

MODULE THREE:

MANAGEMENT, IMPLEMENTATION,
AND GOVERNANCE IN DISASTERS AND RESILIENCE



Module 3 lasted for four days, during which the participants visited the Tohoku region, located in the North-East of Japan. This region was strongly affected by the Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami, in March 2011, and the group visited several sites that had been damaged as well as the projects related to the post-disaster recovery that were under way.

The first stop of the field visit was Hiraizumi – Temple, Gardens and Archaeological sites representing the **Buddhist Pure Land**, cultural property inscribed on to the World Heritage List in 2011, in the aftermath of the disaster, under criteria (ii) and (vi). Participants visited the Buddhist Temple of Chūson-ji and Motsu-ji, temple and gardens. They had the opportunity to see a very important National Treasure of Japan, Konjikido, the Golden Hall, that used to be located outdoors and, currently, is protected under a concrete structure. They also visited the Hiraizumi World Cultural Heritage Center, where they attended a lecture by its Director, **Mr. Tsukasa Oikawa**.

During the lecture, Mr. Oikawa explained the values of Hiraizumi and its different components. He detailed the recovery of one of the stones in the garden of Motsuji. He explained how this stone's position was affected by the 2011 earthquake and that they had to study and follow, with precision, its original inclination in order to re-establish it.

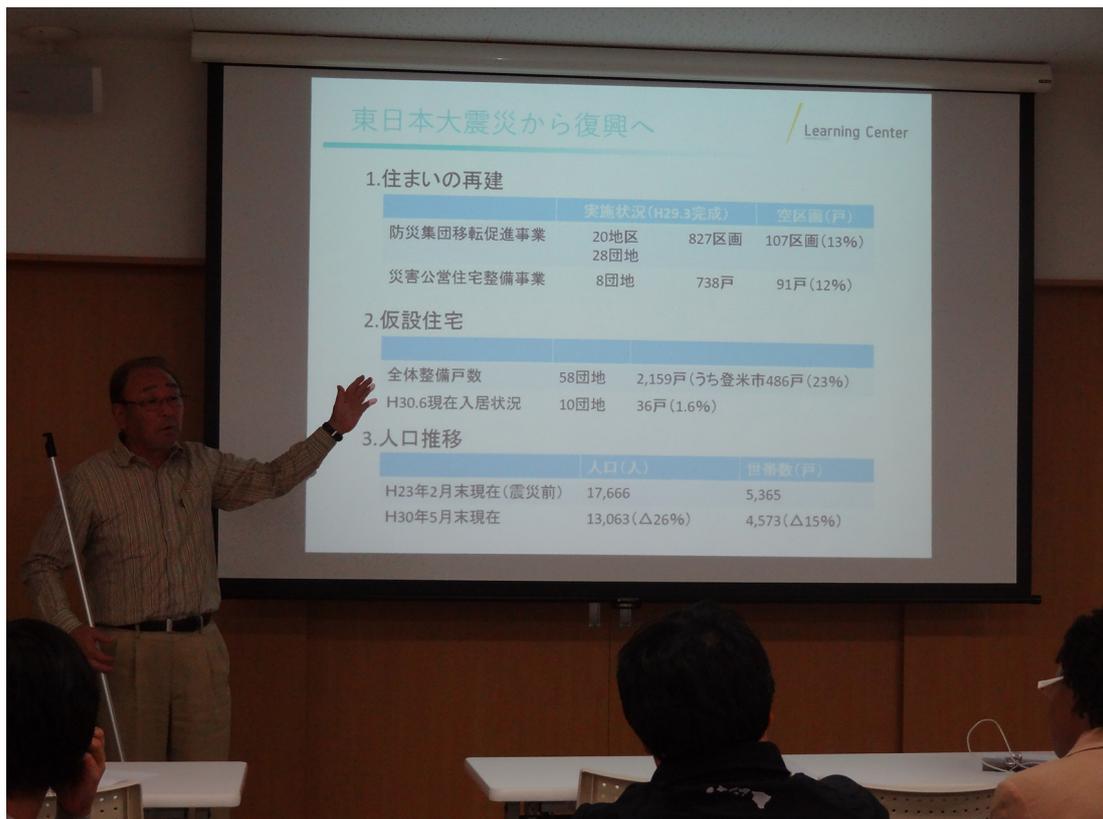


Group photo at Hiraizumi World Heritage Site.



Lecture by Mr. Tsukasa Oikawa, Director of Hiraizumi World Cultural Heritage Center. Interpretation was in charge of Professor Nobuko Inaba, University of Tsukuba.

After the visit, the group arrived at the accommodations in the Iriyado Learning Center in Minami-Sanriku town. Here, Mr. Kenji Endo, Director of the Iriyado Learning Center, explained to the participants the impacts of the disaster in Minami-Sanriku Town and the process of post-disaster recovery, from which Taisho University created Iriyado Learning Center as a space for researchers, visitors, and people interested in learning about disaster risk management and the specific experience of post-disaster recovery in Tohoku.



Mr. Kenji Endo explaining the impacts of the disaster and the process of post-disaster recovery of Minami-Sanriku town.

Participants learned that Minami-Sanriku was a very lively town, where many cultural events were performed throughout the year, and where the relationship between people and the sea was very positive. The sea coast was frequented by fishermen and its beaches were popular in the summer. After the earthquake and tsunami in March 2011, life in Minami-Sanriku changed drastically. A large percentage of the population perished or disappeared because of the tsunami. The relationship with the sea was greatly affected. Nevertheless, Mr. Endo explained how the post-disaster recovery process has involved local

communities and their needs, both material and spiritual. Several projects for recovering areas devastated by the tsunami are underway. There are initiatives to restore natural areas, creating more green public spaces in between the coastline and the settlements, as well as reconstructing the local market, which used to be a core of community life in Minami-Sanriku. The new design and vision serve to revitalize the community, recovering their traditional space of exchange, and boosting local businesses.

On the second day of the field trip, participants started the day with a discussion led by **Dr. Gamini Wijesuriya** and **Professor Masahito Yoshida** in order to clarify the situation in Minami-Sanriku Town and to understand how to look at this experience through the lens of integrating nature and culture in heritage conservation, applied in a post-disaster recovery strategy. Furthermore, they gave elements to the participants to reflect on during the working groups discussions.



Dr. Gamini Wijesuriya, former Project Manager of ICCROM – Sites Unit, and Professor Masahito Yoshida, Chairholder of the UNESCO Chair in Nature-Culture Linkages at the University of Tsukuba, leading the discussions on learning from the experience in Minami-Sanriku town.

The group visited the Minami-Sanriku Town Hall, where they attended lectures by municipality officers. First, **Dr. Takuzo Abe**, a Researcher of the Division of Agriculture and Fishery of Minami-Sanriku town, talked about the natural values in the area and the initiative to inscribe the Shizugawa Bay under the Ramsar Convention for Wetlands. Second, **Mr. Akihiro Dazai**, the Director of Sustainability Centre of Minami-Sanriku town, presented the town’s reconstruction vision after the 2011 Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami.



Left: Mr. Takuzo Abe, Researcher of the Division of Agriculture and Fishery of Minami-Sanriku town. Right: Mr. Akihiro Dazai, Director of Sustainability Centre of Minami-Sanriku town, answering questions from the participants at the end of their lectures at the Town Hall.

During lunch time, participants visited Keimei Maru, a farmer and fisherman restaurant owned by Ms. Sakiko Miura. There, participants listened to her testimony detailing her experience of the tsunami and how she lost her house and restaurant. Ms. Miura shared her particular anecdote: her restaurant had a couple of fisherman floats hanging in the entrance. These were used by his husband, a fisherman in Minami-Sanriku, and the ideograms of his name were written on them. These floats were washed away by the tsunami, however, a few months later some friends told her that her floats had appeared on the news. They had been found in Alaska, were brought back to Japan by airplane and delivered to her in a special ceremony. She said that after being affected by the loss, this event gave her strength to recover her restaurant and continue with her life, in the same place. Ms. Miura is one of the examples of resilience that participants had the chance to listen to.

After lunch, participants visited the Kaminoyama Hachimangu Shrine, where they received a lecture from Ms. Mayumi Kudo, a priestess of the shrine. Ms. Kudo explained to the participants how the tsunami affected her community and how she used her role as a priestess to organize the community and involve community members in the participative processes of the reconstruction of their town. She explained how they worked with Japanese universities' professors, researchers, and students, as well as with foreign universities, like the Massachusetts Institute of Technology or Harvard University from the United States, in re-designing the coastline and the main public areas affected by the tsunami. She also explained how she regenerated the traditions of the *Kiriko*, which are paper handicrafts that are used for communicating with the Gods. Furthermore, she talked about the illustrations and books she is writing in order to communicate disaster risk preparedness to children.



Group photo at the Kaminoyama Hachimangu Shrine, where participants received a lecture from Ms. Mayumi Kudo, priestess of the shrine.

On the third day, participants went to the Marine Visitors Centre. Mr. Yasushi Niimura, a Park Ranger at Sanriku Fukko Reconstruction National Park, gave a lecture about the reconstruction project after the tsunami. Then, Mr. Takuya Hirai, Director of the Marine Learning Institute, presented the role of ecotourism in the recovery after the tsunami.

After the lunch break, Mr. Ken'ichi Muraoka, a fisherman, member of the Council of Minami-Sanriku town, and chairman of the Association for the preservation of Gyozanryu Mitobe Shishiodori (Deer dance), shared his testimony on how the life of fishermen was affected by the tsunami in 2011. He explained his experience and his work on promoting different activities to recover the livelihoods within Minami-Sanriku, such as the regeneration of oyster farming and the recovery of the local intangible heritage of the deer dance.

Finally, the delegation visited the Togura Shrine, located on a hill that the tsunami did not reach and where some people's lives were saved. On this hill, participants could see the memorial stones that serve as reminders of previous tsunamis. On one of the stones it is possible to read: "Beware that when there is a big earthquake, tsunami may follow." The role of these stones was discussed, and their utility questioned, as tsunamis keep affecting this coastal region and people have still been doubtful to look for shelter.



Left: Mr. Yasushi Niimura, Park Ranger of Sanriku Fukko Reconstruction National Park. Right: Takuya Hirai, Director of the Marine Learning Institute.



Mr. Ken'ichi Muraoka explaining about the role of intangible cultural heritage in the process of post-disaster recovery.



Discussion sessions assisted by resource persons at Iriyado Learning Center.

On the fourth day, participants left the Minami-Sanriku town and visited the **Historical Museum of Jomon Village**, in Oku-Matsushima. They received a lecture from **Mr. Hiroki Sugawara**, curator of the Museum, who took an archaeological approach in explaining the lessons gained since the prehistoric past, in the process of disasters response and recovery. Participants learned that areas that were affected by the tsunami in 2011 were not occupied in the past by the Jomon people, who used to live on the top of the hills and the islands. Settlements were not developed next to the sea, as there was local knowledge on the sea level changes, tidal movements, and possible tsunamis. It was concluded that we need to look more at history to learn about landscapes and about where to settle to prevent disasters. Moreover, Mr. Sugawara explained how the scenic landscape of Matsushima had to be protected when new settlements were being constructed in the area, after many coastal settlements were completely washed out by the tsunami. The group visited some of the new settlements and some of the walls that were constructed in certain villages along the coast, to protect them from a potential tsunami. Discussions arose on how useful those walls may be and how they affect the relationship between the people and the sea.



Mr. Hiroki Sugawara, Director of the Historical Museum of Jomon Village, Oku-Matsushima presenting the legacies of the Jomon people in regards to the process of response and recovery after tsunamis. Professor Nobuko Inaba, University of Tsukuba was in charge of interpretation.



Group photo at Matsushima, Place of Scenic Beauty. (Photo: Namiko Yamauchi)

