

# Year End Report on Tohoku Disaster Relief Activities from PWJ



The end of the year is approaching fast, Nine months has passed since north eastern Japan was struck by the Great East Japan Earthquake.

Winter has finally reached the area. As the season changes, the situation around the affected area also changes. Peace Winds Japan (PWJ) continues to support responding to needs from communities and businesses.

PWJ has received various contributions from individuals, corporations and other organizations around the world which enabled us to continue our work for the Tohoku area.

**Peace Winds Japan** would like to express our most sincere appreciation to your continuous support to our activities. Thank You!

## —Youth Support—

PWJ has been working to strengthen the communities affected to provide a positive environment where children can overcome from what they had gone through during the disaster.

### *Providing a safe and fun environment for children*

Because the environment for children to play at the temporary housing is limited, PWJ has been providing safe places to play for children through the “Arts and Caravan” youth program at temporary housing in Kesennuma and Rikuzentakata area. By the end of November, we have served 838 children at 41 Arts and Caravan activities. PWJ has also held events to support adults where the adults can discuss their problems or worries with PWJ’s staff who are certified social workers. We believe our comprehensive approach to support children will help speed their recovery.



PWJ also supports children’s traditional events with after school programs in Kesennuma. We feel it is important to help children regain their pre-disaster lifestyle. Our Moving Forward program aims to help teachers to share skills and techniques to help children through physical activities.

### *Events collaboration with corporate sponsors*

PWJ activities are also enhanced by our corporate supporters. Together, we have provided science projects and other youth focused activities and supported special events.



# —Temporary Housing Support—

## ■ Household goods delivery

By the end of August, emergency shelters in southern Iwate prefecture had closed and PWJ had completed delivering necessary household items to 8,588 households (22,987 residents) in 9 cities.

With the help from corporate and individual volunteers, PWJ also delivered necessary clothing to about 560 households at requested temporary housing in Ofunato and Rikuzentakata.



## ■ Help get through the cold winter..

PWJ has just completed delivering 1,811 electric carpets in Ofunato city and 2,148 gas fan heaters in Rikuzentakata city. With daily average temperature was dropping fast, these items were well needed by the residents of the temporary housing. To help contribute to the area's economy, we have procured these items from local home electronics stores.

Currently, PWJ is assisting in delivering heaters to about 3900 'prefectural paid apartments' throughout Iwate prefecture. Because there were not enough temporary housing available to all, some areas are utilizing empty apartment rooms for a use as a kind of temporary housing.

We have received numerous letters and calls from the recipients living in these apartments to tell us how much they were happy to have received heating appliances. PWJ is very glad to know that they will be able to spend warmer winter.



# —Economic Recovery Support—

Working closely with the Chambers of Commerce and Industry of Rikuzentakata and Minamisanriku cities, PWJ has provided a total of 15 mobile shops. These mobile shops have not only provided additional income to the vendors but also offer more shopping options to residents of temporary housing where there are many residents with no transportation means. Currently, there are bakery, florist, fresh produce and grocery stores and they are visiting many temporary housing and other isolated communities. PWJ hopes these mobile stores will also contribute to more community events and support the economy of the area.

PWJ has delivered store vouchers to residents of temporary housing in Ofunato city where they can use at participating local stores. As of the end of November, we have delivered vouchers to 6,319 residents.



With the help from the central government, small to mid-size business owners are finally receiving temporary store spaces and we are starting to see more businesses restarting. However, many business owners are facing difficulties to equip their businesses adequately on their own. To fill such gaps between government assistance and the local needs, PWJ has decided to provide subsidies to store owners who qualify to help reduce their financial burden when furnishing their businesses. Currently, we are supporting store owners in Rikuzentakata and Ofunato.



## ■ *Supporting local fisheries*



Fishing and fish processing industries are some of the main industries in Tohoku area. PWJ has been working to promote faster recovery of such industries from the beginning. For example, we had supplied equipment to help remove debris around the port. In September, PWJ provided enough items to help restart two fishing cooperatives in Minamisanriku city.

The tsunami destroyed entire facilities at Shizukawa Fishing Cooperative. Though they were renting a temporary office from the city's office of forestry, it was not sufficient to conduct day-to-day business to support their members. With the generous support from its member, they were able to identify an ideal lot for the office. PWJ helped with providing a temporary facility: a new building with a kitchen and bathrooms, office equipment and supplies. Mr. Sasaki, a chairperson at Shizukawa Fishing Cooperatives, stated strongly "this building from PWJ will help motivate many of our member fishermen to return to their work sooner. Thank you very much." In addition, PWJ provided the necessary materials to the Fishing Cooperative to restart their businesses.

Following the project above, PWJ supported to restart the Wakame cultivation. PWJ chose to support this cultivation because it requires a relatively short period to cultivate and make profits. Utatsu Fishery Cooperative aims to recover 50% of the income from the previous year. PWJ provided the materials for its cultivation in Fall such as ropes for putting seeds, buoys, sand bags etc. Mr. Chiba, the president of Utatsu Fishery Cooperative, commented, "I was relieved to receive support from PWJ before the government funding so that I could order the necessary devices early on. All the fishermen were happy to see the Wakame items delivered into our stocks. On top of that, thanks to PWJ's support they could order these items without hesitation. It was very helpful."

Furthermore, PWJ is setting up the space for the Wakame processing in Utatsu area after the cultivation in April. Traditionally, people in Minamisanriku-cho conducted the process of boiling, cooling, salting and dehydrating Wakame at home. However, processing Wakame requires physical spacing to pump sea water, but there was only limited space available due to the tsunami; moreover, it was impossible for each family to find space to reconstruct factories or purchase necessary materials for processing it. Therefore, PWJ provided the Utatsu women's groups, who usually work processing Wakame, the shelters, boiling pots, washing tanks, dehydrators, devices to salt and so on.

Finally, in addition to fishing and cultivation, PWJ provided support to restart the harvest of sea urchins and abalones. We are currently preparing the oars which fishermen who belong to the Shizugawa Fishery Cooperative need to harvest sea urchins and abalones. The sample oars have already arrived and we expect to have a ceremony to distribute these oars to fishermen in mid-December.

With harvesting and processing come the need to restart sales and, "Saury Mail Order Sales" was started in Ofunato city on September 5th, through PWJ's support for the Ofunato Fishery Retail Association. Through November 17th, a total of 18,725 boxes of saury has been delivered to the consumers throughout Japan who were longing to receive them.

Mr. Sasaki, the chairman of the association told us that "I thought it was impossible to deliver saury from Ofunato this year due to the tsunami disaster, yet thanks to all of your support, we could manage to restart the "Saury Mail Order Sales" again. We distributed the advertisement to the member of the association, and each member got orders from their customers. Some already made order for the "Fall Mail Order Sales (such as salmon pieces), which made us feel confident of our business to be restarted."

Furthermore, PWJ fixed the facility for icing fish, which was administered by the same association. From September to the end of November, a total of 348 trap-net boats, including those for the saury and squid, received ice from these facilities and departed from the Ofunato port.



## Supporting communities



To help people in the area to get together and provide a market place where local merchants could sell produce, "Recovery Festival" has been held in Minamisanriku every last Sunday. PWJ has been providing the bus services between the festival venue to the parking area to supplement public transportation. PWJ has operated 4 buses at every festival, which over the 6 festivals adds to over 3,968 passengers.

There were limited spacing for the parking around the venue; therefore, people have to use the bus services. People were happy to use the free bus services since the parking area was set far from the venue. A chairman of the festival executive committee said, "By supporting the free bus services, we can continuously hold the festival."



Every October, salmon starts to return to some rivers in Minamisanriku area from the Pacific Ocean. Salmon hatcheries are traditional means to keep the salmon population healthy in this area, because the salmon fishing is a very important source of income for this area. It was important that PWJ help them not to miss this year's hatchlings so that they could count on some income when the salmon comes back in 4 years. PWJ successfully provided Shizukawa Fresh Water Fishing Cooperatives enough supplies to help them for the salmon hatchery process. And the work continues, mid-December is the busiest time when most salmon return to the rivers.

## Donations and future activities

By the end of October, PWJ had received donations of more than 6 million yen from more than 5,000 donors from all over the world. PWJ had also received various in-kind support from companies and organizations. Some of the programs described above have been funded by grants from organizations such as Japan Platform and Mercy Corps.

So far, PWJ has directed about 5400 0000yen for distributing emergency goods, 3.8m yen to support temporary housing programs, 24000000 for a youth programs and 2.47mil yen for our economic recovery programs.

PWJ will continue to support the recovery of the communities and industries of the Iwate and Miyagi prefectures. We will also aim our work to empower people to be able to rebuild on their own.



You can also see PWJ's report on its relief and recovery activities in the Great East Japan Earthquake at its special home page (<http://peace-winds.org/jp/eq>). Reports on recent activities are also on Blog, Twitter, and Face Book.

- Blog <http://amebio.jp/pwj-touhoku/>
- Twitter <http://twitter.com/#!/peacewindsjapan>
- Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/PWJPublicRelations>

**Peace Winds Japan**  
Ichigaya KT Bldg I. 5F4-7-16 Kudanminami  
Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo Japan 102-0074  
+81-3-5213-4070