

## COMPLETION REPORT

### Japan as the World's Most Enviably Role Model in Earthquake Management: Learning from the March 2011 Mega Disasters

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This so timely and important research is an endeavor to explore why Japanese wonderful model for natural disaster risk reduction, preparedness and management can be useful for the disaster-affected countries in the world, Asia with a particular focus on Bangladesh.

A conceptual skeleton on 'disaster management' and 'earthquake engineering' has been developed to conduct this qualitative research. The study demonstrates that natural disasters are becoming more regular and destructive, and now represent the biggest threat to human welfare. Hence, there is an emerging consensus on the urgency of disaster management as a complex series of events including risk assessment, prevention measures, early preparedness to tackle future disasters, emergency response to a disaster, recovery and reconstruction. It also asserts that applying the engineering knowledge for protecting both natural environment and man-made setup from earthquakes by limiting the seismic risk to socio-economically acceptable levels has become quite essential. Building and managing infrastructure systems as well as transferring advanced technologies assume significance at the same time, clearly because they are vital for both developing and developed societies to mitigate the risks even in an uncertain situation. Besides, the project justifies the need to further cultivate the notion of 'human security' in the context of natural disasters.

The research reveals the fact that the distinguishing ability of Japan as a highly modernized and technologically developed nation to manage any large-scale natural catastrophe is acclaimed globally today. More explicitly, it depicts that the Japanese people are well versed in the art of picking themselves up from any sort of tragedy while '*yamato damashii*' [Japanese spirit] has amazingly wondered the world's media. But the legacy of the 2011 Great East Japan earthquake-triggered tsunami as a mega-disaster has taught them to do more for the future. As the project also exemplifies, there are manifold worthwhile lessons on disaster management that the rest of the world can adopt from Japan's experience-based wisdom, when the country's robust response to such a calamity has infused all the wrong questions raised by some skeptics.

Moreover, it keenly argues that since Japan's disaster risk reduction efforts were rather successful in limiting damages and loss of lives from the earthquake, this nation could definitely inspire other risk-prone countries across Asia as the globe's most sensitive region to climate disasters to vigilantly maintain resilience toward natural disasters. However, this policy-oriented piece recommends that Bangladesh, which is extremely vulnerable to earthquakes due to its geological location at a tectonically active area in the delta basin facing the Bay of Bengal, should learn some realistic lessons from Japan for reducing the risk of its potential earthquakes, even though Bangladesh is still impoverished compared to a most developed Japan with its seismic technological supremacy.

Finally, the insightful findings of this original research will surely be of use to the involved public policymakers and other stakeholders who have an arduous search for Japan's innovative problem-solving skills on disaster risk management and post-disaster reconstruction, when a lack of natural disaster preparedness can severely set back any hard-earned development achievement.

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Verbal Presentation (Date, Venue, Name of Conference, Title of Presentation, Presenter, etc.)

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- Title of presentation: “Risk Reduction, Preparedness and Management for Natural Disasters: A Japanese Experience for South Asia”
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