

Section 7 Response by Volunteers and NPOs

(1) Volunteer Response to Major Disasters in 2021

In the disaster caused by the heavy rain from July 1 of 2021, Disaster Volunteer Centers (hereinafter referred to as "Disaster VCs") were established in seven cities in Shizuoka, Shimane, Hiroshima and Kagoshima Prefectures by the Council of Social Welfare. And a total of approximately 2,800 volunteers provided support through the Disaster VCs (as of September 30, 2021).

In the disaster of the heavy rain in August of 2021, Disaster VCs were set up in 11 cities and towns in Nagano, Hiroshima, Fukuoka, Saga and Nagasaki Prefectures by the Council of Social Welfare. And a total of approximately 4,700 volunteers worked through the Disaster VCs (as of November 30, 2021).

In the affected areas, disaster relief activities for the affected people were carried out according to the local conditions such as cleaning up and clearing out affected houses, carrying away garbage generated from the disasters, removing soil and sand from inside houses and waterways, distributing goods at shelters, and helping them move out of shelters.

In order to prevent the spread of COVID-19, volunteers were recruited only within the affected prefecture and relevant municipalities, and they were asked to implement basic infection prevention measures such as wearing masks, washing hands and keeping safe distance from others. In Atami City, Shizuoka Prefecture, a pre-registration form was opened on the Web for volunteer applicants, and the area of activity and the number of volunteers were adjusted in advance.

In addition to the support provided by volunteers through the Disaster VCs, NPOs and other organizations with expertise provided a broad range of support to give technical assistance to damaged houses such as removing soil and collecting debris, respond to disaster waste, help evacuees at home, support temporary housing, and assist livelihoods. In Saga Prefecture, the "Saga Disaster Support Platform (SPF)" of the coordinating organization within the prefecture prepared the "Guidelines for Assistance Requests" to carry out the support initiatives giving the most priority to ensuring the safety for affected people and supporters.

Disaster Volunteer Activities

	Heavy Rain from July 1 of 2021 (as of September 30 of 2021)	Heavy Rain in August of 2021 (as of November 30 of 2021)
The number of disaster VCs established	7 cities	11 municipalities
The number of disaster volunteers (cumulative total) *1	2,822 people	4,711 people
The number of NPOs and other organizations that conduct volunteer activities *2	51 organizations	131 organizations

*1: The number of volunteers via disaster VCs

*2: The number of organizations that participated in information sharing meetings in Shizuoka, Fukuoka, and Saga Prefectures.

Source: Prepared by Cabinet Office from the website of Japan National Council of Social Welfare

*1: The number of volunteers that worked via the Disaster VCs

*2: The number of organizations that participated in information sharing meetings in Shizuoka, Fukuoka and Saga Prefectures.

Source: Prepared by the Cabinet Office from the website of the Japan National Council of Social Welfare



Volunteer activities after the heavy rain from July 1 of 2021
 (Source: Council of Social Welfare in Atami City)



Disaster volunteer activities after the Heavy Rain in August of 2021
 (Source: Council of Social Welfare in Omachi Town (left) /
 Council of Social Welfare in Saga City (right))

(2) Cooperation among the Administration, Volunteers and NPOs

In the affected areas in Shizuoka, Fukuoka and Saga Prefectures, various support entities such as the administration, the Council of Social Welfare and NPOs held “Information Sharing Meetings” to share information on support activities and to coordinate various activities. It allowed the administration, volunteers and NPOs to provide cooperative support including understanding the needs of affected people and assistance to evacuees at home.

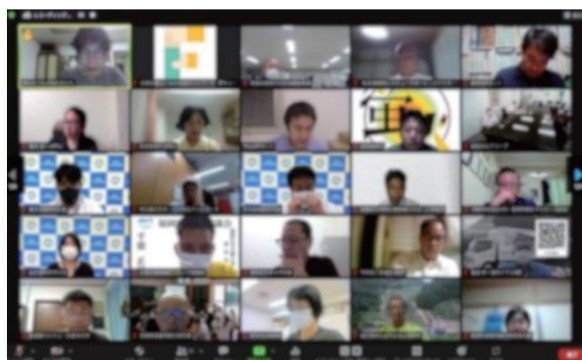
In addition, “national information sharing meetings (Core Conference)” was held by the Cabinet Office, the Japan Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (hereinafter referred to as “JVOAD”), the Japan National Council of Social Welfare and the Disaster Relief Volunteer Activity Support Project Meeting (hereinafter referred to as “Support P”). They shared information on the affected areas and discussed ways to support the affected areas in the future.

Information Sharing Meetings Held in Affected Areas

<p>Shizuoka Prefecture</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ "Information Sharing Meetings of the Shizuoka Prefecture Volunteer Headquarters and Information Center" *Held as meetings for information sharing between in-prefecture organizations and some out-of-prefecture organizations. (July 3,4,7) ○ "Liaison and Coordination Meetings" *Held as meetings for information sharing among organizations active in the prefecture. (July 5, 6, 7, 8, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 19, 21, 26, August 2, 10, 17, 23, 30) ○ "Fuji-no-kuni Disaster Supporters Meetings" *Held as meetings for information sharing among all organizations, both in and out of the prefecture. (July 9) ○ "Information Exchange Meetings for Support organizations in the Izusan area" *Held as meetings for information sharing among organizations active in Atami City, Shizuoka Prefecture. (July 18, August 2, 5, 12, 19, 25, September 3, 9)
<p>Fukuoka Prefecture</p>	<p>Information Sharing Meetings on Heavy Rain Disaster in Fukuoka Prefecture (August 16, 17, 19, 20, 21, 23, 25, 27, 30, September 3, 6, 9, 13, 16)</p>
<p>Saga Prefecture</p>	<p>Hagakure Meetings (August 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 25, 28, September 1, 4, 8, 11, 18, 25, October 2, 9, 23 November 12, December 18, January 22)</p>



Information sharing meeting in Shizuoka Prefecture (Source: Shizuoka Prefecture)



Information sharing meeting in Fukuoka Prefecture (Source: Disaster Relief Network Fukuoka)

(3) Support for Shelter Operations in Saga Prefecture

As a collaborative project between the Cabinet Office and the JVOAD, assessments of shelters were conducted in Takeo City and Omachi Town in Saga Prefecture to confirm the environments in shelters and give assistance on improving such environments. With the cooperation of two NPOs with expertise in improving the evacuation life environment, staff from both NPOs were asked to act as "evacuation life support advisors," and the following things were conducted.

- Creation of a living environment assessment sheet for prolonged shelter life under the COVID-19 Crisis.
- Interviews with organizations involved in shelter support (i.e. administrative divisions, Saga branch of the Japanese Red Cross Society and health care centers).
- Assessment and support for improving the evacuation environment at shelters in Takeo City and Omachi Town.
- Reporting assessment results to relevant parties and exchanging opinions on future improvements.

A series of efforts from assessment to shelter improvement were undertaken in conjunction with local support groups, which led to the development of a system for local support groups to continuously involve in improving evacuation life. These activities are going to be utilized for specifically building of the "Ecosystem of Supporting

Evacuation Life and Human Resource Development against Disasters" which is described later in Section 4, Chapter 3.



Activities of "evacuation life support advisors" (Source: NPO in disaster relief RESCUE STOCK YARD)

[Column]

Establishment of the "Disaster Relief SONAE Reiwa Fund " by JVOAD

In recent years, the needs of affected people have become more diverse and the scope of activities of volunteers and NPOs in times of disaster has expanded. Under these situations, the need for collaboration and cooperation among the administration, NPOs and volunteers has been growing.

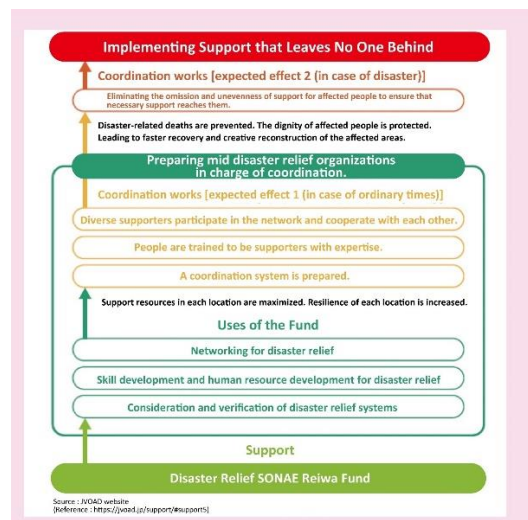
The Japan Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (JVOAD) established in 2016 is the only nationwide coordinating organization that coordinates and supports the activities of different organizations such as NPOs and volunteers during disasters. The Cabinet Office declared a tie-up with JVOAD in 2019 and has cooperated with JVOAD to promote collaboration and cooperation among the administration, NPOs and volunteers such as by jointly hosting nationwide information sharing meetings in the event of disasters.

In order to provide more effective support to affected people, it is important to build a system of cooperation among supporters from ordinary times and to strengthen local disaster response capabilities. Therefore, on November 1, 2021, the fifth anniversary of JVOAD, JVOAD established the "Disaster Relief SONAE Reiwa Fund " with a portion of the donation given by the Japanese Emperor. This donation was given on the occasion of the Japanese Emperor's enthronement and was used to maintain and train the "coordinating organizations" in each area which coordinate several supporting initiatives by NPOs and volunteers during disasters.

The fund calls for wide cooperation and donation from corporations, organizations and individuals. JVOAD plans to promote the following projects in each region of Japan by utilizing the fund.

- Networking among disaster relief workers (holding forums and liaison meetings in prefectures)
- Skill and human resource development for disaster relief (training to develop human resources and coordinators of disaster relief)
- Consideration and verification of a system for disaster relief (e.g. verifications on establishing a specific system for disasters)

The Cabinet Office will continue to promote collaboration and cooperation with JVOAD, and hopes that the regional collaboration system will be further strengthened through the Disaster Relief SONAE Reiwa Fund.



Source: JVOAD website

(Reference: <https://jvoad.jp/support/#support5>)