

THE GREAT EAST JAPAN EARTHQUAKE AND TSUNAMI PARTNERSHIP MEETING

TOKYO, JAPAN
18 MAY 2012

<SUMMARY>

On 18 May, the second Partnership Meeting for the Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami (GEJET) was held at the headquarters of the Japanese Red Cross Society (JRCS) in Tokyo with the presence of the representatives from 13 Red Cross / Red Crescent National Societies and organizations, as well as representatives from the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), European Union (EU), and Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA). A total of 43 participants engaged in an active discussion by reviewing the JRCS operations for GEJET in the past one year. The meeting was followed by two separate one day field trips: one group to Miyagi and another to Fukushima.

The goals for the meeting were:

- 1) To gain further understanding on the situation of the affected population.
- 2) To share JRCS operations on GEJET for the past 12 months.
- 3) To discuss issues related to on-going recovery activities.
- 4) To share the lessons learned and identify issues to be sustained for future discussions.

Overall, participants in the meeting observed and appreciated JRCS efforts in maintaining transparency and accountability throughout the process and congratulated the national society for a successful operation in a complex disaster situation. Participants also reflected on the current disaster response mechanism in Japan and the unique role of JRCS in domestic disaster response including working relationship with the government.

The event proceeded based on the programme:

- Opening remarks
- Presentation on JRCS relief and recovery program
- Presentation on the IFRC evaluation: Report findings and lessons learned from the JRCS response to GEJET
- Presentation on JRCS/IFRC management notes to the evaluation recommendations / GEJET evaluation management response
- Progress report on recovery projects
- How we move forward for common issues on disasters in high income countries – Plenary discussion

In the first presentation, mobilization of 896 medical teams examining 87,445 people along with the attendance to 14,039 people with the engagement of 718 PSP staff was mentioned as part of the activities by JRCS in the initial stage. The allocation of the JPY56.3 million donations from more than 95 Red Cross Red Crescent Societies, countries and regions as well as the JPY 40billion donated by the State of Kuwait through some 5 million barrels of crude oil as a support for recovery was also explained

through the following areas of support: medical services, livelihood, social welfare, children's education, assistance for nuclear power plant disaster victims, and capacity building of JRCS. Update of the amount received for the cash grant distribution, JPY352.9 billion, was also presented in this session. The participants commended JRCS for a successful spending of 63% of the budget and the transparency through holding meetings, publishing reports and sharing photos. The question from the floor entailed that of the usage of family link at the time of the disaster and reporting format for domestic donors.

In the second session, report findings and lessons learned from JRCS response to the disaster was introduced. It was explained that although disaster preparedness was well developed by JRCS and that in fact, JRCS emergency response went successfully as per the contingency plan, the tsunami was far out of anyone's expectation that JRCS alone could not have addressed the enormous needs of the affected population. It was also stressed that both IFRC and JRCS were conscious of accountability since day one and that the evaluation team emphasize the needs for planning for the scaling up of the operation and the utilization of technology, such as social media. Presentation and discussion on evaluation was based on an independent evaluation commissioned by IFRC. In the third session, management response to the evaluation recommendations in five areas: volunteer, PSP, structure in receiving support from other National Societies, response to nuclear accident and others, were introduced. Mobilization of 116,000 volunteers and the deployment of 15 teams or 67 personnel to social welfare facilities were also mentioned in the presentation. Explanation on the significance of holding evaluation and how it may have impact throughout the Movement was also presented in this session.

The afternoon session began with a presentation on the updates of the individual recovery support projects initiated by JRCS followed by a plenary session. The plenary recognized the challenges of the operation and the works accomplished by the JRCS so far and the importance of maintaining good accountability and system in all of the works as the reputation of every movement partners were interlinked in a globalized world. Based on the lessons learned, a number of key issues were identified and discussed during the meeting.

Key issues identified during the plenary

- 1) **Better planning before disaster.** This key issue is to ensure effective mechanism in place with comprehensive plans. Lessons learned from JRCS on integration of relief activities, coordination with volunteers and different partners within the movement and with local government pointed to this conclusion.
 - 2) **Effective cooperation for disaster response and recovery in developed societies.** The need for IFRC as a membership to look at appropriate means of support to national societies responding to disasters in developed countries that under normal circumstances would not need external support and assistance.
 - 3) **Ensuring high accountability.** The GEJET operation received a high amount of support from both international and local communities. While no international appeal was launched, IFRC representatives were invited to Japan to provide guidance and communications support. Partnership meetings and monitoring visits were organized and financial reports and audits were done according to IFRC standard.
- The plenary also identified a need to review the existing Principle and rules of Disaster Relief to fit changing context of the global disaster response systems and dynamics.

Conclusion

Presentations of the fourteen months operation by JRCS for GEJET was well received and commended by the participants to the meeting. It was agreed that the review and the information sharing throughout the Second PNS Meeting was thorough and that it gave participants comprehensive understandings of the recovery process and the challenges ahead. Support for high-income nations was also discussed in reference to the former disasters in the US, Australia and New Zealand and it was commonly understood that challenges need to be overcome and that discussions need to continue to prepare for the future possible disaster.

ANNEX: Recovery operation budget and expenditure

	Sector	Programme	Budget		
			Total Budget	FY 2011-2012 expenditure	Percentage against budget
1	Emergency Relief	Emergency medical service Distribution and replenishment of emergency relief supplies	0.6 billion	0.5 billion	83%
2	Livelihood support	Distribution of six electronic household appliance set Distribution of summer/winter amenity items, etc.	28.8 billion	26.2 billion	91%
3	Social Welfare support	Distribution of nursing beds Provision of vehicles for social welfare institutions Services of JRCS caretakers for elderly, etc.	1.6 billion	0.6 billion	38%
4	Children's education support	Provision of school items: gym and sports items School bus operations support, etc.	2.9 billion	0.6 billion	21%
5	Medical Services support	Construction of hospitals Pneumonia vaccination for elderly, etc.	13.4 billion	6.9 billion	51%
6	Assistance for nuclear power plant disaster victims	Provision of whole body counter, medical radioactive measuring systems, etc.	2.3 billion	0.3 billion	13%
7	Capacity building of JRCS	Provision of vehicles and relief materials for future disasters, etc.	2 billion	0 billion	0%
8	Administrative cost	Administration, Reporting and PR, Auditing, etc.	1.2 billion	0.5 billion	42%
9	Contingency cost	For future potential programmes, etc.	3.5 billion	0 billion	0%
		Total Expenses	56.3 billion	35.6 billion	63%