

language!

Editorial Note

【01】 Providing Support to Foreigners in Times of Disasters

As more disasters strike, OFIX is working on establishing a support system to provide assistance to foreigners in times of disasters, which is one of the goals of the mid-term management plan (2015-2018). One of the projects is as follows.

■ Enhancing Support to Foreigners in Times of Disasters

It is more likely that foreigners become vulnerable in times of large scale disasters due to language barriers and also a lack of knowledge on and experience of earthquakes etc. For this reason, OFIX is encouraging more people to sign up for the Disaster Volunteer Program to assist foreigners with communication.

A Comprehensive Disaster-Prevention Drill for International Students, conducted as part of the project, includes a drill for international students to experience life in an evacuation center and another drill for Disaster Volunteers to perform possible tasks of a Multilingual Support Center in Times of Disasters. Training sessions for Disaster Volunteers are also organized every year.

In addition, OFIX is co-organizing emergency drills and training sessions for Disaster Volunteers with cities and other international associations.

Furthermore, OFIX conducts workshops for those in charge of international students at higher educational institutions in Osaka. The workshops aim to provide opportunities for those responsible for international students to exchange thoughts on the confirmation of their safety in times of disasters. This year's workshop was held on September 3, the day before the Osaka 8.8 Million Drill.

In March 2015, OFIX and Osaka Prefectural Government concluded a letter of agreement on setting up and operating the Osaka Prefectural Multilingual Support Centers in Times of Disasters to provide a smooth delivery of support for foreigners in Osaka Prefecture during a large-scale disaster. OFIX will advance preparations in more detail based on the agreement.

-Multilingual Support Centers in Times of Disasters to Provide Assistance to Distant Affected Areas-

The NPO National Council for Multicultural Corporate Managers is an organization that promotes multicultural societies in cooperation with the National Government, local authorities as well as international associations.

The Council sends facilitators to the multicultural managers course that is co-organized by the Council of Local Authorities for International Relation (CLAIR) and Japan Municipal Training and Research Foundation (JIAM) every year.

Mr. Yoshihiko Doi, who is the Director of the Council and former Director of the Multilingual support center for the Tohoku Earthquake out at Pacific ocean, contributed an article for this issue.

NPO National Council for Multicultural Corporate Managers Director Yoshihiko Doi

The Council set up the Multilingual support center for the Tohoku Earthquake out at Pacific ocean at the Japan Municipal Training and Research Foundation (JIAM) approximately four hours after the Great East Japan Earthquake on March 11, 2011. In this article, I will briefly talk about three important points: set-up venue, collaborating organizations, and activities.

First, the reason why the center was set up in the Kansai area and not in disaster-affected area is that it was impossible to set up a support hub in Tohoku due to the enormous damage from the earthquake and tsunamis. Moreover, even if the center were in the Kanto area, it seemed that we would not be able to provide steady assistance as scheduled blackouts and aftershocks with a seismic intensity of 5 continued.

We set up the center at JIAM training center because it had accommodation facilities and rooms that could be used for the center. Moreover, since we already had relations with JIAM, we were immediately able to gain their

cooperation.

Next, we obtained the cooperation of approximately 50 organizations within and outside of Japan that provided assistance for interpretation, translation and distribution of information. Osaka International Association Network, which assisted us with translation into Chinese, is one of them. OFIX is a member of the Network. Improved and widespread information technology such as exchange of translation by email and cell phones with conference call features made a significant contribution.

Lastly, our main activity was translating disaster information, providing information on the phone with the assistance of interpreters, and sending staff to the affected areas. We were able to perform all these thanks to all the volunteers (cumulative total number of approx. 500 volunteers for 51 days) in from all over the world.

For more detail, visit
<http://blog.canpan.info/tabumane/archive/59>
(Japanese only)

【02】 Preparing for Large Scale Disasters

In times of large-scale disasters such as earthquakes, foreigners may encounter problems. They may have difficulty obtaining information released by government offices, or they may not be able to connect with their families and friends.

Osaka Prefectural Government provides information on disaster evacuation centers etc. on its Osaka Disaster Prevention Net. Emergency information, including weather information, is also provided on the site in English, Chinese, Korean as well as Japanese.

If you subscribe to the "Disaster Prevention Information Email Service", in times of disasters, you can receive emergency information, including information on weather and evacuation, in Japanese and English.

The Osaka Information Service for Foreign Residents of OFIX provides consultation services, and is preparing the translation to multiple languages and dissemination of information needed by foreigners in times of disaster.

Mr. Kikuchi with Sendai Tourism, Convention and International Association who has an

experience setting up and operating a multilingual support center, provides advice on what should be done at times of disasters for foreign residents and for government offices.

-From the Experience of Managing the Multilingual Support Center in Times of Disasters-
Mr. Tetsuyoshi Kikuchi, International Promotion Division,
Sendai Tourism, Convention and International Association

After the Great East Japan Earthquake in March 2011, Sendai International Association (current Sendai Tourism, Convention and International Association) operated the Multilingual Support Center at Times of Disasters set up at Sendai International Center as a specified contractor of Sendai City. We provided necessary information in English, Chinese, Korean and easy Japanese for foreigners affected by the earthquake in addition to consultation service in various languages.

Just after the disaster, we received numerous inquiries on the safety of foreigners in the affected areas. As the number of inquiries on safety decreased, we started to continually receive inquiries regarding the nuclear accident and on how to get out of Sendai or Japan. At the same time, we heard that those who managed evacuation centers were not sure what to do with many foreign residents evacuating to the evacuation centers. From this experience, we felt that the problems of foreigners is not just being unable to understand information in Japanese, but the lack of interaction with people in their neighborhood. Hence, foreign residents should prepare themselves on a daily basis. The following is our suggestions for them.

- (1) Learn Japanese language and acquire knowledge on disaster prevention measures to protect themselves at times of disasters
- (2) Decide on how to communicate with family and friends in home country
- (3) Get to know neighbors to enable future cooperation in times of disasters

The following can be arranged by governments or communities to prepare for disasters.

- Organize emergency evacuation drills and training for foreign residents, and ensure interaction within a community through drills

Organize drills on setting up a multilingual

• support center at times of disasters for affiliated and relevant authorities and volunteers to have the same understanding

These examples are not new, but we believe that these constant actions will lead to communities where everyone can feel safe. We are slowly putting into practice one step at a time in Sendai what we have learned from the disaster. We are grateful to OFIX for enabling an exchange of information and ideas through different projects and I hope we could also work together in disaster prevention projects for a safer community.

Ms. Hayashi, a Sakai City Government staff who participated in the OFIX sponsored Comprehensive Disaster-Prevention Drill for International Students as a staff of the Multilingual Disaster Support Center Group, provided the following comments.

-Participating in the Comprehensive Disaster-Prevention Drill for International Students-
Ms. Yuko Hayashi, Chief, International Cooperation Division, International Department, Sakai City

I participated in the Comprehensive Disaster-Prevention Drill for International Students held at the Orion International House on Saturday, July 4 and joined the multilingual support center team. Aside from administrative officers and staff from international associations, language volunteers also participated in the drill.

The drill was supervised by Ms. Toki, Director of NPO National Council for Multicultural Corporate Managers. We shared tasks among staff members and selected information to be translated and visited an evacuation center.

The Secretariat advised us that when we communicate with the evacuees, we should remember that our aim is to make them feel safe and to take back to the multilingual support center questions from evacuees that could not be answered on the spot.

Volunteers and staff who speak the languages of foreigners affected by disasters are very valuable when promoting the translation of disaster information to different languages and providing a sense of safety to them. We hope that there will be more people who profit from these drills and can assist foreigners in times of disasters.

【03】 Activity Report

■ Comprehensive Disaster-Prevention Drill for International Students and Others

Date : July 4 (Saturday)

Venue : Orion International House

Number of Participants : 49

Two drills were conducted concurrently: a drill for international students to learn what to do and what to expect at evacuation centers and a drill for volunteers and others to experience possible tasks at the Multilingual Support Center in Times of Disasters, including interpretation and translation.

■ Career Counseling for International Students

Date : July 17 (Friday)

Venue : Congrès Convention Center
(Grand Front Osaka North Building B2F)

Number of participants : 24

A consultation corner offering career counseling for international students in universities, junior colleges and vocational schools and graduating in March 2016 was set up at the Job Fair sponsored by OFIX and Osaka Labor Association (L-Osaka).

Regardless of heavy rain, students and job-seekers (out of 1,043 visitors, 173 were international students) came. 24 international students visited the consultation corner.

Aside from consultations on how to choose a job, questions on how to change residential status when employed were also brought up. Counselors present at the consultation corner commented that international students know less about job-hunting than Japanese students.

■ International Education Seminar (JICA Kansai Report)

On August 4 (Tuesday) and August 6 (Thursday), JICA Kansai, OFIX and International House (Aug. 4 only) held the International Education Seminar. On the first day there were 72 participants while the second had 52 participants. The seminar targeted teachers and people interested in development and international education.

The seminars included report sessions and workshops where participants reflected on issues of a globalized society and learned about materials and methods that can be used in the actual classrooms. Participants are expected to make use of what they learned and noticed from the seminars for future international education.

■ Osaka Information for Foreign Residents
Counselor Interpreters' Training

Date: June 22 (Mon.) and July 3 (Friday)

Venue : My Dome Osaka, 3rd Meeting Room
on 8th floor

Participants: 37 on June 22, and 28 on July 3
(Officials of local authorities as well as
interpreters and consultants of OFIX)

On June 22, a lecture on issues regarding children with foreign roots and based on the lecture, a role play exercise was conducted on July 3. Participants divided into language groups with participants playing the roles of a foreigner, a consultant and an interpreter and evaluating each other's interpretation. The participants learned useful background information about countries and the importance of note taking.

In the latter half, Ms. Suzumi Nishimatsu, a aw interpreter, held a drill to improve interpretation skills. The participants said they would like training to be organized on a regular basis.

■ 2015 1st Osaka Prefectural Network Meeting for
Counselors at Help Desks Providing Administrative
Information to Foreigners

Time and Day : July 29 (Thursday)

Venue : My Dome Osaka, 3rd Meeting Room on
8th floor

Number of Participants : 28

(Consultants of local authorities and
international associations as well as officials
of local authorities)

In this meeting, a representative from Osaka Police discussed the problems that foreign residents face. Then, a representative of Osaka Bar Association gave a lecture on the flow of criminal proceedings involving foreigners. The participants were grateful for the opportunity to listen to the valuable talks and found them useful.

The participants exchanged information on

the case examples with regional characteristics and common issues to deepen exchange.

■ OFIX Co-sponsored Events: One-Day Consultation Service for Foreigners
Association for Toyonaka Multicultural Symbiosis

Date: August 9 (Sunday)

Venue : Association for Toyonaka Multicultural Symbiosis

Visitors: 22

A free consultation service for foreign residents who have a difficulty in communicating in Japanese was organized by Association for Toyonaka Multicultural Symbiosis and OFIX. The consultation service was organized to provide information on laws and public administration in the languages of the foreigners. It aims to provide opportunities to connect foreigners who need and wish for further continuous help with collaborating organizations to solve their problems. Three lawyers, a certified administrative procedures legal specialist and consultants of Association for Toyonaka Multicultural Symbiosis and OFIX offered consultation. Volunteers helped with interpretation in 10 languages including Vietnamese, Pilipino, Chinese, Portuguese, and English.

【04】 Notice

◎ Call for New Residents to Orion International House in October

Orion International House is accepting applications for residents to move in in October 2015.

(As of Aug. 27) 2 rooms for male and 2 rooms for female residents are available (first-come first-served) We await your application. For details, please see:
<http://www.ofix.or.jp/accept/support/orion.html>

◎ Please "Like" our OFIX Facebook posts.

We post our activities on our OFIX Facebook page. We also intend to upload multilingual information for foreigners in the event of a disaster.
<https://www.facebook.com/osakafoundation>

- ◎ The Fourth Osaka 8.8 million drill will take place at 11:00 am on 4 September.

This drill has been conducted since 2012 by the Osaka 8.8 Million Drill Executive Committee, consisting of Osaka Prefectural Government, Osaka City Government, Sakai City government and private sector, and targets residents in Osaka.

The leaflet is available in many languages. Foreigners are more than welcome to join the drill.

http://www.pref.osaka.lg.jp/shobobosai/trainig_top/h27_880.html

【Notice from Osaka Prefectural Government】
2015 Population Census -Change in Census this 2015-

Responses can be answered using the printed form or online form. The results will be the base for preparing future welfare, education, employment, disaster prevention, and regional affairs plans. Responses should accurately reflect your situation as of 1 October 2015. For more information, visit <http://kokusei2015.stat.go.jp//>

- Notice from Osaka Prefectural Internationalization Strategy Executive Committee

- ◎ Accepting applications for Osaka Global School Australia Course!

Osaka Prefectural Internationalization Strategy Executive Committee started to offer Australia Courses for grade 10 students in Osaka, in addition to England and the U.S. Courses for Grade 11 and 12 students. Applications are being accepted for the first Australia Course.

[Deadline] Friday, 2 October

[Number of Students] 20

[Expense by Students] 136,000yen (not including overseas travel insurance, lunch, passport and visa fees)

For more information,

<http://osakaglobal.jp/jp/news/2015/07/00.html>

- ◎ A new website on studying in Osaka in Vietnamese language!

A website targeting young Vietnamese in Vietnamese language has been created in order to attract many brilliant Vietnamese students who are interested in Japan.

The content of the website is: 1) Introduction of Osaka, 2) Introduction to educational institutes in Osaka, 3) Useful news for international students, 4) Reports on studying in Osaka by Vietnamese students, 5) Contact information, and 6) FAQs.

The website should respond inquiries and needs regarding studying in Osaka. Also, it is intended to help educational institutes to disseminate information of Osaka and to bring students to Osaka, which should enhance the competitive strength of Osaka.

The URL is: <http://duhoc-osaka.com.vn/vi>

Editorial Note:

I was surprised at how the disaster prevention consciousness of the international students has increased through the roundtable discussion with the dorm residents. It is also necessary for foreigners to support other foreigners. I hope to conduct more useful training for international students and volunteers. (N.S.)

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