

Helping Disaster-stricken Kumamoto by Kitchen Cars

A. Goals of this Project:

(1) To help disaster-stricken people in Kumamoto by providing warm food by kitchen cars. Weather in Kumamoto Prefecture is already becoming hot and humid, generating an easy ground for food poisoning. As a matter of fact, several food poisoning incidents already took place. Since then, private food serving was banned, generating fear among disaster-stricken people not having adequate food to be delivered. Hence, kitchen cars are in demand, because kitchen cars and operators are all certified by the health authority and know the details of preventive measures of food-related health problems. Besides, food is warmer than private catering.

(2) This project is organized by the Kamaishi Kitchen Car Project (KKCP) people, who actually is in a process of rebuilding Kamaishi community. KKCP is dispatching two of their kitchen cars, because they felt that this is an opportunity for them to return to an enormous help they received immediately after the East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami. Many some disaster-stricken restaurant owners have already graduated from kitchen car operations and are already operating restaurants in fixed places. As a matter of fact, KKCP has been designated as one of the best projects found in Tohoku as contributing effectively to rebuild Tohoku communities by the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry, the Government of Japan. They are reported in many places, and also became one of the best disaster resilient cases designated by the Cabinet Office, the Government of Japan. Hence, kitchen car operators know the importance and effectiveness of their work, especially for the redevelopment of the area and also rebuilding human relations in a community, which is in many cases severed due to relocations to other places.

As a matter of fact, their operations are involving many local-school children and people from NPOs and local communities in the disaster-stricken Kumamoto area. They are really becoming the center of encouraging people in the midst of difficulties to rebuild community relations in a drastically different setting.

KKCP knows enormous benefits that kitchen cars can bring from their own experiences in Kamaishi, and wanted to help local people to cope with difficulties and build self-initiated kitchen car operations.

(3) Because of KKCP's experiences, kitchen car operators in Tohoku was organizing a Kitchen Car Disaster Support Network. This movement, initiated by the "Date no Yatai," started three years ago in 2014, and has been fairly successful to obtain support from the HeatWave (a

kitchen car manufacturer), the Kumamoto Catering Association, the Nagasaki Catering Association, and also TOKYO DO which organizes 300 kitchen cars in Tokyo. In March 2016, a conference was organized to discuss about building an NPO.

Then, the Kumamoto Earthquake took place, and demands for dispatching kitchen cars came from Mashikimachi Township, Nishiharamura Village, and Kashimamachi Township. It became the first KCCP's testing ground for building the Network. From April 19 to May 2, Mr. Tomo Fujiwara from Ishinomaki as the representative from "Date no Yatai" went to operate a kitchen car. Then, Mr. Shinji Ogawa from Kamaishi has been conducting a feasibility study and developing networks to dispatch two kitchen cars from KKCP.

With the slogan of returning to people's support to Tohoku, KKCP purchased some local food in Tohoku, while they mainly operated with locally available food in Kumamoto. They first went to Mashikimachi Township in Kumamoto Prefecture, and then to Nishiharamura Village in a mountain where hardly any help was coming in. They wanted to show how kitchen cars can be helpful in a disaster situation and also to develop local-based kitchen car groups to serve the disaster-stricken Kumamoto. KCCP's know-how has been in demand to help such disaster situations as well as redevelop aging rural communities.

B. Locations and Duration of the Project

Mashikimachi Township, Kashimamachi Township, and Nishiharamura Village in Kumamoto Prefecture from June 2014 to May 2017

C. Achievements between April 19 to May 5, 2016

Five days after the Kumamoto Earthquake, one kitchen car left Tohoku and drove 2,500 km, carrying food for 3,000 serving. Then, from April 22nd, it gave 5,000 servings including local food in 12 locations. It made sure to go to small privately-operated emergency shelters in small communities, where goods do not come in a timely manner by contacting local community organizations. So far, all operations were carried by donations.

D. Concrete Activities Proposed

(1) Non-professional catering of food was now banned due to food poisoning in this hot weather. Because of this situation, kitchen cars certified and trained for food safety by the health authority are expected to play a very important role of not only serving food in each community, but also of flexibly moving from one location to another. Two kitchen cars dispatched from Kamaishi will operate during the rainy season from the beginning of June when the risk of food poisoning becomes higher. The plan is to offer 10,000 servings.

- (2) Many local communities requested KCCP to train local kitchen car operators, so that they can operate kitchen cars by themselves. In the three months, KCCP kitchen car operators will train local people who would like to rent two kitchen cars from the KCCP for ¥70,000 yen per month, including maintenance and insurance. As it was the case in Kamaishi, disaster-stricken restaurant owners will be given a priority to rent a kitchen car. Thus, local kitchen car operators will be trained to generate sustainable kitchen car operations.
- (3) In a few months, temporary housing will be established. As KCCP did in Kamaishi, kitchen cars will move from emergency shelters to temporary housing locations, where they can become the center of community gathering, so that communities can be reestablished much more easily than otherwise.
- (4) As KCCP has been operating for five years not only to help disaster-stricken restaurant owners to establish their own restaurants, but also to provide places for people to gather and build communities and to incubate young restaurant owners to develop their own businesses, accumulated know-how by KCCP is enormous. Such knowledge will be an enormous help to disaster-stricken areas. KCCP can also providing disaster-related information to anybody based on their own experiences in the Tohoku Earthquake and Tsunami disaster.
- (5) By involving diverse NPOs and local students to operate kitchen cars, KCCP has offered a place of voluntary activities and social learning to local students and people.
- (6) Thus, KCCP's activities can be summarized as: (a) supplying foods and materials; (b) serving warm food; (c) supporting students to experience voluntary activities; (d) supplying necessary goods requested by people; and (d) providing disaster-related information based on KCCP's own experiences in Tohoku.

E. Cooperating Organizations

- (1) Mashikimachi Town Office and the Anti-disaster Headquarters in the Office
- (2) Mashikimachi Volunteer Center
- (3) Local community associations in (a) Shimada Kushijima Area and (b) Shimada Higashimuta Area in Mashikimachi Township and (c) Shimo Gomori Area and (d) Futa Area in Nishiharamura Village, Asogun. All places are in Kumamoto Prefecture.
- (4) NPO Kumamoto Catering Association
- (5) NPO Kyushu Ramen Party
- (6) NPO Mizuno Travel Group
- (7) Children's Life, Education, and Care (L.E.C) for Treatment of Children's Psychological Problems operated by the Christian Child Welfare Organization

F. Number of People: Main active members = 12; Supportive activity members = 150

G. Budget

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| (1) Kitchen rental fee (including maintenance and insurance): | | |
| | 2 cars x ¥70,000 x 12m = | 1,680,000 |
| (2) Food: | 10,000 serving x ¥200 = | 2,000,000 |
| (3) Traveling cost: | ¥70,000 round trip x 6 times x 2 people = | 840,000 |
| (4) Local workshop meeting cost: | | 40,000 |
| (5) Food containers: | ¥10 x 10,000 servings = | 100,000 |
| (6) Package mailing: | | 300,000 |
| (7) Administrative cost: | | 30,000 |
| (8) Miscellaneous cost: | | 10,000 |
| | Total | <hr/> 5,000,000 |

H. Key Organizations and People Responsible for This Project

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