

Stand by the people in Tsunami Disaster Area

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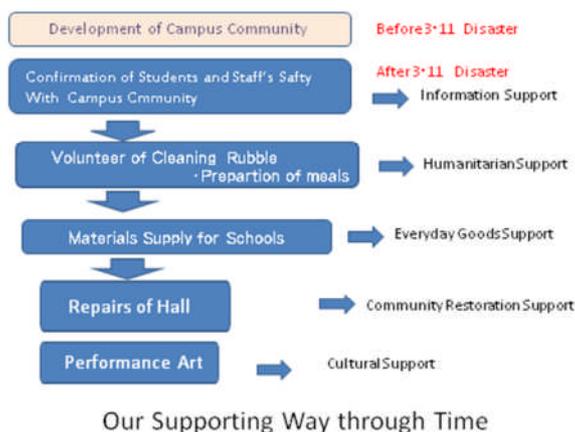
It has already been one year since the earthquake occurred and tsunami ravaged our beautiful Tohoku district in North West Japan. About 16 thousand people died and over 3 thousand people are still missing. Especially in Fukushima with the nuclear disaster, it is still a long and hard struggle towards solution.

We supported the relief work under the banner "Stand by the people in Tsunami Disaster Area".

I have been active in the support activities, through the Fathers' Network and Theater Troupe Network, since 11th. March, last year. I would like to show the activities of our network and university for local area community support with photography's.

Before earthquake

The figure shows mainly post disaster activities. But it is also important in showing how we faced the unexpected earthquake.



The Graduate School of Economics and Management / Faculty of Economics in Tohoku University had developed a simple web-based message board called "Campus Community" in cooperation with a local startup company in order to improve student support and information flow between students and staff. It is used as bulletin board

and online questionnaire system since April 2007.

Large earthquakes have been predicted for Japan for the near future and a communication system that can be used in the event of such a natural disaster was urgently needed. A system that is used during normal times is the most effective for such a rare event since users are already accustomed to it.

The system is made disaster-proof by using a mirror server which kicks in automatically in an emergency situation. As the earthquake devastation area was so large, it took several days for us to return to normalcy. The system was very useful to confirm the safety of our students and teachers.

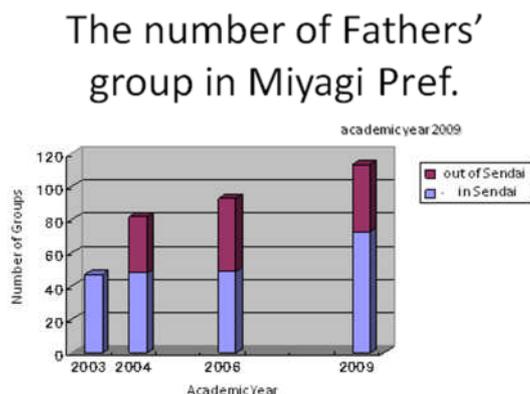
Information Sharing

After earthquake I have been sending e-mail to theater troupes using our ML. The theater work was performed in Nagoya and Gifu based on my "Report from Sendai". At first we needed to get and share such information.

Initially we needed to clear away the wreckage and sludge from the tsunami hit area. Many students and other volunteers worked in government and NPO volunteer centers on their own. Subsequently, Tohoku University students set up a students' volunteer center named HARU.

Fathers' network

In my prefecture Miyagi, there are over 100 "Oyaji no kai", a group of fathers in local area. I am in charge of this network. This group started volunteer work.



Right after the tsunami, we started gathering information about the kind of supplies required. Food and clothing was already being supplied.

We sent emails to various places for school supplies for the children in tsunami hit areas. We received many from all over Japan as well as Germany. We did the distribution by using the "Oyaji no Kai" near the disaster area.

We drove to the disaster hit Ishinomaki and Higashi Matsushima every weekend.

Many schools along the coast were so devastated that the children needed to relocate while the school was recovered. We handed over tools like screw drivers, grass cutters etc. that were sent from a German company in Japan.

Second hand bicycles for school volunteer staff, refrigerators for kindergarten, 10 small wagons for primary schools and 50 home-use note-PC for teachers were supplied.

School transportation

200 new bicycles bought for high school students from the disaster affected bicycle shop. The shop had been swept away by tsunami. We also handed over to another high school 40 bicycles funded by a group in Switzerland. We didn't 'send' the things. It was all personally 'handed over'.

Local community in Ishinomaki

Our Fathers Network began to work together in a small fishing village with international students in our University. In this area many houses and ships were lost. We started by providing food, and then we started the work to recover the community hall. In this January, we prepared food together and enjoyed putting together a few performances with the local people.

Entertainments

We organized some activities for the entertainment of Fukushima and Miyagi prefectures and invited Ishinomaki's children to professional soccer game.

The other day we held a concert in a junior high school by Norway's group.

Everyone can see the concert slide in YouTube. The URL is as follows;

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ogJdqko7HRE&feature=youtube_gdata_player

The activities are still ongoing.

On Christmas day

Finally let me introduce a German support. The Karate Group in Duisburg sent us 5000€. We handed this over to Okawa primary school where so many students and teachers had perished; and part of it to Tokura primary school and a kindergarten in Fukushima near the nuclear power plants.

This made a big difference and helped them have a nice Christmas.