

Disaster Relief

Quick response to needs of affected countries



Interacting with victims of the earthquake disaster in Central Java through magic. Mental care is very important. (June 2006, Indonesia)

Outline of Disaster Relief Program

When major disasters occur in developing areas, JICA carries out emergency relief activities in response to requests received from the governments of affected countries or international agencies. Rescue teams, medical teams, expert teams, or Self-Defense Forces are dispatched in the name of Japan Disaster Relief (JDR) teams as personnel assistance* and emergency relief supplies are provided as material assistance.

Rescue Team

The main tasks of a rescue team are to search for missing people, rescue victims, provide first aid, and move victims to safe areas. The team is made up of rescue personnel of the National Police Agency, the Fire and Disaster Management Agency, and the Japan Coast Guard. They leave Japan within 24 hours of a decision of dispatch in order to conduct search and rescue activities in an affected country.

Medical Team

The tasks of a medical team are to provide or assist in medical treatment for victims in the affected areas, and when necessary they work to prevent infection and the spread of diseases. The medical team consists of doctors, nurses, pharmacists, and medical coordinators registered with JICA. As of January 31, 2007, 800 members (216 doctors, 363 nurses, 40 pharmacists, and 181 medical coordinators) were registered under this scheme.

Expert Team

An expert team takes emergency response measures in the

wake of disasters and provides guidance and advice on how best to achieve recovery. The team consists of technicians and researchers recommended by related government ministries and agencies according to the type of disaster.

Self-Defense Forces

When a large-scale disaster occurs and the dispatch is deemed necessary, Self-Defense Forces can be dispatched. Self-Defense Forces carry out rescue activities, medical activities (including disease prevention activities), emergency response measures, reconstruction, transport activities using ships, aircraft, and helicopters, and water supply activities.

Provision of Materials

Relief supplies such as blankets, tents, water purifiers, generators, and medicine are provided to the affected areas to assist with relief activities for victims and the recovery process in the affected areas. To ensure that relief supplies are provided promptly and in large numbers, warehouses have been set up in four locations worldwide—Singapore, Frankfurt in Germany, Johannesburg in South Africa, and Miami, US. Medicine is difficult to store due to expiration dates and temperature control and require notation in English, French, or Spanish. Therefore, it is provided after being procured from the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) or other organizations if necessary.

Earthquake Disaster in Central Java, Indonesia

Seamless Transition from Emergency Relief to Reconstruction Assistance

On May 27, 2006, a huge earthquake of magnitude 6.3 hit Yogyakarta, an ancient city of Indonesia. Approximately 5,800 people died and 138,000 people were injured. The devastating news was aired worldwide. Upon receiving a request from the Indonesian government, Japan immediately dispatched a JDR medical team, who provided dedicated assistance for 10 days.

Many innovative efforts were tried during this dispatch of the medical team, including the dispatch of an advance team comprised of seven members for investigation and implementation of full-scale circuit treatment. Among these, what was especially

notable was the participation in the medical team of two researchers who conducted studies for reconstruction assistance. Those researchers, who were in charge of studies for reconstruction assistance in the medical team, were tasked with assessing the needs of rehabilitation and reconstruction assistance following the emergency relief activities, which led to prompt and smooth reconstruction operation. Ahead of the world, Japan expressed its commitment to rehabilitation and reconstruction assistance that focused on primary and secondary education, health, and water supply, all of which in addition to the team's contribution was highly appreciated by the Indonesian government.

* Based on the Law Concerning the Dispatch of Japan Disaster Relief Team of 1987