



▲ Seminar participants (Center) making a presentation at the 2017 Sendai Symposium for Disaster Risk Reduction and the Future

## Citizens to share understanding of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction – New university-government partnership project

The Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 was adopted as an outcome document by the Third United Nations World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (WCDRR) held in March 2015, and has been introduced in the international community as a major guideline for disaster risk reduction (DRR) efforts.

The City of Sendai hosts 'the Sendai Framework for DRR Citizen Seminar' as an opportunity to learn about the Framework, in partnership with the International Research Institute of Disaster Science (IRIDeS) of Tohoku University. The seminar includes a number of programs, such as lectures, presentations, group discussions and group work.

The Sendai Framework states the importance of a broad range of stakeholders involved in DRR activities. In order to promote the Framework, it is essential for individual citizens to deepen their understanding of the ideas of the Framework and actually practice it in their lives, whether in their communities, homes, workplaces or other settings. In this context, the City of Sendai has held the seminar every year since 2016. As of the end of December 2018, a rough total of 700 participants have attended the Seminar.

The seminar session held in August 2018 was planned with a focus on "Priority 1. Understanding Disaster Risk and Sharing Information" among the Four Priorities for Action set forth in the Framework. It was attended by many citizens from regional groups, companies, municipalities, educational institutions and NPOs as well as students.

This session began with activity report presentations by two citizen speakers who had participated in past sessions. This was followed by attendees sharing information and opinions on ongoing activities to practice Priority 1 and future plans. The recent seminar received positive feedback, including voices from attendees expressing their appreciation for the opportunity to talk with many local residents about DRR, awareness of the need to create opportunities to share real-life experiences of the disaster and willingness to use what was shared in the seminar to plan future activities.

In addition, we newly started to host 'stakeholders' meetings', inviting a number of participants of previous seminars. In these meetings, discussion has begun to compile a collection of activity reports as an outcome of the Sendai Framework Seminar, with plans to present it at the 2019 Sendai Symposium for Disaster Risk Reduction and the Future, scheduled for March 2019.

The Sendai Framework has been adopted by many countries to develop local DRR plans. Working with its citizens, the City of Sendai will continue promoting this Framework with the aim of contributing to building a culture of disaster-awareness across the globe, as a way to show its gratitude for the support extended to the city in the wake of the Great East Japan Earthquake. We hope that publication of our activities will help facilitate DRR efforts in many parts of the world.



▲ Prof. Fumihiko Imamura, the director of IRIDeS, giving a lecture at a seminar



▲ Stakeholders' meeting

### <Past Events>

#### FY2016

three consecutive seminars; one special seminar (parent-and-child program).

Total attendance: 386

#### FY2017

one basic seminar; one advanced seminar.

Total attendance: 123

#### FY2018

two basic seminars; one advanced seminar; three stakeholders' meetings.

Total attendance: 173



## Aiming to pass on the baton of volunteer activities supporting disaster-affected people to future generations



▲ Student volunteers providing support for local fisheries (Kobuchihama, Oshika area, Ishinomaki City)

### Tohoku Gakuin University Disaster Volunteer Station

#### Sou Kawahara (Left)

Deputy Head of Disaster Volunteer Station, 2nd year, Department of Regional Design, Faculty of Liberal Arts

#### Takumi Sato (Right)

1st year, Department of Economics, Faculty of Economics

The Tohoku Gakuin University Disaster Volunteer Station was established on March 29, 2011, immediately after the Great East Japan Earthquake occurred, to serve as a volunteer work placement center for university students seeking volunteer opportunities in affected areas.

Shortly after the disaster, the Station dispatched a large number of student volunteers, mainly to remove mud and dirt and perform outdoor cleaning in tsunami-flooded areas. Eight years later, the types of volunteer work needed by affected people have largely changed, reflecting the progress of reconstruction efforts.

Currently, the Station has a total of 50 students registered. We plan and operate volunteer work projects in Miyagi Prefecture including providing support to local fisheries and the agricultural industry as well as visiting schoolchildren and senior citizens. When people thank us for our simple activities such as visiting affected people's

homes, with some even tearing up, it is truly encouraging.

The Station also accepts applications for volunteer work in affected regions from university students across Japan. We organize a summertime intensive volunteer program every year, inviting interested students from around the country to engage in volunteer activities in afflicted areas, while hosting an intercollegiate symposium to facilitate discussions and information sharing on volunteerism among students from different universities.

Recently, we have become seriously concerned about the challenging task of maintaining citizens' memories of their devastated hometowns, which are likely to slowly fade away over time. We believe that



▲ A scene from an interaction event with temporary housing residents (Kesennuma City)

it is our responsibility to pass the baton of our activities to younger students and even to much younger generations born after the 2011 disaster and to share our thoughts with them. We also hope that the impact of the disaster as well as the post-disaster recovery and local charms will be shared broadly around the world.

## Sendai to Host the 'World Bosai Forum/IDRC 2019 in Sendai'



▲ A scene from the Plenary Session of the first WBF

On November 23, 2018, it was officially announced at a symposium in Davos, Switzerland, that the World Bosai Forum/IDRC 2019 in Sendai would be held from November 9 to 12, 2019.

The World Bosai Forum (WBF) is an international forum held in Sendai in partnership with the Global Risk Forum (GRF) Davos, which organizes the International Disaster and Risk Conference (IDRC), dedicated to disaster risk reduction, held in Davos, Switzerland.

In November 2017, the Organizing Committee for the WBF, formed by Tohoku University, the Sendai City government, and other members, held 'World Bosai Forum/IDRC 2017 in Sendai' as the first WBF, which was attended by 947 people from 42 countries and regions.

Held together with events targeting not only experts in disaster risk reduction from home and abroad but also the general public, WBF2017 also attracted a total of about 11,000 citizens, ending up succeeding as an international conference supported by citizens' participation. During the forum period, sessions and booth exhibitions were dedicated to sharing and deeply discussing lessons learned and experiences with the Great East Japan Earthquake and resulting tsunamis, efforts to promote the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030, and other topics.

**Details of the 2nd WBF will be provided and updated on the forum's official website.**  
**"World Bosai Forum/IDRC 2019 in Sendai" website:**

<http://www.worldbosaiforum.com/2019/english/>

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