

Sendai has

“Sendai Foreign Resident Disaster Prevention Leaders”

Since FY2020, The Sendai Tourism, Convention and International Association (SenTIA) has cultivated **Sendai Foreign Resident Disaster Prevention Leaders** who learn about disasters and the workings of disaster prevention in Sendai and contribute to community disaster prevention, in a program which is aimed at foreign residents who have an interest in disaster prevention. Currently, there are **22** Sendai Foreign Resident Disaster Prevention Leaders from **15** different countries active.



Why are Foreign Resident Disaster Prevention Leaders necessary?

From the perspective of foreign residents with different languages, cultures, and customs, Japan is a foreign country. Even if they don't have any difficulties in their daily lives, there are not many foreign residents who would take the same actions as Japanese would during an emergency disaster situation.

Sendai Foreign Resident Disaster Prevention Leaders take it upon themselves to learn about disasters and disaster prevention, then tell other foreign residents around them about what they now know. They will leap into action along with others in their community when a disaster strikes.

What are some worries or doubts that foreign residents have about disasters and disaster prevention?



Don't know about the disasters which occur in Japan.



Don't know about emergency food supplies and rules at evacuation centers.



Can't obtain information since they don't know Japanese.



Isolated since they don't know many other people.



What is the role of Foreign Resident Disaster Prevention Leaders?

When there are no disasters.

→Provide and share information.

Send information to foreign residents who don't know about the disasters that happen in Sendai or about how disaster prevention works.

→Participate in community disaster prevention training.

Foreign Resident Disaster Prevention Leaders are wearing blue vests. They must be willing to help manage things if they are participating in disaster prevention training. Please try calling out to them.



When disasters occur.

→Provide information.

SenTIA provides information in multiple languages during disasters. Foreign Resident Disaster Prevention Leaders convey information to foreign residents who do not understand Japanese.

→At evacuation centers

If there is something that Foreign Resident Disaster Prevention Leaders can do, such as managing the evacuation center or explaining information to foreign resident evacuees, please call out to them.

Here's how they were active in FY 2020!

1st Training Session (July 2020)

They learned about what disasters occur in Sendai, the situation of foreign residents in the city, and what challenges they face. In addition to thinking about their roles as Foreign Resident Disaster Prevention Leaders, they also observed places such as the Kyu-Zarugawa River region which experienced flooding due to Typhoon 19 in 2019 and disaster ruins (Sendai Arahama Elementary School).



2nd Training Session (August 2020)

They went to observe designated refuge areas and learned about managing evacuation centers when a disaster occurs. Multicultural disaster prevention workshops were held, and they were also able to talk with citizens of the community such as leaders of neighborhood associations about how to resolve problems surrounding the management of evacuation centers.



We asked Sendai Foreign Resident Disaster Prevention Leaders why they wanted to become Disaster Prevention Leaders and what initiatives they want to try in the future.



from China

Fukawa Hiroko

I experienced the Great East Japan Earthquake 8 years after arriving in Japan and it was my first time ever feeling the terror of a natural disaster. Up until that point, I hadn't thought at all about disaster prevention, but I wanted to participate in this training since I wanted to learn about disasters and how to protect myself when one occurs. I became more concerned about my community in which I live through the training sessions, and from now on I'd like to put forth more effort towards disaster prevention practice in which both Japanese and foreign residents participate, and be active in building a community which is strong against disasters.



from Nepal

Duwadi Bhawani

I arrived in Sendai 13 years ago. I experienced the Great East Japan Earthquake when my child was in elementary school. It was incredibly frightening, but thanks to my Japanese and Nepali friends, as well as others in my neighborhood, I was able to overcome my hardships. I became a Foreign Resident Disaster Prevention Leader since I have lived in Japan for a long time and wanted to be of at least a little use to the community in which I live. I would like foreign residents who have just come to Japan to know about disasters and disaster prevention information. As a fellow resident of Sendai, I want to be able to work together with everyone else during times of disaster.



from Vietnam

Vu Thi Linh Chi

I was very sad after seeing news of the Great East Japan Earthquake on television in my home country in 2011. Now in 2021, I'm in Japan. I don't have very much power on my own, but I became a Foreign Resident Disaster Prevention Leader so that I could cooperate with others in the community. I learned that preparing beforehand is incredibly important since becoming a Disaster Prevention Leader. I now have emergency supplies stocked and often talk to other Vietnamese around me. I want to create things which will be useful for Vietnamese living in Japan, such as a Vietnamese language version of an evacuation manual.



from the Philippines

Carmelita Joy

I started participating in disaster prevention training after the Great East Japan Earthquake. I have also helped with translating multilingual disaster prevention videos and pamphlets created by SenTIA. The Philippines also has a large number of disasters, so I participated in the training to learn a variety of things. After having the disaster prevention leader training, I was able to talk with leaders of neighborhood associations and give them copies of the pamphlets I used during training. I would like to ask Japanese to not be too afraid of foreign residents. Let's greet each other warmly and be able to help each other out even in the event of a disaster.



from Iran

Samaneh Noabadi

A large amount of damage can occur during a disaster if one doesn't prepare properly, so I felt the need to teach other foreign residents about what I learned during the training session. Since a variety of disasters occur in every corner of the globe, I came to understand the importance of people comprehending the situation in their respective areas. I believe it necessary that foreign residents including myself, regardless of nationality or religion, regularly participate in disaster prevention training and cooperate with other citizens in their community.

What the City of Sendai Crisis Management Department's Disaster Risk Reduction Promotion Section expects of Disaster Prevention Leaders.

During the Great East Japan Earthquake in 2011, there were foreign residents who felt anxiety as they couldn't understand evacuation and disaster information. We also heard that communication with foreign residents was very challenging at evacuation centers due to differences in language and culture. In response, the City of Sendai widely promoted disaster prevention and reduction information to foreign residents and encouraged them to actively participate in community disaster prevention training. We would like Foreign Resident Disaster Prevention Leaders to be the ones to maintain closeness with foreign residents, think about disaster prevention and reduction together, and give them advice so that they do not feel anxious during times of disaster.

A message from Mr. Hoshi, leader of the Maebashi Neighborhood Association, Toroku District Combined Neighborhood Association.

I showed the Disaster Prevention Leaders around a designated refuge area during the training. We manage evacuation shelters on our own. Everyone managing a shelter has their own role, such as handing out food, checking the health of evacuees, or picking up garbage and cleaning. We listen to the wishes and problems of the evacuees and think of ways to solve them. The evacuees can also lend their cooperation. I would like to Foreign Resident Disaster Prevention Leaders to also actively participate in the management of shelters. Let's combine our strengths so that we can overcome disasters together.

A message from Tan Shunwai, a Foreign Resident Disaster Prevention Leader from Soja City, Okayama Prefecture.

During times of disaster, it is key that foreign residents are provided information in a language they can understand in a timely manner. It is also important that foreign residents in Japan use their own SNS accounts to provide information as well. But it is not enough to simply translate information into foreign languages. I believe that connections among people are also essential. By regularly getting to know foreign residents living in the community and respecting each other's lifestyles and cultures, both sides will be able to help one another during a disaster.

SenTIA's Multicultural Disaster Prevention

SenTIA is engaged in "Multicultural Disaster Prevention" (the promotion of multiculturalism through disaster prevention). We are aiming to create a community where anyone, regardless of language or culture, can live safely and without worries.

Sendai Disaster Multilingual Support Center

The Disaster Multilingual Support Center is set up when a large disaster occurs in Sendai. The Disaster Multilingual Center announces information in foreign languages which is needed by foreign residents who are affected by the disaster, and also handles consultations in foreign languages. The center is managed by the Sendai Tourism, Convention and International Association (SenTIA).

Location: Inside the Sendai Multicultural Center, 1F Sendai International Center Conference Building

TEL: 022-224-1919, 022-265-2471

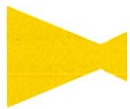
Website: <http://int.sentia-sendai.jp/saigai>



Sendai Disaster Multilingual Support Volunteers

Citizen volunteers who provide language support to those who have difficulty understanding Japanese information when large-scale disasters such as earthquakes, floods, or typhoons hit.

During normal times, they participate in disaster prevention training and lessons, and cooperate in management through translation and interpretation. Recruitment for new Disaster Multilingual Support Volunteers is always open. If you have an interest in supporting foreign residents during times of disaster, please contact SenTIA's International Relations Department (contact information below).



SenTIA provides multilingual information aimed at foreign residents which is useful for disaster prevention.

"Do You Know Where to Go in the Event of a Disaster?"

Aimed at foreigners who have recently become citizens of Sendai City, this pamphlet covers multilingual support during times of disaster, designated refuge areas, and other topics.



"Important Points about Disaster Response Drills"

You can use this to study the important points about disaster prevention drills with helpful illustrations. This document is used by foreign residents and Multilingual Disaster Support Volunteers, when we have a disaster prevention drill.



Multilingual Disaster Prevention Video "It's an Earthquake! What Should I Do?"

This video is aimed at foreign residents who have never experienced an earthquake and gives them helpful advice and information. It covers how to prepare for an earthquake and what to do when one occurs, all explained simply. You can watch it on YouTube.



Multilingual Disaster Prevention Pamphlet "Advice for Protecting Yourself in an Earthquake"

This pamphlet is aimed at foreign residents who don't have any prior knowledge or experience of earthquakes. It has information related to earthquake preparation and what to do in the event of an earthquake. It is presented in an easy to understand way and includes illustrations.



**Inquiries: International Relations Department,
Sendai Tourism, Convention and International Association (SenTIA)**

So that foreign residents can live their lives safely and without worry, SenTIA is involved in a variety of activities which include daily life support, help with learning Japanese, and assistance with disaster prevention. Please see SenTIA's website for details.

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Assistance: Council of Local Authorities for International Relations
Multicultural City Planning Promotion Project