

Response to the Great East Japan Earthquake Disaster

Drawing on JICA's Knowledge, Experience and Network

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

For the recovery and reconstruction stage of its activities, JICA established the Office for Great East Japan Earthquake Disaster. This office coordinates activities covering many departments inside of JICA and organizations outside of JICA, gathers, organizes and stores information to facilitate efficient and effective activities backed by the entire organization. The office also prepared information about lessons that can be learned from reconstruction programs following other major disasters in Japan. In addition, this office distributed in Japan and overseas information about case studies concerning disaster recovery in developing countries where JICA provided support and about knowledge gained from these activities. The aim is to utilize this knowledge to assist developing countries.

Emergency response stage

On the day of the earthquake, JICA established the Emergency Response Headquarters chaired by JICA's President. The Headquarters acted immediately to assist people in the Tokyo area who could not return to their homes, provide emergency supplies, serve kidney dialysis patients at JICA Tokyo International Training Center, find shelter for foreign exchange students, and provide other forms of assistance. In addition, JICA Nihonmatsu Volunteers Training Center, 50km from Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant, became an evacuation shelter for Fukushima Prefecture, serving as a place where people could stay and receive assistance.

JICA Tokyo International Training Center was used as the base for the United Nations Disaster Assessment and Coordination (UNDAC) team that was accepted by the Japanese government. We also provided staff members to help with the activities of this team. JICA staff members accompanied a medical team from Israel to coordinate their activities and provide support. Overall, JICA played a part in cooperation for support from other countries by using its knowledge and networks gained from international emergency assistance activities.

Recovery and reconstruction stage

JICA sent staff members with experience in support for recovery activities to NPOs and helped coordinate activities with government agencies, companies, universities and other organizations. In addition, JICA Tohoku Branch Office provided office space to NGOs. Activities like these allowed JICA to assist in recovery programs by extending support to NGOs and NPOs.

JICA analyzed disaster prevention and response information in areas damaged by the Great East Japan Earthquake Disaster. University studies and research were then performed in order to distribute information about lessons learned to other countries. JICA is holding international conferences that are attended by well-known people and experts from Japan and overseas. The purpose is to show that lessons learned from the Great East Japan Earthquake Disaster are serious issues on a global scale as well as in Japan.

JICA has accumulated experience over approximately the past decade in supporting disaster recovery activities in developing countries, including aid following earthquakes in Turkey and Indonesia. JICA wants to use knowledge gained from activities to recover from the Great East Japan Earthquake Disaster to improve assistance provided in the future when a disaster occurs.



JICA personnel were sent to assist with recovery activities in areas damaged by the earthquake and tsunami.