

Event Report

Disaster Risk Prevention and Preparedness Among Filipino Residents of Saitama City

さいたま市在住フィリピン人住民の防災・減災に関するワークショップ

November 23, 2025 (Sunday) 15:00 – 16:30 (90 minutes)

Seminar Room 8, 3F General Research Building, Saitama University

Overview

A community dialogue workshop focused on disaster preparedness among Filipino residents in Saitama City was held on November 23, 2025 (Sunday). The event brought together diverse perspectives to examine how Filipino residents prepare for disasters and the challenges they face in accessing critical information and resources.

This collaborative initiative between the Department of Resilient Society of Saitama University's Research Centre for Social Transformation and Saitama City created a platform for meaningful exchange between Filipino community members and various stakeholders. Representatives from the Embassy of the Republic of the Philippines in Tokyo participated remotely, demonstrating institutional support for the community's safety and preparedness.



The workshop welcomed 18 in-person participants, including Filipino residents as well as residents from Bangladesh, Indonesia, and Nepal, alongside Japanese participants, and local officials. This multicultural composition enriched the dialogue and facilitated cross-community learning about disaster preparedness challenges and solutions.

Workshop details

1) Survey results presentation

The first segment featured the presentation of results from a comprehensive questionnaire survey conducted in August 2025. This survey was a collaborative effort with Saitama City and targeted Filipino residents of Saitama City aged 15 and above. The primary objective was to understand the community's awareness and knowledge of disaster prevention measures.

2) Opinion exchange and open discussion

The second segment focused on open discussion where Filipino participants, along with residents from other countries, shared their insights and suggestions. The discussions were dynamic and thoughtful, reflecting the participants' commitment to improving disaster preparedness within their community.

Participants' opinions

Participants provided several suggestions to enhance disaster risk awareness and preparedness. Below are the key themes from participants' contributions:

On self-awareness and personal responsibility

- "We need to raise our own disaster awareness. It's not only about the community or the government informing what to do, but we should be proactive to prepare for our safety" – Filipino participant emphasizing the importance of personal initiative.
- "Prevention is better than cure. It always starts with oneself" – Participant stressing individual responsibility.
- "The current level of preparedness among Filipinos? We are not prepared at all" – Honest assessment from a community member.

- "The most important thing is the awareness issue. Understanding of how to prepare for disasters has not been sufficiently disseminated" – Participant summarizing the core challenge.

On communication and information gaps

- "I have no idea how ready other Filipinos are with regard to disasters. There is a general lack of communication, not only among fellow Filipinos but also with the authorities and institutions" – Participant highlighting communication breakdown.
- "It would be nice if there was some mechanism, some mechanism by which this kind of information and questionnaires could be spread among Filipinos more efficiently" – Request for better distribution systems.
- "Filipino community organizations rarely discuss disaster preparedness. Many members have lived in Japan for a long time and have either gotten used to disasters or perhaps have privately made their own preparations. We don't discuss that very much" – Observation on community organization practices.

On information accessibility

- "It's not that information about disaster readiness is not there. People can use Google Translate and look up manuals in English. The biggest issue is that our lives are busy. We cannot be thinking about disasters all the time" – Participant explaining the challenge of prioritization.
- "Information is there for us to take action. We just need to search. The challenge is: if you don't know that you need to search for the information, you won't search" – Highlighting the need for initial triggers.
- "To overcome information-related challenges, foreigners have to study Japanese" – Participant emphasizing language learning.

On institutional support

- "Universities should provide disaster guidelines during orientation for international students. Companies should give preparedness information to foreign employees" – Specific recommendations for institutions.
- "Embassies should send information through email in their native language, not in English or Japanese" – Preference for mother tongue communication.

Conclusion

The "Community Dialogue Workshop on Disaster Preparedness: Insights from Filipino Residents in Saitama City" highlighted critical aspects of disaster preparedness faced by the Filipino community. The voices of workshop participants and the comprehensive questionnaire survey results revealed several key findings:

- Information exists but does not reach the community effectively
- Self-awareness and personal responsibility are essential
- Simple, visible triggers are needed rather than lengthy booklets on disaster preparedness
- Participation in disaster drills is critically low
- Integration challenges in local communities persist

The workshop provided an important opportunity to reaffirm the value of dialogue between communities, authorities, and institutions in building a more disaster-resilient society.