

# Emergency Disaster Relief

## Taking Back as Many Smiles as Possible

### The JICA Emergency Disaster Support System

JICA dispatches Japan Disaster Relief (JDR) teams and provides emergency relief supplies when major disasters occur overseas, in response to requests received from the governments of affected countries or international agencies.

JDR is composed of five teams: 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.

### Operations of the Secretariat of Japan Disaster Relief Team

#### 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 JDR Secretariat 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, the medical team, and the infectious diseases response team are typical ones.

A JDR rescue team searches for and rescues people affected by large-scale disasters abroad. The JDR rescue team is classified in the International Search and Rescue Advisory Group's (INSARAG) external classification as "heavy," or the highest rank.

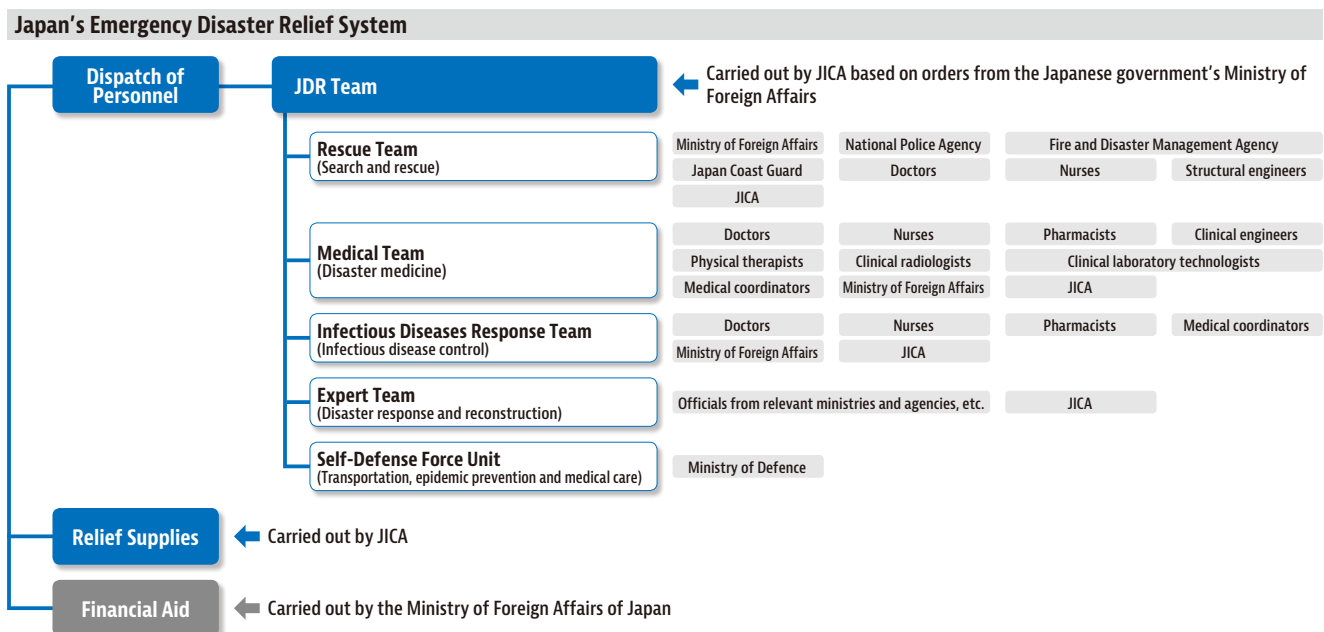
In September 2017, a rescue team was dispatched to Mexico in the wake of an earthquake and worked through the night to engage in search and rescue operations there.

A JDR medical team provides medical assistance to disaster-affected people. In October 2016, the team was certified by the World Health Organization (WHO) as an emergency medical team (EMT). In February 2017, the disaster medical information standardization method called Minimum Data Set (MDS), which was developed by the EMT MDS Working Group led by JDR-JICA was adopted by WHO as an international standard. The MDS was first put to practical use in international relief operations for the cyclone disaster that hit Mozambique in March 2019, with the support of a JDR expert team.

In response to global epidemics of infectious diseases, an infectious diseases response team was established in October 2015, and JICA recruited team members and provided training sessions. The first dispatch was in July 2016 to address the outbreak of yellow fever in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). In June 2018, JICA sent such a team to the DRC to fight against the Ebola outbreak there [ → see the case study on page 59].

#### 2. Provision of Emergency Relief Supplies

In order to provide affected areas with emergency relief supplies in a quick and secure manner, the Secretariat of JDR procures and stores them beforehand, and keeps a stockpile of such supplies in its warehouses at six locations around the world. In fiscal 2018, JICA provided such supplies on 11 occasions of various natural disasters, including a volcanic eruption in Guatemala; an earthquake in Indonesia; flooding or water



**Emergency Disaster Relief in Fiscal 2018: 15 cases**

No	Date disaster occurred	Country/region	Type of disaster	Type of relief	Number of persons dispatched/ supplies provided
1	May 2018	Djibouti	Cyclone	Provision of supplies	Tents, blankets, portable jerry cans, sleeping pads
2	June 2018	Democratic Republic of the Congo	Ebola virus disease	Infectious diseases response team	14 people
3	June 2018	Guatemala	Volcanic eruption	Provision of supplies	Tents, sleeping pads, generators
4	July 2018	Laos	Water damage	Provision of supplies	Tents, blankets, water purifiers, flocculants
5	August 2018	Myanmar	Flooding	Provision of supplies	Tents, water tanks
6	August 2018	Democratic Republic of the Congo	Ebola virus disease	Provision of supplies	Tents, goggles, footwear, face masks
7	September 2018	Democratic Republic of the Congo	Ebola virus disease	Additional provision of supplies	Equipment for epidemiological surveillance and laboratory diagnosis
8	October 2018	Indonesia	Earthquake	Self-Defense Force unit	74 people (One C-130H transport aircraft)
9	October 2018	Indonesia	Earthquake	Provision of supplies	Tents, generators, cord reels, water purifiers, flocculants
10	March 2019	Malawi	Flooding	Provision of supplies	Tents, blankets, plastic sheets, sleeping pads
11	March 2019	Afghanistan	Flooding	Provision of supplies	Tents, blankets, plastic sheets, portable jerry cans
12	March 2019	Mozambique	Cyclone	Expert team	2 people
13	March 2019	Mozambique	Cyclone	Medical team	27 people
14	March 2019	Mozambique	Cyclone	Provision of supplies	Blankets, plastic sheets, portable jerry cans, water purifiers, flocculants
15	March 2019	Zimbabwe	Cyclone	Provision of supplies	Tents, plastic sheets, portable jerry cans, water purifiers, flocculants, generators

damage in Laos, Myanmar, Malawi, and Afghanistan; the Ebola outbreak in the DRC; and cyclones in Djibouti, Mozambique, and Zimbabwe.

**3. Preparation for Emergency Response at Ordinary Times**

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.

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 WHO. Through the Project for Strengthening the ASEAN Regional Capacity on Disaster Health Management (ARCH Project) led by the JICA Infrastructure and Peacebuilding Department, JICA also contributes to development and capacity building of the disaster medicine cooperation system in the ASEAN region.

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.

**Democratic Republic of the Congo: Dispatching the JDR Infectious Diseases Response Team following the Ebola Outbreak**



**To contribute to preventing the spread of Ebola to the capital city of Kinshasa**



A quarantine station along the Congo River

On May 29, 2018, JICA dispatched a team of experts to the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) to assess the outbreak of the Ebola virus disease. The assessment team found that measures taken to prevent the spread of the Ebola virus were inadequate, as people were fleeing by boat along the Congo River from Équateur Province, where infections had been confirmed, to the capital city, Kinshasa, with a population of over 13 million. More assistance was also needed for conducting laboratory work at Kinshasa.

Accordingly, the Japanese government dispatched a JDR infectious diseases response team of 14 experts to the DRC for the June 11–30 period. In Kinshasa, the team

provided technical assistance to strengthen the Ebola surveillance system and laboratory confirmation capabilities, with focus on strengthening the quarantine system along the Congo River, training domestic quarantine officers, and supporting data management.

JICA has been extending consistent assistance in the health sector to the DRC since 2008. This is the second dispatch of a JDR infectious diseases response team to the DRC. The first dispatch was made in 2016 to address the outbreak of yellow fever. The first team supported testing and diagnostic activities and vaccination campaigns in the country.