

2011 GREAT EAST JAPAN EARTHQUAKE & TSUNAMI PEACE BOAT EMERGENCY RELIEF OPERATION

PEACE
BOAT



ABOUT PEACE BOAT

Founded in 1983, Peace Boat is an international non-governmental and non-profit organization with Special Consultative Status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations. The organization works to promote peace, human rights, equal and sustainable development and respect for the environment through global educational programs, cooperative projects and advocacy activities on global peace voyages. Activities based in Japan and Northeast Asia are carried out from our seven Peace Centers in Japan. Our associate organization Peace Boat US is a 501(c)3 registered organization based in New York, and we have representatives in Europe, Latin America, South Asia and the Middle East.

PEACE BOAT'S EXPERIENCE IN DISASTER RELIEF OPERATIONS

As part of our wider peace building activities, Peace Boat has carried out emergency relief operations for the past 15 years, delivering emergency assistance and raising funds, as well as coordinating the dispatch of experienced logisticians, interpreters and volunteer teams to affected areas all over the world.

Peace Boat's first disaster relief efforts took place in 1995, following the Great Hanshin Earthquake in Kobe, Japan when teams of volunteers provided assistance for months supporting community access to food, water and other basic supplies as well as humanitarian support. Since then, Peace Boat has organized emergency relief operations in disaster affected locations around the world, including in Turkey (Aug. 1999), Taiwan (Sept. 1999), Algeria (May. 2003), Mid-Niigata, Japan (Nov. 2004), Sri Lanka (Dec. 2004), Pakistan (Oct. 2005), in the US (Hurricane Katrina, Oct. 2005), Indonesia (Jun. 2006) and Korea (Aug. 2007).

DISASTER IN JAPAN

On March 11, 2011, Japan was struck by an unprecedented magnitude 9 earthquake. The quake triggered a 10 metre high tsunami that submerged over 443 square km of coastal areas, destroying everything in its path and sweeping across cities, villages and farmland. Waves up to 30 metres high traveled as far as 10 km inland devastating the north east coast. Japan is now experiencing its worst humanitarian disaster since the Second World War with more than 27,000 people are dead or missing, and well over 490,000 displaced.

In addition, the March 11 earthquake and tsunami have seriously damaged the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant. The Japanese government declared a state of nuclear emergency, which has forced the evacuation of thousands more residents. The nuclear situation continues to be a cause of great concern, and has hampered relief activities in the affected regions and across the country.



The earthquake affected area; the tsunami devastated 200km of coastline

PEACE BOAT'S EMERGENCY RELIEF FOR THE 2011 GREAT EAST JAPAN EARTHQUAKE: CITY OF ISHINOMAKI, MIYAGI

On March 16, Peace Boat sent two advance teams to Miyagi prefecture, one of the worst affected areas where the number of dead and missing exceeds 14,000 and over 290,000 people have been displaced, to collect information about the damage and needs, and to deliver 10 tons of emergency aid including blankets, water, food, masks and other basic supplies.

Upon consultation with local authorities, Peace Boat established a base camp in the city of Ishinomaki. Peace Boat is working with the city's Social Welfare Council, the Mayor and the Japanese Self-Defense Forces on overall coordination of relief efforts in the area.

Photos by: Yoshimori Ueno



Rubble, trash and puddles of stagnant water abound in crisis-hit Ishinomaki.



The sea which sustains coastal communities like Ishinomaki has now laid waste to them.



Evacuation centres struggle with overcrowding

SITUATION AND CHALLENGES IN ISHINOMAKI

In the immediate aftermath of the disaster, local authorities in Ishinomaki faced extreme difficulties in putting a functional local emergency response in place as an estimated 30% of the city's civil servants were killed in the disaster and many of those who survived have a severely reduced capacity to work, due to their own circumstances including loss of home and family members. During its assessment mission, Peace Boat found that only four out of the then 170 evacuation centers in and around Ishinomaki had an organized food distribution system in place. In this situation, at the city's request, Peace Boat stepped in to support the coordination of meeting survivors' basic needs of food, water and shelter.

More than a month after the disaster, evacuation centres in Ishinomaki struggle to cope with overcrowding and outside the shelters, people remain in their damaged homes or cars without infrastructure or secure access to food and water. The state of the roads, continuing aftershocks and limited gasoline are still hampering movement and assistance to survivors. Buildings that were not destroyed are filled with debris and thick tsunami mud, a health hazard and physical and psychological barrier to re-inhabitation. Clearing the mud is an extremely labour-intensive and physically demanding task, beyond the ability of many of the residents of Ishinomaki in their current vulnerable condition to carry out alone, especially for the large proportion of elderly people in the city. Large numbers of people are needed to work together with the local community to clear this mud from buildings and streets to facilitate the return of local people to their homes, businesses and daily life routines and support the earlier re-generation of the community.

Photo by: Tracey Taylor & Dee Green - 37 Frames



Photos: by Yoshinori Ueno



Volunteers prepare hot meals and clear mud from buildings and streets

Photo: by Yoshinori Ueno



Re-opening local businesses like this fruit shop supports community regeneration

PEACE BOAT'S EFFORTS

Since March 16, 2011 in the immediate aftermath of the disaster, Peace Boat has been acting in a coordination role between Ishinomaki's local government and the many NGOs, institutions and individuals offering help in the area. At the same time, Peace Boat has been carrying out its own emergency relief efforts, dispatching 100-250 volunteers weekly to

- Deliver over 1000 hot meals daily to those outside the shelters
- Provide support within shelters and with the distribution of relief goods
- Clear mud from buildings (schools, retirement homes, businesses, homes) in partnership with the local community.

Peace Boat is committed to working long-term with the local community and local authorities to facilitate the safe return by residents to the still inhabitable areas of the town, and support a speedy re-generation of the community. The next stage of disaster relief will focus on:

- Urgently expanding the work of clearing mud from public buildings, businesses, private homes and roads
- Training, dispatching and transporting hundreds of well-coordinated volunteers capable of carrying out this physical labour to the affected together with the community
- Continuing to provide support and assistance, including relief goods distribution to those living in and outside the evacuation centers as requested by the community.
- Continuing to provide hot meals and provisions as needed, developing this work with local restaurants and employing residents.

SUPPORT PEACE BOAT'S EFFORTS:

- **Financial Support:** Peace Boat urgently needs monetary donations to support relief efforts. All donations will be used on this project, to provide the support and partnership described above to the people of Ishinomaki.

DONATE: Donations can be made directly to Japan, or through Paypal via Peace Boat US: Donate online or see bank/post office transfer information at http://bit.ly/peaceboat_relief

- **Material Goods:** Peace Boat is seeking donations of material goods. The list of requested materials is available on Peace Boat's website and updated regularly according to evolving needs.
- **Volunteers:** Peace Boat is recruiting volunteers, including international volunteers, to assist with the relief work. Details are available on our website.
- **International Coordination:** Peace Boat, with the support of Peace Boat US, is ready to receive offers of international assistance, including volunteers, and direct such assistance to the appropriate groups on the ground.

Further information:

- Up to date details of Peace Boat's 2011 Great East Japan Earthquake Emergency Relief Operation including how to donate or enroll as a volunteer, and the latest activity reports: http://bit.ly/peaceboat_relief
- Regular updates and photographs can also be found on Facebook at: <https://www.facebook.com/PBsaigai>
- Personal experiences of survivors and volunteers in the area on the Blog "Voices from the Ground" <http://peaceboatvoices.wordpress.com>

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