World BOSAI Walk Tohoku +10

Yuichi ONO
The concept of “build-back-better” is a new one worldwide, lacking concrete examples.

We report on how people are working on recovery, documenting the disaster, and passing it down to future generations and how people are achieving "build back better" and disseminating knowledge and wisdom internationally.

**Objective**

1. Reporting and disseminating “Build Back Better”
2. Creating a network of disaster-related museums
3. Promoting Tohoku's Attractiveness
23 Feb. Departed from Usuiso Beach, Iwaki, Fukushima

- Starting from the Shioyazaki Lighthouse in Iwaki, Fukushima, we visited the Usuiso beach area, the most severely damaged area in Iwaki City, on the first and second days of the walk.

- We invited a guest from Usuiso district, who is a local leader, talking about the situation at the time of the Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami and how the district has been recovering. We walked around the town to hear about the recovering status of the district.
Visited disaster-related museums in various towns. What is build back better?

- The Tomioka Archive Museum provided a comprehensive explanation of the origins of Tomioka Town, which has been developed as a power development town in the past, together with nuclear disasters.

- The Tohoku coast is not the only place where reconstruction efforts are underway. Kawauchi Village, located inland, away from the Pacific coast is also taking on the challenge of a new industry utilizing winery.
Futaba Nuclear Disaster Memorial Museum ~ Namie, Fukushima

• The museum explains the damage caused by the nuclear disaster and the recovery process.

• We saw the remains of the tsunami-affected Ukedo Elementary School. All the children successfully evacuated to Ohira hill, which is about 2 km away from the school. But…
Shinchi, Fukushima

- Dr. Kawashima is a former professor at Tohoku University and moved to Shinchi Town Fukushima after his retirement.
- He is currently engaged in fishery in Shinchi Town, which was affected by the nuclear accident.
- On this day, we asked Dr. Kawashima about the current situation and future of the fishing industry in Fukushima.
Earthquake Remains Nakahama Elementary School, Yamamoto, Miyagi

- The first spot after entering Miyagi Prefecture is Nakahama Elementary School.
- Children and teachers evacuated to the roof. The principal, who was the last one to go up the stairs with the children as the top priority, was anxious that the tsunami might be higher than the rooftop, and the responsibility and pressure of protecting the children's lives was immeasurable.
• Yuriage, which flourished as a port town before the Edo period, and Shimomashida, which was an agricultural area, were instantly disappeared by the tsunami.

• The enthusiasm of the staff explained that the group relocation project in Yuriage, which is said to have taken about 10 years, was the result of careful consensus-building among the residents.

Natori City Museum of Tsunami Disaster Recovery
Earthquake Remains: Arahama Elementary School

• Unlike other museums, the school is unique in that visitors can see the damaged area through the windows of the school building and contrast it with the exhibit.

• Arahama Elementary School, which is easily accessible from Sendai, was visited by many foreign tourists!
Disaster Science Course of Tagajo High School, Tagajo

- This unique high school course was developed after the Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami. Students are trained to obtain ability to solve problems caused by disasters in addition to their normal curriculum.

- On this day, we interviewed the students.

- Everyone said that they enjoyed the fieldwork and seemed to be working hard in their studies with high aspirations to help others.
Higashimatsushima City Earthquake Recovery Museum

- We went to a store where we could experience kamaboko (fish cake) grilling where I visited on a school excursion more than 40 years ago. The store was still there, but rebuilt after being damaged by the tsunami in 2011.
- Japan Railway (JR), Nobiru Station was damaged by the tsunami, but the remains of the station are still intact.
- The JR Ishinomaki Line operates on both the upper and lower lines, and at that time, some people's lives were saved and others lost due to evacuation guidance and other operations.
Sora-no-Eki at Rikuzen-Ono Station, Ishinomaki

• Ono-kun, a sock monkey born in temporary housing in front of Ono Station in Higashimatsushima City, finally returns to his hometown.

• In Ishinomaki, a large billboard was created and installed on April 11, 2011, exactly one month after the Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami struck, with the intention of "encouraging local people not to be defeated by the tsunami.

• Ever since then, it has become a symbol of reconstruction and a place visited by many people from inside and outside the prefecture.
Kesennuma Oshima - Anbasan - Karakuwa Peninsula

- March 11 was welcomed at Anbasan in Kesennuma.
- We went to Oshima, a remote island in Kesennuma. We interviewed with a person who was engaged in pelagic fishing for tuna.
Kesennuma Oshima - Anbasan - Karakuwa Peninsula

Most impressive finding to me is as follows:

How come devastated people from tsunami were able to stand up again despite the hardship in many ways?

One common response: They had someone to take care.
Toward the 3rd World Bosai Forum

- In addition to disseminating the results of this initiative through our website and SNS, we plan to publish the results in book form.
World Bosai Forum Background

• The "Sendai Framework" was established at the United Nations World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction held at Sendai in 2015.

• As part of this effort, an international conference, the World Bosai Forum, will be held in Sendai every other year.

• The first and second sessions were held in 2017 and 2019, respectively, with 1,000 participants from about 40 countries and regions.

• The third session was scheduled to take place in 2021, but due to covid situation, it was extended.
Schedule

- As a result of discussions with the Executive Committee, the City of Sendai, and other related parties, it has been decided that the event will be held on the following dates.

  **Friday, March 10, 2023 - Monday, March 13, 2023**

The following considerations were taken into account in the study:

- Keeping the memory of the disaster from fading away
- Considering the spread of corona infection, entry of foreign nationals, development of therapeutic agents, etc.
- Conducting “World Bosai Walk Tohoku +10" in FY2021
Outline of the 3rd World Bosai Forum (Draft)

• Name
  World Bosai Forum/IDRC  2023

• Organizer
  World Bosai Forum/IDRC  2023
  Prof. Fumihiko Imamura, Chair, Local Organizing Committee

• Points to focus on this time
  • More active participation by the private sector and younger generations.
  • To promote interaction and increase the number of participants by organizing thematic and well-organized sessions, especially on integrative and interdisciplinary approaches.
Outline of the 3rd World Bosau Forum (Draft)

Conference Structure
- First day: Pre-event celebration, the start of exhibits by companies and organizations
- Day 2 Plenary session, opening, reception
- Day 3 Plenary session, the exhibition closed
- Day 4 Plenary Session, Closing

Estimated Attendees
- 1500 people for the main conference, 4500 people for the exhibition and events in total
- 4,000 people in Japan, 500 people outside Japan

The basic policy is to hold the event on-site, but internet or online delivery will also be considered.
• Contact
World Bosai Forum
468-1 Aoba, Aramaki-Aza, Aoba-ku, Sendai City, Miyagi Prefecture
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School Disaster Memorials and disaster education after the 2011 Great East Japan Earthquake

Tohoku University, International Research institute of Disaster Science

Julia Gerster

Based on:
Gerster, Julia and Fulco, Flavia. Framing negative heritage in disaster risk education: school memorials after 3.11. Forthcoming
The Great East Japan Earthquake, Tsunami and Nuclear Disaster

The “3.11 disasters”
Magnitude 9 Earthquake (March 11, 2011)
Tsunami
Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant Disaster

About 20,000 people lost their life
More than 350,000 displaced
More than 38,000 official evacuees as of 2022

Source: Iwate Shinsai Tsunami Archive
The ruins of Takano Kaikan and the Minamisanriku Disaster Prevention Headquarters, 2019; 2021
“A conflictual site that becomes the repository of negative memory in the collective imaginary. As a site of memory, negative heritage occupies a dual role: it can be mobilized for positive didactic purposes (...) or alternatively be erased if such places cannot be culturally rehabilitated and thus resist incorporation into the national imaginary (...)” Meskell (2002: 558).
The significance of disaster heritage

7 principles for the Reconstruction Framework. (25.6.2011 Reconstruction Design Council)

Principle 1
For us, the surviving, there is no other starting point for the path to recovery than to remember and honor the many lives that have been lost. Accordingly, we shall record the disaster for eternity, including through the creation of memorial forests and monuments, and we shall have the disaster scientifically analyzed by a broad range of scholars to draw lessons that will be shared with the world and passed down to posterity.

Source: http://www.cas.go.jp/jp/fukkou/
What to preserve and what not?

• Not everything can be preserved as it could become an obstacle for reconstruction
• Preservation decisions can lead to frictions among community members (Sakaguchi 2020)
• Sites of negative heritage can be used to remind of past disasters and imminent hazards
• The preservation of disaster ruins can make a positive contribution to mental and social recovery (Sato, Morris, Kamiyama 2020)
震災伝承施設とは/What are disaster memorial facilities

These facilities convey the facts of the Great East Japan Earthquake and the lessons learned from it, including the following

1) Facilities for understanding lessons from the disaster
2) Facilities that contribute to understanding disaster prevention and preparedness
3) Facilities for understanding the horror of disasters and the fearsomeness of nature
4) Facilities with historic or academic value related to disasters
5) Other facilities that communicate the facts of the disaster and the lessons learned from it

(Densho Road 2022)
Post 3.11

- 164 plates and descriptions about the GEJE (i.e. time and run-up height of the tsunami)
- Facilities or places with the goal to preserve the memory on 3.11 and teach lessons learned (museums, exhibits, memorials, disaster ruins, recovery parks, etc.)

Aomori: 2
Iwate: 32
Miyagi: 47
Fukushima: 30

Source: Densho Road (2021)

Littlejohn 2020: Museumification of Tohoku

https://www.311densho.or.jp/introduction/index.html?no=1
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Prefectural and Municipal 3.11 Disaster Museums</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Iwate Prefecture</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iwate Tsunami Memorial Museum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Former Rikuzentakata Kesen Junior Highschool</td>
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<tr>
<td>Unosumai Tsunami Memorial Hall</td>
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<tr>
<td>3.11 Great East Japan Earthquake Tono City Logistics Support Museum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ofunato Tsunami Museum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Miyagi Prefecture</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miyagi 3.11 Disaster Memorial Museum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ruins of Koyo High School Kesennuma City Memorial Museum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.11 Disaster Recovery Memorial Museum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sendai 3.11 Memorial Community Center</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>The Ruins of Arahama Elementary School</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Millenium Hope Hill Aino Kama Park</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>The Ruins of Nakahama Elementary School</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Kadonowaki Elementary School</td>
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<tr>
<td>(Okawa Elementary School*)</td>
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<tr>
<td>(Minamisanriku Tokura Middle School*)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fukushima Prefecture</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Great East Japan Earthquake and Nuclear Disaster Memorial Museum</td>
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<tr>
<td>Commutan Fukushima</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traditional Requiem Memorial Hall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Earthquake remains Ukedo Elementary School</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tomioka Archive Museum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iwaki 3.11 Memorial and Revitalization Museum</td>
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Prefectural and municipal disaster museums (Gerster and Maly forthcoming)

- **Yellow: School Disaster Memorials**
- (*) Does not (yet) contain an exhibition
Why schools?

- Stable buildings, possible to preserve (safety aspects)
- Already belong to the municipality
- “Fair preservation”
Why schools?

- Center of the community
- Connected to community festivals and events
- Many people have memories connected to the place
- Center of disaster education
- Evacuation shelters
- Post-disaster: remain center of the affected communities
- New role as places for commemoration
Examples of school disaster memorials in Miyagi Prefecture
Arahama Elementary (Sendai City)

- 700 meters from the coast
- 2200 people used to live in Arahama district
- 320 people were saved on the school grounds

- Opened as a memorial in April 2017 (Operated by Sendai City)
- Permanent and temporary exhibitions including videos and emergency goods

PHOTOS:
city.sendai.jp/kankyo/shisetsu/ruin_arahama_elementaryschool.html
Arahama, Sendai City (March 2011)

Source: Michinoku Shinrokuden Archive

Source: Sendai City
Arahama Elementary: “Show the real threat of tsunami to future generations”

- Combination of what life used to be before the GEJE and disaster risk education.
- Theme: 27 hours until the rescue of all evacuees
- Pictures and videos show what the place looked like in the immediate aftermath of the tsunami
- Focus on good evacuation practices
Nakahama Elementary (Yamamoto Town)

• Built in 1989
• Disaster prevention measures: Ground was raised by 2 meters, evacuation staircase outside of the school
• 400 meters from the coast
• 90 people were saved on the rooftop

Nakahama 2019. Picture courtesy of Julia Gerster
Approach: Let people think about disaster preparedness

• Debris and the aftermath of the disaster preserved as much as possible
• Videos and texts provide information about the area and the day of the disaster
• Answers on correct behavior are not provided right away
• Visitors are confronted with questions
• Risk education through emotions: By visiting the ruins, the visitors should imagine what the evacuees went through, what could happen to themselves, and how they can prepare themselves.

Nakahama 2020. Pictures courtesy of Julia Gerster
Okawa
Elementary
(Ishinomaki City)

- 4 kms away from the coast but close to the Kitakami River
- Tsunami came up the river and flooded the school
- 74 children and 10 staff died
- Although the school is next to a hill, the group evacuated too late and in the direction of the incoming tsunami. The disaster manual did not list a designated evacuation place in case of a tsunami.
- 2016 decision to preserve the school building (Ishinomaki City) but community split

Okawa 2022. Pictures courtesy of Julia Gerster
Learning from tragedies

• Okawa Elementary is one of the very few preserved disaster ruins where people died (or death is closely attached to the site)
• Ishinomaki City: Preservation of 2 school buildings (Kadonowaki)
• Questions of responsibility
• The site heavily depends on guides to understand the history attached to it (Okawa Densho no Kai, bereaved parents)
• “Learning from mistakes”
Disaster heritage, memorials, and resilience

• More than 11 years after the disaster: increasing difficulties to keep memories alive
• School ruins: remain sites of learning and community centers
• Different educational approaches
• Emotional Disaster Education
• Importance of preserving diverse experiences

• Covid-19: How to preserve the “invisible”; how to convey experiences during the pandemic?

Okawa 2019. Picture courtesy of Julia Gerster
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