



Sendai DRR Newsletter

Towards a Disaster-Resilient
and Environmentally-Friendly City

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Experiences and Lessons

—Communicating with the Power of the People

Wisdom to Survive in a Future Time of Need Learn about disaster risk reduction while having fun



Sendai Women Leaders' Network for Disaster Risk Reduction

Aya Wako (Left) **Midori Shigeno** (Right)

Chairperson

Vice Chairperson

During the World Bosai Forum period, an event called "Sendai Bosai Pavilion" (Sendai DRR Pavilion) was held. During the event, a hands-on program was held, titled "Let's make colorful lanterns and sweets." The program was planned and operated by the Sendai Women Leaders' Network for DRR. This article is based on an interview with two members of the Women's Network regarding activities they are involved on a regular basis, in order to familiarize more people with DRR.

We engage in activities as members of the Sendai Women Leaders' Network, comprising of more than 100 members. After the Great East Japan Earthquake, we learned practical knowledge about a wide range of issues, including municipal DRR measures, consideration for disabilities and gender, and the operation of evacuation centers. Using these experiences, we began engaging in activities. Members of the Network implement and coordinate community-based DRR activities, including planning and operating voluntary training programs and DRR events.

As one of the programs of the Sendai Bosai Pavilion, an event



▲ Participants making sweets

organized by the City of Sendai for its residents in the World Bosai Forum period, we planned and operated a DRR event. We taught participants how to make DRR lanterns, which anyone can easily make using plastic bottles and chemical light sticks, and also DRR sweets, made by decorating disaster relief crackers with

chocolate and jam. This event provided approximately 1,000 participants, including children and their families, with an opportunity to learn about DRR while having fun by using familiar items in new ways. We hope that the participants share the tips and wisdom they learned, which enable them to protect their lives and survive, with their families and acquaintances.

We hope they remember what they learned when

a disaster actually strikes. Besides the event at the

Sendai Bosai Pavilion, we hold various local DRR

events, including seminars to learn about DRR

from history, and DRR measures for elderly and

disabled people.

The scope of DRR is very wide. We will continue steady efforts by providing events and information that many people can enjoy regardless of sex or age, so that more and more people become interested in DRR.



Lanterns ▶



▲ Plenary Session



▲ Family Show

The World Bosai Forum / International Disaster and Risk Conference 2017 in SENDAI

The First World Bosai Forum/ International Disaster and Risk Conference 2017 in SENDAI was held for four days, from November 25 to 28, 2017. The World Bosai Forum is an international conference held in partnership with the International Disaster and Risk Conference that is held in Davos, Switzerland, every two years. At the Forum, 49 sessions were held under a wide variety of themes, including "Build Back Better," "Women and Disaster Risk Reduction." In the sessions, participants engaged in vigorous discussions leading to the promotion of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030. The Forum was attended by approximately 11,000 participants and included more than 900 experts from 42 countries/regions.



What is Real Recovery?

The Importance of passing on the sentiments of former residents



Panelist at the Plenary Session of the World Bosai Forum/
International Disaster Risk Conference 2017 in SENDAI

Tomoyuki Takayama

Representative of HOPE FOR Project

Shortly after the Great East Japan Earthquake occurred, the tsunami surged towards my house in the coastal area of Sendai City, so I evacuated to a local elementary school, a designated refuge area. Around 3,000 people had evacuated there and I thought about what I could do to help. I decided to send out safety information for the evacuees to their families and friends via Twitter, and managed to do so for over 100 of them. Prompted by a desire to do more, I held an event where balloons containing flower seeds were released on March 11, 2012, exactly one year after the earthquake. This event, held in the coastal area, Arahama, was the beginning of the HOPE FOR project activities. The words "HOPE FOR" printed on the balloons represented two hopes: to encourage each person who releases a balloon to make a wish by adding words that continue on from those printed, and for the flower seeds inside the balloon to grow and bloom where they eventually land. I have continued engaging in HOPE FOR project activities because I believe it is important for former-residents of the Arahama area to have a place to return to that reminds them, even just once a year, of those who lost their lives and the former Arahama area as it was before the earthquake.

At present, local government is studying the possibility of utilizing the Arahama area. As the area is a designated disaster risk area, no one can live there anymore. Former-residents of the area, however,

obviously expected their lives there would continue in the future. The utilization of the Arahama area is not what they requested. They hide their thoughts about the Arahama area deep within their heart even though they don't express it verbally. At the Plenary Session, I called on the

audience to be more considerate of the former-residents' feelings. Both the former-residents and the government think differently now compared to immediately after the disaster. That is exactly why I hope to collect together the former-residents' thoughts, communicate them to the government, and help them to be remembered.

In future, it is essential for each of us to consider disaster risk reduction and "Build Back Better" mean to us personally. I believe that simply constructing buildings and holding events are not the only things required for reconstruction. I strongly hope that reconstruction will be carried out while respecting the thoughts and opinions of the former-residents and future visitors to the Arahama district.



▲ Plenary Session

"Road to Recovery SENDAI"

In order to show the world Sendai City's present state of recovery from the Great East Japan Earthquake and the significant contribution made by citizens, in October 2017 we published an English version of Sendai City's recovery records from the disaster, titled "Road to Recovery SENDAI."

As the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030 emphasized the role of various stakeholders in disaster risk reduction, recovery and disaster risk reduction efforts initiated by citizens attract keen interest from international participants visiting Sendai to attend international conferences and study tours. This booklet introduces post-disaster efforts by citizens, NPOs, private sectors, and volunteers through articles based on interviews. The articles are also posted on the Sendai City's official website.

As the number of people who did not experience the Great East Japan Earthquake increases, it is necessary to pass on the experiences and lessons from that time to future generations for the sake of disaster risk reduction in the future. The City of Sendai will continue contributing to advancing the world's DRR and disaster mitigation by communicating the lessons it learned to the rest of the world.



▲ Road to Recovery SENDAI

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