

Project Study on the Effective Countermeasures against Earthquake and Tsunami Disasters

Bulletin (No. 1)

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As one of JICA's commitments to the "Great East Japan Earthquake"

Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) has initiated a project study, "The Study on the Effective Countermeasures Against Earthquake and Tsunami Disasters" related to the Great East Japan Earthquake 2011 that occurred on March 11. This project study aims to obtain lessons from the disaster itself and the recovery processes that can be applied to JICA's assistance to developing countries in the field of disaster risk reduction. This "Bulletin" for the project study will report activities, findings and other study results.

As the first issue, "Bulletin No.1" summarizes the project study outline.

1. Study Purpose

A catastrophic earthquake, named "The 2011 off the Pacific coast of Tohoku Earthquake" with a magnitude of 9.0, occurred Friday March 11, off the coast of Tohoku (the northeastern part of Japan), and the earthquake and the tsunami generated by the earthquake caused devastating damage to parts of the Kanto and Tohoku regions, especially in the prefectures along the Pacific coast.

The areas affected by the tsunami had experienced tsunami disasters in the past. Structural and nonstructural measures had been implemented to mitigate tsunami damage based on past records of disasters, and these affected areas were known as some of the areas best prepared against tsunami disasters. These preparations included hazard mapping, early warning and evacuation exercises, and these areas were considered to have a high level of tsunami readiness.

However, the magnitude of the tsunami on March 11 greatly exceeded the assumptions of



Kesenuma City (Mar. 27, 2011 by Matsumaru)

disaster management plans, and the result was widespread and severe damage that required national level resource mobilization for the emergency response.

In response to this unprecedented catastrophe, plans for disaster management, crisis management and emergency response will be reviewed based on concrete investigation of the disaster. Also, such a review process will draw attention from the whole world because Japan has advanced technology in the field of earthquake and tsunami disaster management.

In this context, this research project aims to achieve the following through the collection and analysis of information and research results on this earthquake and tsunami by governmental institutions, universities and other academic societies, and through the review of disaster management plans, to:

1. Identify lessons learned from the disaster itself and the recovery processes that can apply to JICA's disaster management

projects

2. Reflect in JICA's sector assistance guideline on disaster management the identified lessons learned
3. Prepare recommendations using post-disaster reconstruction knowledge acquired through JICA reconstruction projects in developing countries.

2. Study Period

The project study will continue until March 2012. In the first term of the study period, the study team concentrates the collecting the information on disaster event to understand what was actually happened. And detailed analysis will be done in the second term of the study period using the research results and other available information. Finally, the study team will compile the lessons learnt identified during the study period.

As the immediate output of the information collection and preliminary analysis, the study team will prepare the progress report by the end of July, 2011.



Tsunami evacuation building, used as apartment, (Minami-Sanriku Mar. 27, 2011 by Matsumaru)



Arahama area, Sendai City (Mar. 25, 2011 by Matsumaru)



Destroyed Sea Dike, Isobe, Soma City (Mar. 29, 2011 by Matsumaru)



Terminal Building, Sendai Airport (Mar. 29, 2011 by Matsumaru)