various space agencies. ACDR 2018 also confirmed the need to continue strengthening human resource cultivation in the field of disaster management through programs like the Visiting Researcher Program for government officials from member countries. In addition to these activities, ADRC will continue to offer activities for improving the disaster management capacity of local communities, such as Town Watching, as well as technologies and knowledge that contribute to disaster reduction measures, such as the development of early warning systems using geodetic satellites.

Last year, we saw many natural disasters unfold worldwide, including earthquakes, tsunamis, and volcanic eruptions, as well as disaster attributed to climate change, like floods, landslides and large forest fires. Many lives were lost as a result of these events. In fact, more than 3,000 people perished just as a result of the magnitude 7.5 earthquake and subsequent tsunami that struck Sulawesi Island in Indonesia.

ADRC recognizes the importance of responding to increasingly intensified disasters, and of forming closer partnerships with policy makers to increase investments in disaster risk reduction, which are high policy priorities for our member countries.

All of us at ADRC are committed to doing our utmost to ensure the safety and security of the people of Asia in close cooperation and strong partnership with our member countries. We look forward to working with you toward that end over the coming year.

Masanori HAMADA
Chairman,
Asian Disaster Reduction Center, ADRC

●ADRC Visiting Researcher Report

Ms. Ei Shwe Sin Win(Myanmar)

I am Ei Shwe Sin Win, Staff Officer in the Department of Disaster Management in Myanmar, a country located at the crossroads of East Asia, Southeast Asia, and South Asia.

Myanmar is prone to almost all types of hazards, including fires, earthquakes, strong winds/cyclones, storm surges, landslides, floods, drought, and industrial and technological hazards. In recent years, the country has also witnessed a spate of localized disasters, such as lightning strikes and riverbank erosion. Hazards are challenges faced by every developing country on their march toward development.

Disasters can occur anywhere, at any time, and in unexpected forms. It is the people in the affected areas that face the brunt of the effects of those events.

Disaster awareness is therefore most important for people living in their local communities, especially as they try to build their societies into disaster resilient communities. In Myanmar, the Myanmar Action Plan on Disaster Risk Reduction (MAPDRR) establishes a long-term vision for building resilience by 2030 under the guidance of the National Disaster Management Committee (NDMC). To implement the 32 priority actions, we need strong cooperation and coordination among government departments, development partners, the private sector, and local communities, including members of the general public.

Japan has valuable experiences in the field of disaster management (DM). During my three-month stay here, I want to learn about DM systems, especially community-based disaster risk management (CBDRM). I strongly believe that I will be able to contribute even more to my department and my country when I return to Myanmar after completing the ADRC Visiting Researcher program.



Ms. Lalita Panoottikorn(Thailand)

My name is Lalita Panoottikorn and I am from Thailand. Bangkok is my home town. I earned a Master's Degree in Law at Thammasat University. Now I'm working as a Plan and Policy Analyst for the Department of Disaster Prevention and Mitigation (DDPM). My work involves formulating policies, guidelines, and measures on disaster prevention and mitigation. The DDPM, which is part of the Ministry of Interior, is the principal government agency responsible for integrating national disaster prevention and mitigation efforts in Thailand.

Let me tell you a little bit about my country. The Kingdom of Thailand lies in the heart of Southeast of Asia. It has a mixture of forested areas, high-lying areas, low-lying areas, seacoasts, and some islands. The climate pattern is controlled by two monsoon winds: the North East Monsoon and South West Monsoon. This leaves Thailand vulnerable to natural hazards including floods, drought, landslides, windstorms, earthquakes, and tsunamis.

On April 24, 2012, the Cabinet approved guidelines for crisis preparation. The government's management system can respond when a problem occurs and can fill gaps in state-level mechanisms for providing services. DDPM has implemented a Cabinet resolution to achieve disaster risk management pursuant to the Disaster Risk Reduction Strategy of the National Disaster Risk Management Plan 2015, which assigned government agencies to set up their own Business Continuity Plans. Japan has effective disaster



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management systems based on the concept of business continuity management, and effective preparation efforts are conducted based on those systems. It would be helpful to adopt similar practices in Thailand.

I believe ADRC's Visiting Research Program has given me a great opportunity to gain experience and to learn about the best disaster management practices in Japan. This is sure to benefit both myself and my country. I would like to take this opportunity to express my sincere gratitude to the government of Japan, ADRC, and the government of Thailand for their support in this work.

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