

## Installation of Non-Stop radio operation system in the Town of Watari, Miyagi Prefecture

2013.07.10 Wed 17:50/Emergency Relief

By the end of last June, BHN installed a non-stop power system for the broadcasting station in the Town of Watari.

Until then, once commercial power supply is suspended, it was always necessary to manually start again which needed some person to rush to the radio station at night.



The system is composed of 6 high-capacity batteries in total for the radio emitter & antenna, automatic power chargers and other equipment. To minimize the cost to install the system BHN has hand-fabricated the non-stop power circuits (which costs around \$10,000 in the market).

With the installation of this non-stop operation system, they are now able to continue broadcasting over 8 hours at the time of blackouts. This work has been realized with the funds from Global Giving .

Please click [here](#) for support and donation to this project. (link to the website of Global Giving)



Almost all the radio system in Watari broadcasting station was built by BHN and they are planning to transform from a “temporal radio station” to a normal “community radio station” next year.

BHN is now consulting with Ohtuchi broadcasting station(in Iwate Prefecture) to improve the listening difficulties in the mountain areas and, after fixing the listening problem, we also intend to install the same non-stop power system there.

Hirofumi Aizawa, Vice President

### Engineering Society Overseas Research Program

From 20<sup>th</sup> to 31<sup>st</sup> May, BHN Association accepted 11 students (plus one lecturer/trip leader) of Engineering Society of [Multimedia University \(MMU\)](#) , Malaysia, who visited Japan for the overseas graduation research program. They came to Japan to study the latest wireless communication technologies in Japan. Their main technological interests were in 3.9G LTE (Long Term Evolution) and NFC (Near Field Communication). They visited many companies, universities and research laboratories which are involved in mobile radio business and technologies.

The students are sophomore or junior of the university and the planning of the program was made by themselves, but the detailed program and the arrangements were made by BHN. Their nationality is mainly Malaysian but there were also students from Nigeria, Jordan, Iran, etc. Therefore, conversation language among the students was commonly English, but Chinese and Malay were also often heard.

In the first part of the program, they started to study the basic mobile communication technologies and the history of Japanese mobile communication services at the University of Electro-Communications, and visited major manufacturers to observe recent communication equipment to get a hands-on experience.

Moreover, they were each given a SUICA card, – an IC card that enables people to take trains all over Japan without buying a ticket each time – and actually used it as the typical example of NFC (Near Field Communication) thereby experiencing its benefits in rush-hour.





In the next phase of the program, they received presentations of the newest technologies in mobile communication and had precious discussions with the factory engineers, through which they understood the trends in mobile communication development from 3G to 4G by way of 3.9G.

In the final part of the program, they visited a radio mobile communication base station site, and saw actual construction and maintenance works. They seemed to be strongly impressed by the large-scale systems and complicated networks.

Since the research institutes, factories and station sites that they visited were located in various places in the Tokyo Metropolitan area, they had to travel every day, but they continued to show vigorous interest in every matter, from which we knew that they are real elites of their countries.

At the closing session, Mr.UEHARA, President of BHN, commended their precious research program and appreciated their enthusiasm in the program, which in turn was responded by many students with speeches of gratitude to BHN and BHN leaders. They are so polite and intelligent that it is certain that they will become leaders in their countries in the future.



Here are some last interesting episodes:

- i) One student got lost in the morning rush-hour train but was safely rescued by the “BHN special search team” within 20 minutes.
- ii) Many gimmick goods were introduced by the BHN leader and they were very much surprised to play with them (Mirage set, 3 dimension transmitter, Dowsing rod, etc.)

iii) Japanese traditional paperwork ORIGAMI was shown and they learned how to fold a paper and make a flower or an animal. Soon they were able to make a lot of ORIGAMI masterpieces to their enjoyment and souvenirs.

iv) Mr. Lini(trip leader) sent a thanks message as follows: “We wish to say a thousand thanks (Terima kasih in Malay) to all BHN for arranging such a wonderful trip! We can’ t say much except to be very grateful & thankful for everything.”

Yasushi Yoneoka, Counselor

— Completion of Internet Set-Up —

- Completion of Internet set-up at meeting halls of temporary housing in the city of Ishinomaki

The works for setting up Internet connections and computers were fully completed in 18 meeting halls of temporary housing community in the city of Ishinomaki.

Nukazuka temporary housing community, one of the six communities where the work had been completed in June, is located approximately 15km away from the city center, and is a middle-sized community where 52 families/92 people live.

Just after the works had been completed, BHN carried out a brief hands-on training to the executives so that PCs can be utilized in the activities of residents' association by making good use of e-mails and browsers. Another IT training is also planned in July targeting at the executives of temporary housing communities in the vicinity.



- “Do not force anyone, nor allow anyone force others” is the key to smooth management of the community. On June 27, Mr. Masanori Sato, BHN Chairman, and Mr. Shuji Arima, BHN counselor, visited Ishinomaki Ohashi temporary housing community.

Since Ohashi Residents' Association consists of 540 families/1,063 people, which is the biggest in Ishinomaki, one can easily imagine that association executives should be facing difficulties in managing the community smoothly.



The following comment by the chairman of the association to Mr. Sato was quite interesting; “our motto, which is ‘do not force anyone, nor allow anyone force others to do something’ is the key to smooth management.”

The chairman of the association added with gratitude that the Internet environment set up by BHN contributed much to:

- 1) quickly obtain public information from municipalities and promptly deliver it to the association members,
- 2) as well as to easily create and edit leaflets.

- Hands-on Training in June

In June, hands-on training for writing and sending/receiving e-mails, and for making leaflets/activities schedule etc. were conducted in 11 premises.

BHN visited Momo-o Nakatsuyama temporary housing community close to the border of the city of Tome, which is 30 minutes’ drive along the Sanriku-do (Sanriku route) from BHN Higashimatsuyama Office.

The community with 122 families is located inland and most of the families are evacuees from various tsunami stricken areas.

According to the chairman of the association, the residents gradually started to socialize with neighbors, and day by day, more and more people started to gather in the meeting hall and enjoy chatting. Nowadays, sweeping and security patrol around the premise are conducted by residents consisting of senior people mainly in their sixties and seventies. The chairman himself studies PC operation enthusiastically because he enjoys creating and editing leaflets.

In the 1<sup>st</sup> IT training in Aikawa Undoukouen temporary housing community after the Internet was set up, the training mainly focused on how to send and receive e-mails. As the Internet is used more freely and

frequently by the residents, further efficient management and information sharing in the community are expected to be achieved.

- IT support for the executives of Higashimatsuyama temporary housing residents' association

The city of Higashimatsuyama, facing the Pacific Ocean had 2/3 of its area flooded by Tsunami; the city suffered the most damage in terms of the devastating impact to its main industries such as agriculture and aquaculture.

Recently, the city started to arrange explanatory meetings for the disaster victims who are looking forward to moving into public housing now under construction; 250 families from 4 districts will actually start moving into the apartments from April, 2014 as a proof of steady revival.



BHN has been supporting the city by means of providing Internet environment to 10 premises and several IT trainings since May, 2012.

In June 2013, mobile routers with high-usage in 6 premises were replaced with FTTH, and in addition, desktop PCs were newly donated for further facilitating the work of the members of the association.

BHN will continue to provide IT trainings and the necessary maintenance supports to the committees and associations concerned.



## Myanmar Life Environment Improvement Project utilizing community addressing systems in the Southern Delta

2013.11.13 Wed 11:20/Emergency Relief

As a result of the evaluation by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, the above captioned project was approved, and a contract for receiving Grant Assistance for Japanese NGO Project was concluded on September 24.

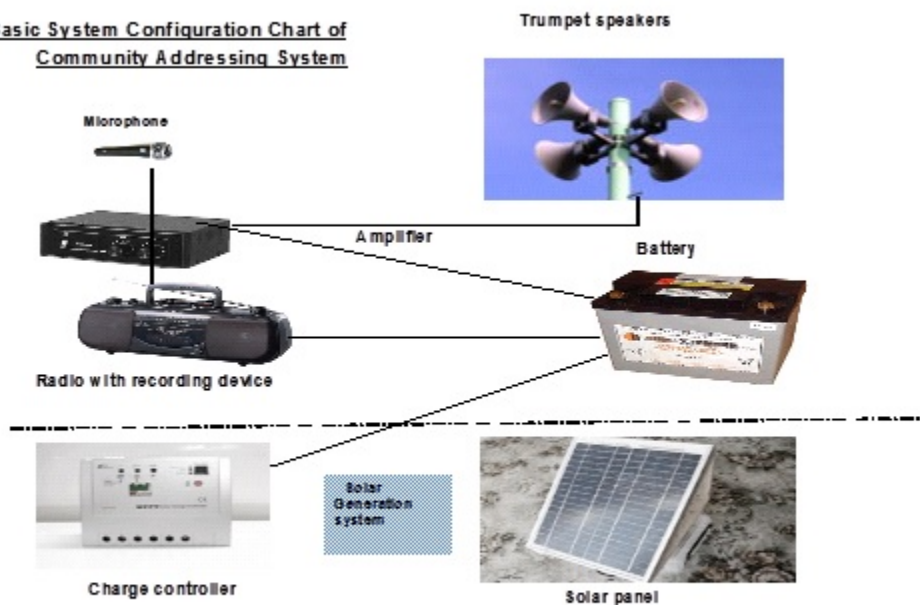


Five years ago, on May 2 and 3, 2008, Cyclone Nargis brought catastrophic destruction with over 138,000 fatalities and missing people mainly in the Ayeyarwady area of Myanmar's southern delta as well as in other areas including Yangon.

Our organization carried out a local survey immediately after the disaster, and from November 2008 to January 2011, we supplied and installed Community Addressing systems ("CA system") to the residents in 91 villages in 4 districts including the Ayeyarmady area. A CA system enables messages and warning signals to be broadcast to the people through loud speakers so that the local residents can be alerted at the earliest possible timing. Based on the appreciation of its usefulness, a request for additional supplies to another 70 villages was received from the Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry of the Republic of Union of Myanmar ("UMFCCI").

The project this year was triggered by this request and UMFCCI is now providing full assistance to us as our prime local partner. The project also includes installation of solar generation systems in the 91 villages already equipped with CA systems in our previous projects. The expected project duration is as long as 17 months starting on September 24, this year.

### Basic System Configuration Chart of Community Addressing System



In Myanmar, the above Cyclone prompted government-led initiatives for disaster prevention, and thus the establishment of emergency-alarm structure and set-up of inexpensive alarm systems are regarded as matters of great urgency. If our project is of any help to the improvement of disaster prevention in Myanmar, we will be most happy.



Most of villages in the project area are located along main rivers or between mesh-like small rivers, and village people usually use boats for their everyday life. Since social infrastructure is rather poor in this area, no commercial electricity is available at home, and most residents neither have telephones nor radios. Therefore, means of information delivery to local residents do not exist even at ordinary times.

Such being the case, we heard people say that even though emergency shelters are built, there are no means for alerting the residents to evacuate to a shelter at the time of disaster. Protection from natural disasters depends on how fast residents can obtain accurate disaster prevention information.

In addition, at ordinary times, we expect that CA systems will be well utilized and help improve life environment of area residents by delivering to them weather forecast, sanitation/health-care, publicity of municipality and event information etc. which are indispensable for the everyday life of the local residents.



Kousuke Dobashi, Director

BHN sent a team to the Philippines -Survey team for support of people affected by Typhoon Haiyan/Yolanda-

2013.11.27 Wed 15:05/

After Super Typhoon Haiyan (locally called Yolanda) struck the Visayan Region of the Philippines on 8 November, a BHN team consisting of three members was dispatched to the Philippines on 19 November to investigate the possible support activities by BHN Association for those affected by the typhoon.

The three spent one day in Manila, having meetings with the members of PLDT (The Philippine Long Distance Telephone Company), PDRF (Philippine Disaster Recovery Foundation), certain telecommunication infrastructure construction company and others in order to collect information about the damages on the telecommunication networks and the state of their recovery, as well as the activities conducted by various groups. The team also had a chance to meet a Japanese resident in Tacloban, Leyte, the worst-hit town by the disaster, who told the team about his escape from his house which was flooded up to the shoulder.

Two of the members later moved to Cebu where they started to investigate possible support activities by BHN in Leyte, such as setting up Internet connections and/or installing Community Addressing Systems, while the member remaining in Manila conducted a research on the availability and the price of equipment that may become necessary in conducting the possible support activities.

Members in Cebu travelled to Omroc, Leyte, another severely hit town in Leyte, and its neighbouring towns. They met some local people wanting to communicate with faraway family members and friends about their safety, so that BHN members lent them their satellite phones and were very much thanked by the people.

Based on the survey results of the team, BHN will draw support plans for the affected people.





## Official Launch of Project

It is almost 11 months since the official launch of the “Community Capacity Development Project for Disaster Risk Reduction by Community Radio” in Hatiya Island, Bangladesh on 15<sup>th</sup> March 2013, which is supported by Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA).

After completing registration of the BHN Association Bangladesh Office (BHN-BD) at the Bangladesh NGO Affairs Bureau, BHN Tokyo concluded a contract with JICA for the JICA Partnership Program and started the project together with BHN’s local partner Dwip Unnayan Songstha (DUS).



Hatiya Island is particularly vulnerable to cyclones and is designated as one of the cyclone high risk areas. People in Hatiya have experienced huge human and asset losses by cyclones for a long time. However, the Island is still left behind in terms of easy and early access to weather and other necessary information for their security in the event of natural disasters due to lack of means.

As a new communication medium in Bangladesh, Community Radio (CR) broadcasting by local Hatiya dialect is expected to contribute to facilitating people’s access to necessary information such as disaster and weather information, basic knowledge of water & sanitation, health care and so on. We are sure CR has huge possibilities to make a lot of positive influence on people’s life in Hatiya, not only in an event of disaster but also in their regular life.

## Outline of Project

The project duration is from 15<sup>th</sup> March 2013 to 31<sup>st</sup> August 2017. The goal is to enhance the ability of people in Hatiya to deal with the disasters with the active use of community radio. We expect to realize the goal through achieving the following outcomes which are the detailed objectives of the project.

1. To establish an operational and managerial system for the community radio (CR) broadcasting system aimed at serving as a disaster early warning system.
2. To establish a weather and disaster protection information broadcasting system specialized in the target area to minimize the disaster risks.
3. To establish an environmental system that will enable the local inhabitants to actively utilize the disaster early warning system based upon the CR system.
4. To establish an evacuation system in case of disasters in the target area.



For protecting human life from cyclones by taking advantage of CR and by enhancing people's potential capacity, all members of this project team are working hard every day on activities to achieve the objectives of the project. These activities will be introduced soon.

Anna Tamaki, Project Coordinator

### **Bangladesh Project No.3: Joint Kick-off Workshop**

2014.02.14 Fri 15:13/Development Support

This project, titled “Community Capacity Development Project for Disaster Risk Reduction by Community Radio, has been implemented in Hatiya Island, Bangladesh with a local partner Dwip Unnayan Songstha as JICA Partnership Program. The project period is from 15<sup>th</sup> March 2013 to 31<sup>st</sup> August 2017. For further information, please click [HERE](#).

- Joint Kick-off Workshop

A “Joint Kick-off Workshop” for the JICA Partnership Program “Community Capacity Development Project for Disaster Risk Reduction by Community Radio” was organized in order to nurture a common understanding of the project concept among the partners.



The workshop was held at DUS Conference Room at Hatiya, from 3<sup>rd</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> April 2013. A total of 15 members participated from Dwip Unnayan Songstha (DUS), BHN Bangladesh (BHN-BD) and BHN Tokyo.

On the 1<sup>st</sup> day, the workshop started with the General Session. In order to foster staffs' deep understanding of the project and its smooth implementation, basic information such as project background, purpose, implementation structure, and basic concepts of Community Radio was explained and discussed among the staffs. In the Financial Session, the staffs had lively discussions on JICA's accounting guidelines, accounting processes, reporting and so on.





The Implementation Session was conducted on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> days. Following a detailed explanation of activity reports and project schedule management, participants spent most of their time braking down each activity from task level to finer level through intense debate.

Throughout the three-day workshop, the staffs worked hard to achieve the aim of this workshop with their concentration and high motivation. At the end of the day, everyone was filled with a feeling of accomplishment.

As project team members, they are expected to work hard together and to contribute actively to the successful implementation of the project for protecting people in Hatiya from the threat of natural disasters.

A more detailed report of the Joint Kick-off Workshop is available in PDF format.

[Joint Kick-off Worshop Rpoert \[PDF\]](#)

>Please click the link below for the previous article of this project.

[Bangladesh Project No.2: Official Launch of the Project in March 2013](#)

Anna TAMAKI, Project Coordinator



## Installation of Solar Power Systems in Myanmar-Karen State

2014.02.26 Wed 17:01/Development Support

In Myanmar, it is said that there are as many as 135 ethnic minority groups and over 60 years after independence, many of these groups were in battle, demanding a wider autonomy against the central government.

In recent years many of them are agreeing ceasefire treaty with the central government and the refugees and IDPs (Internally Displaced People) are gradually returning to their old home lands.



However, most of these lands were deserted and left without any infrastructure investments. Since last summer BHN have been trying to build solar power systems in one of such villages; Shan Ywar Thit in Karen State. To reach the site we have to cross 20 rivers without bridges and during the rainy season from June to October the village is not accessible by land.

Last November, BHN started the construction of solar power systems in the high school and the village community center. In the middle of January, BHN completed the solar systems and installed room lamps, a TV receiver, a radio telephone set, etc. and received a letter of appreciation from the state government for this work.



This project was financially supported by Japan Platform (JPF), an umbrella NGO for NGOs, and BHN is planning to apply for further funds to expand the benefit of solar energy to other areas without electricity in the Karen State.

Hirofumi AIZAWA, Project Manager