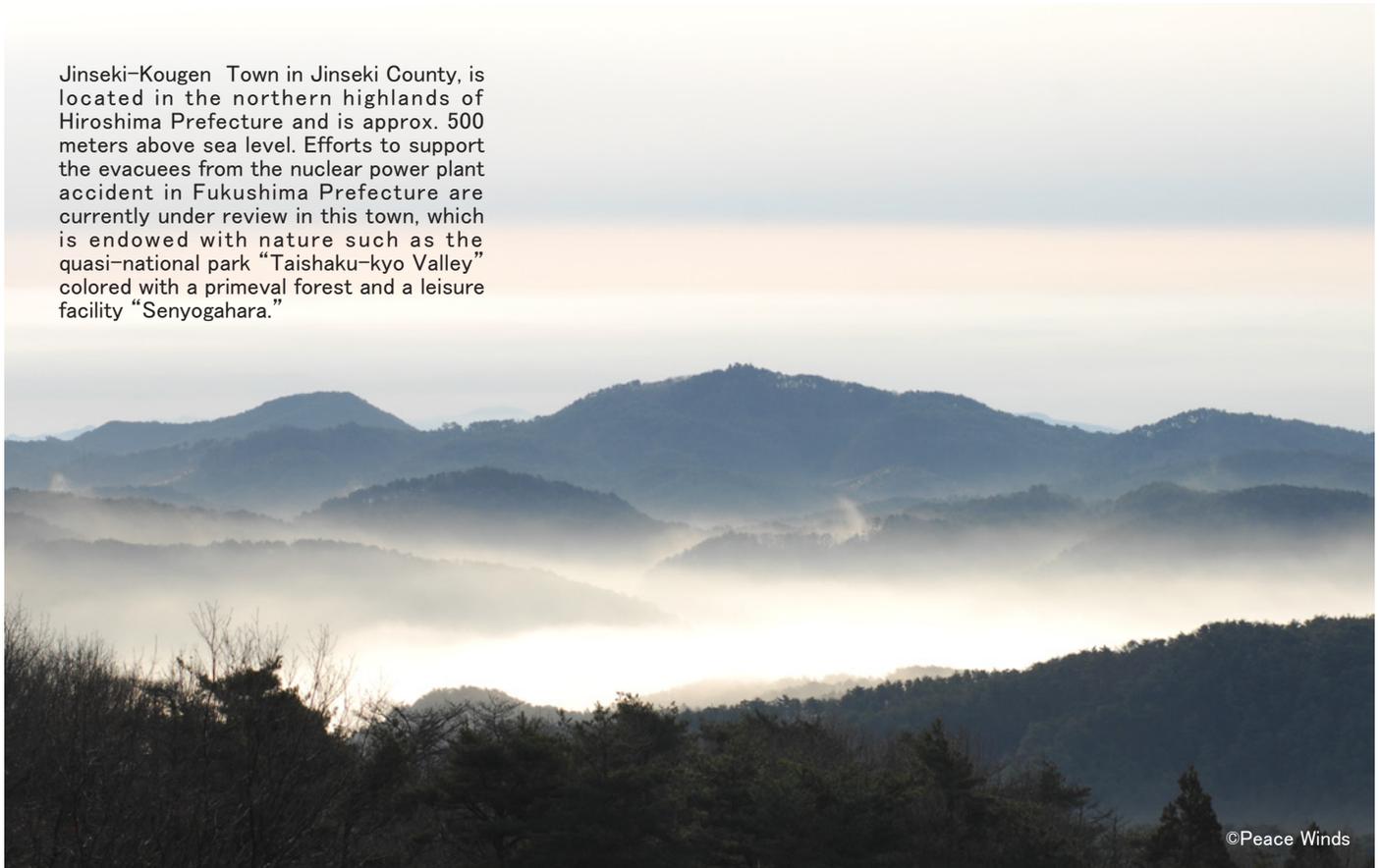


Jinseki-Kougen Town in Jinseki County, is located in the northern highlands of Hiroshima Prefecture and is approx. 500 meters above sea level. Efforts to support the evacuees from the nuclear power plant accident in Fukushima Prefecture are currently under review in this town, which is endowed with nature such as the quasi-national park "Taishaku-kyo Valley" colored with a primeval forest and a leisure facility "Senyogahara."



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Evacuees of the Nuclear Power Plant Accident: Overview of the Current Situation and Challenges

Three years and one month have passed since the Great East Japan Earthquake. In the disaster affected Sanriku coastal areas including Miyagi and Iwate Prefectures, efforts to build new towns are gradually getting underway, such as construction of infrastructure, elevation of sunken grounds, and construction of public housing for the victims. On the other hand, the pace of reconstruction has been very slow in some parts of Fukushima Prefecture, which have been seriously affected by radiation from the nuclear power plant accident.

One hundred thirty thousand evacuees from the accident have yet to return to their home town. It is said that more than 47,000 of them are now living in other prefectures, with 20 percent staying with relatives and acquaintances while more than 80 percent have started new lives in unfamiliar places (Source: Reconstruction Agency, as of March, 2014).

A survey among evacuees conducted every six months since the earthquake indicates that 80 percent of those who evacuated to other prefectures intend to relocate permanently and this trend has been growing with each survey.

In light of this situation, the government finally gave up on meeting its initial goal of sending all evacuees back home, and has begun asking about 25,000 people, whose residences are inside the "difficult-to-return-to zones" where the annual radiation exposure level still exceeds 50

millisieverts, to agree to a de facto "permanent relocation." On the other hand, the government plans to expedite the early return of about 34,000 people whose residences are within the "zones in preparation for lifting the evacuation order," where the exposure level is less than 20 millisieverts.

Some hope to return to their hometown someday and revitalize it. Some have no choice but to settle in a new place to stabilize their lives. These people are all facing harsh realities and being forced to make difficult decisions.

In order to respond to such complicated situations for the evacuees, people in and out of Fukushima Prefecture not only must support the return of evacuees but also have the courage to support those people who are starting new lives away from their hometown and implement supportive measures for them.

In this monthly report, we will introduce an aid project for receiving evacuees from Fukushima Prefecture, which was launched in Hiroshima in August 2013 as part of the NPO Partner Projects to help those affected by the Great East Japan Earthquake.

We will also report on the new aid projects launched by the "Tohoku Common Benefit Investment Fund," which was established by Civic Force in December 2011 following the disasters, as well as the progress of aid for the areas hit by Typhoon Haiyan in the Philippines last year.

Monthly Topics

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

Jinseki-Kougen Town receives evacuees from the nuclear power plant accident

Jinseki-Kougen in Jinseki County is a town of ten thousand people where the average age of residents is 57 years old. Located in the northern highlands of Hiroshima Prefecture, it is approximately five hundred meters above sea level and blessed with verdant nature. This town of declining birth rate and rapidly aging population is expected to stem depopulation by coming up with specific strategies such as promoting industries and tourism, putting public facilities in place, and developing necessary infrastructure

Now, a new project to receive evacuees of the nuclear power plant disaster has begun in a vast, depopulating region of Jinseki-Kougen, which is more than 1,000 kilometers away from Futaba County of Fukushima Prefecture where the nuclear power plant accident occurred.

The main focus of the project is “nina Jinseki-Kougen”, an NPO established in May 2013, with Minoru Ueyama, the former deputy town mayor, serving as the representative. It consists of dedicated members including persons from the administration and local residents who take deep inter-est in community development and disaster aid activities for those affected by the Great East Japan Earthquake.



Civic Force has been providing assistance to activities conducted by “nina Jinseki-Kougen” to support the evacuees of the nuclear power plant disaster within the framework of the “NPO Partner Projects”, one of our aid systems for the Great East Japan Earthquake. Ever since the project started in the summer of 2013, it has coped with evacuee problems by implementing surveys on living environments and relocation preferences of residents of Soma City, Minami-Soma City, Namie Town, Futaba Town, and Okuma Town in Fukushima Prefecture where radiation levels are relatively high.

Sharing Our Experience after the Earthquake with Asia-Pacific

The Asia-Pacific Alliance (hereafter called “Alliance”) established in October, 2012 was founded by Civic Force in cooperation with disaster aid organizations in Asia. In early-March, a meeting was held between AHA Centre and Alliance representatives in Indonesia, which is one of the member countries of the Alliance.

Their discussion included details of the disaster aid program of the Japan-ASEAN Integration Fund (JAIF) and details of the disaster prevention training program scheduled for May in Japan.

The Alliance is also working to increase the number of member countries to add to the current five, namely, Indonesia, Korea, Sri Lanka, Japan and the Philippines. As part of the initiative, members of the Alliance visited Brunei in March to meet the Ambassador of Japan to Brunei, local government officials, the Chamber of Commerce, and a local social welfare foundation and talked about collaboration with the Alliance.



Civic Force has been continuing to provide introductions of Jinseki-Kougen and briefing sessions to applicants seeking to relocate to other areas within Japan, in cooperation with evacuees who have already reset their lives in Hiroshima Prefecture, staff members of NGOs and the administration who support the evacuees.

What the survey clearly brought to attention were the harsh realities the evacuees were facing. Securing housing, job hunting, children’s education, and looking for appropriate nursing and welfare services are just some examples of the difficulties they must overcome. Also, there are cases where evacuees are discriminated against by communities they relocated to, so it is necessary to reduce friction between the evacuees and the locals.

Going forward, “nina Jinseki-Kougen” has plans to increase the number of briefing sessions on relocation for evacuees from the nuclear power plant disaster and to organize some site visits to Jinseki-Kougen Town.

Upon receiving the evacuees, it is essential to ensure a system that will support them on aspects of employment and daily life as well as ensure the understanding of Jinseki Kougen’s local residents.

Regarding prospects for further developments, “nina Jinseki-Kougen” will go into partnerships with the local administration, NGOs, and enterprises that introduce initiatives to revitalize the town and will eventually aim to develop a community where those who relocated can lead safe and peaceful lives together with the local residents.

Members of “nina Jinseki-Kougen” visiting authorities in Yamagata Prefecture which has a lot of experience accepting evacuees from Fukushima Prefecture. “nina” staff are conducting a study about their current conditions since arrival.



Preparations during Peacetime Go Beyond Regions

Civic Force, along with Fukuroi City of Shizuoka Prefecture, its partner in disaster prevention and Shiojiri City of Nagano Prefecture, the sister city of Fukuroi City, was appointed to implement the “Project for the Promotion of large-scale Cooperation between Communities” of the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism. The 3 parties had held 5 discussions between October, 2013 and March, 2014 to exchange ideas on potential collaboration, such as sharing disaster prevention measures and holding various events.

The project aims to promote extensive collaboration for disaster prevention during peacetime and to develop an environment that enables mutual support in emergency situations.

Other events include a debriefing meeting held in Tokyo on March 3, where the 3 parties each presented specific measures for collaboration and possibilities of cooperation with other areas. They also shared information relevant to interregional mutual assistance.

11 regions were selected for the program. Initiatives regarding disaster prevention and mutual assistance were introduced at the March meeting.



To Inherit What Should be Inherited

“Tohoku Common Benefit Investment Fund” was founded in November 2011 to support the reconstruction of the areas in Tohoku that were damaged by the Earthquake, using donations made to Civic Force as funds.

The fund has supported 11 projects to date, supplying 120 million yen in total to the disaster-affected business operators in Tohoku. Most of them have succeeded in resuming operations and getting their businesses back on track, by expanding distribution routes and hiring more staff.

After working for a major banking company and a venture company, I have been engaged in regenerating local businesses for more than ten years. During that time, I also had a connection with the Tohoku region, as I managed a fund in collaboration with a bank in Tohoku.

I visited the disaster-affected area for the first time in April 2011. I was shocked to see the damage caused by the tsunami, but I realized the strength of the people of Tohoku who have been facing nature over the ages, when I heard an old woman say: “We can’t avoid tsunami. It’s a force of nature.”

I myself joined the financial industry and started my own business from

The first project funded by the Fund: “Okatsu Suzuri (ink stone) Production and Sales Cooperative Association” in Ishinomaki, Miyagi Prefecture.



Head of the secretariat, Tohoku Common Benefit Investment Fund
Mr. Testuya Yoshida

scratch in order to take over the family business, which dates back to the Edo period. I thought that my experience might be useful for the reconstruction of the Tohoku area where the damage was catastrophic, when an acquaintance introduced me to the Fund and I became involved as an advisor in March 2012.

It is always a big challenge to boost up the power of local regions in Japan, not only in Tohoku but in any region, but I am feeling a positive response as I see the companies we funded gradually moving forward. I will continue to support the recovery of businesses and communities in the Tohoku area and to do whatever I can by making use of my experience in starting new businesses.

Face to Face

Civic Force is supported by various companies, NPOs and government.

This corner features the latest messages from our partners.

Here are some reports on what we are doing in Tohoku region, as of April 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 support activities. Progress of each project is reported below.

<http://www.civic-force.org/emergency/higashinohon/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. We continuously support the group through designing their website and attending their regular meetings and workshop planning strategies.

■ 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 in October, 2013 to transport a patient by request. In April, their helicopter patrolled the coastal area, responding to tsunami advisories caused by the earthquake that struck northern Chile. They conducted helicopter landing drills at Izushima in Onagawa Town, Miyagi Prefecture.

■ 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. At the end of March, a biomass power plant started in operation in Kesennuma City, Miyagi Prefecture.

■ Community Revive Project

—Supporting local communities in creating and reconstructing homes and jobs—

Cooperating with local NPOs and local administrations, Civic Force has continuously supported the redevelopment of towns for disaster victims who have decided to relocate and the redevelopment of existing towns by sending specialists and providing human resource development programs. Civic Force had supported residents in Koizumi and Osawa districts in Kesennuma City, Miyagi Prefecture, and by March 2014 they have already decided to move to a new location. As their new base is under construction, Civic Force is continuously supporting their meetings on discussion about their new lives.

■ Dream Support Project

—Supporting local youths through scholarships and locally-developed educational programs—

Many high school students face financial difficulties as a result of the earthquake. To ensure that they can continue with their education through to university, this project provides JPY 30,000 scholarships per month for such students. We are planning to provide educational programs and hold meetings for scholarship students again this year.



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 April 2014, we are supporting two projects.

<http://www.civic-force.org/emergency/higashinohon/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.

What We are Doing in Tohoku

NOW

Information

21.3 Million Yen Raised in Donations for Typhoon Haiyan Victims in Central Philippines

Donations were immediately called for by Civic Force when Typhoon Haiyan devastated Central Philippines last November. The donation drive was held until March 31, and resulted in a total of 21,259,952 yen of donations (as of March 31st, 2014). With the help of CDRC (Citizens' Disaster Response Center), our local partner in the Philippines, the donation has been used to procure and distribute emergency relief supplies to the seriously affected Leyte Island, as well as to provide agricultural assistance for early recovery.

Civic Force would like to thank all the donations received for Typhoon Haiyan and will continue to update information concerning the Philippines from CDRC's reports.



"Tohoku Food Marathon and Festival" : Civic Force Chosen as One of the Charitable Organizations

The "Tohoku Food Marathon and Festival", an event for enjoying Tohoku food and specialties, will be held on April 27, 2014 in Tome city, Miyagi Prefecture. This event is a charity marathon supporting the disaster-hit Tohoku area. Civic Force was selected as one of the charitable NPOs of the event.



Tohoku Food Marathon & Festival 2014

User-friendly KazashiteBokin , for your donations

When you make your monthly donation, please register on "KazashiteBokin (Scan to Donate)". The online system enables users to make donations when paying their monthly mobile phone fee in a simple way. You can donate a minimum amount of 100 yen and you can set a fixed amount for your monthly donation. When using this donation platform, you need to install Android 4.0+ on your mobile phone. The application can be downloaded for free on Google Play platform and can be used by all smartphone users.

You can also access the "KazashiteBokin" application on the Google Play Store site by taking a photo of the following QR code. Donations through the system will go to 37 registered organizations including Civic Force.



Announcement of Tohoku Office Relocation

We are pleased to announce that we have moved our Tohoku office in April to the following address: 40-1, Akaiwa-makisawa, Kesennuma City, Miyagi Prefecture

"The Revival Story of an Old Car Ferry, Dream Grandpa" told as a Picture-story Show

"The Revival Story of an Old Car Ferry, Dream Grandpa" was told through a picture-story show at temporary housings and junior high schools located in Oshima, an outlying island in Kesennuma City, Miyagi Prefecture.

The car ferry, "Dream-Noumi" was lent by Etajima City, Hiroshima Prefecture for free and it was in operation from April 2011 to February 2012 between Kesennuma City and Oshima, which was cut off from the mainland after the earthquake. Civic Force partly covered the costs of ferrying from Hiroshima Prefecture and fuel expenses through your donations and these activities were introduced in the show.



The picture-story show was performed by volunteers. They have been providing aid activities in Oshima.

Support us with a single-click on the website

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 a 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 another 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". Donate a fixed amount each month in units of 1,000 yen to be a monthly supporter and you can participate in activities to prepare for a large scale disaster. Payment can be made through bank transfer to Civic Force. Our account numbers are as follows:

•Bank: Sumitomo Mitsui Banking Corporation, Aoyama Branch, savings account No. 6953964

•JP Bank : 00140-6-361805

•Credit card: Please check the "Donate Now!" section on the Civic Force website.

https://bokinchan2.com/civicforce/donation/bokin/page1.php?bokin_type=donation

The following page provides our Monthly Reports which come out around the 11th of each month. <http://civic-force.org/news/monthly/>

