

*~1 year after 3.11~*

## Situation of Rural Women affected by the Great Japan Earthquake and Nuclear Power Plant Accident

Speaker : Women and Mothers from Fukushima

Ms. Kazuko Ito (Human Rights Now)

Ms. Yoiko Ando (Japan Federation of Bar Associations)

Venue : 2nd Floor, UN Church Center Building

Time : 2:30pm to 4:00pm on 7<sup>th</sup> March 2012 (Wed)

### Recovery and Rebirth with Gender View

**O**n 11 March 2011, the earthquake and tsunami, which occurred in Eastern Japan, caused tremendous damage and resulted in numerous deaths. Furthermore, more residents in broader areas of Eastern Japan have been seriously affected by the accidents at the Fukushima Nuclear Power Plants. To date, living condition of affected people are quite poor and protection of fundamental human rights of affected people are not fully guaranteed. After the nuclear disaster, considerable amount of radioactive materials was released in widespread areas of North East Japan most of which are rural areas, and this creates serious risks to the health of the population.

**L**ack of protective measure such as support for evacuation and reparation for the people living in contaminated areas, free and swift medical check, providing clean foods and water by the government, causes serious risk of people's right to life, right to health, right to livelihood. In particular expecting mothers, infants, children are the most vulnerable to harm from radiation.

**T**his session will present the situation of rural women affected by the disaster, and discuss challenges including protection of affected women and their families from the ongoing nuclear crisis.



October, 2011

Mr. Ryuichi Hirokawa (DAYS JAPAN)

### <<Actual Damage>>

- Approximately 7000 women died  
(larger than the number of deceased men by 1000)
- Needs of women were left behind in evacuation centers
- Women including domestic violence victims were (and are) imposed to be silent
- Condolence money is paid to head of family, i.e., men
- Diffusion of radiation was hidden and mothers and pregnant women live with anxiety about health
- Women are excluded from decision-making body for recovery

### << Revelation of Japanese Society Distortion continuing since before this Disaster >>

- Increase of elderly women in northeastern depopulated area
- Deep-rooted gender roll allocation and male-dominated policies centering on units of families
- Women working with low wages on non-permanent basis
- “Myth of security” of nuclear power plant created in the absence of interests of residents and habitual secrecy and closed nature of nuclear power community
- Low percentage of women in national politics and local administration

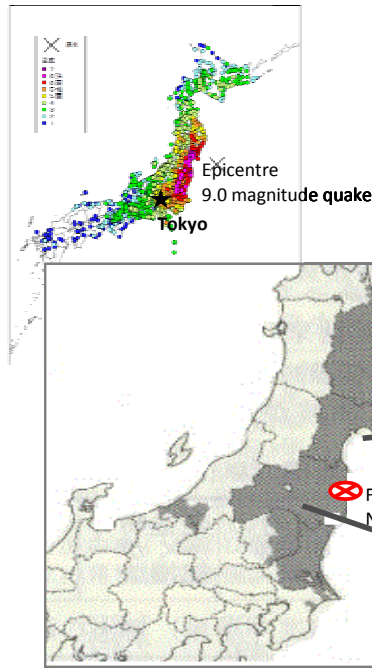
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# Fact Sheet (3.11 the Great Japan Earthquake Damage)

as of 2012/ 01/16

## The Great East Japan Earthquake Damage



**Number of Deaths : 15,844**  
**Number of Missing : 3,394**  
**Number of Injured : 5,893**  
 \* 92.4% of deaths is drowning  
 54% of deaths is 65 years old or more

**Iwate Prefecture**  
 Number of Deaths : 4,667  
 Number of Missing : 1,368

**Miyagi Prefecture**  
 Number of Deaths : 9,506  
 Number of Missing : 1,805

**Fukushima Prefecture**  
 Number of Deaths : 1,605  
 Number of Missing : 217

\* Source of numbers: Website of Disaster Headquarters of Metropolitan Police Department  
 \* Source of Graphic and the percentage of drowning and elderly person: P.13 of Nihonkokuseizukai Region Statistics "Prefecture Status based on Data 2012" compiled and published by Yano Tsuneta Kinenkai Public Interest Incorporated Associations

## Evacuation from Earthquake/Nuclear Plant in Fukushima



Due to nuclear plant evacuation measures, residents are forced to live out of their local town in 12 municipalities of Fukushima Prefecture.

As of 2011/12/15, more than 157,000 (7.9% of population of Fukushima) continue to live as evacuees (61,659 out of Fukushima / 95,988 in Fukushima). (\*1)

Outflow of population continues in Fukushima. (\*2)  
 As of 2011/3/1 Population : 2,024,089 Family Units : 721,328  
 As of 2011/12/1 Population : 1,985,024 Family Units : 716,274

\* Source of Graphic: P.13 of the above-mentioned "Prefecture Status based on Data 2012"  
 \*1: Fukushima Minyu News of 2011/12/31  
 \*2: Fukushima Disaster Headquarters (as of 2012/1/16)

## Evacuation pursuant to Evacuation Order and Male-to-Female Ratio of Municipal Authority Representatives

Name of Municipality	as of 2011/8/31	as of 2012/1/16	Note	Number of Municipal Authority Representatives		
				Seats	Male	Female
Kawamata	422	13	(Male-to-female ratio cannot be found in public information of Fukushima Prefecture.)	16	14	2 (12.5%)
Tamura	864	379		22	22	0 (0%)
Minamisoma	25,184	8,176		24	21	3 (12.5%)
Hirono	5,216	1,203		12	9	3 (25%)
Naraha	7,713	1,351		14	13	1 (7.1%)
Tomiooka	14,762	4,720		16	15	1 (6.3%)
Kawauchi	2,605	2		12	11	1 (8.3%)
Okuma	11,006	-		14	14	0 (0%)
Futaba	6,661	3,803		8	7	1 (12.5%)
Namia	20,115	7,265		20	19	1 (5%)
Katsurao	1,523	240		9	9	0 (0%)
Iidate	5,860	-		12	11	1 (8.3%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>101,931</b>	<b>27,152</b>				

Designation of Evacuation Preparation Area for Emergency was lifted on 2011/9/30.  
 \*3: Mainichi Newspaper Co., Ltd. \*4: Formal Website of Fukushima Prefecture

## Background Information and Disaster Damage

		Japan	Iwate Pref.	Miyagi Pref.	Fukushima Pref.	
Size ( 1) Population ( 1)	Size (km <sup>2</sup> )	372,914	15,279	7,286	13,783	
	Population	approx. 128,057,000	1,330,147	2,348,165	2,029,064	
Family Unit ( 1)	Male (in ten thousands)	6,232.8	63.5	114	98.5	
	Female (in ten thousands)	6,573	69.5	120.9	104.4	
	Population Structures					
	0 ~ 14 years old	13.2%	12.7%	13.2%	13.7%	
	15 ~ 64 years old	63.8%	60.1%	64.4%	61.3%	
	65 years old or more	23.0%	27.2%	22.3%	25.0%	
	Number of Families (in ten thousands)	5,195.1	48.4	90.2	72.1	
	Average Number of People per Family Unit	2.46	2.75	2.6	2.82	
	Average Length of Life (2005)					
	Male (years)	78.79	77.81	78.6	77.97	
Female (years)	85.75	85.49	85.75	85.45		
Labor Situation ( 1)	Number of Employees (in ten thousands)	5,829.5	63.1	105.6	92.6	
	Percentage by Industry					
	Primary Industry	4.2%	12.4%	5.3%	7.8%	
	Secondary Industry	24.2%	23.4%	22.5%	29.9%	
Finances of Working Families ( 1)	Tertiary Industry	71.6%	64.2%	72.2%	62.3%	
	Income per Person (in ten thousands yen)	291.6	226.7	247.3	274.3	
	Monthly Average per Family					
	Real Income (yen)	520,692	488,759	446,918	536,706	
	Living Expenditure (yen)	318,315	317,922	313,647	320,058	
	Average Propensity to Consume		77.4%	84.4%	71.3%	
Representative Assembly ( 1)	Savings per Family (in ten thousands yen)		890	1201	1032	
	Number of Seats for Prefectural Assembly	-	48	61	58	
	Male	-	42	56	47	
	Female	-	<b>5 (10.4%)</b>	<b>4 (6.6%)</b>	<b>6 (10.3%)</b>	
	Number of Seats for Local Assembly	-	691	726	984	
	Male	-	635	649	905	
Female	-	<b>46 (6.7%)</b>	<b>64 (8.8%)</b>	<b>59 (6.0%)</b>		
Reconstruction ( 2)	Number of Reconstruction Conference Members	-	18	12	12	
	Male	-	16	11	11	
	Female	-	<b>2 (11.1%)</b>	<b>1 (8.3%)</b>	<b>1 (8.3%)</b>	
Damage ( 2)	Number of Deaths	-	4,667	9,506	1,921	
	Number of Missing	-	1,368	1,861	65	
	Number of Injured	-	188	4,013	181	
	Number of Fully-destroyed Houses	-	20,184	82,754	19,770	
	Number of Half-destroyed Houses	-	4,552	129,212	61,749	
	Wetted Surface Area (km <sup>2</sup> )	-	58	327	112	
	Inundation Above Floor Level (Number of Houses)	-	1761	7,900	1,053	
	Inundation Under Floor Level (Number of Houses)	-	323	11,299	340	
	Number of Partially-destroyed Houses	-	7,136	211,305	141,922	
	Number of Damaged Buildings (other than Dwelling Houses)	-	4,148	27,818	1,116	
	Number of Disaster Orphans (under 18 years old) who lost one parent	1,567	569	838	160	
	Number of Disaster Orphans who lost both parents	240	93	126	21	
	Evacuation ( 3)	Number of Evacuees	334,786			
		Out of the Prefecture	-	1,545	8,597	59,933
Number of Temporary Housings			13,984	22,095	16,619	
Number of Private Rental Housings used as Temporary Housings			3,986	25,101	24,316	

1 Source: "Prefecture Status based on Data 2012" published by Yano Tsuneta Kinenkai Public Interest Incorporated Associations (as of 2010/10/01)

2 Source: Website of Disaster Headquarters of Metropolitan Police Department (<http://www.npa.go.jp/archive/keibi/biki/higaijokyo.pdf>) (as of 2012/01/04)

3 Source: Bureau of Reconstruction Headquarters in Response to the Great East Japan Earthquake (as of 2011/12/15)

## Report compiled by the Japan Federation of Bar Associations

### 1 Summary of Damage Caused by the Great East Japan Earthquake

On March 11, 2011 the entire east Japan region was devastated by a massive magnitude 9.0 earthquake with its epicenter off the coast of Miyagi Prefecture. The quake was followed by an enormous tsunami bringing waves up to 15 m high. The Great East Japan Earthquake left more than 20,000 people either dead or missing. Governing bodies in quake affected areas were brought to the brink of collapse and there is still no clear forecast of when they will resume normal operations.

Immediately following the Earthquake there was a massive emission of radioactive material from the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station which spread over a wide area. The extent of radioactive emissions was huge, assessed at Level 7, the highest level on the International Nuclear Events Scale (INES). The incident represented an extremely severe contamination of radioactive material with the amount of cesium released reaching 168 times greater than occurred at the Hiroshima atomic blast. Presently, it is still unclear when the situation will be brought fully under control. The wide area contaminated by the radioactivity includes areas used for producing agricultural and marine products, water and soil etc. Considering also that the investigations of the emissions, the information disclosed about the nuclear disaster and the measuring standards used have been inadequate, there has been a tremendous risk of adverse health effects especially on young people, parents with children and pregnant women, whose lives have been severely disrupted. The massive emission of radioactive material extended beyond Japanese borders affecting other countries and raising concern amongst their people.

The Great East Japan Earthquake was much more severe than the Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake of 1995 both in terms of its scale and the extent of the area affected. It left many more people dead and missing and created a triple whammy disaster of earthquake, tsunami and radioactive material emission from the power plant. It broke down lifeline functions over the long-term, caused a huge loss of productive means and broke down regional government functions over wide areas. It exposed the vulnerability of existing regional government functions and the inadequacy of disaster prevention measures, which led to serious problems providing relief, recovery and support for victims. This led to huge losses among those least able to withstand a disaster such as the elderly and people with disabilities. Moreover, most of the areas affected by the Great East Japan Earthquake were lightly populated rural village areas whose populations contain a

high proportion of elderly women. As at the present, April 11, on a gender basis the breakdown of victims who lost their lives in the three prefectures worst affected, Iwate, Miyagi and Fukushima, shows there were 5,971 males and 7,036 females with a further 128 unidentified. Thus there were 1,000 more female victims than male victims.

## 2 The Situation Faced by Female Victims

After the Great East Japan Earthquake women suffered terribly and faced a variety of hardships. Most of them could do nothing but remains silent. The current situation is that they are unable to participate in the processes of planning for rehabilitation, recovery and reconstruction so their human rights are not being respected.

### (1) Exclusion of women from management of evacuation centers

After the disaster most people were left living in evacuation shelters. Because of a sense of values about the allocation of work roles between men and women however, most of the evacuation shelters were being run by men and women were basically excluded from participation in the decision-making processes.

### (2) Women's needs overlooked

As a result, women's needs were being largely ignored. In the evacuation shelters for example, there is little privacy because it is open space without private areas separated by walls. This creates difficulties for everything from breast-feeding through to getting changed. Further, things that women need, everything from makeup to women's sanitary materials etc. were being overlooked. It was obvious that women were forced to bear in many aspects.

### (3) Burden of women's domestic labor increased

Women were facing an excessive burden of work. Due to the sense of values about the allocation of work roles between the genders, most of the domestic chores were performed by women. It is assumed for example that cooking at the evacuation centers is the responsibility of the women. Additionally, publicly provided nursing services have become largely dysfunctional so the burden women face in performing this work has also increased.

### (4) Severe problem of violence against women

Violence against women has occurred in the post-quake climate and there are concerns that it may be getting worse. A kind of violence against women that is peculiar to the earthquake has emerged, such as sexual violence occurring during power blackouts and harm afflicted due to domestic violence that happens after a family has moved to a temporary house or hotel for evacuation. Effective means to prevent this kind of violence have not been established however and even in cases where abuse victims have been publicly noted, most of these have not resulted

in an official notification to the police. There is no system in place for personal consultations that abused women can utilize, so there is an urgent need to establish mechanisms to protect disaster victims from violence.

(5) The situation faced by women affected by the nuclear accident

The substantial contamination from radioactive matter due to the nuclear accident means that people living in the areas around the Fukushima Prefecture are receiving severe radiation exposure. In young immature bodies which experience a greater rate of cell division, the effects of radiation exposure are more severe. In the case of pregnant women, they become more prone to miscarriage and susceptible to severe damage to their health. The health damage suffered by infants and children is also severe so it is understandable that the effects on future pregnant women may be substantial.

Regardless, the Japanese government failed to adequately provide correct information about the radioactive contaminants and the associated risks. Despite the fact that areas with high radiation levels not designated as requiring evacuation extended over large areas around the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station, no effective measures have been implemented to protect the people who live in those areas and their women from the adverse health effects of radiation exposure, and there is no system in place for government funded support for women and children in those areas who wish to evacuate.

Women who may have sustained severe health effects have not raised their voices. A condition of resigned silence extends over the areas of Fukushima and its schoolyards. People's right to have their health and safety protected from the effects of radiation exposure is under threat

(6) Loss of women's workplaces and the spread of poverty

As the earthquake struck in areas of industrial decline, measures to support industrial recovery have been put off. Further, there has been a trend, focused mainly on temporary workers, toward taking the earthquake disaster as an opportunity to terminate employment. As women make up 70% of those temporary workers, it is women's employment that is suffering greater instability.

There is no emphasis however, on assisting women to become financially independent, women's workplaces and the conditions and foundations for business startups by women are not being supported, and many women are now left facing poverty. Single mothers are especially challenged by these conditions.

(7) Problems stemming from views about the household unit

The majority of systems to provide support for quake victims through donations etc. supply their money to the household as a unit. This results in an unfair distribution to women disaster victims. Directing payments to the household as a unit without regards to the individual

circumstances of each family means that it is the man of each household, who is traditionally deemed the head of the family, who receives the support payments. This exacerbates inequality in the decision-making processes within the household and further impoverishes women who are living separate from some family members due to domestic violence etc.

(8) Support systems lacking

Despite women facing a variety of problems in quake affected areas and evacuation centers etc. as described above, there are inadequate consultation systems to cater for women's needs and assist them to deal with the injuries and hardships that arise. Speaking outside of the family unit about what is going on inside the family is especially frowned upon, so there are few places where an individual woman can work out her distressing circumstances and few opportunities for a woman to alleviate the psychological stresses she faces. Non-Japanese women living in Japan who don't have strong ties in the community are especially isolated.

(9) Systems promoted by the Gender Equality Bureau of the Cabinet Office

The Gender Equality Bureau of the government Cabinet Office that aims to promote gender-equal planning participation with how to deal with the earthquake disaster, operates by providing information on things such as the need to ascertain women's needs at evacuation centers and the necessity of involving them in planning management of the centers. The situation is however, that this kind of information is really not being reflected at the coal face. The Gender Equality Bureau lacks status and power, and while the ambit of authority of the national and regional governing bodies can be considered one element affecting that, issues remain about how to verify that policies designed by government to promote gender-equal participation in planning are actually being implemented and how to see these policies through to implementation in the future.

(10) The actual state of gender-equal participation for reconstruction

With the experience of seeing so many women and elderly people left as victims following the Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake of 1995 and the Niigata Chuetsu Earthquake of 2004, "gender-equal participation in planning and the perspectives of both men and women" were clearly prioritized in the amendments to the Basic Disaster Management plan of 2005, and in the second and the third Basic Plan for Gender Equality, stress was placed on promoting equal participation in planning for disaster prevention and the environment.

The reality is however, that only one of the 15 members of the government's Reconstruction Design Council in response to the Great East Japan Earthquake is a woman and the Committees for earthquake recovery in each of the three prefectures of Iwate, Miyagi and Fukushima have only one woman member. The rate of participation of women in planning in the autonomous



government organs, regional government bodies and in different industries is abysmal. Of course it is not satisfactory to just make up the numbers, but with conditions as they are, it is hardly possible for the views of women, who hardly have a voice, to be properly represented and reflected in policy.

### 3 Summary

The lack of respect shown to the rights of women after the Great East Japan Earthquake will probably elicit surprise in the international community. This is however nothing more than a reflection of the backward efforts of Japanese society toward gender-equal planning participation. What we have learned through this disaster is that problems that exist in normal times are exacerbated under the conditions of confusion and hardship that result from a disaster. We have to truly understand that persistent efforts towards gender-equal participation in planning are not something that can be just habitually neglected. We must resolve ourselves to strengthen our efforts in the future toward advancing gender-equal planning and making it a normal and established part of our society.

Opinion concerning Gender-Equal Participation in Planning toward Post Great East Japan Earthquake  
Recovery and How to Protect the Rights of Female Earthquake Victims

December 15, 2011

Japan Federation of Bar Associations

Part 1 Opinion in Summary

1 Expanding participation by women in post-quake reconstruction plans and disaster prevention planning

- (1) In principle, organizations making decisions on devising reconstruction plans and disaster prevention plans and the organizations that implement them should have a 50% participation rate of women (and an absolute minimum of 30% in the event that this is impractical for unavoidable reasons). These plans should include this as their basic policy and must implement it.
- (2) Reconstruction and disaster prevention plans should only be devised after analyzing the different conditions being faced by male and female quake victims and giving an adequate hearing to parties such as women, the elderly, children, aliens, the disabled and sexual minorities as well as organizations comprised of such parties.
- (3) Evacuation center guidelines should be devised incorporating perspectives of gender-equal participation in planning.
- (4) There is a need for local government to verify whether or not responses to help victims have been based on requests issued to relevant organizations announced by the Gender Equality Bureau of the Cabinet Office. Going forward, there is a need for policies that make notification of these effective.

2 Supporting recovery and employment in regional governing bodies

- (1) **The** local government affected by the disaster should move ahead with hiring full and part-time employees with men and women in equal ratios and the government should provide financial support for this.
- (2) Regional recovery efforts should prioritize reconstruction and expansion of medical facilities, nursing homes facilities and childcare facilities in affected regions, and the government should provide financial support for this. Moreover, doing this should reduce the burden placed on each household and connect through to employment opportunities for women.
- (3) To provide support for business startup entrepreneurs, including women, a system for interest-free, unsecured loans should be established, assistance provided for office/home rents, courses to support new businesses should be established and a consultation window set up.

### 3 Care for fatherless families

- (1) There should be support for visits from mother and child support personnel and utilization of Employment for Single Mothers and Independence Support Centers, in order to strengthen employment support for fatherless families and improve lifestyles.
- (2) Application of Article 12 paragraph 2 of the Child Rearing Allowance Act should be frozen for those affected by damage due to the Great East Japan Earthquake.
- (3) The government should give priority to support for affected local government related to the Personal Support Service currently being promoted by the Cabinet Office as a model project.

### 4 Expansion of women's centers

- (1) Domestic violence support centers should be expanded in affected areas (including coastal regions).
- (2) Women's support centers should be established in affected areas (including coastal regions) to enable consultations about medical treatment, child-rearing, nursing, work and various legal problems etc., and these centers should be strengthened.

### 5 Responding to the nuclear accident

- (1) For the benefit of all citizens living in regional government areas with regions that have effective radiation emission levels exceeding 1 mSv per year (excluding natural radiation), if they choose or desire it, the government should take responsibility for maintaining their lifestyles at a place of refuge, such as a dwelling at a point of evacuation, and provide the necessary expenses for their evacuation, until such time as the additional radiation emissions are reduced below 1 mSv by removing contaminated material etc.
- (2) Clear legal regulations should be in place to ensure that pregnant women do not absorb effective radiation levels exceeding 1 mSv per year and that the equivalent radiation level at the surface of the front midsection of their bodies does not exceed 2 mSv per year. The same regulations as apply to pregnant women should also be implemented for children under 18 years old. In case such regulation cannot be implemented, national and local government should notify the necessity of evacuation as well as the assistance measures taken by the government to all pregnant women, children under 18 and their families living above area. At the nation's expense, the government should take responsibility for maintaining the lifestyles of evacuees at a place of refuge, such as by providing a dwelling at a point of evacuation, while providing the necessary expenses for their evacuation.
- (3) For the benefit of all citizens living in regional government areas with regions that have effective radiation emission levels exceeding 1 mSv per year (excluding natural radiation), the government should, at their own expense, provide regular monitoring of internal radiation

exposure as well as a system that enables these people to receive regular, free health checkups in order to prevent health problems. Further, the national government and local government should conduct an accurate and detailed examination to determine the extent of contamination from radioactive material in such areas, and make their results public.

- (4) The incorrect information concerning the health risks to pregnant women and women caring for children disseminated by the government should be withdrawn, and correct views about the risks of radiation based on regulations as in the past, such as the Ionizing Radiation Damage Prevention Regulations etc., should be notified and disclosed.