

## **Field research with Deputy Director of the UCL IRDR Centre for Gender and Disaster Research (2022/7/18-22)**

Themes: disaster area survey, international exchange, 2011 Great East Japan Earthquake, gender, LGBTQ  
Field: Sendai, Otsuchi, Minami Sanriku

July 18-22, 2022, Deputy Director Punam Yadav of the Centre for Gender and Disaster Research at the Institute for Risk and Disaster Reduction, University College London (UCL IRDR), visited the IRIDeS and the tsunami affected areas with the IRIDeS faculty. The UCL IRDR Centre for Gender and Disaster Research has been working together with faculty of IRIDeS since its inception, involved in collaborative research including on COVID-19 and socially vulnerable people, including research supported by TU/UCL matching funds.

During this joint field study, Dr. Punam Yadav and the IRIDeS faculty visited Miyagi and Iwate Prefectures in order to deepen our knowledge on women's leadership and disaster management activities after the Great East Japan Earthquake, women's empowerment after the earthquake, post-disaster situations of women in the affected areas and disaster management planning for LGBTQ people. The visit was coordinated by Researcher (Specially Appointed) Miwako Kitamura (International Research Collaboration Office), Associate Professor Anawat Suppasri (Tsunami Engineering Lab) and Assoc. Prof. Elizabeth Maly (International Research Collaboration Office).

The group visited the Sendai Centre for Gender Equality to learn more about women's empowerment and disasters. During the field work, we visited to Minami Sanriku Town in Miyagi Prefecture and Otsuchi Town in Iwate Prefecture, and heard how local women's experiences during and after the GEJE. During the fieldwork, Keiko Abe, proprietress of Minami Sanriku Hotel Kanyo, spoke about women's leadership, local disaster prevention and revitalisation and gave valuable insights into disaster recovery and the role of local women. At Kishoji Temple in the Kirikiri area of Otsuchi, we talked with the head priest and his wife about the role of the temple, and roles women played in the management of the evacuation center. We also discussed future analysis and research, in collaboration with the UCL IRDR Centre for Gender and Disaster Research and the IRIDeS of primary materials at the temple.

The first workshop between the UCL IRDR Centre for Gender and Disaster Research and the IRIDeS took place on 21 July, with presentations by Dr. Punam Yadav, Gender and disaster researchers in Japan, researchers working on disability and disasters, and women and LGBTQ support workers participated in the discussion on inclusive disaster management in the future.

During this visit, Dr Punam Yadav had a lively discussion about future joint research and student exchanges with Tohoku University Vice-President Toshiya Ueki, Vice-President Masahiro Yamaguchi, Deputy Director of the International Strategy Office Prof. Akiyoshi Yonezawa, Director Fumihiko Imamura and Assoc. Prof. Suppasri of IRIDeS. The participants expressed their willingness for further research on disaster reduction with a specific gender perspective between the Institute and UCL IRDR.

At IRIDeS was also able to obtain funding for a joint research project with NIED and led to discussions with Assoc. Prof. Erick Mass, a co-researcher on this study, on how data from the Great East Japan Earthquake use explicitly for LGBTQ and disaster research.

Report: Miwako Kitamura, Elizabeth Maly (International Research Collaboration Office)  
Anawat Sappasri (Tsunami Engineering Lab)

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Interview with the owner of the Minami Sanriku Hotel Kanyo



Visiting Kishoji Temple in Kirikiri



Visit to Otsuchi community Centre with Storyteller (Kataribe)



Visiting Tohoku University Head quarters



The first UCL IRDR Centre for Gender and Disaster Research and IRIDeS workshop held at the IRIDeS



Collaborative research meeting with UCL IRDR Centre for Gender and Disaster Research and IRIDeS researchers