

Japan

I Year Update

March 2012

Japan Earthquake and Tsunami: One Year Later

On the afternoon of March 11, 2011, a 9.0 magnitude earthquake struck the Pacific Coast of Japan. It was the most powerful earthquake in Japan's recorded history, triggering a massive tsunami with waves up to 40 meters in height that engulfed entire towns.

The Pacific coast of Tōhoku region (northeastern Japan) and the area around the city of Sendai were the most affected. Over 20,000 people lost their lives and tens of thousands were displaced when their homes were destroyed. The earthquake also damaged nuclear reactors which leaked radio-activity for the months following, requiring 200,000 more people to evacuate.

In the wake of this crisis, the Christian Reformed World Relief Committee (CRWRC) supporters gave generously. By the end of December 2011, \$1,161,888 had been raised for CRWRC's response. Using these funds, CRWRC partnered with Christian Reformed Japan Mission — the Japan branch of Christian

Reformed World Missions (CRWM), the Reformed Church of Japan (RCJ), Japan International Food for the Hungry (JIFH) and Christian Relief Assistance Support and Hope Japan (CRASH) to provide immediate food assistance, emergency supplies, and trauma counseling. In addition, CRWRC and CRWM have been sending volunteers from North America to work alongside Japanese volunteers in mucking out houses and repairing homes and churches.

On the following pages are a few highlights of what has happened through this ministry over the past year. CRWRC will continue its disaster response work in Japan for another two years, working in a close partnership with CRWM staff on the field. Please continue to support this ministry with your prayers as CRWRC helps the people of Japan to rebuild their lives and regain hope!

The Reformed Church of Japan reaches out

Partnerships have been very important in the Japan earthquake response. Larry Spalink, who works for CRWM and acts as Field Leader for the Christian Reformed Japan Mission (CRJM), brought together four cooperating missions in a unique collaboration.

As they worked together to meet physical, emotional and spiritual needs of those impacted by this disaster, God's love was made evident. Mr. M is a great example. He recently wrote to the Nagoya Iwanoue Reformed Church to thank them for their support.

"I am delighted to think of your good health and activities," Mr. M. said. "Last year, after the March 11th disaster, you came quickly to us and I was thankful for the warmth you made me feel at that time. I am hanging in there these days with my family. My teenage son has been unable to continue his studies since September, and his condition is improving little by little every day as he continues treatment."

"When the disaster struck on March 11, it left me broken-hearted and without hope," said another disaster survivor. "But receiving so much support and assistance from so many people, I have been enabled to rediscover my will to live, and I am so thankful to everyone. The other day, Pastor H. came and delivered the goods I had asked for. I am using these to prepare to face the cold of winter. I thank you for your care to respond to my requests. It is due to all of your kindness that I have been able to realize the value of my life and once more to take care of myself. I will cherish this feeling of gratitude as I resolve anew to live carefully the life that has been spared. Thank you everyone so much!"

The investment of time and effort that has been made by these various Christian groups is having



Each day before the clean-up and construction work, the group would open with a prayer.

Japan Earthquake Response At A Glance

- Worked with four main partners: Christian Reformed Japan Mission (CRJM), The Reformed Church of Japan (RCJ), Japan International Food for the Hungry (JIFH), and Christian Relief Assistance Support and Hope Japan (CRASH)
- Daily food and emergency supplies were distributed to evacuation centers and homes helping 100 families each day
- First aid kits were distributed to 600 families living in temporary housing
- An experienced trauma counselor who had served as a missionary in Japan and spoke Japanese was deployed
- A series of pastoral seminars were held focusing on grief counseling
- 4 summer camps were held for children impacted by the disaster
- 240 homes were mucked out and/or repaired by volunteer work teams
- Three CRWM staff members received special trauma recovery counselor training

an immediate impact as it meets needs in the community, but it is also strengthening the perception of Christianity in a country where there is only a very small Christian population.

"The plan is to set up two community centers near Sendai and provide ongoing assistance for up to two years" says Wayne de Jong, CRWRC Director of Disaster Response and Rehabilitation. "These centers will provide families with continued trauma care and counseling as well as special programs for children and the elderly."

Ministry through Home Repair:

During the fall of 2011, CRWRC sent four teams of North American volunteers to Japan. These 20 volunteers were led by experienced carpenters and worked alongside Japanese volunteers to muck out and repair damaged houses.

The collaboration with local volunteers was especially exciting. Structured volunteerism is very new to Japanese society. The joint effort of North American and Japanese volunteers working side-by-side provides mutual encouragement and support.

To date, 240 homes and churches have been cleared out and repaired by these teams. Five additional teams will be sent between April and August 2012.

Volunteer Story from Team #4

By Elaine Sharringa

I would like to tell you about one of the most fabulous days of our trip. We had been talking about the fruits of the Spirit. During the work day, we were invited to a dedication for a finished house. It was quite spectacular and very spiritually moving. God was certainly present.

The homeowners — a family who had witnessed the tsunami — were standing there, listening to the men who helped rebuild their house say their goodbyes. The wife had seen the tsunami coming and had just enough time to grab her little boy and escape to safety. Their house was completely ransacked by all of the water, causing havoc with the walls and their belongings. But now everything was completely restored — neat and clean.

Many local Japanese and international volunteers had helped rebuild their house. These volunteers were very proud and pleased to be able to bring a smile to the face of this couple, although the tears of joy were mixed with tears of grief from the reality of the disaster. All around us we could see living examples and houses that are still broken.

The dedication was such a wonderful way to give their house back. We arrived there with the other volunteers and sang “What a friend we have in Jesus” and “Jesus loves me.” Then we prayed with the family. A minister came as well and gave a mini-sermon. There was such fellowship in the room — we were all one with one purpose together in Christ.

There were tears in many eyes. Words cannot describe this moment. It was exactly what this whole mission is about...the all important task of being the hands and feet of Jesus.

The Japanese are still struggling and are in need. Many people are still devastated and depressed, and they cannot imagine what their life will be in the future. They have a hard time knowing what to do and even finding the energy to start. I pray that the important work of this ministry will continue.



Volunteer Team #1

Volunteer Story from Team #1

By Iona Buisman, CRWRC's Global Volunteer & MP Program Coordinator

I had the opportunity to lead a volunteer team to Japan. One day, we were assigned to Mrs. S's lot, which is where her business for children's electronics once stood. Inside the building, the water from the tsunami had reached shoulder height. After the water receded, an eight inch mess of sludge was left, which had dried to a mixture of dust with assorted debris.

Our job was to search for personal belongings and to clean the garage to restore it to some semblance of its former state. While 15 of us worked on the garage, another group of 15 worked on clearing the land that was now overgrown with waist high grass.

Mrs. S. worked alongside some of group members as they cut through the long grass to uncover a little garden that was planted by her mother. You could see the delight on her face as she saw the shrubs emerge.

Mrs. S had lost her mother in the tsunami, and this re-discovered garden will bring her some comfort. She expressed her amazement that it only took us one day to complete what she thought would take weeks.

The church — and by this I mean the Japanese church as well as the churches represented by volunteers around the world — is in a unique position to reach out in servant love to community members. This is an opportunity to shine God's light!



JIFH warehouse volunteers distributing goods



Reverend Takayuki Ashida (RCJ) working with volunteers

Special Thanks

CRWRC would like to thank the churches and individual donors in Canada and the United States who have supported its earthquake response in Japan with their prayers and financial gifts, and the Canadian Reformed World Relief Fund which made a special financial investment in this effort.

We join the Director of Japan International Food for the Hungry in saying, "On behalf of Japan International Food for the Hungry and the members of the affected communities in Tohoku, I would like to express our deepest gratitude for your partnership, prayers, and support for the immense needs of the survivors of this disaster. You have provided support to us when the needs in the affected communities were greatest." Thank you.

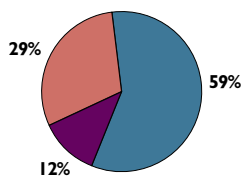
Financials

CRWRC received \$1,161,888 for its Japan earthquake response. The bulk of this (88%) came from individuals and churches in the United States and Canada. The remaining 12% came from the Canadian Reformed World Relief Fund.

By December 2011, \$366,775 (32%) of this had been spent. The rest will be spent over the next two years as CRWRC and its partners set up two community centers near Sendai and provide ongoing assistance.



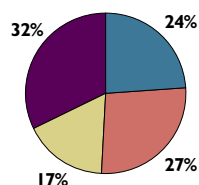
Revenue



Individuals and Donors in the US*	\$ 675,932
Individuals and Donors in Canada*	\$ 342,676
Canadian Reformed World Relief Fund	\$ 143,280
Total Income	\$ 1,161,888

* Note: Support raised by volunteers to cover their travel, food, and other logistics is not included in the income or expenses.

Expenses



First Response (food, non-food items, first aid kits)	\$ 89,815
Psycho-social care and counseling	\$ 99,297
Home clearing and repair*	\$ 61,474
Administrative expenses	\$ 116,189
Total Expenses	\$ 366,775

Planned Expenses for 2012-2013 \$ 795,113

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