



ELCA Disaster Response
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.

JAPAN EARTHQUAKE & TSUNAMI SITUATION REPORT #2

March 25, 2011

I. SUMMARY

- 244,000 people are still taking shelter in some 1,900 evacuation centers
- More than 27,500 people have been confirmed dead or remain unaccounted for
- Economic cost from the earthquake and tsunami estimated at \$309 billion U.S. dollars
- Distribution of food and non-food relief materials continue
- Visit <http://blogs.elca.org/disasterresponse> for more information

II. SITUATION

Evacuees and survivors of the March 11 earthquake and tsunami continue to suffer in freezing weather including snow storms today. Approximately 210,000 households (516,600 people) do not have electricity and one million people are without gas due to a lack of fuel. As electricity is restored the number of people in evacuation centers continues to decrease significantly. There are currently an estimated 244,000 people still taking shelter in some 1,900 evacuation centers mostly in northeastern and eastern Japan.

The number of evacuation centers has also decreased by one fifth. The March 25 UNOCHA report explains that the reduction is a result of evacuees moving into larger evacuation centers now that roads are repaired and debris is cleared. In the week following the disaster there were about 2,212 mostly smaller evacuation centers, many of which were in isolated areas where relief was difficult to reach. The evacuees are now congregating in larger centers which serve as main distribution points for relief supplies. Managing committees have been established in the evacuation centers to establish order in the centers in regards to distribution of food and relief items, cleaning, water supply, and allocation of individual living spaces. A municipal official acts as the liaison between the committees and the municipality.

The number of people feared missing has also gone down as people thought to be missing are identified when they move into the larger evacuation centers. More than 27,500 people have been confirmed dead or remain unaccounted for - 10,066 deaths and 17,443 missing. A survey has found that 19 percent of the casualties were people over the age of 60, 22 percent were over 70 and 23 percent were over 80. The survey shows that the elderly were most affected by this disaster, probably as a result of not being physically able to evacuate quickly enough.

Local media reports that 53 percent of hospitals with 100 beds or more are either closed or only partially operational in the three worst affected prefectures. Out of 255 hospitals, 17 are closed and 117 are operating on a limited scale. The majority of hospitals explained this was due to a shortage of staff and medicine, damaged buildings and equipment, and a delay in restoration of water, electricity or gas.

There are positive developments for vital services and infrastructure. More than 90 percent of telecommunications disrupted by the earthquake/tsunami have been restored. Similarly, about 90 percent of the national highways that had been damaged by the earthquake and tsunami are now open to the public. Bus companies are also operating again as roadways are no longer restricted to emergency vehicles only.

In Fukushima Prefecture, the Self Defense Force says it has been unable to search for missing people due to the ongoing nuclear situation. People living in a 20-kilometer radius of the plant have been advised to evacuate and those within 20 km to 30 km have been advised to stay indoors. However, after two weeks of remaining indoors, residents are reportedly running short of supplies and the Government says it will assist those who want to evacuate.

Radioactive iodine higher than the acceptable limit for infants has been found in tap water in Saitama, Ibaraki, Tochigi and Chiba Prefectures. Authorities of Tochigi Prefecture as well as the cities of Hitachi and Kasama in Ibaraki Prefecture have advised not to give tap water to babies. In Tokyo, the level of iodine in tap water decreased on Thursday to the standard, but the Metropolitan Government is continuing the distribution of bottles of water to families with infants until today. Radiation has also been detected in sea water collected 30km from the coast, near the nuclear plant. The Ministry expressed the need to study the long-term impact it may have on marine life.

The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), and the World Health Organization (WHO) have issued a joint Statement on Food Safety Issues following the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Emergency. The Statement says; "Some food products sampled at sites both within the Fukushima Prefecture and in adjacent areas have been contaminated by radioactive materials. Japan has regulations in place relating to provisional regulatory limits of radioactivity in food. Food monitoring is being implemented, measurements of radionuclide concentrations in food are taking place, and the results are being communicated publicly. Japanese authorities are also giving advice to consumers and producers regarding safety measures."

The Government estimates the economic cost from the March 11 earthquake and tsunami in seven affected prefectures to be up to \$309 billion U.S. dollars (25 trillion yen). The destruction of housing, social infrastructure such as roads and ports, and production facilities in affected areas could cost between \$198 and \$309 billion. The figure far exceeds the \$123 billion from the 1995 Kobe Earthquake. Almost 19,000 homes and buildings have been washed away by the tsunami. Another 118,137 have been damaged. The tsunami also damaged 2,000 roads, 36 railways and 54 bridges.

III. COORDINATED RESPONSE

The ELCA has an expansive network of global companions through which it engages in relief and rehabilitation following major international disasters. Our church's ongoing relationships – both Lutheran and ecumenical – enable us to engage swiftly and effectively with communities in need, as they recover from disasters like the earthquake and tsunami in Japan. To respond to the disaster in Japan, we are working very closely with the Japan Evangelical Lutheran Church, the Lutheran World Federation, and Church World Service in providing direct assistance to survivors of this disaster – and we'll continue to walk with them as they rebuild their lives.

On March 18th, the ELCA made an initial commitment of \$240,000 to our companion's relief efforts:

- \$100,000 to the Japan Evangelical Lutheran Church for initial relief efforts;
- \$40,000 to enable the Lutheran World Federation to deploy an emergency relief advisor from India, arriving on ; and
- \$100,000 to Church World Service for an immediate response to 5,000 households, about 25,000 individuals, now living at 100 evacuation sites in the northeastern area of Japan.

Please refer to the Japan Earthquake and Tsunami Situation Report #1, March 18 for further detail on these efforts.

The Japan Evangelical Lutheran Church is working together with three other Lutheran churches as well as the Roman Catholic Church, Japan Episcopal Church, and many others in relief and rebuilding efforts. In a letter to the ELCA's Presiding Bishop Mark Hanson this week, President Sumiyuki Watanabe of the JELC has thanked the ELCA for our solidarity and initial contribution and requests continued prayers and support to the church.

JELC's immediate relief efforts are underway, through the distribution of food and non-food items to affected families in the community of Sendai. Distribution points have been established at the churches and preschools in Sendai for the distribution of food and materials difficult to obtain in Sendai which have been transported from Tokyo:

- 5000 kg rice
- 5,010 vegetable juice 200ml
- 1,920 water 500ml
- 1,020 instant soup
- 240 packages toilet paper
- 1,300kg banana
- 500kg Miso

The Lutheran churches in Japan have formed a joint committee to prepare a coordinated response to this disaster. This body is referred to as Japan Lutheran Emergency Relief (JLER) and is comprised of the following participating churches:

1. Japan Evangelical Lutheran Church (JELC)
2. Kinki Evangelical Lutheran Church (KELC)

3. Japan Lutheran Church (JLC)
4. West Japan Evangelical Lutheran Church (WJELC)

This body will be receiving an emergency response advisor on Monday, March 28. This individual will work with the JLER to prepare a full strategy to respond to church infrastructure damage and needed livelihood and food relief. Initial focus will also be on establishing a base for relief activities and defining opportunities for coordination with other denominations, the wider ecumenical network and NGO's also responding to this disaster. ELCA Global Mission Area Program Director for Asia and Pacific, Franklin Ishida, is currently in Japan and will accompany the LWF deployed emergency response advisor as his work begins. The JLER is also planning to assess opportunities for volunteers and prepare volunteer placement opportunities; it is unknown whether there will be a need for volunteers from outside Japan.

IV. FUNDRAISING

As of March 25, ELCA Disaster Response has received gifts totaling more than \$750,000 for Japan Earthquake and Pacific Tsunami relief. Those who give to shared mission support and ELCA World Hunger are already helping to fund the ongoing work in Japan and the deployment of mission personnel through ELCA Global Mission. The ELCA invites gifts to ELCA Disaster Response in order to continue its work in Japan.

You may provide support in the following ways:

- Give by phone at 800-638-3522
- Donate online at: www.elca.org/japanearthquake
- Send checks to:
ELCA Disaster Response
39330 Treasury Center
Chicago, IL 60694
Memo: *Pacific Earthquake and Tsunami*

V. COMMUNICATION

The week of March 21, included many communication updates about the situation in Japan found at www.elca.org/disaster and elsewhere. This includes:

- Worship resources for this disaster
- Featured content from our companions in Japan on the ELCA Disaster Response blog found at: <http://blogs.elca.org/disasterresponse>

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