Monitoring of the LANDSLIDE Phenomenon using Wireless Sensor Networks

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Received: October 2015 Revised: October 2015 Accepted: November 2015

ABSTRACT: This paper presents a WSN-based method for monitoring the displacement in landslide susceptible slopes. In this method, an array of wireless transmitters installed on the target slope will broadcast regular signals, which will be received and interpreted by two synchronous receivers. The proposed system monitors the slope by measuring the phase difference between the two mentioned receivers before and after displacements, and shows promising reliability and accuracy for monitoring the status of landslide susceptible mountainous terrains. This approach did not have any field trial, but its results and accuracy has been evaluated through a series of comprehensive simulations performed for an array of six transmitter (Tx) and two receivers (Rx).

KEYWORDS: Real-time Landslide Monitoring, Wireless Sensor Network

1. INTRODUCTION
There have been many efforts to predict and control natural disasters such as landslides. The most important factor of distinction between these methods is the extent of their area of interest or AOI. Some methods are suitable for regions smaller then several hundred square meters; these methods are usually based on laser beams and WSN-based transmitter-receiver systems [1-3]. The second group includes those methods that process SAR1 produced images to monitor a vast AOI [4-6]. The third group consists of those methods that measure geological and hydrological parameters of the target slope to monitor and predict the possibility of landslide [7]. For example, sensors such as pressure transducers, geophones, moisture meters etc. could use a wireless sensor network to transmit valuable data about an AOI; data that can later be processed to estimate its features or hazards. The mentioned methods are the most popular approaches for predicting or monitoring landslides, but, as always, each approach has its own advantages and drawbacks. For instance, methods of first group have a high level of power consumption and cannot be safely implemented in residential areas; methods of second group are very time consuming and their accuracy is subject to effects of climatic conditions; methods of third group require a multitude of expensive equipment, which can be a major issue for large scale projects [8-11]. More details and examples of the similar and innovative methods and applications have been stated in [12-17].

2. GEOMETRICAL PRINCIPLES AND SIGNAL PROCESSING
Considering the financial and technical limitations of methods mentioned in introduction, objective of this paper is to present a novel simulation-based method for monitoring the slopes susceptible to landslide. This new method, which is based on simulation via MATLAB software and is coded by C#, can detect, monitor and report small displacements in the target slope. The program developed for this method is equipped with a graphical user interface (GUI) that simplifies the data entry process and ensures the clarity of produced results. Theoretical and mathematical principles of the proposed method are explained below.

In this landslide detection technique, an array of transmitters (TX) will be installed on the target area and will send regular signals to two synchronous wireless receivers. This system measures the changes in phase difference (caused by displacement of transmitters) and estimate the real-time status of the

1 Synthetic Aperture Radar
target slope with a tenth of a millimeter accuracy. The mentioned synchronous receivers will be installed in a location safely away from the target area and will demodulate the received signals independently but with considering the correlations. Here, the main problem will be to detect and counter an “ambiguous state”, in which displacement may occur without any detectable change in phase difference. So far, the proposed approach has only been tested in simulations and is yet to be implemented in a field trial.

As mentioned in introduction, monitoring the landslide-susceptible slopes has been the subject of extensive research and there are currently several methods that can be used for this purpose. But this study aims to use the concept of phase difference between two receivers to develop an inexpensive and low-noise method to detect and measure displacements. This monitoring system will measure the phase difference pertaining to the transmitter installed in the AOI1 (which is the target slope) and the synchronized receiving nodes, which must be installed in a location slightly away from the AOI. An array of transmitters (TXs) will be configured to repeatedly and synchronously broadcast the string of (11111111) on a specific carrier frequency (4 GHz). The receiver nodes will be installed in a location close to each other but away from the slope and will demodulate the signals independently but with a shared synchronous oscillator. The system will be able to use IEEE 802.11n network protocol and its related equipment to quickly detect the displacements and deformations in an area of about 2500 square-meter. Collected data can be sent to a secondary control center for further processing. This technique is resource-efficient since it enables several arrays of transmitters and antennas to share a single data transmission circuit.

In the rest of this paper, we will first assess a system composed of a single TX and describe how a phase shift can be interpreted into a displacement value; then we will extend the theory for a system composed of an array of TXs. Next, we will discuss the ambiguous state (path) and its mathematical definition and equations. We will then present the block diagram of the receivers and will describe the signals of transmitter and receiver at each step, from the start of transmission until the end of detection. Finally, a series of 3-D simulations will be performed to demonstrate the process of work and estimate its errors.

2.1. Wireless transmitter - receiver model

Figure 1 shows an overview of the proposed landslide detection system. Here, the AOI is a slope overlooking a residential zone. An array of TXs (named T1 to T6) is installed on the AOI and is configured to send a certain data sequence to the receivers (during the training phase). These two synchronous receiver nodes (named R0 and R1) are installed closely to each other (with a certain and predefined spacing) but at a distance away from the AOI.

Fig. 1. Global view of the innovative system for monitoring of the landslide phenomenon

2.2. Calculation of displacement in a single-TX system

Figure 2 shows a 3D view of the model of the proposed landslide detection system. T(x0,y0,z0) is the location of transmitter on AOI; the first receiver (R0) is located at (0, 0, 0) and the second one (R1) is located at (a, 0, 0). T’ is the location of the point T after the displacement. δ is the magnitude of displacement or deformation and points p(x0,y0,0) and p’(x1,y1,0) are the projections of T and T’ on the X-Y plane. Deviation lines (r0,r1) and (r0’,r1’) are the distances of R0 and R1 from T and T’.

Fig. 2. status of point T and its post-displacement equivalent T’

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1 Area Of Interest
We have: \[ r_o = \sqrt{x_o^2 + y_o^2 + z_o^2} \] and \[ r_1 = \sqrt{(x_1 - a)^2 + y_1^2 + z_1^2}. \] \( \theta_0 \) and \( \theta_1 \) are the angles between the lines \( R_o - T \), \( T - T' \), \( R_o - T' \) and \( T - T' \). Location of \( R_o \) and \( R_1 \) and TXs should be recorded in the course of installation so that parameters \( a \), \( Z_o \), \( Y_o \), \( X_o \) could be determined. Slope vector at point \( T \) can be obtained by the following equation (using numerical analysis techniques): \[ \vec{M} = (x_1 - x_o)\hat{x} + (y_1 - y_o)\hat{y} + (z_1 - z_o)\hat{z} \] (1)

The scalar value of this vector is:

\[ M_{rn} = (z_1 - z_o)\sqrt{(x_1 - x_o)^2 + (y_1 - y_o)^2} \] (2)

Without knowing \( T' \) \((x_1, y_1, z_1)\), to obtain \( \theta_0 \) and \( \theta_1 \) we need to calculate the phase difference \( \varphi_0' \) in terms of distance \( D = r_o - r_1 \). Since \( D' = r_o' - r_1' \), without knowing the location of \( T' \), phase difference \( \varphi_0' \) can only be calculated via the receiver nodes. According to triangles \( T - T' - R_o \), \( T - T' - R_1 \) we can argue that:

\[ r_0' ^ 2 + \hat{s}^2 - 2r_0\cdot \hat{s} \cdot \cos \theta_0 = r_o^2 \]

\[ r_1' ^ 2 + \hat{s}^2 - 2r_1\cdot \hat{s} \cdot \cos \theta_1 = r_1^2 \] (3)

Therefore:

\[ r_0' \approx r_o - \hat{s} \cdot \cos \theta_0 \]

\[ r_1' \approx r_1 - \hat{s} \cdot \cos \theta_1 \] (4)

where \( \theta_0 \), \( \theta_1 \), \( r_0 \) and \( r_1 \) are parameters measured during installation. Having obtained \( D = r_o - r_1 \) and \( D' = r_o' - r_1' \) we have:

\[ \delta = \frac{D - D'}{\cos \theta_0 - \cos \theta_1} \] (5)

In equation (3), \( D' \) is unknown, but it can be calculated with the help of measured phase \( \varphi_0' \)

\[ D' = \lambda \cdot \varphi_0' / 360 \] (6)

In the above equation, \( \lambda \) is the wavelength of carrier frequency. It should be noted that \( \varphi_0' \) is a (complex or irrational) number and \( 0 < \varphi_0' < 360 \). Therefore, equation (4) only provides the fractional part of \( D' \). For \( \delta < \lambda \), the value of \( D - D' \) is the fractional part of \( \lambda \). The integral part of \( D' \) can be obtained from \( D \) so having \( D = r_o - r_1 = N_o \cdot \lambda + D' \), \( r_o, r_1 \) and knowing that \( \Delta D = D - N_o \cdot \lambda \), \( N_o = \text{mod}[D, \lambda] \), the correct value of \( D' \) can be calculated by the \( D' = N_o \cdot \lambda + \Delta D' \). Since \( D - D' \) is a fraction of \( \lambda \) and \( D - D' = \Delta D - \Delta D' \), we have:

\[ \delta = \frac{\Delta D - \Delta D'}{\cos \theta_0 - \cos \theta_1} \] (7-1)

As equation (7-1) clearly shows, the main causes of error in measurement are \( \theta_0 \) and \( \theta_1 \), which both are dependent on the direction of displacement. Now assuming that \( \theta'_0 = \theta_0 + \epsilon \) and \( \theta'_1 = \theta_1 + \epsilon \) where \( \epsilon \) is a small error (deviation), \( \delta' \) (due to \( \epsilon \)) can be obtained through following equation:

\[ \delta' = \frac{\Delta D - \Delta D'}{\cos(\theta_0 + \epsilon) - \cos(\theta_1 + \epsilon)} \]

\[ \approx \cos \theta_0 - \cos \theta_1 - \epsilon \cdot (\sin \theta_0 - \sin \theta_1) \] (7-2)

Displacement error due to \( \epsilon \) will be:

\[ \Delta \delta = \delta' - \delta \]

\[ \approx \epsilon \cdot (\Delta D - \Delta D') \cdot \sin \frac{\theta_0 - \sin \theta_1}{\cos \theta_0 - \cos \theta_1} \]

\[ \frac{\Delta \delta}{\delta} \approx \epsilon \cdot \frac{\sin \theta_0 - \sin \theta_1}{\cos \theta_0 - \cos \theta_1} \] (8)

3. A SYSTEM WITH ARRAYS OF TXS

The explained single-TX system can be easily extended to a two-dimensional system with arrays of TXs and be used to monitor a wide area for displacements. Figure 1 shows an instance of a \((2 \times 3)\) TX array. Each TX of the array is configured to broadcast its signal sequence on a regular basis. Each TX can have its own slope vector. TXs of an array could share a single transmission circuit via a multiplexer so that the cost of hardware and equipment could be reduced. Two synchronized receivers demodulate the broadcasted signals, identify the source TX and determine and calculate the displacement corresponding to the source.

4. AMBIGUOUS STATE (PATH)

An ambiguous state (path) is a state in which after displacement the phase difference between the receivers remains unchanged. This state occurs when \( r_o' - r_1' \) equals \( r_o - r_1 \). According to the procedure described in the previous section, when displacement is such that \( T'(x_1, y_1, z_1) \) results in an ambiguous state, method fails to detect the displacement.
As Figure 3 shows, considering the curved lines $r_0$ and $r_1$, the point $T$ can be located on the circle resulted from intersection of two spheres with radiuses $r_0$ and $r_1$. Therefore, $T(x_0, y_0, z_0)$ satisfies the equation

$$(x_0 - a)^2 + y_0^2 + z_0^2 = r_0^2,$$

where $a$ is the slope of ambiguous path. Equation (10) can be written as

$$(x_0 - a)^2 + y_0^2 + z_0^2 = r_0^2, \quad r_1^2 > r_0^2. \quad \text{(10)}$$

The circle resulted from the intersection of the two spheres is located on Y-Z plane and assuming that $x = 0$, we have:

$$x_0 = (a^2 + r_0^2 - r_1^2) / 2a = c / 2a,$$

$$c = a^2 + r_0^2 - r_1^2,$$

$$y_0^2 + z_0^2 = r_0^2 - c^2 / (4a^2). \quad \text{(9)}$$

![Geometrical status of ambiguous state](image)

**Fig. 3.** Geometrical status of ambiguous state

Center of circle is located at $(c/2a, 0, 0)$ and its radius is $\sqrt{r_0^2 - c^2 / (4a^2)}$. Ambiguous state happens when displacement or movement of slope is in a way that $r_0$ and $r_1$ both change by the same $\delta$. Therefore, $\delta > \alpha \rightarrow r_0' = r_0 - \delta$, $r_1' = r_1 - \delta$ (because of gravity), and assuming that $C' = C - 2(r_0 - r_1)\delta$, intersection of two new spheres (with radiuses of $r_0', r_1'$) create a new circle with new $x = x'$ and new radius:

$$x_1^2 + y_1^2 + z_1^2 = r_1'^2,$$

$$(x_1 - a)^2 + y_1^2 + z_1^2 = r_1^2,$$

$$\Rightarrow x_1 = [c - 2(r_0 - r_1)\delta] / 2a = c' / 2a,$$

$$y_1^2 + z_1^2 = (r_0 - \delta)^2 - \frac{c'^2}{4a^2}. \quad \text{(10)}$$

$T'$ is the intersection of the slope with this new circle. The center of this circle is located at $(c'/2a, 0, 0)$ and its radius is $\sqrt{(r_0 - \delta)^2 - (c' / 2a)^2}$ which is approximately equal to $r_0 - (c' / 2a)\delta - [1 - c(r_0 - r_1) / (2a^2\delta)]\delta$. In this three-dimensional system, the ambiguous path is represented by the locus of $T'$ created by variation of values $r_0', r_1'$. It would be very hard to obtain a three-dimensional equation for this ambiguous path. So we solve it in two dimensions, and then obtain the value of $Z$ from the slope of ambiguous path $m_a = (z_1 - z_0) / \sqrt{(x_1 - x_0)^2 + (y_1 - y_0)^2}$. In X-Y plane, $T$ can be obtained from the intersection of two circles created by the intersection of two spheres with $z_0 = 0$ and radius of $L_0$ and $L_1$.

We have:

$$L_0 = r_0 \cos \theta_a,$$

$$L_1 = r_1 \cos \theta_b,$$

$$\theta_a = \tan^{-1}(y_0 / x_0),$$

$$\theta_b = \tan^{-1}[(y_0 / (x_0 - a))] \quad \text{(11)}$$

where $\theta_a, \theta_b$ are the angles between $R_1, R_0$ and point $T$. $[L = L_0 - L_1]$ is the difference in the magnitude of deviation. As shown in figure 3, these two circles can be assumed as the projection of a 3D space on a 2D plane. Assuming that $z = 0$, equation (10) can be simplified for X-Y plane:

$$x = \frac{c - 2(l_0 - l_1)\delta}{2a},$$

$$y^2 = (l_0 - \delta)^2 - \frac{c - (l_0 - l_1)\delta}{2a}^2,$$

$$y \approx l_0 - \frac{c}{8a^2}[(l_0 - l_1)^2 - \frac{2(c - (l_0 - l_1)\delta)}{2a^2}],$$

$$\approx l_0 - \frac{c^2}{8a^2} - \frac{\delta}{l_0} \quad \text{(12)}$$

By eliminating $\delta$ from $x$ and $y$ in the above equation, we will have:

$$y = l_0 - \frac{(a^2 + l_0^2 - l_1^2)^2}{8a^2} - \frac{a^2 + l_0^2 - l_1^2}{2(l_0 - l_1)} \frac{a}{(l_0 - l_1)} \frac{x}{x} = m_y y + K \quad \text{(13)}$$

where $m_y = a / (l_0 - L_1)$ is the slope of ambiguous path and $K = l_0 - (a^2 + l_0^2 - l_1^2) / (8a^2l_0) - (a^2 + l_0^2 - l_1^2) / (2l_0 - l_1)$ \quad \text{(14)}
Equation (13) is the equation of ambiguous path in X-Y plane. Having T and \( m_{ah} \), the height of ambiguous path at point \( T' \) can be obtained from the following equation:

\[
z = z_0 - m_{ah} \cdot \sqrt{(x_0 - x)^2 + (y_0 - y)^2}
\]  

(15)

Figure 4 shows the ambiguous path in the X-Y plane. As can be seen, TX and receivers are located at T(400,200) and R_0(0,0) and R_1(a,0) with \( \alpha = 1 \) to \( \alpha = 5 \). Figure (4-a) shows the state where \( L_1, L_2 \) are reduced by the same \( \delta \), and Figure (4-b) shows the path based on equation 13. In both cases, ambiguous path is expressed as a function of \( \alpha \) (the distance between R_1 and R_0).

**5. BLOCK DIAGRAM AND SIGNAL ANALYSIS OF TRANSMITTER-RECEIVER SYSTEM**

Figure 5 shows the block diagram of the proposed transmitter-receiver system with one TX and two receivers. A typical TX broadcasts a signal with a fixed carrier frequency. Carrier frequency (F_c) is different from frequency of receivers.

The typically required efficiency is between -25ppm\(^1\) and +25ppm (in the range frequency at which system is sustainable). So the maximum error of F_c between transmitter and receiver will be 50ppm. Assuming that carrier frequency of TX is \( F_c + \Delta F_c \), the carrier frequency of receiver will be \( F_c \) with a maximum frequency difference of \( \Delta F = 0.5 \times F_c / 10^4 \). In Figure 5, a local oscillator is shared between two receiver nodes, which create two frequencies of \( F_1 \) (Intermediate frequency band) and \( F_2 - F_1 \). Amplified signals \( m_0(t), m_1(t) \) are demodulated independently by a frequency of Fc-FI. These two signals are then passed through a low-pass filter to create \( S_1(t) \).

Fig. 5. Block diagram of the synchronous receiver system

\[\begin{align*}
\text{Amplified signals} & \quad m_0(t), m_1(t) \\
\text{demodulated by} & \quad F_c-FI \\
\text{then passed through} & \quad \text{low-pass filter}
\end{align*}\]

Two (I-Q) in-phase quadrature demodulators are used to generate base-band signals \( v_1(t), v_2(t) \), which later will be used to generate the phase difference data pertaining to receiver nodes. Assuming that \( p(t) \) is the signal sent by TX and \( p(t) = \cos[(w_c + \Delta w_c)(t - \tau)] \), 0 \( \leq t \leq T_p \), and \( T_p \) is the pulse period, the received signals \( m_0(t), m_1(t) \) will be in the following form:

\[
\begin{align*}
m_0(t) & = \cos[(w_c + \Delta w_c)(t - \tau_0)] \\
m_1(t) & = \cos[(w_c + \Delta w_c)(t - \tau_1)]
\end{align*}
\]  

(16)

where \( \tau_0, \tau_1 \) are the delays from TX to receivers R_1 and R_0. After multiplying \( m_0(t) \) and \( m_1(t) \) by the frequency \( F_c - F_1 \) and passing them through the low-pass filter, we will have:

\[\text{Fig. 4. The ambiguous path on X-Y plane (the error in y is expressed as a function of a)}\]

Because of gravity, Z component of point TX decreases during the displacement. So it will be enough to check that whether the slope \( m_{ah} \) matches the slope \( m_{xh} \) (ambiguous path) on X-Y plane. If \( m_1 = m_{xh} \) the detection technique fails only when \( m_1 = (x_i - x_0) / (y_i - y_0) \). Equation (7-1) can be used to calculate the deviation of ground in a single TX system. In case of an array of TXs, each TX will have its own slope and ambiguous path. In this case, location of the two receiver nodes must be designed in a way that none of the ambiguous paths match the displacement or deformation path.

\(^1\) Pulse per minute
Depending on the wavelength of carrier signal and the specific TX, and it also affects the ambiguous path. In addition, increasing the distance between receivers does not affect δ, but increases the accuracy of calculated cos θ_0 – cos θ_1. The phase difference between receivers (α) affects the ambiguous path for each specific TX, and it also affects θ_1, θ_0 and ΔD – ΔD'. Depending on the wavelength of carrier signal and the location of TX, α should be large enough to maintain the accuracy of calculations by preventing (ΔD – ΔD') and (cos θ_0 – cos θ_1) from getting too small. On the other hand, a very large α will have negative effects on the receivers’ synchronization clock. In the end, the displacement calculated through this method is compared with the real distance between T and T' obtained from geometrical equations:

\[ \delta_{\text{Real}} = \sqrt{(x_0 - x_1)^2 + (y_0 - y_1)^2 + (z_0 - z_1)^2} \]  

A GUI\(^1\) is designed to simplify the processes of entering coordinates, reviewing the calculations, and plotting simulation results. Details and results of simulation are presented in section 6.

**6. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

To determine the accuracy of proposed method, MATLAB software was used to perform a series of simulations, where the effects of different states and forms of landslide on an array of six transmitters were evaluated. At the end of this section, we present one instance of these simulations with its related parameters and calculations.

At each step of process, the designed GUI reports the results and their accuracy independently for each transmitter (T1 to T6). This GUI is designed to provide a number of user-friendly features and capabilities, which include:

Component 1: determines the carrier frequency of the system and location of receivers R_0 and R_1.

Component 2: determines the pre-displacement and post-displacement location of first transmitter.

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\(^{1}\)Graphical User Interface

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\[ \delta_{\text{Real}} = \sqrt{(x_0 - x_1)^2 + (y_0 - y_1)^2 + (z_0 - z_1)^2} \]
Component 3: determines the pre-displacement and post-displacement location of second transmitter.
Component 4: determines the pre-displacement and post-displacement location of third transmitter.
Component 5: determines the pre-displacement and post-displacement location of fourth transmitter.
Component 6: determines the pre-displacement and post-displacement location of fifth transmitter.
Component 7: determines the pre-displacement and post-displacement location of sixth transmitter.
Component 8: Activates, deactivates, or turns off each transmitter
Component 9: selects a certain transmitter and displays its data.
Component 10: displays the calculated values and the error in calculated $\delta$
Component 11: displays the real-time status of each transmitter
Component 12: displays the status of signals at each step of process
Component 13: displays 3D and 2D representations regarding the status of transmitters and their response to landslide.
Component 14: displays and plots the graphical representations from three perspectives to enhance and simplify the analysis of landslide and its process.

It should be mentioned that user-specified $T'x$ coordinates are used to calculate the real displacements ($\delta_{\text{real}}$) (via the equation of distance between two points in a 3d space) and determine the error of the proposed method.

6.1. Simulation instance
In this section, the following assumptions are used to demonstrate the process and determine the accuracy of proposed approach. The following data are used as the program inputs:
- Carrier frequency ($f_c$): 4 GHz
- Coordinates of the first receiver node ($R_0$): (0,0,0)
- Coordinates of the second receiver node ($R_1$): (1,0,0)
- Coordinates of the first transmitter node ($T_1$): (10,10,10) $(10.5,10,10)$
- Coordinates of the second transmitter node ($T_2$): (10,11,10) $(10,11,1.001)$
- Coordinates of the third transmitter node ($T_3$): (11,10,10) $(11,10,1.001)$
- Coordinates of the fourth transmitter node ($T_4$): (11,11,10) $(11,11,10.5)$
- Coordinates of the fifth transmitter node ($T_5$): (12,10,10) $(12,10,1.10)$
- Coordinates of the sixth transmitter node ($T_6$): (12,11,10) $(12,11.5,10)$

Tables 1, 2, and 3 show the desired parameters and quantities (discussed in section 2.1 and 2.2) obtained from simulation.

Figure 7 shows the GUI window related to the above inputs. This figure displays the input data, calculated parameters (for $T_6$ for example), received signals (for example $V_{eq}(t)$ and $V_{ac}(t)$), and a 3D view of the results. As mentioned earlier, this program can display 3d representations and project them to 2d planes; figure 8 shows these projections on X, Y, and Z planes, which provide a better view for interpretation of results for the occurring of the landslide.
In this paper, we introduced a novel method and system for monitoring the displacement in landslide susceptible slopes. In this method, an array of wireless transmitters installed on the AOI broadcast a series of regular signals, which will be received and interpreted by two synchronous receivers. This integrated wireless sensor network gauges the displacements by measuring the phase difference between the two mentioned receivers. The main possible flaw in the principles of this method was defined in the form of an ambiguous path and was addressed in the simulations. We also performed a variety of 3D simulations, where an array of six transmitters was used to monitor displacements in hypothetical landslide susceptible slopes. The proposed system can measure the displacement of each transmitter with a tenth of a millimeter accuracy, and this points to its high potential for landslide monitoring purposes.

**REFERENCES**


