

# Response to the Great East Japan Earthquake/Tsunami

## Drawing on JICA's Knowledge, Experience and Network

In response to the unprecedented catastrophe of the Great East Japan Earthquake, JICA made efforts to fulfill its responsibility as a public organization. It took advantage of the knowledge and experience accumulated through JICA's overseas emergency disaster assistance and disaster prevention activities and provided assistance utilizing JICA's human resources, network and facilities.

On the day of the earthquake, JICA established the Emergency Response Headquarters chaired by JICA's President and immediately confirmed the safety of personnel and training participants from overseas. On March 13, in response to the request from Fukushima Prefecture, JICA began accommodating evacuees from areas near the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station at the JICA Nihonmatsu Training Center (JICA Nihonmatsu).

JICA staff were dispatched to support evacuees, whose number increased rapidly. At the early stage of the operation, the staff coordinated a participatory meeting for evacuees (which is an approach used in development projects) and supported to set up the principle of resident autonomy, as well as provided need-based support. At the stage where assistance became necessary to improve the quality of life of the affected people, Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers (JOCVs) and others who had temporarily left the countries

for security reasons, began carrying out volunteer activities in Japan. The volunteers provided continuous support in the areas of health and child care utilizing their experience in developing countries.

To coordinate international assistance from overseas, JICA dispatched eligible members to participate in the teams accepted by the Japanese government: the United Nations Disaster Assessment and Coordination (UNDAC) team and the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA) team. These members contributed to the activities by drawing on the knowledge and network acquired from previous international emergency relief activities. They also supported the activities of an overseas medical team.

Furthermore, JICA provided facilities and dispatched staff with expertise on reconstruction assistance for the activities of NGOs, which played a key role in coordinating citizen-led relief activities.



The words "Gratitude and Departure" are inscribed in remembrance of the commemorative tree planting and cleaning activity by residents who temporarily evacuated to JICA Nihonmatsu Training Center in Fukushima Prefecture.

In order to analyze the information obtained from the affected areas regarding the disaster and to disseminate this information globally, JICA carried out a study in cooperation with Tohoku University\*. In addition, JICA co-hosted the High Level Expert Panel on Water and Disaster on April 28, which was attended by international experts, including the UN Secretary-General and the Governor of Iwate Prefecture (both by video). JICA is also compiling case studies and "lessons learned" regarding the reconstruction process, and is making preparations to disseminate these to the international community as well as to utilize them for supporting developing countries. The following table outlines JICA's other activities, such as relief activities by JICA staff and volunteers, utilization of facilities, provision of supplies, etc.

\* See JICA's website for reports on the study. [http://www.jica.go.jp/english/operations/thematic\\_issues/water/earthquake/index.html](http://www.jica.go.jp/english/operations/thematic_issues/water/earthquake/index.html)

Provision of JICA's Facilities	
Accommodation of people who could not return home due to disruption of transportation services (Tokyo facilities)	JICA's facilities in Ichigaya, Hiroo and Hatagaya were made available to the public for overnight stay.
Accommodation of dialysis patients (JICA Tokyo)	A maximum of 100 patients were accepted at JICA Tokyo.
Accommodation of foreign student evacuees (JICA Osaka)	60 foreign students and their families from the disaster affected areas were temporarily accepted.
Provision of facilities to serve as secondary evacuation centers	Employee housing, Tsukuba International Center, Hiroo Center, and Azabu Institute were placed on the list of available facilities of the Ministry of Finance (Financial Bureau) for secondary evacuation centers.
Assistance to Affected People by the Disaster	
Liaison services for international assistance	JICA supported the activities of the UNDAC team and UNOCHA (provided JICA's facilities and logistical assistance). JICA staff accompanied and supported an overseas medical team.
Shelter for evacuees in Fukushima Prefecture (JICA Nihonmatsu)	JICA Nihonmatsu was made available as an evacuation center upon the request of Fukushima Prefecture. At most 453 people were accepted. JICA staff were continuously dispatched to assist the affected people. JOCVs worked to provide livelihood assistance, including healthcare and child care. Meals were provided using a portion of donations from JICA staff, experts, volunteers and others.
Assistance for operations of Higashi-Matsushima City Evacuation Center in Miyagi Prefecture	JOCVs were dispatched to assist with the operations of the evacuation center. JICA staff were dispatched for the coordination of JOCVs.
Cooperation for Sanriku area through Tono Magokoro Net in Iwate Prefecture	JOCVs, Senior Volunteers, JICA staff and others were dispatched as volunteers (to remove the mud, clean houses, sort supplies, prepare meals, assess the needs, etc.). In addition, JICA staff were dispatched to support the Secretariat of Tono Magokoro Net. Buses of JICA international centers (JICA Tsukuba, Yokohama, Chubu, etc.) were made available for the transportation of volunteers.
Assistance for launch of volunteer information station	JICA staff supported the launch of "Volunteer Station(an information booth)" at Sendai Station for the relief network called "Tasukeai Japan."
Collaboration with NGOs and NPOs	
Provision of JICA Tohoku's conference room for the use of NGOs	Office space of JICA Tohoku in Sendai was offered to the Great East Japan Earthquake Liaison Office of the Japan Platform (JPF) and Japan NGO Center for International Cooperation (JANIC).
Japan Platform (JPF)	JICA staff was dispatched to support its operation.
Japan NGO Center for International Cooperation (JANIC)	JICA staff was dispatched to support its operation.
Sendai-Miyagi NPO Center	JICA staff was dispatched to support its operation.
Other	Facilities were made available for briefing sessions on disaster relief activities and orientation sessions for volunteers, etc. (Global Plaza, JICA Tokyo, Chubu, etc.)
Donations	¥54.54 million in donations collected from JICA employees, experts, volunteers, officials and others in Japan and developing countries was donated to the three affected prefectures and JANIC.
Messages from the World	Over 3,000 messages received from 100 developing countries (words of condolence, sympathy and encouragement, appreciation for Japan's assistance to date, pledges of cooperation for Japan's reconstruction, etc.) were placed on display at JICA Nihonmatsu and Higashi-Matsushima City, as well as at JICA's other Domestic Offices, some prefectural international associations, Saitama Prefectural Education Center, "Global Festa"(annual festival for international cooperation held in Tokyo) and other locations. A special exhibit related to the disaster, titled "The World is Connected," was held at the Global Plaza.
Compilation of Reconstruction-Related Lessons Learned and Preparations for Their Global Dissemination	
The High Level Expert Panel on Water and Disaster	Held in Tokyo on April 28, 2011.
Third Session of the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction	JICA participated in the meeting held in Geneva on May 13, 2011.