

Current Status of Reconstruction from the Follow-up Survey of Disaster-Response Planners and Workers, and Implications for Indicators of Recovery and Recovery Policies

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1. Survey on Experiences of Disaster Response Planners and Workers in the Great East Japan Earthquake

The authors of this research conducted a survey on the experiences of disaster-response planners and workers in the Great East Japan Earthquake (Survey period: June 2011 to June 2012) and interviewed 50 people (7 male and 43 female) from 40 groups who participated in disaster response activities from the perspective of gender, minorities, and so on. The majority of the survey participants had been affected by the earthquake but were still engaged in disaster response activities. They faced the Great East Japan Earthquake when there were almost no specific disaster response measures, particularly those that took gender equality and diversity into consideration. The survey reveals how participants, who likely interacted most closely with the women affected by the earthquake, participated in disaster response activities and what they considered challenges. The survey aimed to contribute to the improvement of disaster response activities and policies.¹

Here, we report the findings from the follow-up survey (Survey period: September 2019–present). The current survey explores how the participants of the first “survey on the experiences of disaster response planners and workers in the Great East Japan Earthquake” have subsequently expanded their activities and how they perceive the status of reconstruction. The purpose is to understand the current status and changes in women and people in various positions in the affected areas from a medium- to long-term perspective and to improve disaster response activities and policies during the recovery period.

This survey is ongoing at the time of this report. Here, we present a preliminary discussion only of the portions where the interviews have been completed and present the reconstruction index of our Grants-in-Aid for Scientific Research team and the implications for the leader survey that has been planned for after FY2020. In this paper, the “survey on the experiences of disaster response planners and workers in the Great East Japan Earthquake” is referred to as the “2011 Survey,” and the “follow-up survey” is referred to as the “2019 Survey.”

Survey Overview

- 1) Survey name: The follow-up survey on “the experiences of disaster response planners and workers in the Great East Japan Earthquake”
- 2) Survey period: From September 2019 to around August 2020 (currently underway)
- 3) Survey researchers: Keiko Ikeda (Shizuoka University) and Azumi Tsuge (Meiji Gakuin University)
- 4) Survey participants: From 40 groups, a total of 50 people who participated in the “survey on the experiences of disaster response planners and workers in the Great East Japan Earthquake” and who consented to participate in the follow-up survey.
- 5) Survey method: In-person semi-structured interview or group interview (1–2 hours).
- 6) Main survey items: (1) Continuation of and change in disaster response activities; (2) Opinions on the situation of women (and the elderly, children, persons with disabilities, foreign nationals, etc.) 8 to 9 years after the Great East

Japan Earthquake; (3) Reevaluation of disaster response activities and disaster responses immediately after the Great East Japan Earthquake occurred; (4) Involvement in and opinions on “reconstruction”; (5) Changes in people involved in disaster prevention, disaster response, and reconstruction who have gender and diversity perspectives; (6) Others.

- 7) Data used in this report: Among the data from 22 groups² (29 people: all females) whose interview was completed by the end of February 2020, the survey results for question items (1) and (2) in (6) will be used.

2. Follow-up Survey on “Disaster Response Planner and Workers”: Result summary

2.1. Attributes and Positions of Survey Participants (data used in this report)

Table 1 shows the positions and ages of the survey participants when they participated in disaster response activities and the details of their activities at the time of the 2011 survey and the 2019 survey. Most survey participants whose data is included here were individuals and groups affected by the Great East Japan Earthquake and were involved in gender equality and minority support in the affected areas as part of their work and activities even before the earthquake, when they were working for citizen’s voluntary activity groups or government-affiliated organizations (Gender Equality Centers, International Exchange Associations, etc.). There was only one individual/organization (No. 11) who came from outside the affected areas and started participating in activities after the earthquake occurred. Therefore, most of the survey participants have an in-depth understanding of the situation and challenges of women and minorities during the reconstruction, based on their pre-earthquake situations. These challenges tend to be omitted in conventional gender-blind reconstruction surveys.

Since this is a follow-up survey, the age group of participants is relatively high, as most of them are over their 60s. The affiliations and positions held by the survey participants from the six groups have changed since we conducted the 2011 survey. However, their fields of expertise (gender equality, child support, social welfare, etc.) were unchanged. Only one group (No.12) had disbanded and discontinued taking part in activities related to reconstruction.

2.2. Details of Activities

The contents of disaster response activities at the time of the 2011 Survey varied widely, but many included the procurement and distribution of women’s supplies, improvement of living conditions at the evacuation centers (operation of women’s rooms, etc.), providing a place or function for women to meet and interact with one another (i.e., salons, massages, tea meetings, etc.), and understanding the needs of women who were affected by the earthquake. As part of the disaster response at that time, these activities were designed to understand and respond to the needs that tend to be forgotten in general efforts to support affected people.

During the 2019 Survey, it was apparent that the range of challenges targeted by the activities had expanded to other areas, such as domestic violence/gender-based violence/divorce, welfare of the elderly, children and child rearing, opportunities for people to socialize, employment, interactions among evacuees from the nuclear power plant accident, communication of localized information, and participation in public reconstruction discussions. Special support for the elderly and young people (from their teens to their 20s) has also been provided. In

contrast to the 2011 Survey, which focused on responding to issues unique to disasters, such as living in the evacuation center or temporary housing and lack of supplies, the 2019 Survey revealed there were many activities designed to tackle basic social issues that had also probably existed before the disaster.

The nature and form of the survey participants’ activities have several common characteristics (Table 1). First, “counseling” (face-to-face, telephone, SNS, etc.) continues to be widely provided (No.1, 8, 10, 13, 15, 19). Counseling opportunities do not specify the age of the person seeking counseling or the content of counseling, but has rather focused on specialized areas or particular targets, such as gender-based and domestic violence, career counseling for women, counseling for young women (abuse, gender-based violence, social withdrawal, addiction, etc.). This shows the diversification of challenges in the recovery phase. Support, such as through salons, group activities, handicraft groups, is also provided widely (No.1, 3, 6, 9, 13, 14, 16). The actual function of salons is diverse. They offer a wide range of activities, including tea meetings, handicraft groups, and talking salons. They have a common purpose as they provide for interactions between people affected by the disaster who tend to be withdrawn, particularly to receive mental health support (although it is not explicitly described as “mental health” to them). The main participants of each organization are of different age groups, such as elderly men and women or women raising children. This helps the salons to serve as a place for peer support to discuss their lives and family issues. In terms of mental health, No. 17, who consciously gave mental health support to people working in the field of education indicated that a wide range of people are attempting to recover their mental health.

Table 1 Summary of Survey Participants and Their Activities (2011-12, years prior to 2019)

No	Affiliation and position	Age	Site of activity	Activity Details (2011-2012)	Activity Details (years before 2019)
*1	Citizens’ voluntary activity group (Gender)	40–70	Fukushima Wide affected areas	Counseling for women; management of women’s rooms in evacuation centers; telephone counseling; salons, etc.	Telephone counseling; salon for mothers; survivor advocacy (domestic violence /gender-based violence)
2	Administration affiliated facility (Gender)	40	Fukushima Wide affected area	In charge of establishing and operating women’s rooms in an evacuation center; Logistical support for women’s organizations that provide support to evacuees and dissemination of information about support experience	Sharing experiences of disaster and reconstruction (for students); women’s capacity development for reconstruction
3	Administration-affiliated facility (Welfare)	50	Fukushima Evacuation from nuclear power plants	Interpersonal care for people displaced by the earthquake/evacuees from nuclear power plants (mainly elderly people); salon management; welfare activities in temporary housing (for people with disabilities/the elderly)	Supervising social workers; interactions with long-distance evacuees; support for returnees (nursing care and prevention classes/salons); Reconstruction FM radio
4	Administration-affiliated facility (International)	70	Fukushima Evacuation from nuclear power plants	Supplying goods; counseling; confirmation of the safety and whereabouts of foreign nationals/salons/information collection and dissemination	Relay of coverage overseas; communicating damage from the nuclear power plant; relay of women’s support organizations outside the affected areas
5	Individual (Medical profession)	70	Fukushima Evacuation from nuclear power plants	Counseling; interpersonal care; counseling for young nurses	Participation in the reconstruction of practical nursing schools
6	Citizen’s voluntary activity group	70	Miyagi/Fukushima Wide	Understanding women’s needs; volunteering for laundry; distribution of women’s underwear; women’s	Record and communicate the status of women (surveys/passing down stories /symposia); salons; training community

	(Gender)		affected area	counseling	disaster prevention leaders (men and women); reconstruction-related councils and training instructors
7	Administrative Officer (Firefighting)	40	Miyagi Wide affected area	Working as a correspondent at the field command headquarters	Support for local disaster risk reduction organizations; Training for female disaster risk reduction leaders
8	Citizen's voluntary activity group (Gender)	60	Miyagi Wide affected area	Distribution of women's goods; understanding women's needs (massages/tea meetings/handicraft groups); telephone counseling and providing information on domestic violence/gender-based violence prevention and response	Domestic violence/gender-based violence/divorce counseling/counselor training/survivor advocacy; youth support (abuse/school non-attendance/addiction/gender-based violence); support for young people who have left an orphanage
9	Citizen's voluntary activity group (Gender)	60	Miyagi Tsunami	Goods supply support; understanding women's needs (massages/tea meetings/handicraft groups); support for female business managers; information dissemination by the affected people; selling handicraft products	Salons (mental care, elderly people); domestic violence courses for high school students
10	Citizen's voluntary activity group (Child support)	60	Miyagi Wide affected area	Children's playgrounds; goods supply support; events for children; child-rearing counseling and supporter counseling/training; child support mediation	Goods supply support and counseling for parents and children; training/networking for children's supporters; telephone counseling for children; “Children and Child-rearing Prefectural Citizens Ordinance” in the affected areas.
*11	Citizen's voluntary activity group (Gender)	40	Miyagi Wide affected area	Coordination of volunteers and local women's groups; understanding women's needs in evacuation centers and temporary housing; handicraft (gathering + income); salons	Development of theme-based communities and small businesses (women's empowerment); training and exchange for women's leadership; career counseling
*12	Citizen's voluntary activity group (Gender)	60-70	Miyagi Earthquake	Investigation of women's needs at evacuation centers; procurement/distribution of women's items; massage; salons	No activities locally performed due to the dissolution of the group; operation support for the Kumamoto Earthquake evacuation centers
13	Individual (Town development)	50	Miyagi Tsunami	Understanding women's needs in evacuation centers and temporary housing; salons, etc.	Support for handicraft groups; career counseling at community cafes
14	Citizen's voluntary activity group (Support for parents and children)	60	Iwate and other areas. Wide affected area	Accepting picture book donations, organizing them, and donating the books to the affected areas; mobile library vehicle	Picture book salon, storytelling salon (schoolchildren)
15	Administration affiliated organization (Gender)	60	Iwate Wide affected area	Establishment of evacuation centers; counseling for the affected people; comments on reconstruction plans	Recording and disseminating women's experiences; giving opinions on comprehensive plans and reconstruction plans; counseling women
16	Local assembly member	60	Iwate Tsunami	Arranging and distributing goods; hosting salons	Support for group activities; small snack and candy stores (operated by elderly people); animal therapy for children
17	Administration (Education, Social Education)	60	Iwate Wide affected area	Operation tasks until a self-management organization is established in the evacuation center; mental care for children and their legal guardians	School reconstruction plan “mental support”, reconstruction education, mental care of teachers/legal guardians
18	Administration affiliated organization (Gender)	70	Iwate Earthquake	Procurement and delivery of women's goods/ensuring safety; entrepreneurship support	From shopping service to gender equality work; the Special Committee for the Promotion of Women's Participation in the Reconstruction Committees
19	Citizen's voluntary activity group (Gender)	70	Iwate Wide affected area	Procurement and delivery of women's goods/ensuring safety; entrepreneurship support	Counseling/support for young women (SNS in the same generation), from shopping service (ensuring safety) to continuous support
20	Production cooperative (Women's Division)	60	Iwate Tsunami	Communal cooking at evacuation centers; leader in sorting and distribution of aid supplies	Special Committee on the Promotion of Women's Participation in the Reconstruction Commission; Reconstruction Commission (Fisheries)

21	Citizen’s voluntary activity group (Gender)	70	Iwate Tsunami	Ensuring safety; goods supply; early restart of local stores	Dissemination of disaster and reconstruction status; childcare instructors; local councils
22	Citizen’s voluntary activity group (Gender)	60	Iwate Tsunami	Ensuring safety; goods supply; listening to victims; mediation related to support for the affected areas	Disseminating the status of disaster and reconstruction; holding workshops on issues such as disaster prevention and health

Source: 2019 survey on disaster response planners and workers. “*” in the “No” column means a group interview. All interviewees are women.

Issues related to mental recovery are increasingly brought to the salon rather than the counseling service (No. 9). The number of activities similar to “counseling” and “salon” suggests that many people struggle with issues such as mental recovery, livelihood, and safety, or need long-term support to progress during the reconstruction period.

Survey participants also mention activities involving collection, recording, and dissemination of information related to women, in addition to providing women a place to learn (No.6, 15, 21, 22). Since the earthquake, so-called “citizen’s research”³ has also been conducted, in which women in the affected areas collect and disseminate information about the disaster and the status of reconstruction with a focus on women. Some of them conducted interviews and questionnaire surveys periodically with the same participants and discussed “reconstruction” based on the challenges revealed by the survey results, which is closely related to the topic of this grants-in-aid for scientific research⁴ (No. 6 and 15). Activities were also designed to acquire and disseminate information about reconstruction activities through annual workshops, with the constantly evolving challenges in the affected areas as a learning topic (No. 21, 22). These research reports and efforts to disseminate information may not lead to policy recommendations, but they are intended to keep records and pass on the experiences and to prepare for future disasters from a nongovernmental perspective. On the other hand, there were also initiatives to identify female leaders who can be involved in disaster risk reduction and reconstruction (No. 2, 6, 7, 11) or to participate in prefectural or municipal reconstruction-related councils and foster women who can participate in decision-making in reconstruction and future disaster responses (No. 6, 10, 11, 20, 21).

2.3. Challenges Identified during the Reconstruction Period

Table 2 shows the challenges concerning the situation of women (and the elderly, children, disabled people, foreign nationals, etc.) identified 8–9 years after the Great East Japan Earthquake. Based on this information, we listed the main challenges that may need to be ascertained objectively by using indicators. These are listed below in no particular order. “No.” indicates the survey participants reference number listed in Tables 1 and 2.

- (1) Population outflows; (2) Younger population outflows (particularly women) (No.1, 2, 8, 9, 16, 18)
- (3) Family separation (No.1, 3, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 19)
- (4) Consolidation and closure of elementary schools and a decline in the number of children (No.3, 4, 5, 10)
- (5) Poverty, wage disparities, workplaces, and employment (No.3, 8, 10, 16, 19)
- (6) Social infrastructure (shopping, transportation, etc.), child-care facilities (No.2, 8, 9, 11, 14, 16, 19)
- (7) Return, voluntary evacuation, housing, and relocation-related matters (No.1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 12)
- (8) Heap-up, seawall construction, etc. (No.13, 16, 21, 22)
- (9) Domestic violence/gender-based violence/divorce, safety (No.1, 8, 9, 10, 15, 18, 19)

(10) Mental and physical health (No.1, 6, 9, 17, 21, 22)

(11) Isolation and loneliness of the elderly (No.1, 6, 9, 12, 13)

(12) Issues involving young men and women (abuse, social withdrawal, school non-attendance, place of one's own, sexual abuse/violence, addiction, etc.) (No.8, 10, 18, 19)

(13) Condition of children (No.8, 10, 18, 19)

Table 2 Participant opinions on the Situation of Women
(and the Elderly, Children, People with Disabilities, Foreign Nationals, etc.) (Around 2019)

No	Situation	Changes in Gender Equality
*1	Isolation and loneliness of elderly women; family separation; rent and livelihoods of voluntary evacuees; indecision about returning; invisibility of the relationship between main complaints and disasters	Decrease in elected female assembly members; decrease in maternal and child living support facilities (public facilities); successive dissolution of gender-related organizations
2	Outflows of young women; shortages of university applicants; (after returning) lack of places to discuss child-rearing because schools or hospitals are located far away.	Dissolutions of gender equality groups; increase in agricultural sales promotion/women-related agricultural groups
3	Decrease in the number of schools and children; sex-ratio in their 30s to 40s is 3 men to 1 woman; change in household composition; safety of women; lack of workers	Organizations came from outside after evacuees returned home. However, “they did not have a concept of gender equality.”
4	Increase in the number of foreign workers and issues related to the workplace; decrease in the number of elementary schools and children; location and layout of post-disaster public housing (positively evaluated); indecision about returning	The city council no longer made efforts to increase the percentage of women; the number of female city council members declined from three before the earthquake to one.
5	Difficulty recruiting nursing students (young population outflows); no contact with people moving in; decrease in the number of elementary and junior high schools and students; the younger generation freed from gender norms and role of housewife because of family separation	Reduction of power from the Gender Equality Council to the Plan Promotion Committee; decrease in the number of publications and the number of pages used for the gender equality public relations magazines
6	Emergence of community associations that train women as local disaster managers; disposal of homes where residents cannot return; poor physical condition of family members; family separation; increase in the number of elderly people living alone; polarization of women-empowered and not	Gender equality has been “promoted at the community level” with disaster risk reduction as entry point.
7	More women wish to get involved in disaster risk reduction	Working styles in case of disasters (female firefighters)
8	Population declines in the coastal regions; issues of young men and women (parents who have not recovered, economic difficulties); domestic violence; changes in family structure	Continued lack of attention toward gender issues from the administration; emergence of issues that cannot be handled by the existing gender equality measures (issues for young men and women)
9	Inconvenience of shopping and public transportation infrastructure; The disaster was a window of opportunity for women. People who could take advantage of the opportunity and those who did not; elderly women with no place to go	Gender equality is “non-existent”.
10	Miyagi Prefecture ranks the first in the incidence of school non-attendance (Parents' poverty and psychological problems); instability in the lives of second-generation children after the disaster; attachment disorder (disaster ⇌ abuse); poverty and scholarships; decline in the number of schools	No reference
*11	Waiting for the “willingness to do something” (women proposed spending a year creating a town suitable for raising children); strengthening awareness of gender roles and family responsibilities among younger generations.	No reference
*12	People moving in from neighboring local municipalities affected by the tsunami (no interactions); “Here is not an affected area”	There has been no major change; there was no opportunity to discuss gender issue in the council on the comprehensive development plan.

13	Family relationships (e.g., places for elderly people, marital issues, etc.); How to discuss the relocation to high ground; Positive impacts left by external organizations that provided support	No reference
14	More women go to work once their homes are settled, but there is a shortage of schools and childcare facilities; mental care for children takes time.	No reference
15	Visualization of diverse people (home evacuation, people with disabilities, LGBT, etc.) However, will there be vertical and horizontal collaboration?; Gender equality does not advance automatically just by taking diversity into consideration.	First female local assembly member (zero before the earthquake); increase in the number of young women engaging in disaster prevention activities; improvement of the emergency employment as there were no spots created for women (spots available specifically for people with disabilities)
16	It took too long to heap up for affected people to decide to come back; no places to work; population outflows; no place for children to play; families no longer put constraints on girls' career paths and jobs.	No reference
17	The number of children declined to one-third of the number at the time of the earthquake; mental problems of children and legal guardians continue to exist; teachers who cannot respond to the needs adequately; unstable life mainly in single-mother households.	No reference
18	Outflows of women of childbearing age; young women's difficulty in continuing school; difficulty in giving feedback women's opinions to the reconstruction deliberation process (“alibi making”); the idea of diversity spread.	It is essential to collect disaggregated reconstruction statistics by sex, but this has not been prepared or used.
19	Issues concerning girls and women in their teens and 20s (changes in families and the effects of poverty) are neglected in disaster support; safety of young women; wage disparity between men and women;	A female local assembly member was newly elected.
20	Increase in the number of women becoming “formal members” amid the declining trend in the number of women in the Fisheries Cooperatives Women's Division (changes in family and livelihood structure); ineffective debates on reconstruction by women and men separately	Neither neighborhood association nor Fisheries Cooperatives nor local government made progress with gender equality.
21	Many people require significant time to deal with mental health; debates over seawalls; more understanding of diversity, including LGBT and people with disabilities	No reference
22	Differences in understanding when communicating the situations in the affected areas; involvement of women's groups in disaster prevention activities; mental care by welfare commissioner (support for the supporters)	The percentage of women in the council has increased dramatically, and young women begun to speak up.

Prepared based on the follow-up survey (from September 2019 to ongoing) on “disaster response planners and workers”

Due to the limited width of the columns, the survey participants' narratives are summarized in the quotes below only for certain issues. The contents in the parentheses found in the quotes are the areas supplemented by the authors.

In some regions, “the biggest challenge for women is that an increasing number of women aged 25 to 45 years, who are also in their childbearing stage, moved to urban areas”, and that is the “major change that has occurred since the earthquake” (No. 18). **(2) The outflow of young people (especially women)** is considered serious, including the long-term impact of the phenomenon.

The background of the increasing population loss involving young people, regardless of gender, are recognized as the results of a variety of related circumstances as explained by the following statements: “For many affected people, the workplace did not get reconstructed immediately... (If a house or store that needs to be rebuilt) is located in the heap-up area, which would make them wait for many years” (No.16), “There is a big wage gap between (coastal) and urban areas.” (No.18), “In areas where people are returning, women have no place to go to talk about childrearing because there are no schools or hospitals.” (No.2), “The young people who

evacuated to urban cities do not come back... because they already found a job there... There are places where they could leave their children, and... their children’s education has begun in urban cities.” (No. 4), and so on. Among thirteen major issues mentioned by the participants as listed above, following issues are related to population outflow of young generation, i.e., **(4) the consolidation of elementary schools and the decrease in the number of children, (5) poverty, wage disparities, workplaces, and employment, (6) living infrastructure (shopping, transportation, etc.) and child-care facilities, and (8) the construction of heap-up areas and seawalls.**

Some explain that **(3) the separation of families** in the process of evacuation prompted young women to reconsider their positions and relationships within the family. “The women in the village area live with their father-in-law and mother-in-law, who are usually not as flexible, compared to those in the city, right? So, there were some situations where elderly people and young married couples with their children evaluated separately. Then, the wives said, ‘Wow, this is our world without them’ and started feeling very comfortable with the environment. Then, when they were about to go home, they said, ‘Well, we have children, so please go home first, grandpa and grandma’, and there are many of those people in the village who never came back... I heard rumors that the wives from this place and that place never came back” (No.5). Similar opinions have been expressed by the survey participants in Fukushima, Iwate, and Miyagi Prefectures. Furthermore, it was also mentioned that gender norms changed as families’ restrictions on the behavior of young women were weakened. “... (in coastal areas) girls had been told that they should not go over the mountains or that people living in the coastal area should marry someone from the coastal area. These customs had been rooted deeply, but they collapsed. Perhaps that is the biggest impact of the earthquake. Of course, I think there are a number of other factors, such as the loss of jobs and places to live in the coastal area.” (No. 18)

There were also references to issues concerning specific age groups, such as **(11) the isolation and loneliness of the elderly, (12) problems of young men and women, and (13) condition of children.** For elderly people, various concerns were expressed, such as “I can’t go because I am sick and physically handicapped” (when only young couples evacuate far away, because he is an old man); “I can’t go because I have my doctor here and worry about neighborhood situations, but I feel lonely”; “My sons (who evacuated to their wives’ parents’ home) said, ‘Let’s live together. I’ll have your room ready too.’”; “(But...) these women feel, ‘if I, who is their wives’ mother-in-law, move there, that would mean a loss of face for my sons. I do not want to cause any inconvenience to them.’ That is a big part of counseling for the elderly (women). They helped their family and local people so much, and that was the way it was. Now, their position is reversed, but they feel that they should not cause any inconvenience.” (No.1). There are significant differences in the implications of **(3) family separation** for the elderly and younger generations.

One disaster response planner and worker (No.19) recalls, “Young girls were just left alone (meaning they were neglected without getting any support). Although we could pay attention to elderly people, children, and people with disabilities immediately, we could not do so for young girls and boys at all.” The worker pointed out the safety issues involving female junior- and high-school students in the affected areas and the economic problems of university students and said, “When I spoke at a high school in the affected area, I thought, ‘This is dangerous’...Now, the situation of young girls is extremely tough, and even if they have a family, they have no place in their family, and that is why they go out but they are often seduced or harassed when they are outside.”

There is another survey participant (No. 8) who pointed out that young people, who were survivors of abuse or gender-based violence, became socially withdrawn, or developed addiction, and so on, have been neglected in the reconstruction process and there have been few support activities in this area.

Survey participants who have long been involved in children’s support, pointed out the challenges that occur when children born after 2011 enter preschool and elementary school: “Isn’t attachment disorder a result of children growing up in such a difficult situation where parents cannot pay enough attention to them after the earthquake?” (No. 10). The survey participants also mentioned that “young people who were in high school at that time of the earthquake have already become parents and started raising their children, which means there is a growing number of people in the second generation after the earthquake. The parents’ situations are unstable, and the children who have been raised by them also feel anxious.” If the challenges facing young men and women continue to be neglected, the problems involving the second generation will also become more apparent. We learned that the content of child telephone counseling has been changing constantly since the earthquake.

Regarding **(9) domestic violence/gender-based violence/divorce and safety**, the 2019 survey addressed the issue of the younger generation’s involvement in gender-based violence and the sex industry, which was not addressed much in the 2011 survey (this does not mean it did not exist). The survey participants who are actively involved in gender-based and domestic violence issues mentioned that this had been addressed since the earthquake; however, introducing women’s counseling in the reconstruction project has helped reveal the problem, which led to an increase in the number of people receiving counseling (No. 8).

The issues described above are believed to be related to one another, and thus, neglecting one issue causes another issue to worsen.

2.4. Progress of Gender Equality and Involvement of Women in Reconstruction

Participants mentioned that there were differences between men and women in expectations for reconstruction and their prioritization of needs: “What women raising children wanted was a park, but (we) couldn’t make a park, so we planned a ‘Child-rearing Festival’”; “Mothers (who toured the areas affected by the Chuetsu Earthquake) saw the reality that the town would not continue if there were no people even if the town fully recovered. Everyone said that they had to make it more comfortable for the generations raising children and for the younger generations to live here” (No.11). Some of the survey participants discovered the needs of women and included them to their activities.

However, it is difficult for women to express their opinions on reconstruction in public. “There were few women attending (the discussion of whether or not to relocate), and so it was decided by men... Using an aggressive leadership style, they said, ‘Guys, this is how it is going to be, period!’” (No. 13). Even when women tried to express their opinions on reconstruction, survey participant No. 18 described the actual situation by saying, “the Great East Japan Earthquake Reconstruction Commission in the prefecture set up the women participation promotion committee, but they only added one sentence that mentioned including the perspectives of vulnerable people and women in the plan. In reality, this is how it is. But I didn’t give up and continue to express my opinions very aggressively. Then, things started to change a little bit. I think we are at a point where men started to feel compelled to incorporate women’s perspectives.”

In the 2019 Survey, some participants discussed whether gender equality has progressed in the reconstruction

process (Table 2). Notably, in Fukushima Prefecture, all survey participants believed that gender equality has regressed. The reasons for this include the decrease in the number of elected female members in local assemblies (No.1 and 4), the dissolution of maternal and childcare facilities and gender-related organizations (No.1 and 2), the decrease in the percentage of women’s committees in the administrative councils, and the reduction in the authority of councils for gender equality (No.4 and 5). However, in the coastal areas of Iwate and Miyagi, women were elected for the first time to become members of local assemblies (No. 15, 19). It became more common for younger people and women to speak out in administrative councils (No. 15, 22), and the necessity of women’s participation in voluntary disaster risk reduction organizations based on local organizations has finally been understood (No. 6, 7, 19). In contrast, many survey participants still mentioned that no significant changes have been made.

3. Implications of Reconstruction Indicators, Indicators Related to the Sense of Recovery, and Question Items

3.1. Implications of Reconstruction Indicators and Indicators Related to the Sense of Recovery

The Gender Team (Asano and Ikeda) in the “Reconstruction Indicators” group for this Grant-in-Aid for Scientific Research selected the “Reconstruction Indicators from Gender Perspectives” (See the report by Sachiko Asano). The report in Section 2 discussed above explains the grounds for the selection of the individual indicators. We will list the items that should be considered essential when conducting quantitative surveys using the proposed reconstruction indicators in the future.

Analysis of Pre-Disaster Conditions

Most survey participants realized that they had difficulty in determining whether the challenges during the reconstruction period shown in Section 2 should be considered “disaster reconstruction issues” or “societal issues in normal times.” This is a valid point as compared to the concept of vulnerability, which is the basic term in disaster sociology. Further, it would be easy to return to the original state if the foundation is firmly reestablished despite the damage caused by a disaster. If not, the situation becomes worse, and a series of underlying challenges continue to appear. Therefore, the situations before and after the disaster must be thoroughly considered and compared.

Collection of Disaggregated Data by Age and Gender

As the reconstruction process progresses, issues related to position, gender, and age are gaining attention. Statistics should be collected and analyzed by age and gender to the greatest extent possible to highlight specific challenges and to better understand reconstruction in accordance with actual human conditions. In many cases, however, neither central government agencies nor local governments have published statistics by gender or age even when the overall statistics are published. Instead of giving up the effort here, we should seek the disclosure of itemized data.

Response to Issues which Policies are not Systematized and Statistical Data that are Difficult to Access

The typical issues that have become visible in the process of reconstruction are those involving young men and women. Originally, the government and the private sector presented few measures to support the younger generations or took part in few activities to support them. Therefore, policies were not systematized in the

reconstruction process, and as a result challenges arose in this area. If this situation continues further, it will lead to a worsening of the challenges, which means that the generation who were children at the time of the earthquake would raise their children without recovery. Accordingly, where policies have not been systematized, there are very few statistics related to the issues that have not been recognized as such. With regard to domestic violence and gender-based violence, the number of cases identified by the police and counseling agencies is just “the tip of the iceberg,” and it would not be meaningful to discuss the increase or decrease in these cases based on the figures.

Supplementary statistics on these issues should be collected based on information from support organizations. These challenges will only recur each time a disaster occurs if the actual situation is not understood as a result of policies not being systematized or being difficult to access.

3.2. Implications of Planned ‘Leader Survey’

Recovery for whom? ‘Leaders’ as defined in ‘the leader survey’ probably refers to the representatives of local organizations such as neighborhood and community associations, as well as citizen’s voluntary activity groups in the community development field. The majority of representatives of local organizations consist of men who have already retired or men of an even older generation. The majority of the leaders of citizen’s voluntary activity groups also consists of men. If they are to be asked about the challenges of reconstruction and what it actually means, they would be unlikely to list the challenges discussed in Section 2 of this report as important issues.

We regard the survey participants in this report as “an intermediate entity,” in the sense that they can interact with people in various situations and are aware of policy trends to some extent. Many people who are in a position to deal with diverse needs are involved in community-based activity groups (e.g., people with disabilities, the elderly, foreign nationals, sexual minorities) and support groups. For women’s needs, the participants in this report are the intermediate. Therefore, leader surveys should include people who work closely with these diverse groups.

4. The Optimal Regional Solution for Reconstruction

We would like to raise several questions related to what the optimal solution would be and for whom. Further, who will judge this and when? What happens when the optimal solution for a community does not match the optimal solution for a household or individual? If the smallest unit of a community is a household, how do we evaluate the different impacts within the household, such as the issues that the elderly, youth, and children faced during the reconstruction period discussed in Section 2.

In particular, would vulnerability persist if the optimal solution is based on the information obtained when a particular group is excluded from community decision-making and the needs of a particular population are invisibilized?

Women and Diverse Groups as Part of Local Participation Capabilities

The question then becomes, how should we address issues that are difficult to identify?

Keep the following perspectives in mind: Demographic changes, regional core industries, regional

independence (industry, commuting area, etc.), community collaboration activities and cohesiveness of residents, extent of damage (the extent of damage to industries and railways), whether community leaders survived, whether urban revitalization plans had been created in the past, and whether plans created retroactively were led by the local administration or the public.

Further, we would like to propose adding perspectives from “the participation of women and diverse people.” As discussed in this report, there are entities in local communities that can address the reconstruction challenges that have thus far been neglected, to build a better society. However, these entities do not exist in every region. Even if they exist in the community, they may not have (or may not have been able to) participated in reconstruction discussions, or they may be invisible in surveys and field research. Focusing on “the participation of women and diverse people” helps decide what issues can be included in the reconstruction debate, whether discussions can be carried out by local people to some extent, or whether the discussions needs to be guided externally. “Local communities” (the ratio of females in the chairpersons of community associations) in “Reconstruction indicators from the gender perspective” (Refer to the report by Asano and Ikeda discussed in this report), “Female counseling” (the number of counseling cases), “Reconstruction to build a better society” (the ratio of women in the reconstruction planning committee), and the number of citizen’s voluntary activity groups may serve as effective, alternative indicators for this perspective.

¹ 東日本大震災女性支援ネットワーク調査チーム、2012、『東日本大震災における支援活動経験に関する調査報告書』東日本大震災女性支援ネットワーク。調査実施者は、池田恵子、柘植あづみ、正井禮子、ゆのまえ知子、吉浜美恵子。

² Survey participants No. 18 and No. 19 in the “2019 Survey” (Refer to Tables 1 and 2) are counted as one group because we conducted a group interview with them at the same time in the “2011 Survey”

³ 宮内泰介、2003、「市民調査という可能性：調査の主体と方法を組み直す」、『社会学評論』53 巻 4 号、566-578 頁。

⁴ For example, えんぱわーめんと 11 わて編、2017、『東日本大震災における女性の経験に関するアンケート調査報告書 ～復興・復幸の実現に向けてから～ (2013 年 7 月) 東日本大震災からの復興に関する女性アンケート調査報告書 (2015 年 12 月) 増刷版』；特定非営利活動法人イコールネット仙台編、2013、『聞き取り集「40 人の女性たちが語る東日本大震災」』；同、2016、『聞き取り集「40 人の女性たちが語る東日本大震災」－その後「今」、そして「これから」』。