

Present situation of Thailand on tsunami disaster mitigation as improvements from the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami

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The 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami caused devastating damage to Thailand and other nearby countries. This presentation summarizes some improvements of tsunami disaster mitigation, especially for non-structural countermeasure namely tsunami warning system, tsunami evacuation drill and tsunami disaster education as well as issues on housing recovery and tsunami memorials based on lessons from the 2004 tsunami. Five months after the event, a new organization in Thailand so called National Disaster Warning Center (NDWC) was established. Currently, NDWC is under the Department of Disaster Prevention and Mitigation, Ministry of Interior. NDWC is not only in charge of tsunami but also all natural disaster warning in Thailand. For tsunami warning, NDWC works together with Thai Meteorological Department (TMD) on data sharing. NDWC and TMD monitor the data from their seismic stations, GPS buoy, as well as other data providers including the Japan Meteorological Agency (JMA). It took about 20 min for NDWC to announce tsunami warning message at the beginning but improved to 5 min at present. There is national tsunami evacuation drill conducted every year in the 2004 tsunami affected 6 provinces operated by local governments and NDWC. However, some small tsunami events such as in 2012 demonstrated that traffic problems during evacuation are still unsolved. Story of the 2004 tsunami has been telling to young generations by their parents, school teachers and medias. Ministry of Education is currently developing teaching materials for tsunami education referred to Japanese materials. About the tsunami disaster memorials, there are both locations with well maintain and location that need moderate to major reparations of the memorials as well as evacuation related facilities. Governments and private sector provided various types of post-disaster housing by different source of funding provider, but turn out that most of residents in provided houses project have less satisfy in their housing' s conditions. In the future, further improvements on non-structural countermeasures for tsunami in Thailand can be expected in various points of view.

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