

This report is produced by OCHA. It was issued by the Regional Office in Asia Pacific with input from the UNDAC team in Tokyo. It covers the period from 20-21 March. The next report will be issued on the 22 March.

I. HIGHLIGHTS/KEY PRIORITIES

- Bad weather returns to the worst affected areas affecting the distribution of goods
- Half a million blankets distributed but all other relief items still urgently needed
- The World Bank says Japan will take at least five years to reconstruct its earthquake and tsunami affected regions
- Electricity has been restored to three reactors at the Fukushima Nuclear Power Plant

II. Situation Overview

More rain continues to disrupt Japan's emergency relief operations as well as compounding the misery of the hundreds of thousands of people who survived the 11 March earthquake and tsunami in the northeast of the country. More than 350,000 evacuees continue to endure cold weather at shelters in 16 prefectures, including Tokyo, as blankets and other desperately needed relief supplies start to meet the demand. Already, half a million blankets have been distributed.

About 10,000 people each day are leaving the evacuation centres for their homes as electricity is restored. But thousands more cannot go home either because their homes were washed away by the tsunami, leveled by the earthquake or they are evacuees from the area around the Fukushima Power Plant. There are now 2,131 evacuation shelters in 16 prefectures which suggest the displaced are moving to many areas on Tohoku Region, as can be seen on map on page six.

The bad weather is hindering emergency response efforts as helicopters that have been delivering relief supplies have been grounded due to the rain and authorities have to rely on road transport. Japan's Prime Minister Naoto Kan also had to cancel his visit to the affected areas. The military, police and local fire fighting units have mobilised 120,000 people for the relief effort and the clean-up operation. The World Bank says the rebuilding will cost US\$ 232 billion and it will take Japan at least five years to reconstruct its affected regions.

The number of casualties continues to rise. More than 21,911 are dead and missing: 8,649 confirmed deaths, 13,262 missing, and 2,644 injured. The electricity supply is improving each day with power now restored for 234,000 persons in the last few days. Only 244,000 households remain without electricity (601,000 people). Access to water is still a concern however and 1 million households (2.4 million people) remain without water across 11 Prefectures.

The psychological toll on those who survived the disaster and are now in evacuation centres is becoming more apparent. Many evacuees, including children, are suffering from post traumatic stress disorders. In addition, school teachers in the affected areas require counseling as they are exhausted both physically and mentally and many of them are managing the evacuation centers in the schools they used to teach in. There are also concerns for people with disabilities in the centres, especially the hearing impaired who rely on emails via their mobile phones to communicate but are currently unable to do so until the mobile phone network is fully restored.



Due to damaged communication networks, the Mayors from the three worst affected Prefectures in Iwate, Miyagi and Fukushima are highlighting their priority needs on the website of the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transportation and Tourism. Priority needs are fuel, temporary shelters, food, sanitation materials, clothing, medicines and household appliances. Fuel is particularly critical for the delivery of relief items and medical services as well as for the evacuees search for family members.

Iwate

In one of the hardest hit towns in Iwate, Rikuzen-Takata, more than 80 percent of the 8,000 households which had pre-quake population of 23,000 are believed to have been swept away. The Mayor, Futoshi Toba has told media the city was well-prepared against earthquakes and tsunamis. It had a 6.5 metre high seawall, all households had received a hazard map, and there was a community-based disaster prevention system. But the tsunami was beyond their capacity and even though they followed the evacuation plan including coming to the aid of aged and handicapped neighbors, the tsunami washed everything away. The Mayor says the shortage of fuel and food is still very serious.

Miyagi

In Sendai city which has a population of 1 million in Miyagi Prefecture, authorities say it may take a month to restore gas and water supplies.

The Mayor of Minami-Sanriku town in Miyagi, Jin Sato says 70 percent of 5,770 homes in the town were destroyed and 36 town officials remain missing. He has told media that the tsunami was much higher than the 8 meter high seawall and that their disaster prevention plan was for a tsunami of 6.5 meters high, but this tsunami was almost twice as high. Currently, nearly 10,000 people, about half of the town's population is in evacuation centers. The Mayor says that everyone in the town should be considered as 'in need' even if their houses are not damaged as they are unable to purchase anything due to lack of supply. He says that apart from blankets, all other supplies of relief goods are not sufficient. Meals are provided at least 3 times a day but are not yet satisfactory in terms of quantity and quality.

MSF says the situation in Minami-Sanriku and the communities between Kesenuma and Miyako on the coastline of northern Miyagi is improving rapidly as the delivery of a large number of relief items is now possible with the restoration of major roads.

Fukushima

In Fukushima Prefecture, where residents have been evacuated from a 20 km zone around the Nuclear Power Plant and those within 30 km have been told to stay indoors, about 700 patients in six hospitals located within the 20-30km radius are being transferred to other hospitals in the country. Another 980 people in nursing homes have been evacuated.

The Prefectural official Masato Abe says that food, water and necessities such as toilet paper and undergarments remain in short supply and relief workers are struggling to reach areas threatened by radiation leaks but repairs on Route 4, a main highway in the prefecture is enabling food deliveries.

Fukushima Nuclear Plant

Electricity has been restored to three reactors at the Fukushima Nuclear Power Plant; however, the cooling systems are not yet operating. Some workers at the facility were temporarily evacuated after smoke was seen rising from reactor No 3. The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) says there have been positive developments at the site. The IAEA said smoke or vapour rising from one of the overheating reactors at the damaged Fukushima power plant had become less intense. But it said the overall situation remained very serious. Radioactive contamination has been detected in some milk, water and vegetables – but below levels that are a concern.

III. National Response

The Government's Special Task Force for Livelihood Support of the Affected Populations announced on the 18 March is now operational. The Task Force is responsible for ensuring that aid reaches the evacuation centres. It also will also coordinate with the Disaster Volunteer Coordination Office, established on 16 March. A separate Task Force has been set up for nuclear power plant response.

Shelter

The National Police Agency says there are 2,131 evacuation centres in 16 prefectures as of the 21 March. Tochigi and Chiba Prefectures have also made requests for planned housing. This brings the total number requested of planned housing to 33,175.

Statistics on Evacuation Centres and Evacuees & Planned Construction

Prefecture	No. of evacuation centres	No. of people in centres	No. of planned housing
Aomori	12	367	
Iwate	377	47,443	8,800
Miyagi	877	142,381	10,000
Yamagata	54	3,858	
Fukushima	446	131,665	14,000
Ibaraki	100	3,922	
Tochigi	45	3,068	145
Chiba	34	1,036	230
Niigata	62	7,849	

Source: National Police Agency, 21 March, 12:00

Logistics

To date, the Japan Self Defence Force has delivered approximately 379,928 meals, 1,370 kg of rice, and 52,146 canned foods, 19,889 litres of drinking water, 4,720 blankets and 46,580 litres of fuel. The Force has also provided bathing services to 5,424 persons.

Japan's Federation of Economic Organisations has a relief items transportation hotline scheme to support the affected populations. The Federation is appealing for its 1,600 member companies and organizations to send specified items such as food and hygiene products to designated locations. The first shipment from Kobe Port is scheduled to leave on 24 March. The shipment will arrive at Aomori Port and the Japan Self Defence Force will transport the relief items to the affected areas. The Federation is also partnering with an airline company to use empty space for transporting some of the relief items.

One of Japan's biggest oil refineries in Yokohama, which had been shut down after the earthquakes, has resumed operation today. It has capacity to provide 270,000 barrels of oil per day, which is expected to ease the current fuel shortage in the affected areas.

Health

Medical assistance to the affected populations is focused on providing general healthcare in the evacuation centres as well as psychological support. The Government has 74 health worker teams (3 teams in transit) working in Iwate, Miyagi and Fukushima. The National Hospital Organization has 16 medical teams in Iwate (6 teams 33 personnel), Miyagi (6 teams 32 personnel) and Fukushima (4 teams 14 personnel). The Japan Medical Association has dispatched 20 teams and the All Japan Hospital Association and the Japan Association of Medical Care Corporations have jointly sent 12 teams to the affected areas.

Two teams specialized in radiation medicine are operational in Fukushima. The National Cancer Center, the National Center for Global health and Medicine, Japan Labour Health and Welfare Organization, Japan Pharmaceutical Association and Japan Society of Hospital Pharmacists have also dispatched medical and pharmacist teams to the affected areas.

Eight psychological care teams are in Miyagi and 18 more teams are scheduled to arrive in Iwate and Miyagi shortly. The Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare (MHLW) is mobilising 389 child welfare specialists from 52 municipalities to be dispatched to evacuation centres and child welfare centres, pending the request from the affected areas. MHLW has also received requests from the social welfare facilities in the affected areas for dispatching social workers. The Ministry is currently mobilising nearly 6,000 social workers from other non-affected Prefectures. The Ministry has also prepared a mental care guidebook that is being distributed to affected municipalities and website has been set up to provide information for counsellors and teachers http://www.ncnp.go.jp/mental_info/index.html.

Food and Non Food Items

The Emergency Disaster Response Headquarters reports that 5.5 million meals have been delivered to evacuation centres and hospitals in the affected areas to date. An estimated 870,000 meals were delivered yesterday and 960,000 meals the day before. Approximately 380,000 blankets and 90,000 diapers have been delivered to the affected areas to date. According to Government figures there are no additional blankets in transit but there are 106,000 diapers still to be delivered. Japan Red Cross has also delivered an additional 122,530 blankets.

WASH

The Emergency Disaster Response Headquarters reports that approximately 3.2 million bottles of water have been delivered to evacuation centres and hospitals in the affected areas to date. Approximately 100,000 thousand bottles of water were delivered on 20 March. Another 1 million bottles of water are in transit.

Education

Nearly 3,300 schools have been closed in 16 prefectures because they were damaged by earthquakes and the tsunami, are within the nuclear exclusion zone, or are now being used as evacuation centres. There are about 554 schools currently being used as evacuation centers.

To provide education to affected school children, the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology is allowing school children to transfer without the necessary documents. Several local governments have offered to host school children with or without other family members: Osaka offered to receive 3,000 high school students hosted by families, and Kagawa Prefecture will take 200 elementary school children and 40 junior high school students.

IV. International Assistance

NGO and Relief Supplies

The Government of Japan has requested that its position on international donations of relief items and on international Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) operating in Japan be made public. With regard to relief items, *“the Government of Japan has received offers for relief goods/material from many countries, international organizations, NGOs and private sector. The Government is identifying the needs and establishing a mechanism for storage and transportation to affected people. Therefore, it is recommended not to send any relief goods without coordination with the Government and local governments”*.

Concerning offers of assistance by NGOs, the Government of Japan states that *“Search and Rescue operation phase still continues in the affected areas at this moment and the access to those areas is strictly limited to rescue workers. It is also reported that there is temporary shortage of petrol in the affected area. International/foreign NGOs are recommended to wait until the situation improves so that those NGOs are able to conduct their activities in a self-sustainable way”*.

The Government of Japan has received 128 offers of assistance from countries as well as 33 offers from international organizations. It has accepted relief items from 14 countries. More than 78,000 blankets have been received and then channeled through the Japan Red Cross Society.

In total, 890 International Search and Rescue (USAR) specialists and 37 rescue dogs from 20 teams representing 15 countries have supported the Japanese rescue teams in this disaster response. The majority have now completed their assignment and only four teams remain. It is expected that all teams will finish their missions this week.

V. Coordination

The Government of Japan’s Emergency Management agencies are leading the response through the Emergency Response Team, headed by Prime Minister Naoto Kan. Information from the Government of Japan, including situation reports can be found at <http://www.kantei.go.jp>.

An UNDAC team, based at JICA Tokyo International Centre is supporting the Government with information management and supporting the International USAR teams.

Information sites:

- Regular updates including MapAction products are available on the Virtual OSOCC.
- Crisis Commons has put together a Japan Data Profile wiki containing various data sources relevant to the Japan earthquake and tsunami response: http://wiki.crisiscommons.org/wiki/Japan_Data_Profile
- The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) is posting official updates on the nuclear power plants: <http://www.iaea.org/newscenter/news/>. The World Health Organisation has information on its website regarding radiation-related health risks: <http://www.who.int/hac/crises/jpn/faqs/en/index.html>. As of 19 March, WHO is **not** advising general restrictions on travel to Japan: <http://www.who.int/hac/crises/jpn/faqs/en/index3.html>

- Japan's Ministry of Education has released results of all radiation measurements per prefecture on <http://eg.sakura.ne.jp>.
- Official national meteorological information can be found at:
Japan: Japan Meteorological Agency: <http://www.jma.go.jp/jma/indexe.html>
China: China Meteorological Administration: <http://www.cma.gov.cn/>
Russia: Service for Hydrometeorology and Environmental Monitoring: <http://www.meteorf.ru/default.aspx>

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