

The 2011 Great Eastern Japan Earthquake

(GLIDE: EQ-2011-000028-JPN)



Situation Report 17

2011.07.11

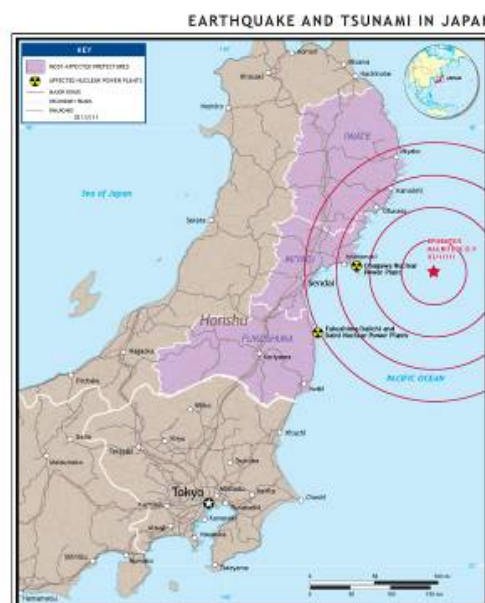


Source: "Reuters/ALY SONG, courtesy Trust.org - AlertNet"

I. Overview

- 35,708 people still in evacuation shelter
- Construction of temporary shelters almost on schedule; life still difficult for many people
- Further support for vulnerable children needed
- Hot temperature slowing reconstruction process
- Many NGOs still on the ground, continuing various operations

With the massive earthquake and the following tsunamis recorded on 11 March 2011 (14:46 JST), the death toll reached 15,550 today. The total number of those killed and missing is now 20,894. After 4 months from the disaster 5,344 people are still missing.



SOURCE: GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION UNIT, USAID/DCHA/OFDA

In the hard-hit areas, 9,300 people in Miyagi, 4,584 in Iwate and 1,600 in Fukushima Prefecture died in the disaster. There are 35,708 evacuees still staying in 1,041 evacuation shelters in the three Prefectures. Construction of temporary shelters is gearing up to meet the demands of 50,000 units. Throughout Japan, 99,236 people are currently taking refuge to evacuation shelters, temporary shelters, relatives, public accommodations.

According to the latest Cabinet Office report, 12 local railway routes are not available, yet all 13 airports including Sendai are in operation. As for the damage on coastal levees, 190km out of 300km along the coast line of Iwate, Miyagi and Fukushima were fully or partially damaged. 561 square km were inundated.

Children remain vulnerable. There are more than 200 orphans who lost both of their parents. Private sectors, individuals are funding some children rather than the support by the government. At schools, some children are not fully fed in municipalities where cooking facilities are damaged.

Hot weather continues in the affected Tohoku area (35C +) and is hampering clearing activities due to deterioration of health of the people. The hot temperature is also causing hygiene issue where many seafood processing factories were damaged and left massive amount of rotten fish. Pest control is an urgent issue.

Activities of NGOs and volunteers continue. The operations vary as to meet the shifting demands. Debris and mud clearance still continues after 4 months from the disaster. As people started to live in temporary shelters, monitoring people's health is more difficult because it is assumed that some residents especially the aged at the temporary shelter will hesitate to go outside. And places of their work have not been activated yet so that there are still many jobless victims. Stronger focus on mental health and job creation are another serious issue.

Aftershocks are still recorded, expanding the areas of epi-centers outside of Tohoku.

This report will further include the following information: 1) Situation of Temporary Shelters, 2) Situation of Children, and 3) Situation of NGOs and Volunteers.

As part of our response to the Great Eastern earthquake, SEEDS Asia is supporting the affected communities by compiling humanitarian information on the ground in the affected area to be disseminated to the greater humanitarian community. It has also started community-based rehabilitation work in Kesen'numa with local partners funded by Church World Service.

Please refer to our latest in-depth reports by at our website:

<http://seedsasia.org/eng/projects-japan.html>

II. Situation of Temporary Shelters

More than 50,000 temporary fabricated shelters are demanded in affected areas. As of 11 July, nearly 38,000 units are completed (76%). 9,000 units are currently under construction. While overall number of shelters is already completed or under construction, the official plan for the completion of all the temporary shelters by mid August will not likely be achieved (press conference by Minister Ohata on 08 July).

As of 8 July, a total of 36,731 units are completed in Iwate, Miyagi and Fukushima Prefectures. The number covers 71% for the total demand. While more than 37,000 evacuees are still staying in the evacuation centers, only 64% of the temporary houses are currently occupied¹.

¹ Mainichi news online article: 10 July, 2011, <http://mainichi.jp/select/weathernews/news/20110710k0000m040077000c.html>

Figure 1: Number of temporary shelters needed, start constructed, and completed by major affected prefectures as of 11 July²

	Iwate	Miyagi	Fukushima
Total units needed	13,833	22,435	14,000
Construction started	13,833	19,918	13,487
Completed units	11,527	15,985	10,135

Figure2: Number of completed temporary shelters and their occupancy ration by the affected Prefectures as of 7 July.

	Iwate*	Miyagi*	Fukushima*
Completed units	9,919	15,756	9,212
Occupied units	7,181	9,619	5,533
Occupancy ratio	72%	61%	60%

*Data collected for Iwate: 1 July, Miyagi/Fukushima: 7 July 2011. Chart generated from the Mainichi news article.

Some municipalities are behind the schedule for application and selection process. The three prefectures also provide public apartments for affected families. 18,884 units in Miyagi and 16,250 in Fukushima (07 July), and 2,939 in Iwate (08 July)³ are occupied and it is considered as one of the reasons for low occupancy rate for the temporary shelters.

For places where lands are submerged, finding physical spaces to build the temporary shelters is difficult and people are hesitant to live in those areas. A town in Miyagi prefecture approved to build the temporary shelters in already inundated area. The area is 2km away from the coast line but still accessible to higher grounds in times of disasters. However, there are some cases that the affected families are hesitant to live in those temporary shelters.

Issues around temporary shelters

Lives of those staying at the temporary fabricated shelters gradually settled and various issues started to emerge.

² For detailed numbers by cities, town and others, please refer to the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism: <http://www.mlit.go.jp/common/000140307.pdf>

³ Mainichi news, 09 July 2011:

<http://mainichi.jp/select/weathernews/news/20110710k0000m040077000c.html>

The temporary shelters were built in urgent manner and sometimes do not meet the basic demands. For example, in some shelters, there are gaps in between walls or foundation. A town in Kamaishi city, Iwate Prefecture, residents are suffering from ants. Local government office distributed pest control repellents but not all the residents are using the chemical due to concern for their health, especially for the little ones.

Generally, the fabricated shelters are used for many times. Some are living in the pre-used ones and some are living in newly built ones. The residents will face harsh summer. When the cold season arrives, the problem will be more serious. Residents show their concerns if they will be able to live in the shelters for two years.

Some show their concerns that the places where the shelters are built are not safe for high tides or tsunamis. Or the temporary shelters are simply not convenient for the affected families including commute to work and schools.

Strong community ties of the affected area are somewhat fragile as many families are separated from each other. Those who are now in the temporary houses share their senses of isolation. This is found among mainly seniors who have stronger connections with their neighbors. They developed strong ties through hardships and daily lives at evacuation shelters.

After the Great Hanshin Earthquake, more than 230 people were found dead at the temporary shelters without anyone noticing. NGOs and volunteers are trying to reach those living alone. Home visits and community gathering at these shelters are arranged, however, some cases of such death are reported.

III. Situation of Children

Orphans

The Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare reported⁴ that there are more than 200 orphans under age of 18 in Miyagi, Iwate and Fukushima Prefectures who lost both parents (including those still missing), major news reported. There are 101 in Miyagi, 82 (88) in Iwate, and 18 in Fukushima. The hard-hit areas in Miyagi list 37 in Ishinomaki, 19 in Natori, and 12 in Kesen'numa.

⁴ Report of the Ministry on 06 July quoted yet primary information not available at the time of reporting.

In Iwate Prefecture, total number of orphans who lost both parents marks 88. Children under 18 years old who lost one of their parents are 382 (data as of 24 June 2011 by Iwate Prefecture). In Fukushima, there are more than 100 children who lost one of their parents.

Local municipalities are promoting application of existing support system in addition to those funds collected through various schemes. For examples, Soma city, Fukushima prefecture decided to provide financial support for children under 18 who lost both or one parent(s). The city recently handed first monthly grant for 48 children. Miyagi prefecture is currently planning to set up a special support funds for the children who lost both/one parent(s) in order to effectively distribute the donations collected from private sectors, organizations and individuals.

School Meal

After 4 months from the disaster, some school children are still hungry at school. 13 municipalities in the affected area are still not able to provide “full school lunch meal” which meet nutritious standard set by the government. This is due to damages caused to *kyushoku centers*, collective school kitchens and availability of raw foods.

Currently the local governments are utilizing private lunch box services and support from NGOs. Concerns for nutritious balance and continuity remain high. In Ishinomaki city and Minamisanriku, the situation will not likely improve even after school summer holiday. Currently schools in both municipalities are supported by NGOs.

IV. Situation of NGOs/Volunteers

Due to the scale of the disaster, reconstruction and rehabilitation process will take time. After 4 months from the disaster, relief operations still continue at some places including distribution of food. Many NGOs are working in the affected area with support from volunteers. Volunteer centers are established in local municipalities to accept and coordinate volunteers. There are 24 centers in Iwate, 12 in Miyagi and 30 in Fukushima. Most of the centers have their own website that are usually run in Japanese. As of the end of June, the total numbers of volunteers who were engaged are 130,300 in Iwate, 267,900 in Miyagi, 84,500 in Fukushima. At least 43 NGOs from 16 countries are known to have arrived in Japan to date according to the Cabinet Office.

Japan Platform (JPF) and Japan NGO Center for International Cooperation (JANIC) collaboratively compile activities of their member NGOs working in the affected Tohoku region. OCHA post “Who What Where” maps of the affected area based on the information provided by JPF/JANIC. Both reports and maps are available on ReliefWeb site: <http://reliefweb.int/taxonomy/term/6861>

V. Contact Information

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SEEDS Asia takes an integrated and interlinked approach to disaster management and environmental conservation within the overall umbrella of human security, to ensure safer communities in the Asia Pacific region.

A registered non-profit organization located in Kobe, Japan, members of SEEDS Asia come from a broad range of backgrounds that are collectively pooled to promote community-based disaster management.

SEEDS Asia worked in Indonesia, Maldives, Myanmar, Pakistan, Vietnam and Japan.