

Professor Maureen Fordham from UCL visited in Japan (2024/03/3-7)

Theme : International research collaboration activities, tsunami disaster, field research
Place : Miyagi Prefecture

Professor Maureen Fordham, Director of the UCL IRDR Centre for Gender and Disaster, embarked on a pivotal visit to Japan to enhance collaborative efforts and share vital insights on incorporating gender perspectives into disaster risk reduction. Her itinerary included a formal engagement with Professor Ueki, Vice President of Tohoku University, and constructive interactions with the Center for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI Center) at Tohoku University. This visit facilitated valuable exchanges with faculty members and a student deeply involved in DEI activities, underscoring the potential for integrating gender diversity into disaster risk management practices.

Fieldwork

A significant portion of Professor Fordham's visit was dedicated to fieldwork in Onagawa and Ishinomaki, areas profoundly affected by the Great East Japan Earthquake. This effort, in collaboration with Researcher (Specially Appointed) Kitamura (International Research Collaboration Office) and a PhD student from Tohoku University, aimed to gather firsthand insights into the disaster's impacts and the community's recovery and resilience strategies. The team engaged directly with the local people of Onagawa, who shared their experiences and the reconstruction efforts of their town. A visit to Kadowaki Primary School in Ishinomaki emphasized the essential role of education in disaster preparedness and resilience.

Emphasizing the Importance of Disaster Gender Studies

The discussions and activities during this visit highlighted the critical importance of disaster gender studies. Gender perspectives are crucial for understanding the nuanced impacts of disasters on different segments of the population and for developing more inclusive and effective disaster risk reduction strategies. The collaboration between the UCL IRDR Centre for Gender and Disaster and the International Research Institute of Disaster Science (IRIDeS) at Tohoku University is a testament to the commitment to advancing this field. Together, these institutions aim to foster a multidisciplinary approach to disaster research, integrating gender studies to enhance resilience and emergency planning methodologies.

Future Collaborations

Professor Fordham's visit to Japan has significantly bolstered the research and collaborative dynamics between UCL, Tohoku University, and their external partners. The engagements and fieldwork conducted have enriched our understanding of disaster resilience, highlighting the indispensable role of gender perspectives in crafting comprehensive and effective disaster response strategies. The ongoing partnership between UCL and IRIDeS promises to advance our capabilities in addressing the challenges posed by natural disasters, ensuring a more inclusive and equitable approach to disaster risk reduction.



Meeting with professor Ueki



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