

We would like to express our deepest appreciation to your compassion and prayers, large amount of offers and actual hands given for the affected population in Japan. We will welcome for further offer of help, but please note it is generally not lack of relief supplies which is a problem, but more for the issue of better coordination to reach the needy. JPF and JANIC are trying to fill the gap of the needs from the field, and we are grateful for your understanding and long term support.

We would like to recommend the following points to those International NGOs which are already in Japan or planning to come to Japan for the relief and rehabilitation operation. The points are made based on the present situation in Japan, and there are some spontaneous recommendations reflecting on the ongoing situation.

1) A large number of people in the affected areas are still staying neighboring evacuation centers and a number of people are still relocating to other prefectures including Tokyo and other parts of Japan. On the other hand, there are many people who have been staying at home without any or with limited external supports. Therefore please note that the needy people are not only in established evacuation centers, but at home and at social welfare institutions in many prefectures. Post disaster assistance should be considered for long term.

2) In Japan, humanitarian & welfare activities are coordinated by the Prefectural Social Welfare Councils (SWC), as well as Municipality SWCs at city/ward/town/village. After a huge disaster, a local SWC is supposed to establish a Disaster Volunteer Center (DVC) at prefecture and municipality levels. At present, Pref. DVCs in Iwate, Miyagi, Fukushima, Ibaraki and Chiba have been established, while some city/ward/town/village SWCs have not been fully operational yet due to their multilayer damages. At this moment, a large number of individual volunteers are available but local DVCs which have been setting up in the affected area do not always have sufficient capacity to coordinate the offers of help and needs. Some Japanese NGOs, which are well organized and self-sustainable (food, accommodation, and communication etc.), have started their activities.

In this connection, the International NGOs are strongly advised as follows;

- A. It is advisable to find partnership or collaborate with Japanese/international NGOs which are already operating on ground. JPF and JANIC will provide information about Japanese NGOs, and set up opportunity to introduce/connect them.
- B. Ensure to inform and consult with a pref. DVC prior to the commencement of your activities (communication to be made in Japanese). The pref. DVC may advise the NGOs about needs, information on local DVCs` contact etc.
- C. During the operation, please do keep in close contact with the municipality DVCs, and do inform the same DVCs about the completion of the operation well ahead of time for the smooth take over.

Contact list of Prefecture Disaster Volunteer Centers

Prefecture	Telephone	Fax	e-mail
Iwate	019-637-9711	019-637-4255	vc-1@iwate-shakyo.or.jp
Miyagi	090-6853-1863	022-217-9388	g101@miyagi-sfk.net
Fukushima	024-522-6540	024-522-6546	vc@fukushimakenshakyo.or.jp

3) Some SWCs/DVCs are still struggling to establish themselves and sustain their activities. NGOs should realize the importance and present situation of local DVCs, and are advised to support them in any possible ways, as many of their basic resources had been lost.

4) We observe the more NGOs operation and relief supplies in Miyagi Pref. in comparison to other affected prefectures. There is a general tendency to avoid Fukushima Pref. due to the fear of nuclear radiation. For coming phase of assistance, NGOs should receive necessary information timely and coordination should be improved so that more needs are covered in all affected areas.

5) A huge number of individual volunteers working in the affected areas is available in Japan; therefore, it is recommended for the International NGOs to consider deploying a small number of staff members and try to utilize locally available resources including of the staff/volunteer.

For further information, please contact:

Japan Platform (JPF),

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FAX:03-3240-6090,

Mail: info@japanplatform.org, URL: <http://www.japanplatform.org/E/index.html>

You may also contact Japan NGO Center for International Cooperation (JANIC)

Japan NGO Center for International Cooperation (JANIC),

5F Avaco Bldg, 2-3-18 Nishiwaseda, Shinjuku-ku, Tokyo 169-0051 Japan,
TEL 03-5292-2911, FAX 03-5292-2912

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