

Measuring, Discussing and Living Together – What We Learned from Four Years in Suetsugi

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In cooperation with radiation protection experts and using radiation measurements, residents of Suetsugi, Iwaki-shi in Fukushima have been striving to reshape their life. Suetsugi lies within the 30 km radius of the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant so the residents have had serious reservations about continuing their life there after the accident. Today, radiation remains a line dividing their lives; dose measurements directly affect their daily decision making. Assisted by medical and scientific specialists, the residents faced this challenging situation by measuring their own exposures and discussing the results among themselves. Since 2012, Suetsugi residents have used personal dosimeters, made trips for whole body counter measurements, and acquired food contamination monitors. The results have always been openly shared among the residents. Obtaining and discussing their own data has been crucial to understand the various results and to practice radiation protection in their daily routine. The four-year experience in Suetsugi is an example of cooperation among various stakeholders, which should be a lesson for the future.