

Children from Tohoku Speaking Out to the World (July 19, 2012)



Children have shown their delightful faces with a great international opportunity.

Members of the Children's Community Building Clubs joined the World Ministerial Conference on Disaster Reduction in Tohoku, held on July 3, 2012 in Sendai, Miyagi prefecture. The children presented their opinions about disaster risk reduction.

A summary of their opinions follow;

- (1) Please listen to children's opinions, in addition to listening to adults.
- (2) Please establish child-centered disaster risk reduction programmes everywhere in the world.
- (3) We propose the establishment of a system where children around the world can collaborate.

(There are more details here (in Japanese),
http://www.savechildren.or.jp/scjcms/sc_activity.php?d=880)



Members of the Children's Community Building Clubs had a presentation in front of adults including media correspondents and politicians.

The children in Ishinomaki, Rikuzen-takata and Yamada, have been getting together to read the recovery plans released by the government in Oct., 2011. Based on their experience of the earthquake and tsunami that hit Japan last year, they have been exchanging opinions and drawing up suggestions on the recovery and reconstruction plans. These suggestions were presented to Japan's Minister for Reconstruction, Mr. Tatsuo Hirano, in February this year.



Children enthusiastically discussed recovery plan for their hometowns.

The children then took the chance to present their combined opinions to the world as a proposal. They presented their proposal to Ms. Margareta Wahlström, Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG) of the United Nations and discussed it with her. Ms. Wahlström was impressed by their activities and proposal, and said that the proposal was so practical and brilliant with detailed suggestions from children.



Ms. Margareta Wahlström asked questions to members of the Children's Communities Building Clubs.

Ms. Wahlström also suggested putting the proposal on the United Nations website so that children from all over the world could exchange opinions on disaster risk reduction. The children were excited to present their opinions to an international audience and discuss those opinions. A new spirit of "Speaking Out" is growing among children in Japan. Through the Children's Community Building Clubs they are becoming more confident in expressing their opinions about how to create a better future.

You can watch the video on Youtube;



Later on the end of July, the website of the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR) introduced the Children's opinions and suggestions submitted to Ms. Wahlström, as she promised them before.

The article is here; <http://www.unisdr.org/archive/27835>