

The Japan Times

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Many disaster-related meetings, exhibitions to be held

While dozens of conferences will be held at the Third UN World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction, held by the UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction at the Sendai International Center, in the center of Sendai, many other side events will be held in other facilities in Sendai, other cities in Miyagi Prefecture, and other prefectures in the Tohoku region.

The side events, dubbed Public Forums, are more than 350 conferences, exhibitions and other events, organized by national and municipal governments, nongovernment organizations, nonprofit organizations, universities and other groups from Japan and the world.

Public Forums are divided into four categories — Comprehensive Forums on the Great East Japan Earthquake, Symposium/Seminar, Theme Pavilions and Exhibitions.

In the first category, various government organizations as well as the Sendai Committee for the UN World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction will hold 10 symposiums on disaster risk reduction at Tohoku University's Kawauchi Hagi Hall in Sendai.

The Cabinet Office, the Fire and Disaster Management Agency, the Sendai city government, Japan International Cooperation Agency and other organizations will hold various symposiums, including "Spreading Public Awareness of Disaster Risk Reduction via Education for Sustainable Development" organized jointly by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, UNESCO and the Miyagi University of Education.

In the Symposium/Seminar category, symposiums will be held by more than 350 Japanese and foreign organizations at 54 venues in 11 facilities in Sendai, as well as two other cities in Miyagi Prefecture, two cities in both Iwate and Fukushima prefectures and one in Aomori Prefecture.

Symposium organizers include Disaster Recovery Institute Japan, Hosei University, the Japan Committee for UNICEF, Save the Children Japan and the World Bank Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery.

In the Theme Pavilion category, symposiums, workshops and exhibitions will see participation of local residents. Such events with the theme of "disaster risk reduction with residents' participation" will be held mainly at the Sendai City Support Center and those themed "women and disaster risk reduction" will be held at the Sendai Gender Equal Opportunity Promotion Center.

In the Exhibition category, various exhibitions and presentations, showing recovery progress from the Great East Japan Earthquake and other topics related to disaster risk reduction, will be held at 17 venues in Sendai, including Sendai Mediatheque.

Plan Japan seminars

International NPO Plan Japan, one of the oldest and largest children's development organizations, will host two public forums at the UN World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction in Sendai.

Plan International Head of Disaster Response Unni Krishnan will make a keynote speech, followed by a discussion by Plan Japan Manager of Communications Mie Kashiwade and other experts, in a symposium, titled "Introduction to Psychosocial Support in Emergency — With a Case Study from Tohoku Disaster," at Tokyo Electron Hall in Sendai, Miyagi Prefecture, from 1:30 p.m. to 5 p.m. on Sunday.

Krishnan and other speakers will discuss importance of psychosocial support for the recovery of individuals and communities after disasters.

Krishnan will also participate in a symposium, titled "Adolescent Girls and Disaster — Girls Disaster Risk Reduction Conference," at L Park Sendai from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. on Tuesday.

Moderated by Asako Osaki, a board member of Plan Japan, the symposium will touch on the increasing recognition that adolescent girls need special attention in disaster risk reduction.

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