



# **Disaster Prevention and Reconstruction from a Gender Equal Society Perspective**

- Lessons from the Great East Japan Earthquake -

From the “White Paper on Gender Equality 2012”

Summary

Cabinet Office, Government of Japan  
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The Cabinet annually submits to the Diet a report on the state of formation of a gender equal society and policies implemented by the Government (the White Paper on Gender Equality).

The 2012 White Paper has a special section devoted to providing analysis and proposal under the theme of “Disaster Prevention and Reconstruction from a Gender Equal Society Perspective.” This document is a summary of the special section. Please see the White Paper for more detailed information on source cited.

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## **Disaster Prevention and Reconstruction from a Gender Equal Society Perspective**

One year and three months have passed since the Great East Japan Earthquake and subsequent tsunami hit the north-east coast of Japan. Since then, the affected areas have been working to stabilize living circumstances as quickly as possible and to bring about a return to normal local life; various measures have been put in place in order to achieve this goal. While the response to this disaster continues, it is emergently required to improve and strengthen disaster prevention and mitigation measures in anticipation of a similarly large-scale event in the future.

Here, we examine the Great East Japan Earthquake as it happened and government's response to the event from the perspective of a gender equal society. We also clarify any lessons that are of particular note in the context of implementing current or formulating future disaster prevention and recovery & reconstruction measures.

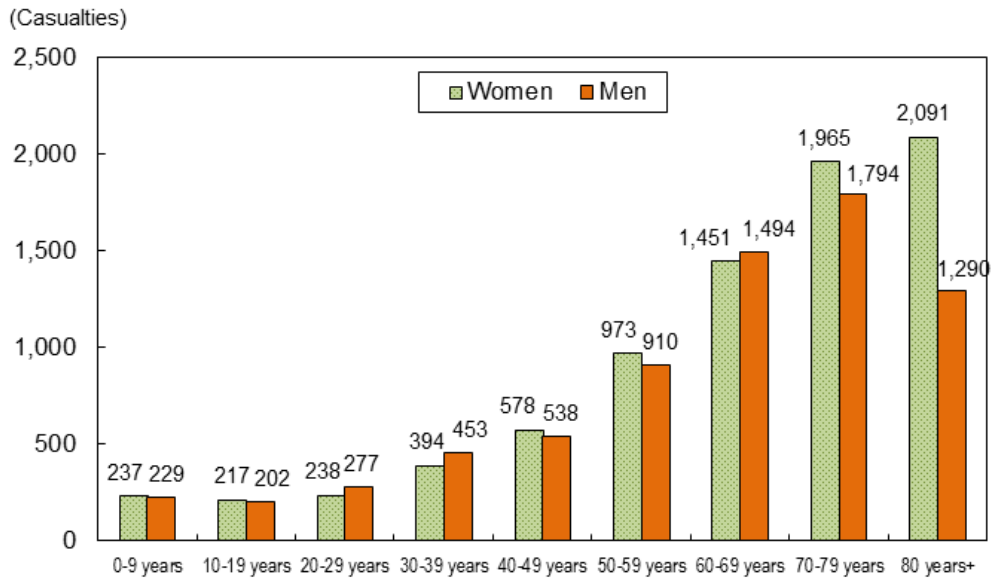
### **Section 1: Occurrence of the Great East Japan Earthquake**

#### **1. Disaster**

Iwate, Miyagi and Fukushima prefectures were the worst affected, with 8,363 female and 7,360 male casualties recorded in total (the gender of 63 further casualties is not identified). Female casualties outnumber male by around 1,000. The majority of these additional 1,000 female casualties were aged 70 years or older; the gap in the number of deaths for elderly men and women is considerable (see Figure 1).

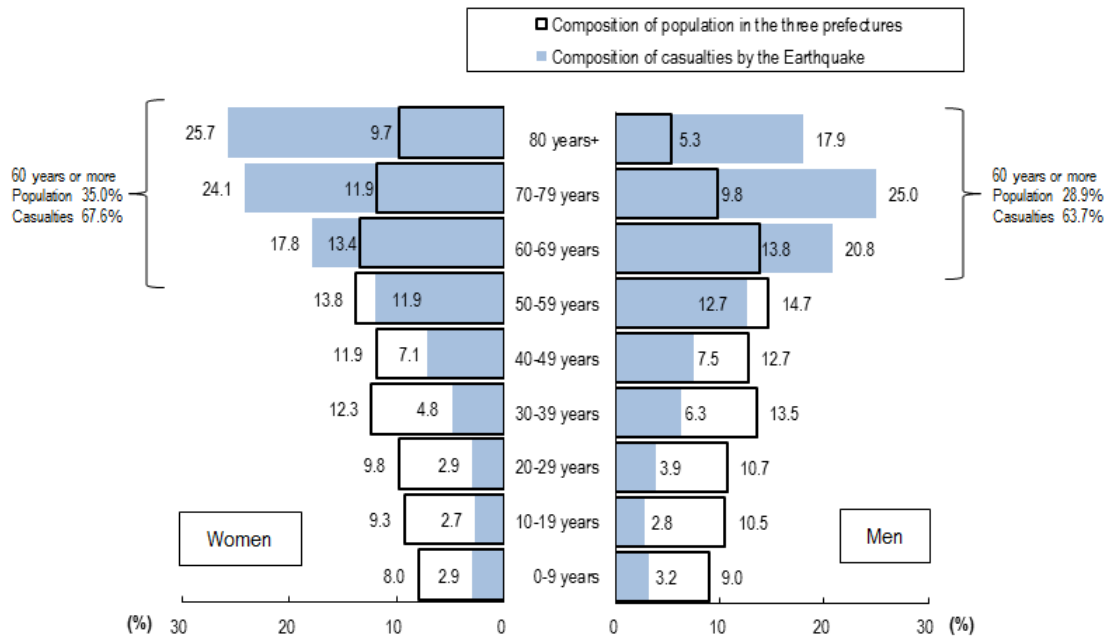
A comparison of the respective number of casualties in Iwate, Miyagi and Fukushima prefectures, segmented by gender and age group, with population data obtained from the 2010 National Census, shows that the proportion of women and men aged 60 years or more is 35.0% and 28.9% respectively, while the ratio of casualties aged 60 or over is 67.6% for women and 63.7% for men. These figures reveal that the ratio of casualties disproportionately higher for the elderly (see Figure 2).

**Figure 1: Casualties by Gender and Age Group in the Great East Japan Earthquake (Iwate, Miyagi, Fukushima Prefectures)**



(Notes) 1. The data source is 'Cause of Death for Casualties in the Great East Japan Earthquake, 11.03.11-11.03.12', National Police Agency  
 2. Figures do not include casualties whose gender or age is not identified.

**Figure 2: Comparison of Male and Female Casualties in the Great East Japan Earthquake and Regional Population by Age Composition (Iwate, Miyagi, Fukushima Prefectures)**



(Notes) 1. The data source is 'Cause of Death for Casualties in the Great East Japan Earthquake, 11.03.11-11.03.12', National Police Agency, and the National Census (2010), Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications.  
 2. The sum of all age brackets is 100.  
 3. Population data for the three affected prefectures does not include persons whose age is not identified. The casualty figures for the Great East Japan Earthquake do not include casualties whose gender or age is not identified.

## 2. Rescue and Relief Operations

Rescue and relief operations subsequent to the Great East Japan Earthquake were conducted through extensive cooperation among police, fire services, Japan Coast Guard and the Self-Defense Forces.

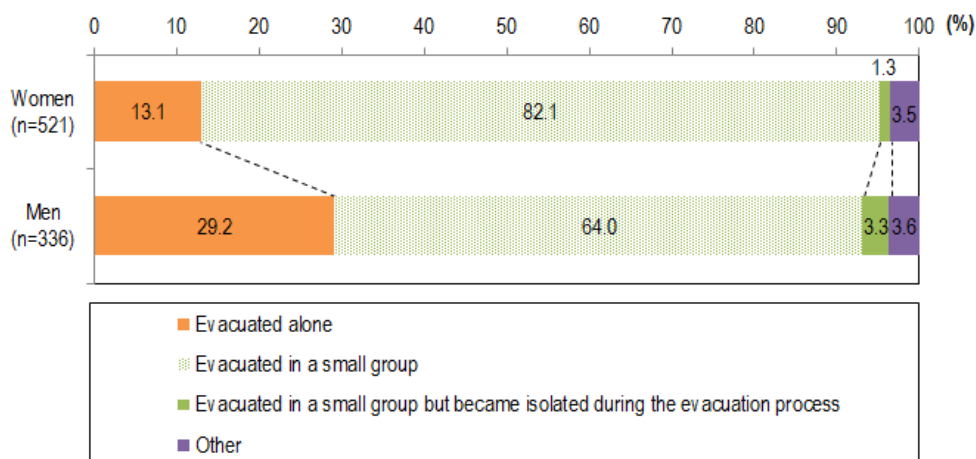
No data by gender of the personnel dispatched to the affected areas from the National Police Agency, Fire and Disaster Management Agency, Japan Coast Guard and the Ministry of Defense is available.

## 3. Tsunami Evacuation Operations

The Cabinet Office, Fire and Disaster Management Agency, and Japan Meteorological Agency jointly conducted ‘Survey on Tsunami Evacuation’ from early to late July 2011. The survey targeted people affected by the earthquake and tsunami who were resident in Iwate, Miyagi and Fukushima prefectures and were evacuated from coastal areas to other locations in their respective prefectures.

The survey indicates that, when the disaster occurred, women obtained information from talk with people around them like family members and neighbors, and evacuated with other people, suggesting that women have a stronger connection with their local community than men (see Figure 3).

**Figure 3: Accompanying Persons during the Evacuation process (by gender)**



- (Notes) 1. Figures for men and women calculated by the Gender Equality Bureau, Cabinet Office, based on ‘Survey on Tsunami Evacuation’ (2011) conducted jointly by the Cabinet Office, Fire and Disaster Management Agency, and Japan Meteorological Agency.  
 2. 870 people (525 women, 345 men) who were evacuated from coastal areas to other prefectural locations in Iwate, Miyagi and Fukushima prefectures were surveyed. The survey was conducted by interview during field visits to temporary housing and evacuation sites.  
 3. The survey was conducted between early and late July 2011.  
 4. The respondents to this question were those who selected one of the following options: “I evacuated immediately after the shaking had stopped”; “I evacuated after I finished doing something else”; “I was doing something else when the tsunami hit”.  
 5. “Other” includes answers such as “I don’t remember” and “other”.

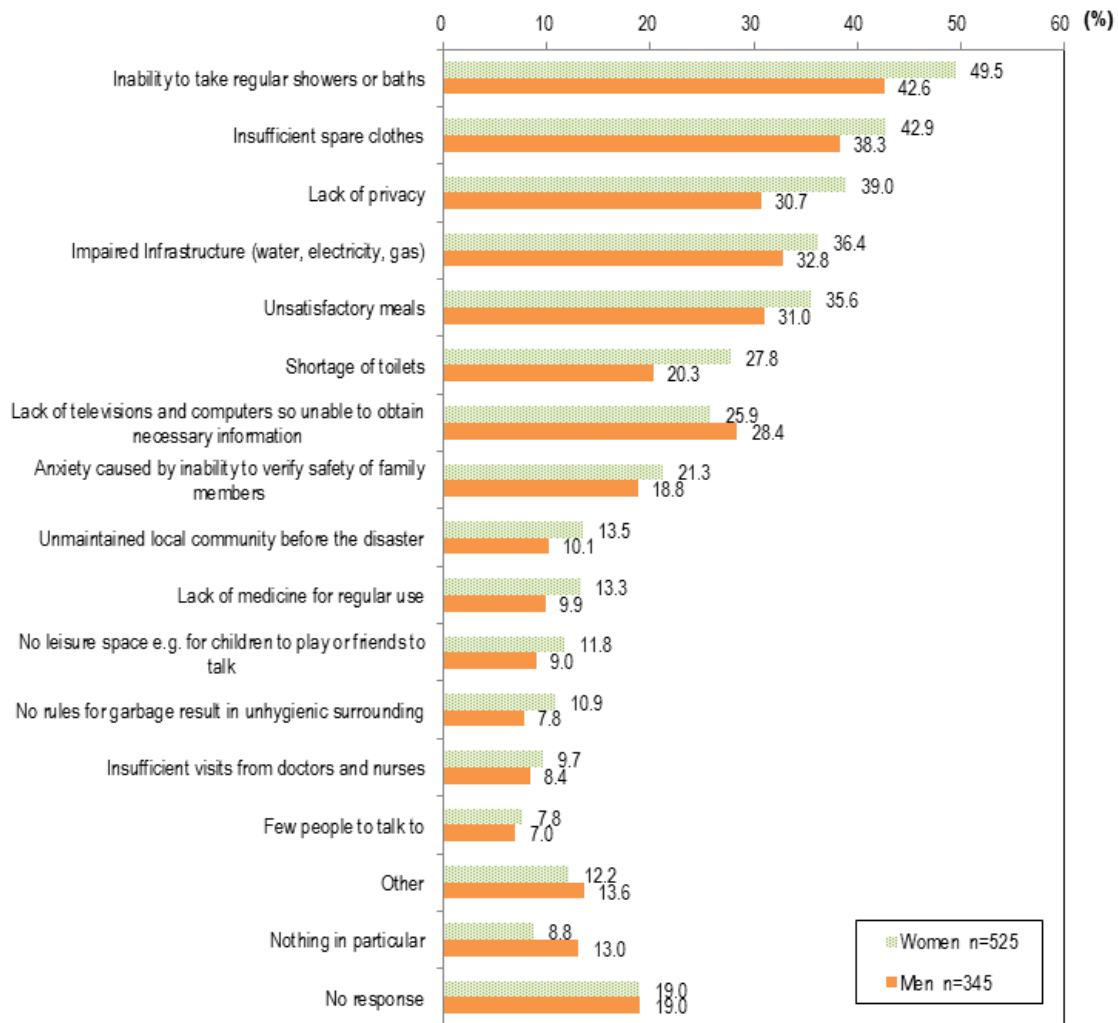
## Section 2: Situation and Circumstances of Affected People

### 1. Evacuation Sites

In Iwate, Miyagi and Fukushima prefectures, 96-97% of leaders of community organizations were men who were charged with the design and operation of evacuation sites. It has been pointed out that there was not sufficient awareness of the need to consider the requirements of women (see Figure 4).

The Cabinet Office conducted 'Survey on the Disaster Response from a Gender Equality Perspective', between November 2011 and March 2012. Respondents were local governments and private organizations in affected areas as well as those that had provided support to affected areas. The survey reported due to the lack of female involvement in taking responsibility for the operation of evacuation sites: (a) there was a tendency not to place any importance on the requests and opinions of women; (b) there was a tendency among women to hesitate to request those items required by/for women when they were in short supply. Furthermore, stereotypical perceptions of traditional gender role perpetuated the idea that men should clear rubble while women should prepare meals for the evacuation site. In many cases, daily allowance was provided for clearing rubble while no such compensation was provided for working on food preparation.

**Figure 4: Problems Encountered during Residence at Evacuation Sites Immediately after the Disaster (by gender, multiple answers possible)**



- (Notes)
1. Figures for men and women calculated by the Gender Equality Bureau, Cabinet Office, based on 'Survey on Tsunami Evacuation' (2011) conducted jointly by the Cabinet Office, Fire and Disaster Management Agency, and Japan Meteorological Agency.
  2. 870 people (525 women, 345 men) who were evacuated from coastal areas to other prefectural locations in Iwate, Miyagi and Fukushima prefectures were surveyed. The survey was conducted by interview during field visits to temporary housing and evacuation sites.
  3. The survey was conducted between early and late July 2011.

## 2. Emergency Temporary Housing

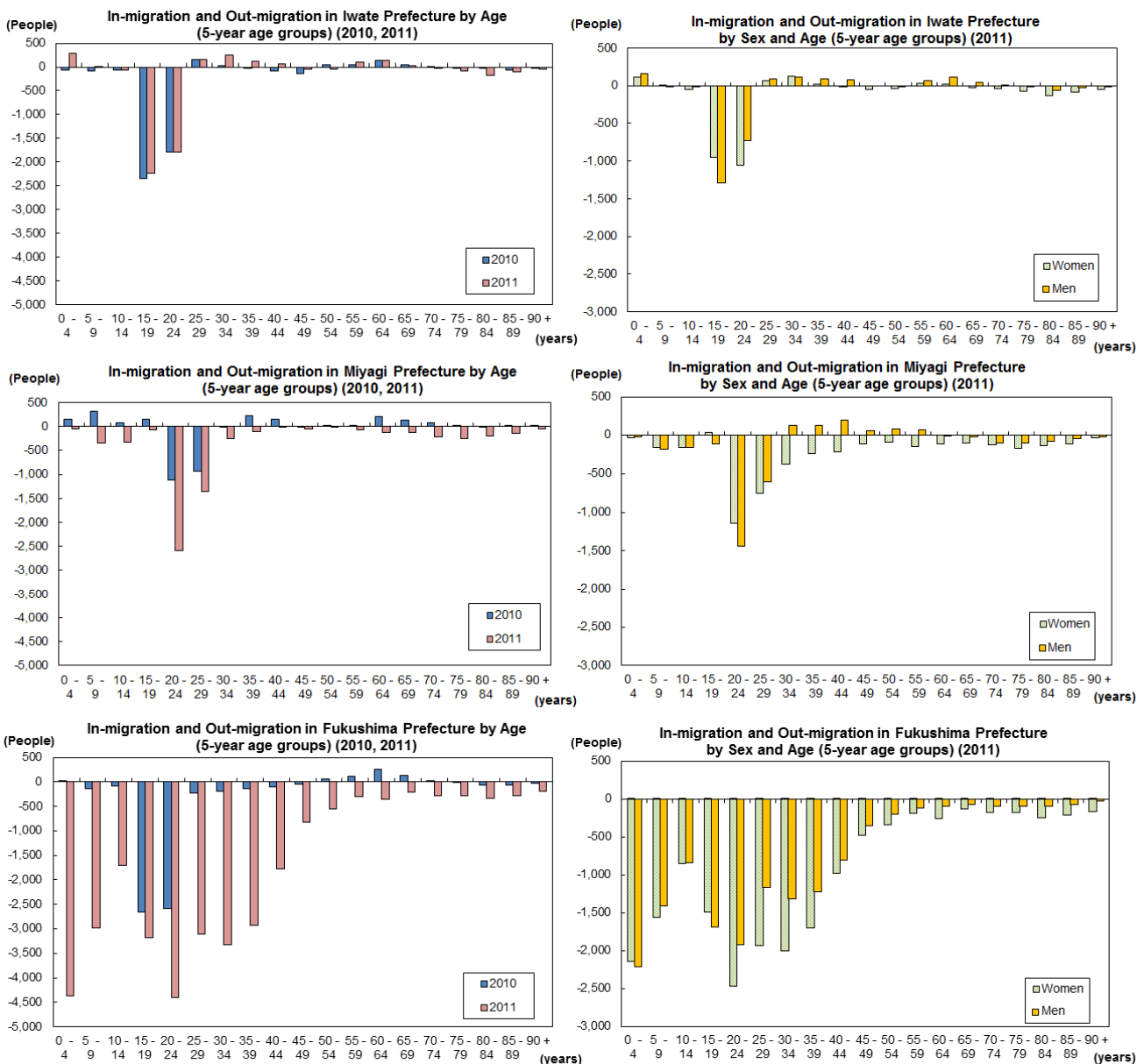
Temporary housings were not “barrier free” with gravel paths, and steps up to entrances and bathing areas. This lack of accessibility caused everyday problems for the elderly and persons with physical disabilities. In addition, the above-cited survey by the Cabinet Office reported that: (a) most of the persons responsible for temporary housing were men, with few examples of women independently involved in running communities; (b) there were insufficient spaces safe for babies and young children; (c) less participation of men for group meetings held at meeting places revealed concern for isolation.

### 3. Trends in Internal Migration

According to the figures for in-migration and out-migration (the number of inter-prefectural migrants) in Iwate, Miyagi and Fukushima prefectures in 2011, no age groups showed any particular increase in out-migration in Iwate prefecture, while the number of out-migration aged 20-24 years and 25-29 years was considerably higher than the previous year in Miyagi prefecture.

In Fukushima prefecture, out-migration was recorded for all age groups, with a particular increase from the previous year for the 0-14 year age group. Out-migration for the 0-14 year age group consisted 4,577 women and 4,463 men and there was little difference by gender. However, those figures for the 25-44 year age group which could include the parents of the former group were 6,628 for women and 4,514 for men, and those represented considerable gap between the gender (see Figure 5).

**Figure 5: Trends in In-migration and Out-migration (inter-prefectural migrants) in Iwate, Miyagi and Fukushima Prefectures**



- (Notes)
1. The data is taken from 'Report on Internal Migration derived from Basic Resident Registers: Population Movement Nationally and in Iwate, Miyagi and Fukushima prefectures' (2011) by the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications.
  2. Figures for 2011 include figures for the period prior to the disaster.
  3. Although these figures will not include those persons who have not registered to the relevant local authority, they do include those movements that are not directly related to the disaster (e.g. moving for school, for work, etc.)
  4. In-migration and out-migration = "number of people moving into the prefecture from another prefecture" - "number of people moving out of the prefecture to another prefecture"



#### 4. Employment

The number of female active applications in February 2012 in Iwate, Miyagi and Fukushima prefectures had increased by 10.8%, but that of male had fallen by 2.4%, compared to the same month in the previous year (see Table 6).

The number of persons receiving unemployment benefits in February 2012 was 34,256 for women and 24,060 for men. The figure had increased by around 1.7 times for male and around 2.3 times for female the number in the same month in previous year. This higher rate of increase for women indicates that women in these prefectures are experiencing more severe employment situation (see Table 7).

Data from branches of Hello Work (the national public employment security office) located along the coast of the affected areas shows that the active job openings -to- applicants ratio is low in the food production sector— with a comparatively high number of female applications. In contrast, the number of active job openings exceeds that of active applications in the construction and civil engineering sectors with small number of female applications. It indicates job mismatch between the sort of work that female applications are looking for and the actual jobs available (see Figure 8).

**Table 6: Employment Trends in Iwate, Miyagi and Fukushima Prefectures (by gender)**

Active applications (above: people, below: %)					Persons who found employment (above: people, below: %)						
		May 2011	August	November	February 2012			May 2011	August	November	February 2012
Iwate prefecture	Women	24,601 (26.0)	20,480 (23.6)	18,964 (18.1)	19,505 (10.6)	Iwate prefecture	Women	2,108 (24.8)	1,871 (16.9)	1,907 (16.9)	1,972 (15.1)
	Men	21,325 (4.3)	16,597 (-4.2)	14,692 (-4.8)	15,694 (-2.9)		Men	2,016 (38.1)	1,766 (24.6)	1,652 (5.2)	1,539 (28.5)
Miyagi prefecture	Women	39,387 (26.7)	34,888 (23.6)	31,913 (15.7)	30,691 (14.7)	Miyagi prefecture	Women	2,289 (11.5)	2,470 (23.8)	2,242 (3.9)	2,264 (12.2)
	Men	36,551 (15.0)	30,933 (5.3)	27,350 (1.4)	25,829 (-1.1)		Men	2,282 (43.0)	2,503 (31.0)	2,117 (13.1)	2,136 (38.9)
Fukushima prefecture	Women	28,304 (14.1)	25,084 (11.9)	23,049 (8.4)	22,529 (6.1)	Fukushima prefecture	Women	2,323 (22.5)	2,207 (26.6)	1,992 (14.9)	1,908 (9.5)
	Men	25,214 (-3.3)	22,253 (-2.0)	20,462 (-2.3)	19,515 (-3.7)		Men	1,916 (13.9)	2,170 (40.4)	1,940 (20.9)	1,624 (20.7)
3 prefecture total	Women	92,292 (22.4)	80,452 (19.7)	73,926 (13.9)	72,725 (10.8)	3 prefecture total	Women	6,720 (19.2)	6,548 (22.7)	6,141 (11.2)	6,144 (12.2)
	Men	83,090 (6.1)	69,783 (0.5)	62,504 (-1.3)	61,038 (-2.4)		Men	6,214 (31.2)	6,439 (32.1)	5,709 (13.1)	5,299 (29.8)

(Notes) 1. The data is taken from the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare report: 'Current Employment Situation in the Three Disaster-Affected Prefectures (monthly report) (figures for men and women)'.  
2. Figures shown in parentheses show the percentage increase or decrease from the same month of the previous year.  
3. All figures are presented in terms of absolute values.

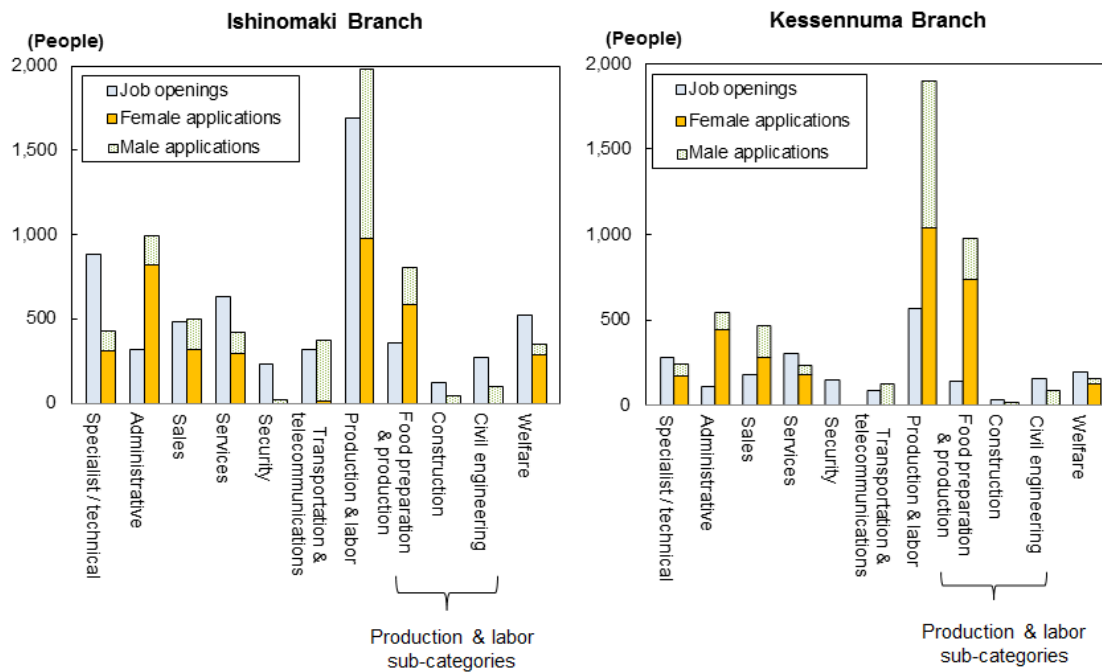
**Table 7: Actual Number of Unemployment Benefit Recipients in Iwate, Miyagi and Fukushima Prefectures (by gender)**

(Unit: Above: people, below: %)

		May 2011	August	November	February 2012
Iwate prefecture	Women	8,666 (100.6)	8,863 (93.9)	7,230 (87.8)	6,829 (94.3)
	Men	6,951 (36.1)	5,825 (17.0)	4,527 (15.0)	4,255 (22.1)
Miyagi prefecture	Women	17,652 (144.1)	19,406 (131.8)	16,338 (135.6)	15,261 (145.3)
	Men	15,296 (118.1)	14,810 (95.2)	12,188 (88.7)	10,875 (79.1)
Fukushima prefecture	Women	13,403 (107.0)	15,453 (121.0)	14,033 (136.3)	12,166 (126.1)
	Men	11,269 (75.6)	11,355 (76.1)	9,916 (81.1)	8,930 (80.2)
3 prefecture total	Women	39,721 (120.4) About 2.2 times	43,722 (119.3) About 2.2 times	37,601 (124.8) About 2.2 times	34,256 (126.6) About 2.3 times
	Men	33,516 (80.8) About 1.8 times	31,990 (68.3) About 1.7 times	26,631 (67.8) About 1.7 times	24,060 (65.8) About 1.7 times

- (Notes)
1. The data is taken from the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare report: 'Current Employment Situation in the Three Disaster-Affected Prefectures (monthly report) (figures for men and women)'.
  2. Persons currently in receipt of unemployment benefit include those persons receiving extended benefits because of difficulty in finding a job, specially extended benefits, and those who reside in the area where the Wide-Area Job Introduction Order has been put into force.
  3. Unemployment benefit figures also include those persons who are voluntarily unemployed, who have retired having reached mandatory retirement age, and other specific circumstances (e.g. sabbatical, temporary break from work, etc.)
  4. Figures shown in parentheses show the percentage increase or decrease from the same month of the previous year.

**Figure 8: Active Applications and Active Job Openings at Regional Branches of Hello Work (January 2012)**



- (Notes)
1. The data is taken from the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare report(January 2012): 'Current Employment Situation in the Three Disaster-Affected Prefectures (monthly report) (figures for men and women)'.
  2. Job offering form does not include question on applicant's sex, therefore no data is available on the sex decomposition.
  3. Welfare-related work includes those jobs in other categories that are related to welfare.

## 5. Mental Health

A research team from the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare was established to conduct the ‘Survey on the Health and Welfare of Affected People by the Great East Japan Earthquake’. The survey targeted residents of Rikuzen-takata city in Iwate prefecture and Ishinomaki city in Miyagi prefecture as participants.

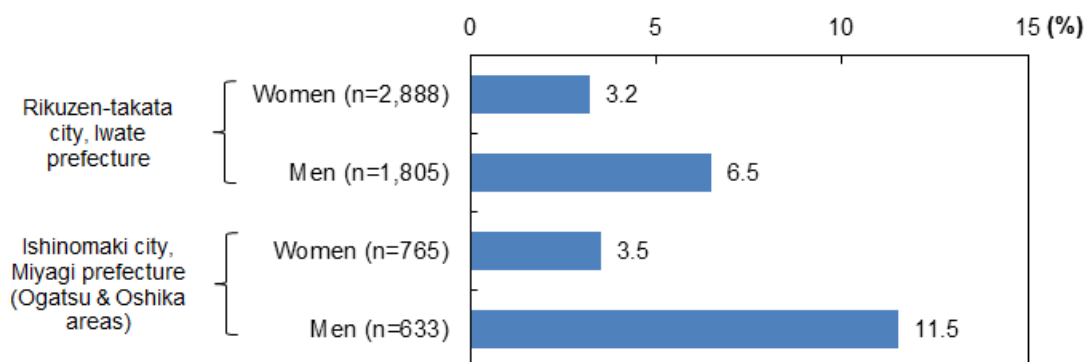
The survey collated data from male and female respondents separately. Before and after the Great East Japan Earthquake, most adult respondents showed little change in alcohol consumption. For both cities, the proportion of people reporting increased alcohol consumption subsequent to the disaster was around 3% for women, and between 7-12% for men (see Figure 9).

The survey also looked at insomnia levels. The proportion of respondents indicating suspected insomnia in Rikuzen-takata city was 44.4% for women and 27.7% for men, and in Ishinomaki city was 50.2% for women and 32.4% for men (see Figure 10).

The distribution for indices to measure mental health indicated that the proportion of respondents scoring 13 points or more on the scale, placing them in the ‘severe’ category and indicating the need for individual support, was 7.0% for women and 3.3% for men in Rikuzen-takata city, and 8.4% for women and 6.0% for men in Ishinomaki city (see Figure 11).

Overall, both these data shows how the impact of the disaster on health was greater for women than men in terms of insomnia and mental health.

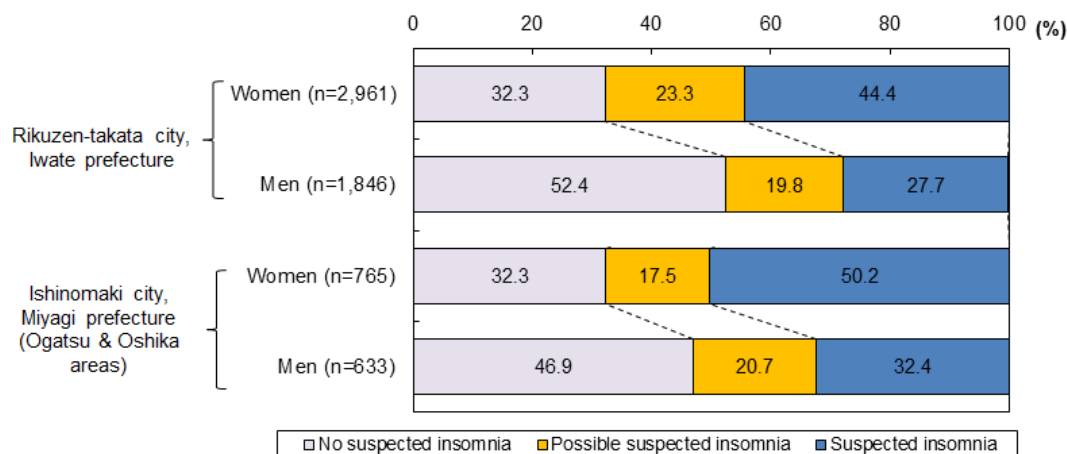
**Figure 9: Proportion of Persons Reporting Increased Alcohol Consumption (Rikuzen-takata and Ishinomaki cities, by gender)**



**(Notes)**

1. The data is taken from the Research Team on ‘Survey on the Health and Welfare of Affected People by the Great East Japan Earthquake’ (Research leader: Kenji Hayashi, Director, National Institute of Public Health) at the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare.
2. The figures above are taken from a survey conducted with people affected by the Great East Japan Earthquake. This long-term follow-up study on health looks at men and women aged 18 or more, and involves both health check-ups and questionnaires (however, only those questionnaires answered by persons aged 20 or more are referred to for questions regarding to alcohol consumption).
3. Respondents were asked about their weekly alcohol consumption levels before and after the disaster, and the figures above represent the proportion of persons who indicated an increased consumption level after the disaster.
4. Figures for Rikuzen-takata city in Iwate prefecture were drawn up separately for men and women by Professor Kiyomi Sakata of Iwate Medical University, one of the team researchers. The data was collected between October and December 2011.
5. Figures for Ishinomaki city in Miyagi prefecture (Ogatsu & Oshika areas) were drawn up separately for men and women by Professor Ichiro Tsuji of Tohoku University, one of the team researchers. The data was collected between June and August 2011.

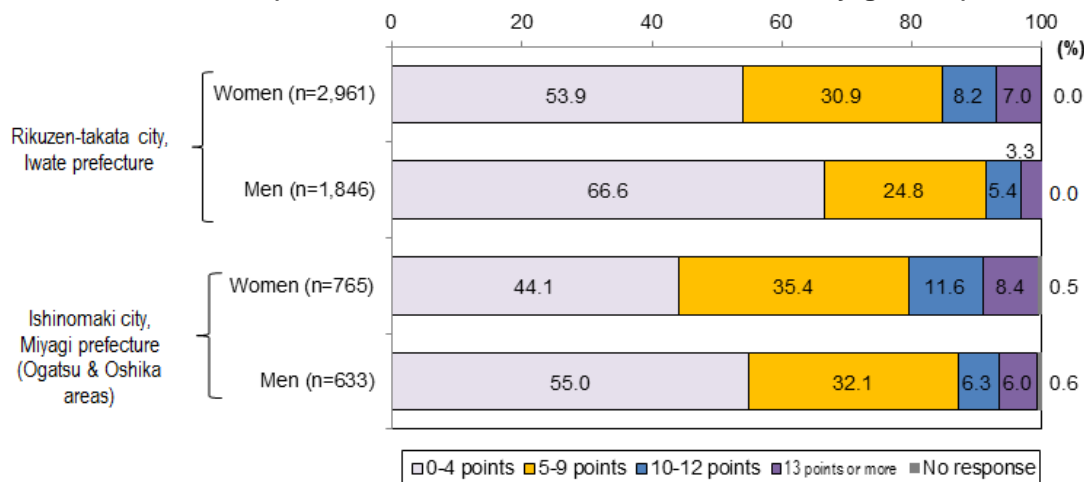
**Figure 10: Insomnia (Rikuzen-takata and Ishinomaki cities, by gender)**



(Notes)

1. The data is taken from the Research Team on 'Survey on the Health and Welfare of People Affected by the Great East Japan Earthquake' (Research leader: Kenji Hayashi, Director, National Institute of Public Health) at the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare.
2. The figures above are taken from a survey conducted with people affected by the Great East Japan Earthquake. This long-term follow-up study on health looks at men and women aged 18 or more, and involves both health check-ups and questionnaires.
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4. Figures for Ishinomaki city in Miyagi prefecture (Ogatsu & Oshika areas) were drawn up separately for men and women by Professor Ichiro Tsuji of Tohoku University, one of the team researchers. The data was collected between June and August 2011.
5. The survey was carried out using the Athens Insomnia Scale, developed as part of the Worldwide Project on Sleep and Health established primarily by the World Health Organization. Respondents are asked to answer eight questions on their sleep patterns over the past month, and the total number of points awarded represents the scale of their insomnia (0-3 points: No suspected insomnia; 4-5 points: Possible suspected insomnia; 6 points or more: Suspected insomnia).

**Figure 11: Mental Health (Rikuzen-takata and Ishinomaki cities, by gender)**



(Notes)

1. The data is taken from the Research Team on 'Survey on the Health and Welfare of People Affected by the Great East Japan Earthquake' (Research leader: Kenji Hayashi, Director, National Institute of Public Health) at the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare.
2. The figures above are taken from a survey conducted with people affected by the Great East Japan Earthquake. This long-term follow-up study on health looks at men and women aged 18 or more, and involves both health check-ups and questionnaires.
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4. Figures for Ishinomaki city in Miyagi prefecture (Ogatsu & Oshika areas) were drawn up separately for men and women by Professor Ichiro Tsuji of Tohoku University, one of the team researchers. The data was collected between June and August 2011.
5. The survey was carried out using the K6 scale developed by Kessler et al. in the US to screen patients for mental health conditions such as depression and anxiety. This scale is widely used as an index for determining the level of mental problems, such as psychological stress. Respondents were asked to answer six questions, and their mental state is judged according to the number of points awarded to their answers. The higher the number of points, the more likely they are to be suffering serious mental problems.

## 6. Crime and Violence

The number of confirmed incidents of crime for FY 2011 in Iwate, Miyagi and Fukushima prefectures fell by around 14-20% from the corresponding figures to the previous fiscal year, a greater decrease than the national average (see Table 12).

With regard to sexual crime, the number of confirmed incidents of rape and indecent assault also fell in comparison with figures from the previous fiscal year (see Table 13).

The Cabinet Office worked with local governments affected by the disaster and non-profit organizations to offer an advisory and counseling service for women living in the affected areas by telephone or interview, giving them the opportunity to speak out anxieties, problems and violence against women. The service was run in cooperation with consultants throughout Japan, and was conducted from 10 May 2011 onwards in Iwate prefecture, 1 September 2011 onwards in Miyagi prefecture, and 11 February 2012 onwards in Fukushima prefecture. A variety of problems were consulted, including: cases of increased violence as partners became more dependent on alcohol; cases of partners taking out their anger at the destruction of former homes and an inability to settle in a new environment; cases of women moving back in with separated partners as a result of the loss of home and work, but being unable to bear the violence; cases of former partners approaching women with offers of help after the disaster, but after getting back together the women suffering violence at the hands of these partners.

**Table 12: Confirmed Incidents of Crime in Iwate, Miyagi and Fukushima Prefectures**

(Unit: incidents)

Iwate prefecture			Miyagi prefecture			Fukushima prefecture		
FY2011	FY2010	Difference	FY2011	FY2010	Difference	FY2011	FY2010	Difference
6,337	7,365	-14.0%	20,144	24,354	-17.3%	15,621	19,586	-20.2%
3 prefecture total			National total (reference)					
FY2011	FY2010	Difference	FY2011	FY2010	Difference			
42,102	51,305	-17.9%	1,468,549	1,570,050	-6.5%			

(Notes)

1. The data is taken from National Police Agency.

2. Figures for each year are inclusive from March of that year to February of the following year. Figures for FY2011 include provisional figures for March 2012.

**Table 13: Confirmed Incidents of Sexual Offence in Iwate, Miyagi and Fukushima Prefectures**

(Unit: incidents)

	Iwate prefecture			Miyagi prefecture			Fukushima prefecture		
	FY2011	FY2010	Difference	FY2011	FY2010	Difference	FY2011	FY2010	Difference
Rape	9	14	-35.7%	15	27	-44.4%	16	17	-5.9%
Indecent assault	41	46	-10.9%	145	138	5.1%	87	122	-28.7%
3 prefecture total			National total (reference)						
	FY2011	FY2010	Difference	FY2011	FY2010	Difference			
Rape	40	58	-31.0%	1,185	1,269	-6.6%			
Indecent assault	273	306	-10.8%	6,974	7,003	-0.4%			

(Notes)

1. The data is taken from National Police Agency.

2. Figures for each year are inclusive from March of that year to February of the following year. Figures for FY2011 include provisional figures for March 2012.

## **Section 3: Recover and Reconstruction Measures**

### **1. Basic Framework for Recovery and Reconstruction**

The Basic Act on Reconstruction in response to the Great East Japan Earthquake was passed in June 2011. The fundamental principle of the law includes the statement that: “the wishes of those persons living in regions affected by the Earthquake should be reflected in the process of reconstruction, together with the views of a diverse range of Japanese nationals, including women, children and disabled persons.

Basic Guidelines for Reconstruction in response to the Great East Japan Earthquake, formulated in July 2011, states that its basic approach is to “promote the participating of women in all platforms and organizations of reconstruction, from the perspective of a gender equal society”. It explicitly states the required inclusion of gender equality and the perspective of women in reconstruction measures and policies.

The Reconstruction Design Council in response to the Great East Japan Earthquake, made up of relevant experts, includes one female committee member of a total of 15 members. The Study Group of the Council has 19 members, 2 of which are women. The Reconstruction Promotion Committee, however, newly established in February 2012 in response to the establishment of the Reconstruction Agency, has 15 members, 4 of which are women.

### **2. Recovery and Reconstruction Efforts by Local Governments**

Of all the municipalities located in coastal areas affected by the disaster, 43 received direct technical support from nationally appointed staff in the formulation of disaster recovery and reconstruction plans. A survey of these municipalities showed that, as of April 2012, 38 of the municipalities had established committees to work on recovery and reconstruction plans. Committee members included experts not resident in the relevant municipality. The total number of members of such committees is 751; of these, 84 are women (11.2%). There are a total of nine municipal committees with no female members at all (see Table 14).



**Table 14: Proportion of Women on Reconstruction Planning Committees**

Prefecture	City, town, village	Committee members	Of which women	Percentage of women
Aomori	Misawa City	22	1	4.5%
	Hachinohe City	17	2	11.8%
Iwate	Hirono Town	20	1	5.0%
	Noda Village	25	3	12.0%
	Fudai Village	14	0	0.0%
	Tanohata Village	12	1	8.3%
	Iwaizumi Town	18	0	0.0%
	Miyako City	21	3	14.3%
	Yamada Town	20	1	5.0%
	Otsuchi Town	48	5	10.4%
	Kamaishi City	45	8	17.8%
	Ofunato City	28	2	7.1%
	Rikuzen-takata City	50	4	8.0%
Miyagi	Kesennuma City	13	0	0.0%
	Minami-sanriku Town	9	0	0.0%
	Ishinomaki City	29	4	13.8%
	Onagawa Town	12	1	8.3%
	Higashi-matsushima City	6	0	0.0%
	Matsushima Town	16	2	12.5%
	Rifu Town	14	1	7.1%
	Shiogama City	15	0	0.0%
	Shichigahama Town	31	0	0.0%
	Tagajo City	15	1	6.7%
	Sendai City	16	3	18.8%
	Natori City	22	2	9.1%
	Iwanuma City	12	3	25.0%
	Watari Town	18	3	16.7%
Yamamoto Town	10	3	30.0%	
Fukushima	Shinchi Town	15	1	6.7%
	Soma City	26	0	0.0%
	Minami-soma City	25	5	20.0%
	Hirono Town	14	3	21.4%
	Iwaki City	7	0	0.0%
Ibaraki	Kita-ibaraki City	19	5	26.3%
	Hitachi City	10	1	10.0%
	Hitachi-naka City	24	7	29.2%
	Kamisu City	14	6	42.9%
Chiba	Asahi City	19	2	10.5%
Total		751	84	11.2%

<Reference>

Prefecture	Committee members	Of which women	Percentage of women
Aomori	12	3	25.0%
Iwate	19	2	10.5%
Miyagi	12	1	8.3%
Fukushima	23	1	4.3%

- (Notes)
1. The data is taken from the Reconstruction Agency.
  2. Figures as of April 2012.
  3. Reconstruction Planning Committees refer to committees established by the relevant municipality and including external experts. The committees have been established in order to make final decisions on recovery and reconstruction plans.
  4. The following are excluded from this list on the basis that the relevant municipality formulates (draws up) recovery and reconstruction plans but has no specific committee in place to do so: Kuji city, Iwate prefecture; Takahagi city, Oarai town and Kashima city, Ibaraki prefecture; Sammu city, Chiba prefecture.



### **3. Employment and Entrepreneurship Support for Women in Affected Areas**

Many of the areas affected by the disaster has been experiencing population aging and population decline since before the Great East Japan Earthquake. As efforts are made to revitalize life in local communities, it is vital that a new model for a society experiencing population aging and a declining birth rate is developed; one in which communities are maintained through new forms of mutual support, and in which women are encouraged to use their skills and capabilities to the fullest in order to participate in economy and society.

New businesses are springing up in the affected areas, many of which have been sparked by volunteer activities in evacuation sites, for example women who provided meals for evacuees have subsequently set up businesses preparing and selling lunch boxes, and community-based cafes.

All relevant ministries have schemes in place designed to provide assistance and support to women seeking employment or entrepreneurial opportunities in affected areas.

## **Section 4: Lessons from the Great East Japan Earthquake**

### **1. Development of the Central Disaster Management Council**

In December 2011, the Central Disaster Management Council amended the Basic Disaster Management Plan in order to include more specific details on: the promotion of the participation of women in the operation of evacuation sites and the improvement of efforts to consider the needs of women and families with children in the operation of evacuation sites; the promotion of the participation of women in the operation and management of temporary housing and the provision of greater opportunities for all persons living in such accommodation, particularly women, to have their opinions heard and acted upon.

The Central Disaster Management Council comprises 27 members, of which 2 are women. The Working Group subordinate to the Council has 20 members, of which 5 are women.

In response to the lessons learned from the actual occurrence of the disaster and subsequent disaster response activities, many local governments are in the process of amended local disaster management plans. In FY 2011, 27 prefectures amended their regional disaster management plans.

Local governments are required, in accordance with the Basic Act on Disaster Control Measures, to establish Regional Disaster Management Councils. The proportion of women on these councils as members was, as of April 2012, on average 4.5% for prefectures (3.5% in 2011). The number of prefectural councils with no female members decreased from 12 in 2011 to 6 in 2012 (see Table 15).

In order to further encourage such measures, in May 2012 the Cabinet Office and Fire and Disaster Management Agency notified all prefectures that measures to promotion gender equality would be included in a review of disaster management measures.

Furthermore, a bill entitled 'Bill to Partially Amend the Basic Act on Disaster Control Measures' was submitted to the 180<sup>th</sup> Session of the Diet. The bill proposes that, in order to better reflect the views of diverse actors in regional disaster management planning, prefectural governors should be able to appoint as members of the Regional Disaster Management Councils persons who have set up independent disaster management organizations and persons with relevant academic expertise.

**Table 15: Proportion of Women on Regional Disaster Management Councils**

Prefecture	Council members (people)	Of which women (people)	Percentage of women (%)	Reference: Percentage of women in the previous year (%)	Government ordinance cities	Council members (people)	Of which women (people)	Percentage of women (%)	Reference: Percentage of women in the previous year (%)
Hokkaido	58	4	6.9%	5.2%	Sapporo	62	4	6.5%	6.6%
Aomori	49	4	8.2%	4.1%	Sendai	63	2	3.2%	4.9%
Iwate	57	1	1.8%	1.8%	Saitama	82	5	6.1%	4.9%
Miyagi	49	1	2.0%	2.1%	Chiba	69	2	2.9%	4.4%
Akita	54	2	3.7%	5.8%	Yokohama	60	2	3.3%	1.8%
Yamagata	50	2	4.0%	4.0%	Kawasaki	68	3	4.4%	4.7%
Fukushima	49	3	6.1%	8.2%	Sagamihara	47	2	4.3%	2.2%
Ibaraki	45	1	2.2%	2.2%	Niigata	61	4	6.6%	5.1%
Tochigi	49	2	4.1%	2.0%	Shizuoka	45	4	8.9%	8.9%
Gunma	42	1	2.4%	2.4%	Hamamatsu	32	2	6.3%	6.3%
Saitama	63	3	4.8%	3.3%	Nagoya	63	8	12.7%	13.3%
Chiba	54	1	1.9%	1.9%	Kyoto	47	3	6.4%	6.5%
Tokyo	62	0	0.0%	0.0%	Osaka	50	4	8.0%	8.0%
Kanagawa	49	5	10.2%	0.0%	Sakai	50	2	4.0%	4.3%
Niigata	58	4	6.9%	6.9%	Kobe	61	1	1.6%	1.6%
Toyama	56	4	7.1%	7.4%	Okayama	49	20	40.8%	40.8%
Ishikawa	60	2	3.3%	3.3%	Hiroshima	70	3	4.3%	4.3%
Fukui	55	1	1.8%	0.0%	Fukuoka	68	6	8.8%	3.1%
Yamanashi	55	1	1.8%	1.9%	Kitakyushu	60	17	28.3%	6.3%
Nagano	57	1	1.8%	0.0%	Kumamoto	62	5	8.1%	6.6%
Gifu	51	3	5.9%	4.0%	Total	1,169	99	8.5%	7.2%
Shizuoka	48	2	4.2%	2.0%					
Aichi	66	0	0.0%	0.0%					
Mie	48	1	2.1%	6.5%					
Shiga	51	1	2.0%	2.0%					
Kyoto	59	3	5.1%	5.2%					
Osaka	53	1	1.9%	0.0%					
Hyogo	49	3	6.1%	0.0%					
Nara	53	4	7.5%	1.9%					
Wakayama	48	0	0.0%	0.0%					
Tottori	54	9	16.7%	16.7%					
Shimane	59	8	13.6%	8.5%					
Okayama	48	3	6.3%	2.2%					
Hiroshima	55	0	0.0%	0.0%					
Yamaguchi	57	1	1.8%	3.5%					
Tokushima	53	10	18.9%	20.0%					
Kagawa	50	4	8.0%	8.2%					
Ehime	44	0	0.0%	2.3%					
Kochi	52	3	5.8%	0.0%					
Fukuoka	48	0	0.0%	0.0%					
Saga	52	3	5.8%	3.9%					
Nagasaki	66	3	4.5%	4.7%					
Kumamoto	56	1	1.8%	1.9%					
Oita	44	2	4.5%	6.8%					
Miyazaki	45	1	2.2%	2.3%					
Kagoshima	56	1	1.8%	1.8%					
Okinawa	50	3	6.0%	0.0%					
Total	2,486	113	4.5%	3.5%					

(Notes) 1. The data source is documentation available from the Gender Equality Bureau, Cabinet Office.  
2. Figures as of April 2012

## **2. Collaborative Support from Diverse Organizations**

The response to the Great East Japan Earthquake was characterized by the provision of support through a wide framework of collaboration, including national and local governments, Gender Equality Centers, universities, NPOs, NGOs, neighborhood communities, and private business.

Gender Equality Centers play a vital role in the promotion of gender equality in local communities. On a day-to-day basis these centers provide information, undertake communication and awareness activities, and offer advice and counseling services, and have in place collaborative frameworks that include diverse organizations also engaged in local and community-focused work. This existing framework allowed the Gender Equality Centers to take on central and coordinating roles in terms of the various support activities provided by these organizations at the time of disaster occurrence. These centers used the network among Gender Equality Centers nationwide to provide support information for and assistance items to women in affected areas. In addition, these centers used their experience to provide support to evacuation sites and temporary housing in consideration of the needs of women and families with young children. The role of the centers was significant.

However, the fact that support was provided to people affected by disaster by multiple organizations also highlighted a number of issues. The above-cited survey conducted by the Cabinet Office notes a number of difficulties in evacuation sites, many of which were experienced by the following groups of people: parents with ill children; persons with developmental disorders difficult to identify from outward appearances and persons with internal disorders; persons with allergies requiring special support; persons with gender identity disorders; persons experiencing violence from partners; non-Japanese persons with insufficient understanding of the Japanese language.

## **3. Creation of a Gender Equal Society and Disaster Management and Recovery**

It is clear that overall women are more vulnerable to the effects of disaster than men. Now, as recovery and reconstruction progress, women in the affected areas are facing a challenging employment environment, and the issue of securing adequate employment opportunities for women is a serious concern. In terms of providing support to would-be female entrepreneurs, there is a general need for entrepreneurial support in the affected areas, including to women. Such support should focus on the provision of funding and know-how and skills-based assistance.

Equally, the issue of isolation within temporary housing is of particular concern among men, who tend to have less interaction with their local communities on a day to day basis. It should be noted that more men than women report an increase in alcohol consumption subsequent to the disaster.

There was a need for greater consideration of the differing needs of men and women with regard both to post-evacuation living circumstances and later processes of recovery and reconstruction.

At the same time, however, large numbers of women were involved on the front-line of disaster response after the Great East Japan Earthquake, working in rescue, relief, support to affected people, reconstruction, recovery, and disaster management. It should still be noted that the proportion of women involved in decision making processes for disaster management and recovery measures was low, at the national and all other levels. Women are an important resource in terms of disaster management and recovery forces, and they are expected to take on an increasingly important role. The question of how to promote further participation by women is important as a future agenda as highlighted by the inclusion of measures for such in the Basic Disaster Management Plan and the Basic Guidelines for Reconstruction in response to the Great East Japan Earthquake.

The lessons from the Great East Japan Earthquake made clear the importance of gender equality in disaster response; the importance of the day-to-day collaborative frameworks by multiple entities among national and local governments, Gender Equality Centers, universities, NPOs, NGOs, neighborhood associations, and private business; and the vital importance of the participation of women in the formulation of policy and principles for disaster management and recovery.

An inclusive society is one which does not exclude any person or group of people, and which shows due consideration for those persons unable or less able to speak up, and those persons who, when they do speak up, are seldom heard. The creation of such a society is inextricably linked to reducing the risk of social exclusion (e.g. isolation resulting from a lack of human relationships with people in local communities, inability to benefit from necessary services) faced by the vulnerable people who are most at risk from the impact of disasters. This viewpoint is not a perspective limited to the areas affected by disaster or the moments in which disaster occurs. It is a standpoint that relates to the very nature of society as a whole, and should be routinely considered as vital. The creation of a gender equal society, then, is very much linked to the realization of a society that can withstand the challenges of disaster.

## Articles

### **Article 1: The Activity of Female Self-Defense Forces Dispatched to Affected Areas and the Importance of Nursery Support**

From the first day of the disaster, the Ministry of Defense and Self-Defense Forces worked to open temporary facilities for young children within Ground Self-Defense Forces bases. In total, 1,138 children were temporarily taken in, which enabled a total of 931 Self-Defense Forces were able to take part in disaster relief operations.



### **Article 2: The “Bond Team”—Community Safety Officers Strengthening Community Links**

Police officers, mostly women, from the Metropolitan Police Department were dispatched to areas in Miyagi prefecture hit particularly hard by the earthquake as the “Bond Team”, a special community safety unit. The team worked to provide long-term support to these areas, and was present from immediately after the occurrence of the disaster through June 2011.



### **Article 3: Business Innovation and Support in Relief Items**

The response of private business immediately after disaster occurrence was fast; many companies committed to large-scale support programs as part of their corporate social responsibility (CSR) policies. People affected by the disaster were in need of a range of relief items, ranging from shared requirements such as water and food, to more specific items required by men and women. The need, for example, to provide women with menstrual sanitary products was realized and met at a relatively early stage, but other items, such as underwear, hand cream, and cosmetics, were in demand among women but difficult to obtain immediately after disaster occurrence.

One apparel manufacturer provided underwear in different sizes, as well as a one-size-fits-all type bra. The support of a cosmetics company made it possible to offer cosmetics at evacuation sites as well as massages using creams. Women were also provided with a cosmetics set, including face wash, skin tonic, moisturizer and hand cream.

#### Article 4: Support for the Elderly and for Child Raising: A Case Study Using an Employment Generation Scheme

An employment generation funding scheme was used to provide support to persons housed in temporary housing, such as shopping and child-minding services.



Support workers operating a shopping service  
Special activities: *Sankaku Planning Iwate*  
(NPO, Morioka city)



Support workers visiting temporary housing residents  
Personal Support Center  
(Sendai city)



Baby & toddler group at meeting center  
Miyagi University (Higashi-matsushima city)

#### Article 5: Telephone Advisory and Counseling Service for Women in Fukushima Prefecture

This service, Fukushima Women's Telephone Advice and Counseling Service, received many calls from women who had been evacuated out of the prefecture or had been separated from their families and were suffering from anxiety as a result of this 'double life', as well as women who were having trouble with family relations. Examples of problems included such cases as: women who now found themselves responsible for raising their children alone in unfamiliar surroundings, having left their partners behind on their own, and who were having trouble communicating with their partners as the mutual stress was leading them to argue; women who were having problems because of conflicts in opinion on the effects of radioactive substances between themselves and the older generation.

The telephone service became a magnet for calls from women who had been evacuated outside of Fukushima prefecture, who wanted to speak to someone in Fukushima who would understand how they felt. 22.5% of all calls were made from outside Fukushima.

#### Article 6: From Volunteering to Employment and Exchange

*Watari Ichigokko*, an NPO based in Miyagi prefecture, used the experience gained providing meals in evacuation sites to expand its activities, hiring space (for free) in the local meeting center and then providing it to affected people as a space where they could select relief items and eat meals. Now, the NPO has opened a café in a prefab, and is progressing measures to talk to persons other than those living in temporary housing, and holding events in community centers.



### **Article 7: Disaster Management from the Perspective of Gender Equality in Local Governments**

The Station Toyonaka Empowerment Partnership, in Toyonaka city, Osaka prefecture, made use of a scheme offered by the Cabinet Office, the Regional Gender Equality Collaborative Project Support Scheme, to draw up the ‘Toyonaka Women’s Disaster Prevention Guidebook’ in collaboration with local administration, private organizations and local citizens, and to propose the ‘Toyonaka Women’s Disaster Prevention Kit’.

In Nishihara town, Okinawa prefecture, the first ever drill for tsunami-related evacuation was carried out, in collaboration with neighborhood associations and women’s groups.



### **Article 8: Issues Resurfacing with Disaster Occurrence**

Various issues were faced by persons resident in affected areas who were also experiencing spousal violence. For example, adding one’s name to a register at an evacuation site could lead to the violent partner discovering an address. For others, the fact that their divorce had not been finalized meant that they were not able to collect support funds paid out to the ostensible head of the family.

Persons with gender identity issues faced difficulties in using toilets and showers at evacuation sites, which were divided for male and female use, with no further options.

### **Article 9: Reaffirming Disaster and Gender at an International Conference**

On 9 March 2012, the 56<sup>th</sup> session of the Commission on the Status of Women passed with consensus a resolution entitled ‘Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women in Natural Disasters’. This resolution is designed to share the experiences and lessons of Japan with all countries of the world, to enhance the understanding of international society about natural disaster, and to promote measures that encourage disaster and disaster management measures to take the needs of women into account. This was the first resolution submitted to the Commission on the Status of Women by Japan.