

AIWEST-DR 2025 Conference Report (2025/8/20-22)

Theme: *Global Partnerships Toward Future Disaster Resilience*
Venue: University College London (London, UK), onsite/online
URL: <https://aiwest-dr.usk.ac.id/>

University College London (UCL) hosted the 17th Aceh International Workshop and Expo on Sustainable Tsunami Disaster Recovery (AIWEST-DR 2025) on 20–22 August 2025. They were joined by co-organizers the Tsunami and Disaster Mitigation Research Center (TDMRC) of Syiah Kuala University, IRIDeS (Tohoku University), the National Defence University of Malaysia (UPNM), Universitas Gadjah Mada (UGM), the Indonesian Disaster Experts Association (PIT-IABI), the Indonesian Geographical Society (IGI), and the University of Sydney.

AIWEST-DR 2025 shared lessons from the human suffering, infrastructure damage, and reconstruction following the 2004 Indian Ocean Tsunami, as well as from other disasters around the globe. This year, the event focused on the theme “*Global Partnerships Toward Future Disaster Resilience*.” It was the third time that AIWEST-DR was organized outside Indonesia.

The first day featured an Opening Ceremony at UCL’s Gustav Tuck Lecture Theatre. Keynote lectures were delivered by Prof. Helene Joffe (University College London) and Dr. Ella Meilianda (TDMRC, Universitas Syiah Kuala). Assoc. Prof. Anawat Suppasri (Tsunami Engineering Lab) read the Diplomatic Remarks on behalf of the Embassy of Japan in the United Kingdom. The day concluded with networking, drinks, and canapés at the Wilkins Building Japanese Garden.

The second day began with a keynote by IRIDeS Director Shinichi Kuriyama (Disaster Public Health Lab) titled “*How changes in behaviour can save lives in disasters*.” His talk drew on his article in *Nature – World View* (19 August 2025), urging the adoption of a public-health approach to disaster risk reduction. “*Disaster preparedness needs to become a social norm*,” Prof. Kuriyama emphasized, stressing that collaboration between health professionals and disaster-management officials is essential to saving lives.

Assoc. Prof. Sébastien P. Boret (Inclusive Disaster Risk Reduction Lab) chaired a session on Inclusive Community Resilience and Disaster Education. In this session, several IRIDeS members presented their research: Assist. Prof. Hyejeong Park (International Cooperation for Disaster Medicine Lab) on *Disaster preparedness of persons with disabilities in Banda Aceh: Evidence from the 2004 Indian Ocean Tsunami*; Asst. Prof. Miki Ishikawa with Research Associate Rieko Takahashi (Uehiro Disaster Risk Reduction Research Division) and Visiting Prof. Hiroyuki Sugai (Inclusive Disaster Risk Reduction Lab) on *Changing Faculty and Staff Attitudes through Contact with Hearing-Impaired Colleagues: Focusing on Disaster Response*; and Assoc. Prof. Julia Gerster (Disaster Memory Studies Lab) on *We Were Here Too! Conveying Diverse Disaster Experiences through Japanese Paper Theater (Kamishibai)*.

On the third day, Assoc. Prof. Suppasri organized a special session titled “*Sustainable System for Resilience and Innovation in Coastal Community*,” where he presented on Multi-hazard Assessment. In the session *Hazards and Their Mitigation*, Vice-Director Prof. Shunichi Koshimura (Disaster Geo-Informatics Lab) presented his latest research on *Tsunami Digital Twin: Its Concept, Progress, and Applications*.

AIWEST-DR 2025 concluded with a Closing Ceremony, including remarks from Vice-Director Prof. Koshimura and the organizers. The conference highlighted active international collaborations among participants and countries, while drawing critical lessons from past disaster experiences. Finally, it was announced that AIWEST-DR 2026 will be hosted in Chulalongkorn University in Bangkok, Thailand.

Text and Photos: Sébastien P. Boret (Inclusive Disaster Risk Reduction Lab)
Anawat Suppasri (Tsunami Engineering Lab)
Elizabeth Maly (International Research Collaboration Office)
Erick Mas (Disaster Geo-informatics Lab)

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Keynote Speech Prof Kuriyama



Sustainable System for Resilience and Innovation in Coastal Community Spec. Session



IRIDeS Group Photo



Closing speech, Prof Koshimura



Final Group Photo, AIWEST-DR 2025, "Bye and see you in Bangkok!"

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Presenters and titles from IRIDeS members

Presenters/co-authors	Affiliation	Title of Talk
Hyejeong Park, Sébastien P. Boret	International Cooperation for Disaster Medicine Lab, IRIDeS	Disaster preparedness of persons with disabilities in Banda Aceh: Evidence from the 2004 Indian Ocean Tsunami
Miki Ishikawa, Rieko Takahashi, Hiroyuki Sugai	Uehiro Disaster Risk Reduction Research Division, IRIDeS	Changing Faculty and Staff Attitudes through Contact with Hearing-Impaired Colleagues: Focusing on Disaster Response
Julia Gerster, Kaoru Ueda	Disaster Memory Studies Lab, IRIDeS	We Were Here Too! Conveying Diverse Disaster Experiences through Japanese Paper Theater (Kamishibai)
Bruno Adriano, Cesar Jimenez, Erick Mas, Shunichi Koshimura	Disaster Geo-informatics Lab, IRIDeS	Reassessing Major Earthquakes in the Central-South American Region to Enhance Tsunami Hazard Evaluations
Anawat Suppasri, Naruethep Sukulthanasorn, Ryuta Enokida, Shinichi Kuriyama, Nattapon Trumikaborworn, Ratchaneekorn Thongthip	Tsunami Engineering Lab, IRIDeS	The 2025 Myanmar Earthquake: Fact-findings for creating resilience in Thailand against future earthquakes
Anawat Suppasri, Syamsidik	Tsunami Engineering Lab, IRIDeS	Multi-hazard assessment (Special Session: "Sustainable System for Resilience and Innovation in Coastal Community")
Shunichi Koshimura, Yuichiro Tanioka, Yusaku Ohta, Erick Mas, Bruno Adriano, Ayumu Mizutani, Akihiro Musa, Yoshihiko Sato, Hiroyuki Takizawa, Hiroaki Kobayashi	Disaster Geo-informatics Lab, IRIDeS	Tsunami Digital Twin: Its Concept, Progress, and Applications
Aiko Sakurai, Mizan B.E. Bisri, Bethany Meidinger, and Rina Suryani Oktari	Kobe University, Disaster Education Research and Implementation Lab	Two Decades After the Indian Ocean Tsunami: Assessing School Disaster Preparedness in Banda Aceh
Elizabeth Maly, Takeshi Sato, Aiko Sakurai, Takashi Oda	International Research Collaboration Office, IRIDeS	Sendai Bosai Leaders: Localized community-based disaster risk reduction from Sendai
Ryo Saito, Akihiro Shibayama, Fumihiko Imamura	Cognitive Sciences Lab, IRIDeS	Mini Electric Mobility for BOSAI: Navigating Dynamic Scenarios and Phases for Inclusive Resilience in Motion
Sébastien P. Boret, Hyejeong Park	Inclusive DRR Lab, IRIDeS	Evacuation challenges of people with disabilities during disasters in Japan