

Producing Evacuation Shelter Operation Manuals Specific to the Shelter

Sendai City



Background and Purpose of Project

In the Great East Japan Earthquake, which occurred on March 11, 2011, a great number of people were evacuated to shelters due to large-scale damage, but various problems were found in terms of the best form of shelters and systems to operate them.

In the operations of shelters, aspects that must be taken into account may differ, depending on the characteristics of communities and living environment; some communities have many elderly residents, while others have many students from abroad; some communities are located in mountainous areas, while others are in downtown areas. Meanwhile, some communities have already set up evacuation rules or compiled manuals to be used in times of a disaster, based on their past experiences.

So, the Sendai city government is promoting the compilation of "community-version" evacuation shelter operation manuals that reflect the circumstances of the respective communities, by holding discussions with representatives of communities and officials of organisations managing facilities to be used as shelters in the event of a disaster.

Outline of Project

Using as a reference the Sendai evacuation shelter operation manuals drawn up in April 2013, based on shelter operation-related lessons learned from the Great East Japan Earthquake, community organisations, organisations managing

facilities to be used as shelters and Sendai municipal government officials in charge are working together to formulate community-version evacuation shelter operation manuals. These manuals will be reviewed and updated following shelter operation training.

◆Sendai evacuation shelter operation manuals

Shelters are operated through cooperation among community organisations such as neighbourhood associations, evacuees, Sendai city government officials in charge of shelters, and officials of organisations that manage facilities to serve as shelters. The manuals would be shared by all these people gathering at the shelters.

Specifically, the manuals contain basic information and procedures related to the preparation stage and actual operations of shelters, including types of shelters, the roles to be played by each party, an example of a shelter operation organisational chart, a check sheet for visual screenings of facility safety, and a list of items that should be checked at each stage of evacuation.

◆Community-version evacuation shelter operation manuals

In the operation of shelters, the elements that must be taken into account may differ, depending on the characteristics of communities, the composition of residents, and other factors. Meanwhile, some communities have already set up manuals

and rules for evacuation.

Therefore, the Sendai City government has called for the compilation of community-version manuals that reflect the circumstances of the respective communities, based on the Sendai evacuation shelter operation manuals. Some communities have drawn up manuals to be used by the leaders of shelter operation committees as well as simplified manuals for distribution to households.

For example, an area near Tohoku University's International House accommodation facility for students from abroad has created shelter operation manuals together with students from overseas. In another case, manuals were made that utilise pictograms for ease of understanding, such as one indicating that you must take off your shoes before entering.



A comprehensive disaster drill in Sendai (June 12, 2015)

Features and Advanced Aspects

Community-version shelter operation manuals are compiled in collaboration with citizens.

The establishment of community networks and cooperation among people and organisations concerned are promoted through the formulation of community-version shelter operation manuals, shelter operation training and other related activities.

Effects of Project

As of Nov. 30, 2015, community-version evacuation shelter operation manuals had been created

in 166 of the total of 193 shelters in the city. Community networks were established through the compilation of the manuals, shelter operation training and other activities. Collaboration among people of many age groups has led to the development of community activity supporters and the fostering of human resources.

Problems and Responses

◆Before Project Implementation

Three main sets of problems were raised, based on opinions from communities, a survey on citizens and circumstances at relevant organisations.

-Establishment and operations of and support for shelters.

Community organisations play a central role and establish close relations with the managers of facilities to be used as shelters and the city government, so that shelters are operated through collaboration among these parties.

-Designated evacuation shelters.

Following prior consultations with communities, it was decided that municipally run elementary, junior high and high schools, civic centres and community centres can be used as shelters immediately after a disaster happens.

-Evacuation shelter operations.

Discussions were held to help the city government, communities and facility managers share information, and manuals reflecting the circumstances of respective communities were shared.

◆After Start of Project

Circumstances differ from community to community, and some communities are therefore still working to compile shelter operation manuals. Continued support will be necessary for these communities.

Outlook

The Sendai evacuation shelter operation manuals were compiled based on the Great East Japan Earthquake, and the community-version evacuation shelter operation manuals also mainly specify responses to be taken in times of earthquakes. It is also necessary to make manuals on responses to floods and other disasters.

Reference URL

http://www.city.sendai.jp/kurashi/bosai/hinanjo/1208133_1391.html *Japanese

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