

# Emergency Disaster Relief

## Regaining as Many Smiles as Possible

### ● The JICA Emergency Disaster Support System

JICA is responsible for executing Japan's disaster relief operations in response to requests from the governments of affected countries or international organizations following large-scale disasters. JICA has two forms of assistance: dispatch of a Japan Disaster Relief (JDR) Team and provision of emergency relief supplies.

JDR is composed of five units: rescue team, medical team, infectious diseases response team, expert team, and the Self-Defense Force unit. The decision to dispatch a JDR team is made by the Minister of Foreign Affairs based on the request of the affected country and consultation among the governmental organizations concerned. JICA takes charge of JDR operations. JICA is also in charge of providing emergency relief supplies.

### ● Operations of the Secretariat of Japan Disaster Relief Teams

#### 1. Dispatch of JDR Teams

The Secretariat of JDR at JICA is in charge of the administrative work of disaster relief operation for overseas afflicted areas. When the Japanese government decides to dispatch a JDR Team, the Secretariat of JDR organizes the team members. In addition to arranging flights for the team and organizing cargo, the secretariat sends a team of JICA personnel for logistics support and provides various other types of support so that team members are ensured of smooth operations in the field. Among the JDR teams, the rescue team and the medical team are most often dispatched.

A JDR rescue team searches for and rescues people affected by large-scale disasters abroad. JDR rescue teams are classified in the International Search and Rescue Advisory Group's (INSARAG) external classification as "heavy," or the highest rank, in 2010. In March 2015, the teams also passed the qualification test, which is conducted every five years.

A JDR medical team provides medical assistance to disaster-affected people. The team used to provide only primary care

involving outpatient services. In response to the diversified needs of affected countries, now the team is capable of meeting advanced medical needs, including performing surgeries and dialysis and providing hospitalization services. An electronic record system called JDR MOS was built in fiscal 2014, making it possible to streamline medical treatment and expedite data collection procedures.

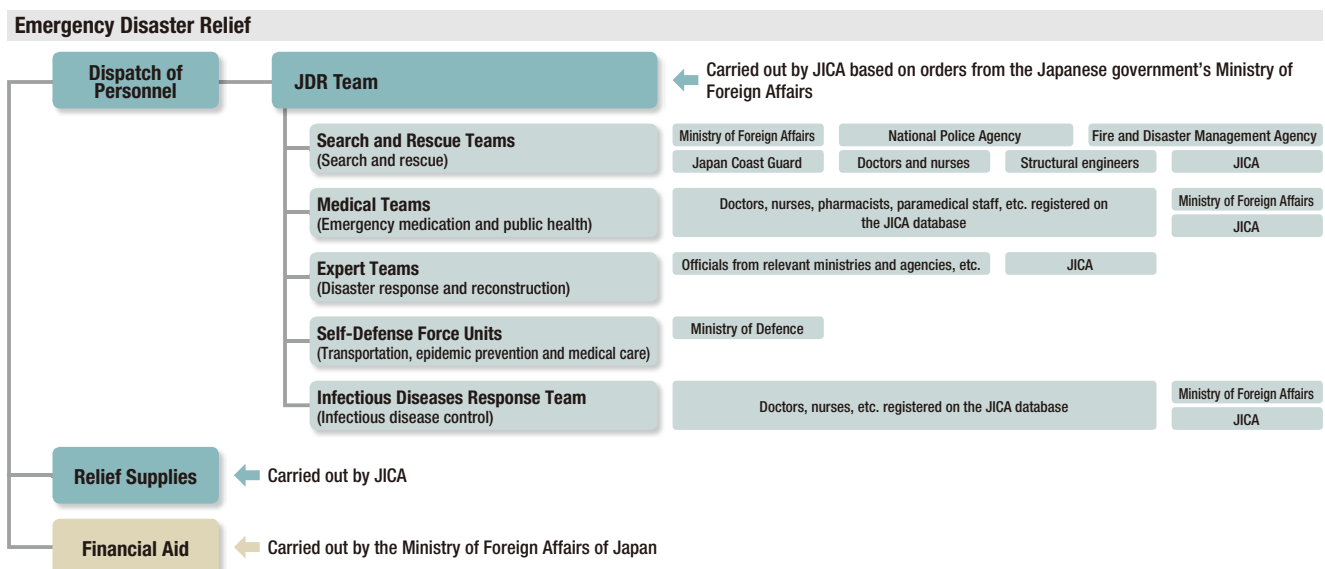
Furthermore, taking into account the response to Ebola hemorrhagic fever that spread in West Africa in 2014, an infectious diseases response team was newly organized in October 2015 to provide more effective medical assistance in the event of a global epidemic of an infectious disease. JICA established the new team for the first time in about 20 years since a Japan Self-Defense Forces unit joined JDR in 1992. This team is expected to provide medical assistance in a wide range of areas related to infectious disease control.

#### 2. Provision of Emergency Relief Supplies

In order to provide affected areas with emergency relief supplies in a quick and secure manner, Secretariat of JDR procures and stores them beforehand, and keeps a stockpile of such supplies in its warehouses at three locations around the world and at United Nations Humanitarian Response Depots (UNHRD). Moreover, in fiscal 2015, on-site storage warehouses were newly established in the Pacific region. In the same fiscal year, JICA made a total of ten in-kind contributions including support for the drought damage in the Marshall Islands, the cyclone damage in Fiji, and other natural disasters.

#### 3. Preparation for Emergency Response in Peacetime

In order to enable JDR teams to deliver prompt and appropriate assistance in times of large-scale disasters, it is essential to maintain readiness in normal times. To this end, JICA provides various kinds of training throughout the year to build the capacity of candidate JDR team members.



The rescue team conducts a 48-hour comprehensive drill in searching and rescuing survivors from under the rubble in a simulated setting. The medical team provides introductory training for aspiring registration applicants. Two times a year, it also offers intermediate-level specialized training as part of its efforts to improve skills and knowledge in disaster medicine.

With regard to donor coordination, the Secretariat of JDR has been working to strengthen relationships with other international organizations concerned, including the United Nations Office for

the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA) and the World Health Organization (WHO).

Recent years have seen more and larger natural disasters in the world. Accordingly, international disaster relief operations by Japan, a disaster-prone country with vast experience in disaster management, is increasing in importance. The Secretariat of JDR is strengthening cooperation with different departments and sections to provide seamless assistance for rehabilitation and reconstruction after emergency response.

#### Emergency Disaster Relief in Fiscal 2015: 15 cases

No	Date disaster occurred	Country/region	Type of disaster	Type of relief	Supplies provided
1	April 2015	Micronesia	Typhoon	Provision of supplies	Water purifiers, potable jerry can
2	April 2015	Nepal	Earthquake	Search and Rescue team	72 people
3	April 2015	Nepal	Earthquake	Medical team (1st team)	46 people
4	May 2015	Nepal	Earthquake	Medical team (2nd team)	34 people
5	April 2015	Nepal	Earthquake	Self-Defense Force team	149 people
6	April 2015	Nepal	Earthquake	Provision of supplies	Tents, blankets
7	June 2015	Ghana	Flooding	Provision of supplies	Blankets, sleeping pads, plastic sheets
8	August 2015	Myanmar	Flooding	Provision of supplies	Blankets, sleeping pads, plastic sheets
9	September 2015	Dominica	Flooding	Provision of supplies	Water purifiers, generators, water tanks
10	September 2015	Myanmar	Flooding	Provision of supplies	Mosquito nets
11	October 2015	Indonesia	Fire and smoke pollution	Provision of supplies	Fire-extinguishers
12	October 2015	Indonesia	Fire and smoke pollution	Expert team	1 person
13	February 2016	Taiwan	Earthquake	Provision of supplies	Plastic sheets, potable jerry can
14	February 2016	Fiji	Cyclone	Provision of supplies	Tents, sleeping pads, plastic sheets, generators
15	March 2016	Marshall	Drought	Provision of supplies	Water purifiers, potable jerry can

#### Case Study **Nepal: Dispatch of a Japan Disaster Relief Team to Address Earthquake Damage**

### JICA Dispatched a Rescue Team and a Medical Team Simultaneously

**An earthquake of magnitude 7.8 hit Nepal on April 25, 2015, widely inflicting enormous damage on the capital Kathmandu and other areas. At the request of the Nepalese government, JICA dispatched a Japan Disaster Relief Team immediately after the earthquake.**

#### **The First Dispatch of JDR Medical Team for Field Hospital Performing Surgical Operations on Seriously Ill Patients**

The dispatch of a rescue team was decided on the day of the earthquake, and a total of 70 rescue team members and four rescue dogs left Japan the following day. After arriving in Nepal, the rescue team consulted with the Nepalese government, international organizations, and other entities for necessary adjustments and conducted search and rescue activities in temples around the former royal palace in Kathmandu. After that, the Japan rescue team, allocated to a part of the ancient city of

Bhaktapur, continued energetically working on search and rescue activities there. The government and people of Nepal highly evaluated and acknowledged the contributions of the rescue team.

Following the rescue team, it was also decided to dispatch a medical team. The medical team first provided medical assistance in hospitals in Kathmandu and then carried out medical treatment activities in the village of Barabise, three hours northeast of Kathmandu. Barabise is a small village in a mountainous area with poor access to medical services. The only hospital in the village where surgical operations can be performed was also afflicted. When the med-

ical team started providing medical treatment, residents who were injured in the earthquake formed a long line for medical care.

This dispatch program was the first case in the more than 30-year history of the medical team. The functions of the medical team were enhanced so as to be capable of performing surgical operations, providing dialysis treatment, and setting up hospital wards. There was a little boy among the seriously ill patients who received a surgical operation by the medical team. His right arm was fractured in the rubble of a collapsed building, and there was a risk that his arm would become nonfunctional without receiving adequate medical treatment. His life might have been greatly changed if a surgical operation had not been performed. In this way, the Japan medical team played an enormous role in providing medical assistance for the village with many seriously ill patients and extremely limited access to medical services.

In conjunction with the emergency assistance, JICA also commenced a new support program that takes into account post-disaster rehabilitation and reconstruction as well as disaster prevention measures in peacetime. Learning from past disasters, JICA will continuously provide various types of assistance in cooperation with the Nepalese government to prevent the same tragedy from being repeated

[ → see the Case Study on page 91].



Search and rescue activity



Surgical operation in the medical tent