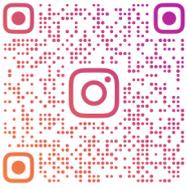




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Volume No. 5

December 2023



JICAIRAN

SPECIAL POINTS
OF INTEREST

Medical
Equipment
arrived in
Tehran

Bam Earth-
quake: Retelling
A Tragedy

Interview with
Mr. Takahashi
on DRR

Medical Equipment for Arash and Imam Hossein Hospitals arrived in Tehran

In late November and early December 2023, the first and second shipments of medical equipment under the JICA Grant Aid Project for the “Improvement of Medical Equipment in Tehran” have successfully arrived in Tehran.

Specialists will be visiting Iran for installation of the equipment and medical training for hospital staff so that the hospitals can launch providing further improved services to the public.

Arash Women Hospital and Imam Hossein Hospital are now taking the final steps in preparing their sites for the medical equipment installation.

In cooperation with the Ministry of Health and Medical Education, and the Ministry of

Foreign Affairs of Iran, we, the JICA Team in Iran, hope that the patients will soon take benefit of the advanced medical equipment under this project before the coming Nowruz.



Bam Earthquake: Retelling A Tragedy

The morning of December 26, 2003, was one of the most terrifying days of the recent history of Iran. A devastating earthquake of a magnitude of 6.5 struck the city of Bam in southeastern Iran.

A strong destructive shake that killed around



43,200 people and destroyed more than 80% of houses and buildings which left many survivors homeless. To support the Government of Iran and the affected people, JICA dispatched a Japan Disaster Relief (JDR) medical team within 48 hours after the earthquake which provided medical treatment to a total of 1,050 people, and also emergency supplies amounting to USD 320,000.

Not only dispatching the JDR team, but also JICA dispatched Japanese experts to conduct a needs assessment study to grasp the actual demands of the people in Bam. Based on the study results, JICA focused on three sectors for reconstruction

in Bam, namely, “water supply system”, “agriculture” and “community revitalization”, and made continuous efforts to help rehabilitate Bam, especially Bam-Citadel (Arg-e Bam).

On the day before the first anniversary of this tragedy, JICA held a handover ceremony of the reconstruction of the water supply system to ensure safe drinking water for the residents of

Bam and Baravat. The following year, JICA provided a Grant Aid for the rehabilitation of Arg-e-Bam.

The Bam earthquake was a trigger to understanding the necessity of disaster preparedness and strengthening the emergency response system, especially for the city of Tehran.



Disaster Risk Reduction

Interview with Mr. Takahashi

Mr. TAKAHASHI Ryoji is an expert with a background of urban planning and architecture who has a more than 25 years of experience in the field of Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) in many countries in Iran, Indonesia, the Philippines, Pakistan, Nepal, Djibouti, Tunisia, and Peru. He has been engaged with JICA’s DRR projects in Iran since 1999.

-Tell us about your background and your involvement with Iran.

Soon after I started my career in 1997 at a consulting engineering firm in Japan, I happened to be involved in JICA’s first project, “Earthquake Risk Assessment in Tehran”. The Project was about estimating damages in case of a big earthquake in Tehran, I found it interesting after participating in the risk assessment project in

Iran and started focusing on the DRR sector.

However, my engagement in Iran has been the longest with a total of 4 projects successfully conducted. Currently, the 5th project is being implemented. I have grown up with the projects in Iran. So, JICA Iran’s projects are my life work!

-In a simple way, how do you define DRR?

DRR refers to the systematic efforts and measures taken to minimize the adverse impacts of natural or man-made disasters. DRR aims to enhance the resilience of communities and reduce the vulnerabilities that make them



susceptible to disasters.

-How do you think ordinary people can get involved in DRR?

Ordinary people can play a crucial role in DRR in various ways; 1- To attend training sessions on disaster preparedness and response like first aid,



evacuation procedures, 2- To spread awareness about disaster risks through community meetings or educational events, 3- To develop and practice emergency plans with family and neighbors including evacuation routes, 4- To join local or national volunteer organizations involved in disaster response and 5- To support initiatives that promote sustainable development and resilience. By actively participating in these ways, ordinary people can contribute significantly to building a more resilient and prepared community in the face of potential disasters.

-From your perspective, how do you see DRR progress in Iran? And what keeps you hopeful?

After implementation of the risk assessment, government officials considered the concept more seriously and Tehran Municipality implemented structural and non-structural measures through the implementation of the JICA cooperation project. Structural measures are mainly hard components including constructing seismic-resistant buildings and

infrastructure, and non-structural measures are mainly soft components such as enhancing coping capacities. I think, Tehran has become much safer compared to 20 years ago, and hope to see more improvements in structural measures in the future.

-Please name some best practices supported by JICA in Iran?

1. *“Earthquake Disaster Risk Reduction Master Plan”*: was formulated in 2004 to mitigate the damages estimated in the previous “Earthquake Risk Assessment” project. It included structural and non-structural measures to be implemented. As this master plan was effective until 2018, now in the current project being implemented, the plan will be revised.

2. *“Establishment of Emergency Operation Center (EOC)”*: was constructed based on the outcome of the JICA’s Cooperation Project. Before making the concept of the EOC, the Japanese example was referred. This facility can help speed up emergency operations immediately after the occurrence of a disaster.

3. *“Earthquake Quick Damage and Loss Estimation System (QD&LE)”*: was introduced and installed as a system to estimate shaking levels and indicate vital information related to quakes, damages and loss of lives by plotting on



the map which will be used for the initial response to be taken by rescue forces, just after

occurrence of earthquake.

4. *“Experimental Earthquake Early Warning System”*: the Early Warning System will detect the earthquake near the epicenter and provide information on the shaking level expected in certain locations. For example, when a railway company receives the warning, trains can be stopped. It is still in its trial phase, however, in the future, it can be extended to other areas to reduce the devastating damages that threaten people’s lives.

5. *“Community Volunteer Group (Davam Group)”*: community empowerment was one of the major focuses through the past cooperation. To enhance people’s capacity, a variety of activities were implemented such as evacuation drills, town watching, disaster education and so on. Through the implementation of these activities, Community Volunteer Groups were formed to respond to emergencies. Now, all districts of Tehran have formed their Davam Groups.

-Your Final Words:

I think our Iranian counterparts have learned so much from past cooperation; they are motivated



and talented, so they act by themselves now, and I am respectful of that, especially for TDMMO. They are doing their effort, not only limited to what JICA has supported. I hope we can extend our support to more intensive specific areas such as earthquake early warning system and so on. We cannot stop disasters occurring. However, we can reduce life-threatening damages by implementing various measures. DRR efforts do not have a goal and it is necessary to keep working on them.



President Tanaka visited Bangsamoro Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao in the Republic of Philippines, where JICA has supported the peace consolidation process since 1990s.

Wishing you hope and happiness in the New Year

