



Aerial view of Kesennuma City, Miyagi Prefecture, taken from a helicopter. Two years and ten months since the earthquake, sunken grounds are being elevated and public infrastructures are being restored. (Aerial photographs and video footage were taken during a joint tsunami disaster drill organized by and presented to Kesennuma City in November, 2013.)

Third New Year since the Earthquake Disaster

Two years and ten months have passed since the Great East Japan Earthquake. People in the coastal areas of Tohoku region severely damaged by the earthquake and tsunami began the third New Year since the disaster. How was 2013 for the people of Tohoku on their way to recovery? How will 2014 be for reconstruction?

The number of people who evacuated or moved because of the earthquake disaster is 270,000 (source: Reconstruction Agency, as of the end of 2013). The number has decreased from 470,000 immediately after the disaster in 2011. Rebuilding of houses and restoration and development of public infrastructure are moving into high gear. Under these circumstances, the government announced at the end of last year that the reconstruction budget for fiscal year 2014 would be 3.6 trillion yen. The government increased the budget for disaster recovery and public projects, including construction of coastal levees and road reconstruction. It also allotted a budget for scholarships, aid for long-term evacuees and a model project called "New Tohoku."

Each disaster-affected municipal government places importance not only on infrastructure policies but also on "soft aid". However, there is a concern that the municipal employees responsible for reconstruction projects may be overwhelmed by the heavy workload, as the budget has ballooned compared to before the disaster.

In addition, there are various complex problems that cannot be solved only with funds such as: discussions over the

coastal levees which are planned to be built along the coast line, new town development after group relocations to higher grounds, jobs number recovery, and mental health care for disaster victims.

The key to overcoming these problems would be to recognize the lack of manpower in disaster-affected areas and to consider how civilians can cooperate with local governments, instead of simply blaming the slow action of administrative bodies.

Civic Force has been supporting the reconstruction of affected areas since immediately after the earthquake. Last year we started a full-scale operation of the Mid- to Long-Term Reconstruction Project, which consists of five pillars. Utilizing the networks we have built, we have been supporting independent activities that aim for local revitalization. Moreover, through our NPO Partner Project which we have been implementing since April 2011, we help the evacuees from Fukushima Prefecture, where aid activities have tended to be slow.

In this first Monthly Report of 2014, we will report about our aid activities in Tohoku and our emergency relief activities in the Philippines, which was hit by a typhoon in November 2013. In 2014, we will continue our aid activities for the reconstruction of Tohoku and strengthen our cooperation with the Asian region as a member of the "Asia Pacific Alliance," an international cooperation organization.

Monthly Topics

Civic Force selects hot topics among various projects of this month.

Osawa Café Opens to Help Boost Local Community

“Two years and nine months have passed since the March 2011 earthquake, and now there’s finally a place where visitors can drop by casually and chat”. On December 2013, a completion ceremony was held at the “Osawa Café”, a meeting space in Osawa district, Karakuwa Cho, Kesennuma City, Miyagi Prefecture. This region was badly damaged by the March 2011 earthquake.

Together with university students majoring in architecture and urban planning who helped design and construct the café, people living in temporary housing in the Osawa district attended the ceremony and celebrated the completion of Osawa Cafe, commonly known as “Eco-house”. (See photo) Participants enjoyed snacks provided by the students such as “imoni,” a potato and meat soup traditionally prepared during the cold season in the Tohoku region.

Local volunteers living in Osawa district launched the “Osawa-chiku Bosai Shudan Iten Sokushin Jigyo Kisei Domei Kai,” an organization promoting collective relocation for disaster prevention in Osawa district to encourage residents to reunite and reconstruct the community proactively. Nearly 80 percent of the buildings in the Osawa district were devastated by the disaster.

Many of the disaster-hit areas suffer from population outflow which has been encouraged further after the earthquake. Measures to stop depopulation and encourage sustainable development of the community are essential in these areas. Responding to this situation, Civic Force has been providing support for people involved in developing communities in the affected areas, such as Osawa district, through our “Community Revival Project—Supporting local communities in creating and reconstructing homes and jobs—,” one of our mid-to long term reconstruction projects.

In order to implement collective relocation and community reconstruction, we are required to understand the challenges and difficulties of each community. We must also have the knowledge concerning the legal system related to community reconstruction and land reuse.

Civic Force has encouraged local residents to proactively resolve difficulties by funding, specialists, publishing books, and creating job opportunities.



Donate Now for Typhoon Haiyan Victims in the Philippines!

Civic Force is now calling for donations to the Philippines for December/January. Typhoon Haiyan left over 12 million people in urgent need of aid. We have provided emergency relief supplies, together with Citizens’ Disaster Response Center (CDRC), our local partner in the Philippines.

Please donate to help people who were seriously affected by the typhoon in the Philippines. Your donations will be used for emergency and reconstruction assistance.

First Patient Transport from Kesennuma to a Hospital in Ishinomaki

All Round Helicopter (ARH), a partner organization of Civic Force, transported a patient by request from Motoyoshi Hospital in Kesennuma City, Miyagi Prefecture to Ishinomaki Red Cross Hospital on December 16, 2013.

This was the first patient transport since ARH launched a full-scale operation on October 23. After the successful transport, Mr. Keisuke Watanabe, Operation Manager of ARH and a paramedic, said, “It took 59 minutes or so from the first emergency call to delivering the patient to an ambulance. We did everything we could at present, as time is also critical to minimizing aftereffects. I pray for the quick recovery of the patient.” A family member who flew with the patient said “The transport was so fast!” while looking a little relieved.

Since heavy snow had fallen the day before in Kesennuma, the helicopter was able to transport the patient much faster than by land. Mr. Watanabe said, “I am grateful to Ishinomaki Fire Department for their cooperation, as well as to both hospitals. I hope more people will know about our helicopter transport service so that more lives can be saved.”

We will continue intensive trainings and build a cooperative framework with many more hospitals.



Agreement with Kesennuma Municipal Hospital

On December 25, 2013, ARH signed an “Agreement on the Use of Multi-purpose Rotary-wing Aircraft for Medical Purposes” with Kesennuma Municipal Hospital in Kesennuma City, Miyagi Prefecture. This is the third agreement signed with a medical institution, following Ishinomaki Red Cross Hospital and Kesennuma Municipal Motoyoshi Hospital.

Civic Force provided emergency relief supplies such as food and makeshift tents to affected people in Leyte and Samar provinces, which were the most damaged areas.



- Period of donation: Until January 31, 2013
- Donate to:
(Payments can be made through bank transfers to Civic Force)
Civic Force “Philippine Chubu Taifu Shien”
(Philippines Typhoon Haiyan Disaster Response)
Sumitomo Mitsui Banking Corporation,
Aoyama Branch Account No.7027403
- Credit cards are also accepted:
https://bokinchan2.com/civicforce/donation/bokin/page2.php?pm_type=card

Turning to “ECO-HOUSE” for inspiration in the community

Under the slogan “Come home to Osawa, folks,” those interested in the Osawa district of Kesennuma City, Miyagi Prefecture, set up the “Association to Promote the Collective Relocation Project for Disaster Prevention in Osawa” in June, 2011, three months after the Great East Japan Earthquake. Since its launch, the association has been making every effort to reconstruct houses and to accomplish collective relocation to higher grounds so that the people of Osawa can live together again. Development of the actual housing site began in June, 2013.

Osawa had lost its assembly hall in the tsunami. People in the area immediately organized an association that would focus on setting up temporary housing, but they were groping in the dark not knowing where to start. At the time, they struggled to keep on moving forward while relying on all available sources of support.

During that period, we were able to hold workshops on a regular basis with the cooperation of “Civic Force” and the “Kesennuma Future Plan Osawa Team,” a group composed



ECO-HOUSE
(Ecologically-friendly House)
completed in Osawa district.
This house is expected to
become a communal space
accessible to everyone as
part of the preparation for
moving to higher grounds.



Mr. Hidenori Hoshi,
Directing Manager of the Association to
Promote the Collective Relocation Project
for Disaster Prevention in Osawa.

Face to Face

Civic Force is supported by various companies, NPOs and government. This corner features the latest messages from our partners.

of urban-planning research departments of universities and other institutions. With them, we worked on constructing “Osawa Café,” commonly known as ECO-HOUSE (ecologically-

friendly house, refer to p. 2), which is expected to become the new assembly hall and the focal point for the overall town development of Osawa that would enable securing a new site for collective relocation and utilizing vacant lots.

ECO-HOUSE, which was completed on Dec. 15, 2013, is designed to generate power by natural energy, so it also plays a role as a model facility for the local people to experience an ecologically-friendly system and to be used as reference when building their new houses on higher grounds. We hope this facility becomes a communal space as well as an inspiration for the people of Osawa in due time.

We would also like to put our efforts together and do everything we can to build a new town by having more consultations on the reconstruction of the district.

Here are some reports on what we are doing in Tohoku region, as of January 11, 2014.

Mid- to Long-Term Reconstruction Projects

Civic Force has been running several “Mid-to Long-Term Reconstruction Projects” since the summer of 2012, in order to tackle the challenges that were identified in the disaster areas during the aid projects we conducted for roughly one and a half years following the disaster. The progress of each project is reported below.
<http://www.civic-force.org/emergency/higashinihon/choki/>

■ Tourism Revitalization Project

—Enhancing cooperation between the public and private sectors to make Kesennuma “an attractive city for tourists”—
Civic Force has been supporting the development of strategies for the “Revitalization of Tourism,” which is one of the most important challenges for the reconstruction of Kesennuma City, Miyagi Prefecture. In July 2013 we participated in the foundation of the “Platform for Creation of Ria Coast Tourism,” a general incorporated association, and will continue to support the project as a member of the board of directors.

■ Wings for Life Project

—Supporting helicopter transport service for emergency medical purposes—
Even before the disaster, the lack of medical services had been a problem in the coastal areas devastated by the earthquake. We started a helicopter service to provide better access to advanced medical institutions. The service was launched last autumn. See page 2 for more information.

■ Green Circle Project

—Developing a sustainable forest industry and effective utilization of woody biomass—

This program aims to promote a sustainable society by utilizing woody biomass. Together with local companies and other NPOs, Civic Force is supporting the training of individuals engaged in forestry, management of lumber yards, and trial use of community currency.

Brief Report on Our NPO Partner Projects

We have been supporting projects that are run by the disaster victims for the reconstruction of their local communities. Since April 2011, Civic Force has supported 37 organizations and 49 projects. As of January 2014, we are supporting five projects.
<http://www.civic-force.org/emergency/higashinihon/npo/>

• **Platform for Creation of Ria Coast Tourism:** Embodying the strategy of tourism in Kesennuma City, the organization leads pilot projects.

• **nina jinseki-Kogen :** The organization encourages evacuees from Fukushima Prefecture to relocate to Hiroshima Prefecture and supports them to sustain their community in the new environment.

• **Network Orange :** The organization held Tohoku Marche and an Entrepreneur Contest in October. The prize winners of the contest will join a workshop in France in March.

• **Mori wa Umi no Koibito :** The project promotes environmental education to review how human beings can coexist with nature.

• **Kesennuma Future Plan Osawa Team :** Specialists in the fields of urban design and architecture support group relocation and reconstruction projects.



What We are
Doing in Tohoku
NOW

Ceremony to Deposit Donation Held at Lawson HQ

To help the Philippines, Lawson, Inc. and Ninety-nine Plus, Inc. conducted a nationwide fund-raising campaign at 11,497 stores of the Lawson Group from November 13 to 30, 2013. Out of the JPY42,126,471 that had been collected, JPY10 million was donated to Civic Force. The donation ceremony was held on December 26, 2013 at Lawson headquarters office, where Masakatsu Gonai, Executive Officer of Lawson (photo right) handed the certificate to Kensuke Onishi, Chairperson of Civic Force.



Information

Information on Tax Deduction of Donations

Donations made to Civic Force are treated as donations to a corporate body that makes special contributions to public welfare, and are thus entitled to preferential tax treatments. Donations of private donators are tax-deductible either by “tax exemption” or “deduction of income tax.” To receive such tax benefits, donors must attach receipts issued by Civic Force when making final tax declarations. Receipts can be obtained by filling out the request form for receipts provided in the following website:
<https://www.civic-force.org/contact/receipt/>.

For those who made donations via Just Giving (JG), please make a request for receipts from “My Page” on the Just Giving website.

Support us with single-click on the siteFor Corporate Partners

When you click the “Single-click donations” on the website, our sponsors will donate 1 yen. We would like to ask for your cooperation.

- Donations via PSC with click
<http://www.psc-inc.co.jp/clickdonation/index.html>
- Donations via United people Fund
<http://www.clickbokin.ekokoro.jp/139.html>
- gooddo
<http://bit.ly/17Xr7N3>

For Corporate Partners

We need your support in case there is another disaster. We have to strengthen our tie-ups with various corporations and organizations in preparation for the next large-scale disaster. Our activities are greatly helped by our corporate supporters. We hope you will develop an interest in our activities and become a supporting member. Please refer to the following web page: <http://www.civic-force.org/about/membership/>

Start your support with only 33 yen per day

We must be ready for the “next one”. Your donation will be of great help in backing up our activities to prepare for the next large-scale disaster. Donate a fixed amount each month in 1,000 yen units to be a monthly supporter and you can participate in activities to prepare for a large scale disaster.

- Credit card: Please check the “Donate Now!” section on the Civic Force website.
https://bokinchan2.com/civicforce/donation/bokin/page1.php?bokin_type=donation

A Message from the Disaster Area

Two years and ten months have passed since Civic Force started activities to support reconstruction in the disaster-hit areas of northeastern Japan. This section showcases the people who live in the affected areas and continue positive efforts towards recovery. For this issue, we interviewed Mr. Kiyohide Chiba who runs Chiba-ichi Shoji Corporation, a milk retailing company, in Kesennuma City, Miyagi Prefecture.



Kiyohide Chiba,
Executive Director
Chiba-ichi Shoji Corporation

— “I lost seven members of my family in the tsunami of the Great East Japan Earthquake. They were my wife, daughter, parents-in-law and a few relatives. I’m currently living with my son, the only survivor in my family. I’m originally from Tokyo and I was a salesperson at a liquor retailer but moved to Kesennuma City, my wife’s hometown, to take over the milk store my parents-in-law were running. I re-opened the store six weeks after the disaster as I didn’t want to see its history end. It celebrated its 50th anniversary in 2012, the following year.

My current goal is to build a commercial batting cage in Kesennuma City. My son, who was not able to see me again until three days after the disaster, now dedicates himself to baseball. However, playing fields and athletic facilities became temporary housing sites so fewer places were available for him to play freely. One day I took him to a baseball batting cage in Iwate Prefecture, which took an hour and a half to reach, and there, he asked me to build one in Kesennuma City. Listening to my son saying, “When is it going to be finished?” in pure innocence, I decided to launch my project.

To build a batting cage, it costs a few million yen. So, I started to sell “Kibo no Nomu Yoguruto” (which means “yogurt drink of hope”), a product unique to our store located in the temporary shopping arcade of Kesennuma City. I worked hard and saved the money earned from the sales of the yogurt drink, wishing to build a batting cage no matter what it took. With funding from financial institutions and much support from people all over the country, the construction of the batting cage started last September and will soon be finished. I want many people to use it and be able to put smiles on many faces.