



**Nuclear Free Local Authorities SC seminar
Friday 25th January 2013
Committee Room 3, Manchester Town Hall,
Albert Square, M60 2LA**



***Fukushima – two years on: reflections from eyewitnesses on
the disaster, post disaster and lessons for the UK***

As NFLA members will know, the Fukushima incident has been one of the worst international nuclear emergencies in the IAEA's recorded history with a substantial radiation release and the evacuation of many thousands of people. A large area of land has become uninhabitable for years to come and the incident has had a profound effect on the possible future development of nuclear power.

This NFLA seminar gives a unique opportunity to hear from two eyewitnesses. Mitsuko Sonoda and Geoff Read were living in Fukushima at the time of the nuclear disaster on 11th March 2011, and self-evacuated with their young son. They returned to live near the evacuated area for several months and are currently now living back in the UK.

Mitsuko Sonoda is a Japanese woman who since the disaster has been active in finding and sharing information about radiation contamination and especially food safety. She has actively lobbied educational authorities and local government in Japan to provide school meals with as close to zero radiation as possible, and to take seriously the risks to children from long term exposure to low-level radiation, including from play. She has also communicated with many evacuees from high radiation areas in Fukushima and further afield, and has spoken on the above subjects to elected representatives and officials from the Japanese national and local governments, and to the media.

Geoff Read is an English social artist who lobbied in the early days of the disaster for more families to be evacuated, and subsequently worked with 100 children from Fukushima on collaborative portraits, where the children created an image, into which he drew their portraits according to their instructions. Some are accompanied by words from the children. See <http://strongchildrenjapan.blogspot.com/> for further details.

Programme

- 1.00pm Welcome by the NFLA Chair, Councillor Mark Hackett
- 1.05pm Fukushima - the context, the disaster and the emergency response
- 1.35pm Fukushima - the personal experience
- 2.05pm Fukushima - the children's experience and the 'Strong Children Japan' art project and exhibition
- 2.20pm Fukushima and its impact on UK nuclear safety and disaster preparation
- 2.30pm Question and answer session (for a 3pm close)

If you would like to attend this seminar please contact the NFLA Secretary – s.morris4@manchester.gov.uk or telephone 0161 234 3244.