

Response to the Great East Japan Earthquake

New Initiatives for Information Sharing, Collaboration, and Mutual Reconstruction

JICA has continuously supported the people and areas affected by the Great East Japan Earthquake in the past five years, starting immediately after the disaster occurrence on March 11, 2011. In fiscal 2015, JICA's efforts were centered on sharing and disseminating information through opportunities that include JICA training and international conferences, promotion of joint

reconstruction projects in collaboration with local governments of disaster-affected areas, and human resources development.

JICA plays a role in communicating valuable knowledge and experiences of reconstruction after the earthquake to developing countries, and at the same time, JICA continues to conduct projects in the Tohoku area to contribute to local revitalization.

Dissemination of Reconstruction Processes and Lessons Learned, and Collaboration with Local Governments of Disaster-Affected Areas

Participation in the 2016 Sendai Symposium for Disaster Risk Reduction and the Future

As a follow-up event one year after the Third UN World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction that was held in Sendai in March 2015, the 2016 Sendai Symposium for Disaster Risk Reduction and the Future was held in March 2016, hosted by the City of Sendai.

JICA reported on the "build back better" efforts that had taken place after Typhoon Yolanda, which hit the Philippines in 2013, and after Nepal Earthquake in 2015, as well as on the lessons-learned in the areas affected by the 2011 Great East Japan Earthquake. Meanwhile,



Theme session hosted by JICA

Higashimatsushima City in Miyagi Prefecture reported on its "Future City" Initiative, specific measures to "build back better," and relationships and collaboration with overseas entities fostered through experiences of the earthquake.

Signing a Memorandum of Cooperation with Higashimatsushima City

After the Great East Japan Earthquake, Higashimatsushima City has been working on reconstruction, together with stakeholders that include the citizens, administrators, universities, and the private sector, and has globally disseminated and shared knowledge and lessons learned through the reconstruction process in collaboration with JICA. The city's activities involved accepting visits by interested parties such as JICA training participants, implementation of the JICA Partnership Program aimed at joint reconstruction effort with the City of Banda Aceh in Indonesia, which had been affected by the 2004 Indian Ocean earthquake and tsunami, and assistance for reconstruction of the island of Leyte and Samar in the Philippines, an area affected by Typhoon Yolanda.

Based on these collaborations, JICA signed a Memorandum of Cooperation with Higashimatsushima City in July 2015. By strengthening collaboration with Higashimatsushima's "build back better" initiative, JICA aims to contribute to the development of developing countries as well as promoting further revitalization and reconstruction of Higashimatsushima.

Promoting Reconstruction in Disaster-Affected Areas, and Sharing and Accumulating Experiences

Promoting Reconstruction in Disaster-Affected Areas

Since August 2011, JICA has been dispatching former JICA volunteers as Reconstruction Facilitators to the Miyato and Nobiru areas of Higashimatsushima City. The Facilitators carry out their missions along with reconstruction of the areas by making use of their experiences in international cooperation.

Furthermore, under the Cooperation Agreement with the Reconstruction Agency and the Japan Overseas Cooperative Association, JICA started dispatching former JICA volunteers to Iwate, Miyagi, and Fukushima prefectures as support administrative officers for municipalities in January, 2013. The aggregate number of volunteers that have been dispatched is 117 as of March 2016.

New Attempts Include Workshops with JICA Training Participants

Local governments of Iwate, Fukushima, and Miyagi prefectures have accepted visits by JICA training participants to disaster-affected areas and conducted explanations on reconstruction programs. Aggregate totals reached 230 cases and 3,703 participants from fiscal 2012 through 2015.

In fiscal 2015, JICA started a new program under the theme of women's participation in disaster prevention with seven Asian countries, consisting of Indonesia, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Nepal, Bangladesh, the Philippines, and Viet Nam, and held a workshop in Sendai City with local female leaders active in the field of disaster prevention.

Meanwhile, new attempts had also started, as seen in the example

of participants from Colombia, a country where assistance for the IDPs (internal displaced persons) to return to their original residential areas has been big challenges. Participants visited and exchanged their experiences with the local residents and administrative officers in Iwaki City, Fukushima Prefecture about the collaborative efforts made by the old and new residents and the administrative officers for reconstruction from the complex disaster of earthquake, tsunami, and the severe nuclear power plant accident.

Making Experiences of Reconstruction an Advantage for Tohoku

The Miyagi Roundtable for Disaster Risk Reduction and Risk Management was established by Tohoku University, Kahoku Shimpo Publishing, the City of Sendai, Tohoku Electric Power, and other organizations in 2015. This is an initiative to share research and efforts among those who are locally involved in disaster management, such as private sector, government, academia, the mass media, and citizens' groups, aiming at continuing the collection and dissemination activities of lessons learned from the earthquake, in which JICA also participates as a member.

Through collaboration with various initiatives in Tohoku, as mentioned above, JICA will continue to share invaluable experiences of disaster management and reconstruction from the Great East Japan Earthquake to countries working on reconstruction from disasters and conflicts, and to countries that plan to develop suitable disaster management schemes.