

Projects to Transmit Earthquake Experiences Contained in the Recovery Plans from the Great East Japan Earthquake

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1. Background/objective

Local authorities affected by the Great East Japan Earthquake on March 11, 2011, have drafted their “recovery plans” and are using the resulting plans in urban planning efforts.

Few studies have examined the ways in which “the transmission of earthquake experiences” are addressed in recovery plans. A planned implementation from an early stage of recovery may allow for more effective transmission.

Examining the ways affected local authorities attempt transmission of earthquake experiences is important for disaster prevention. Therefore, the article describes a study that examined existing policies within current recovery plans, related to the transmission of earthquake experiences from the Great East Japan Earthquake.

2. Topic

This article examined the recovery plans drafted by local authorities in the coastal areas of Iwate and Miyagi Prefectures, which suffered serious damage from the earthquake and tsunami. The study examined the plans of 27 local authorities: 12 from Iwate Prefecture and 15 from Miyagi Prefecture. Each local authority drafted its recovery plans by March 2012.

3. Method

After reading all recovery plans, the sections of each plan related to “the transmission of earthquake experiences projects” were extracted and sorted according to content.

The analysis focused on whether each project intended to transmit the earthquake experiences from the Great East Japan Earthquake. More specifically, projects demonstrating clear intent to transmit earthquake experiences by using phrases such as “the transmission of the earthquake,” “the handing-down of lessons,” and “memorial” were collected.

4. Results

Out of 27 recovery plans, 26 plans contained projects that indicated intent to transmit earthquake experiences. When the projects contained within each of these plans were counted, 95 projects were identified. Project content was separated into the following 6 categories.

The category entitled “facilities development” contained the highest number of projects. These projects included plans to develop parks and green spaces to commemorate the earthquake (14 projects), to build a monument (12 projects), to develop a facility to record and exhibit earthquake experiences (12 projects), and to carry out maintenance work on earthquake ruins in relation to damaged buildings and subsidence (7 projects).

The category entitled “archives” contained the next highest number of projects. These consisted of plans to create records of the earthquake, the recovery, and publication of the records (21 projects) and plans to develop and train *kataribe* (story tellers) and those involved in implementing the plans for transmission (3 projects). The project that focused on the creation and publication of records was

adopted by the highest number of local authorities.

The category entitled “education” included 8 projects, “tourism” included 4 projects, “disaster prevention” included 4 projects, and “other” included 5 projects.

5. Discussion

Project content could be further divided into two categories: tangible (facilities development) and intangible (archives, education, tourism, disaster prevention, and other topics).

Seven years have passed since the earthquake struck and plans are being implemented to transmit earthquake experiences. The implementation is complex and combines diverse projects such as creation of an educational course and trip focused on disaster prevention education including an exhibit displaying relevant records, commentary by the *kataribe* at earthquake ruins.

For future transmissions of earthquake experiences and disaster prevention, it will be important to combine projects related to tangible and intangible aspects. In future studies, we will continue study on this topic by collecting additional data on projects related to the transmission of earthquake experiences and will explore additional ways to combine projects.

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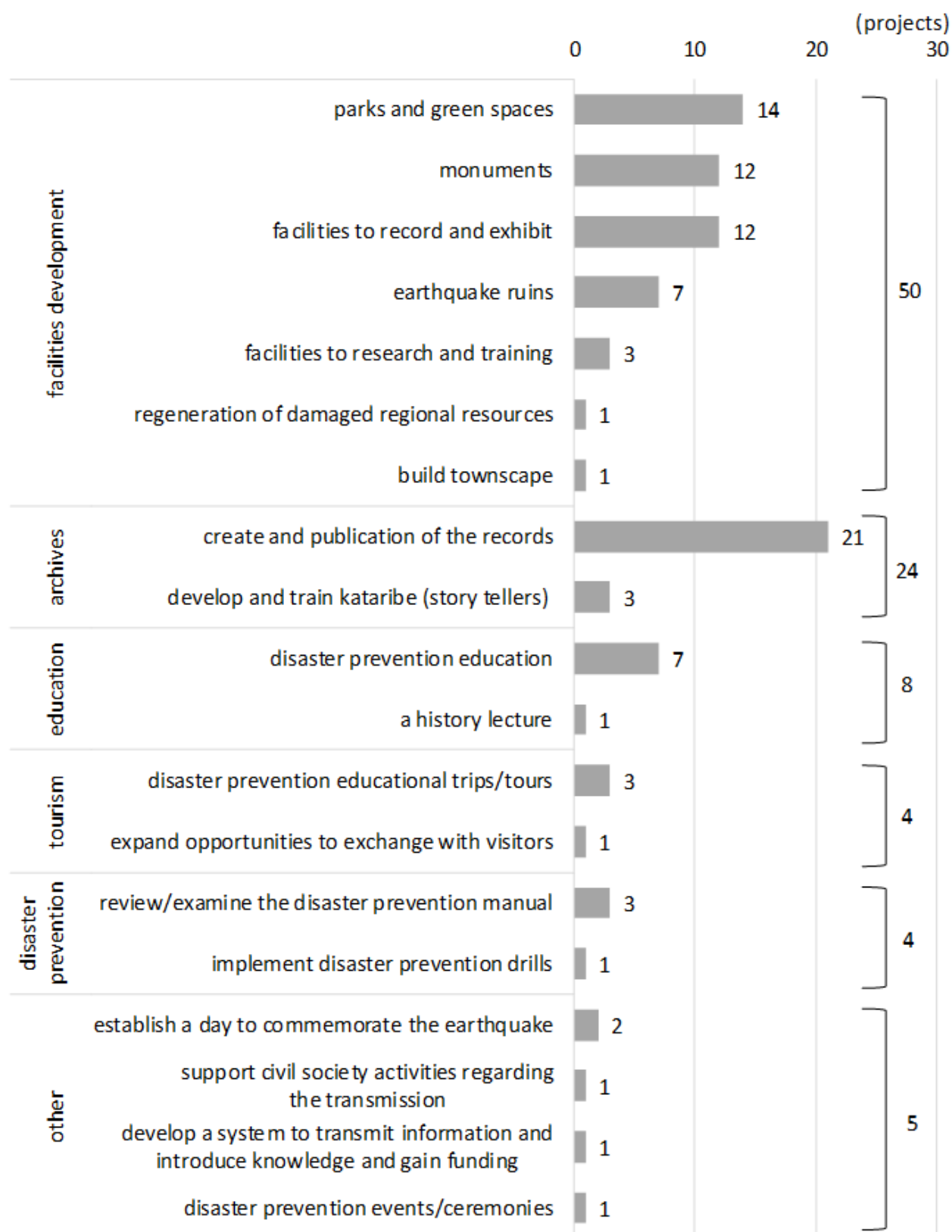


Fig. Number of Projects for Transmit Earthquake Experiences