



JTB Tourism Research & Consulting Co.

ARISE Case Studies in Disaster Risk Management



Okinawa, Japan, located southwest of the country, is heavily dependent on tourism, the largest economic sector in the region. Following the Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami in 2011, the Okinawa Prefectural Government launched the Tourism Crisis Management initiative, a multi-faceted project to reduce the disaster risks and prepare for potential crisis events to the tourism sector. The project triggered the government to develop the Okinawa Tourism Crisis Management Plan - the first of this kind officially developed by a local government in Japan.

RISK	ACTION	IMPACT	OUTPUT
<p>Natural disasters: Major typhoons make landfall five to six times a year. Okinawa experienced one of the largest tsunamis in history in 1771 that reached 85 meters from the sea level and devastated 40% of the Ishigaki Island.</p> <p>Health hazards: The resort area experienced a sharp decline in visitors following regional health hazards including SARS and bird flu.</p> <p>Reputation crisis: Immediately following the September 11 terrorist attacks in the US in 2001, a reputation arose that Okinawa is the potential next target of the attack because of concentrated US military bases on the island. This led to a sharp decline of inbound tourists.</p>	<p>The Okinawa Prefectural Government contracted with JTB Tourism Research & Consulting Co. (JTRC) as a consultant for the project.</p> <p>Actions undertaken by the PPP include: Seminars and symposia to educate tourism stakeholders about the importance of crisis management; a series of workshops to develop tourism crisis management manuals fit to each local destination and service providers; creating evacuation maps for visitors in major tourist areas; posting elevation signage in major tourist destinations and facilities; and developing an emergency information delivery system for tourism stakeholders and visitors</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Raised awareness of the local tourism stakeholders and citizens about the potential disaster risks that may impact tourism sector. ✓ Local municipalities began developing tourism crisis management plans or adding to the existing disaster prevention plans procedures to protect visitors and tourism businesses from potential disaster risks. ✓ Evacuation maps developed for major tourist sites. ✓ Elevation signage and evacuation signage posted in major tourist destinations and facilities. ✓ Disaster response manuals developed for bus and taxi operators. ✓ Local hotels are better prepared for disaster risks. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Okinawa Tourism Crisis Management Plan and its Action Plan have been developed approved by the Governor. ✓ The Okinawa Convention and Visitors Bureau has developed a crisis management plan that corresponds with the Prefectural Government Plan. ✓ A close partnership has been formulated between the public and private sectors to address the disasters that impact tourism in large. ✓ During the course of development of Tourism Crisis Management Plan, cross divisional dialogue was encouraged among the relevant government departments which enhanced understanding of tourism crisis within the government office.



Left: Work shop with local stakeholders

Right: Evacuation drill during a crisis management seminar

Elevation signage (above) and evacuation signage (below)



Lessons Learned

Being safe and well prepared for potential disaster risks contributes to improve competitiveness of a tourist destination. It is the top leaders of both public and private sectors who make a decision to 'invest' on safety of the destination, which may not generate immediate economic impact but is effective in a long term branding of the destination and tourism businesses.

BUSINESS CASE

As a company dedicated to enhancing tourism and its impact to society in large, we believe it is our mission to support the destinations and tourism businesses to be safer and better prepared for potential disaster risks. It is just as important as marketing and promoting the destinations and products.

REPLICATION OPPORTUNITIES

Any destinations in the world face potential risks from diverse types of disaster risks that affect both visitors and tourism industry. Okinawa Prefectural Government and JTB are happy to share our experience with any destinations that have interest in reducing risks in tourism sector.

How does the project support the implementation of the Sendai Framework targets?

1	Reduce disaster mortality by 2030	X	The project will reduce the mortality among visitors and employees of tourism businesses by helping to develop effective evacuation plans for destinations and tourism service providers. Proactive crisis management plans to promptly and adequately cope with potential disaster risks will reduce affected people and economic loss, including employees of tourism businesses and their families.
2	Reduce number of affected people by 2030	X	
3	Reduce economic loss by 2030	X	
4	Reduce infrastructure damage and disruption of services by 2030	X	
5	Increase countries with DRR national/ local strategies by 2020		Disaster resistant tourism infrastructure and buildings such as hotels and transportation infrastructure will reduce the damage and disruption of services.
6	Enhance international cooperation to developing countries	X	
7	Increase the availability of and access to EWS* and DR information to people by 2030		All of this is applicable to developing countries where the tourism sector is still in the early stage of disaster risk reduction and crisis management.

How does the project contribute to the ARISE Themes?

1	Disaster Risk Management Strategies	X	The project includes multiple contribution to the ARISE Themes as DRR in the tourism sector requires efforts in diverse dimensions such as strategies; education and training; policy and regulatory; and urban risk reduction and resilience.
2	Investment metrics		
3	Benchmarking and Standards		
4	Education and Training	X	
5	Legal and Regulatory	X	
6	Urban Risk Reduction and Resilience	X	
7	Insurance		

For More Information



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