



CIVIC FORCE

NEWS LETTER Vol.21

(July, 2020)



In Kuma Village, Kumamoto Prefecture, 78 districts were isolated on July 5 due to road blockades caused by landslides and heavy rains. Despite the municipality being affected by the disaster, helping hands have been limited because of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. This circumstance is likely to cause protracted restoration efforts for the houses and farmlands ruined by mud.

Photo: Doctors from ARROWS that entered one of the isolated communities in Kuma Village by helicopter to rescue the residents

Emergency Assistance for the 2020 Kyushu Heavy Rains amid COVID-19 Pandemic

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Only two years after the West Japan Floods, which was called “the worst flood damage in the Heisei era,” the 2020 Kyushu Heavy Rains – more powerful than the West Japan Floods – tragically devastated lives in the region. Extensive areas were inundated by the flooding of the Kuma River, and heavy rain emergency warnings were issued in Kumamoto and Kagoshima prefectures on July 4 and in Fukuoka, Saga and Nagasaki prefectures on July 6 and 7. Later on, heavy rain fell on Gifu and Nagano prefectures, and the Tohoku Region. The series of torrential rains across the nation resulted in the deaths of more than 80 people, mainly in Kyushu. Additionally, more than 16,700 residential damages in 27 prefectures were reported as of the end of July.

As a member of ARROWS (Airborne Rescue & Relief Operations With Search), a joint emergency assistance team, early on the morning of July 4, Civic Force rushed to the affected areas by amphibious vehicles, cars and helicopters. Although it was an unprecedented challenge for us to conduct assistance activities under the threat of COVID-19, we put lifesaving as the priority. We executed search-and-rescue (SAR) operations and provided medical care at isolated communities in Hitoyoshi City and Kuma Village in Kumamoto Prefecture. Also, we set up and operated evacuation shelters, and procured and distributed emergency relief supplies. Civic Force coordinated with companies to bring various relief supplies such as underwear, sanitary goods, bedclothes and electric fans to affected areas. Through our experience responding to COVID-19 since January, Civic Force was well prepared to implement infection control measures during assistance activities including distributing non-contact thermometers, surgical masks, antiseptic solutions and isolation tents.

This newsletter features our assistance activities during the 2020 Kyushu Heavy Rains. It also provides updates on our COVID-19 and Great East Japan Earthquake assistance activities. We would like to take this opportunity to give our sincerest thanks to all of our supporters.

Supporting Disaster Affected

The following articles describe the emergency responses, the aid activities, and the reconstruction efforts that Civic Force has provided in various disaster-affected areas in Japan.

2020
Kyushu
Heavy
Rains

Ten Days Since the Disaster

– From Rescuing Stranded Villagers to Setting Up and Operating Evacuation Centers

From the onset of disaster on July 4, Civic Force, as a member of ARROWS, mobilized a total of 30 doctors, nurses, SAR crew, and pilots as well as three SAR dogs. Since then, Civic Force conducted emergency relief activities at Hitoyoshi City, Kuma Village, Kurume City, Hita City, and some areas in Saga Prefecture, making use of two helicopters, land and amphibious vehicles and boats.



Day2– Setting Up and Operating Evacuation Centers

On July 5, in consideration of health conditions, Civic Force proposed to transfer the victims staying at Kuma Village General Sports Park to nearby evacuation centers. We supported the establishment of the evacuation centers at Hitoyoshi First Junior High School and the former Taragi Prefectural High School. With the assistance of doctors and nurses, we hung posters that recommended thorough hand washing and advised how to create spaces while avoiding the three Cs (closed spaces, crowded places, close-contact settings).

Day4– Approaching a Stranded Village

On July 7, we responded to a request from Kounose Nursery in Kuma Village, which was one of the stranded villages. Our team walked on roads that were covered deep in mud and delivered two days' food supply to 66 stranded victims and also provided medical care. On July 8, during a lull in the rain, we transported 20 villagers by helicopter in five round trips.

Dogs and cats were also saved.



Day1– Emergency Transport and Medical Assistance

On July 4, some of the victims who were transferred from Senjue, a flooded elderly nursing home, to Kuma Village General Sports Park needed medical care, so Civic Force transported them to nearby hospitals by car. We also provided mind and body care, treated injuries and prescribed medicine, to evacuees at the evacuation centers.

Day1– Procurement and Distribution of Emergency Relief Items

Civic Force distributed relief items to the victims in a timely manner. Much of the following relief items were donated by the Social Emergency Management Alliance (SEMA) and private companies: evacuation centers.



Relief Items

Ten camping tents / operation handbooks for evacuation centers / face masks / energy gels / anti-septic solution / non-contact thermometers / hand cream / skin lotion / bedclothes / electric fans / blue tarps / underwear / socks / children's clothing and face masks / roller bags / power strips / batteries / clocks / garment cases / ballpoint pens and memo pads / mosquito coils / diapers / t-shirts / pillows / bath towels / mattresses / bleaching agent

Distribution Destinations

<Kumamoto Prefecture> Hitoyoshi City Council of Social Welfare, Hitoyoshi Sports Palace, Hitoyoshi East Elementary School, Hitoyoshi City First Junior High School, Former Taragi Prefectural High School, Kuma Village General Sports Park
<Kurume City, Fukuoka Prefecture> Kitano Lifelong Study Center, Kitano Elementary School, Torikai Community Center, Kurume City Council of Social Welfare
<Kashima City and Tara Town, Saga Prefecture> Omoiari Volunteer Center
<Hita City, Oita Prefecture> Amagase Regional Development Office, Sugikawachi Elementary School, Tsue Junior High School, Nakatsue Regional Development Office, Taio Sport Center

“NPO Partner Project” Starts in Hita City, Oita

In order to aid the recovery and reconstruction of areas affected by heavy rain, Civic Force is supporting the community-oriented activities of local NPOs through the “NPO Partner Project.” Here, we introduce the activities of Riera, an NPO based in Hita City, which has provided basic recovery support for the affected areas since the the disaster. We will also look at NPO activities in other affected areas.

Hita City, Oita
Prefecture

“What We Can Do Now for the Future of Amagase Hot Spring & Nakatsue Village” –Riera

Hita City was seriously damaged by the Northern Kyushu Heavy Rain in 2017. At that time, Riera, an NPO formerly called Hichiku Volunteer Center, assisted with evacuation center management. Now it operates out of its base in Hita City and works on promoting the relocation and settlement of residents as well as disaster prevention and mitigation.

After the recent heavy rain disaster, Riera set up bases at the former Amagase Nursery School and other locations, and has been supporting the recovery and reconstruction of the heavily damaged Amagase Hot Spring district. The NPO is receiving volunteers from inside and outside Oita Prefecture and is also helping to launch groups of young volunteers for the restoration of tourism. The residents of Nakatsue Village, which was temporarily isolated by landslides, are expected to live as evacuees for an indefinite amount of time because of the continuing rainfall. To alleviate this situation, Riera will organize recreational activities and study meetings to revitalize the area, in



addition to providing relief supplies, removing mud and cleaning up houses. While building a trusting relationship with local people through these activities, Riera aims to provide individualized assistance in restoring their lives.

The leader of Riera, Kenya Matsunaga, said, “We can’t keep up with the growth of mold which is so fast after the flood disaster in the middle of the rainy season. There are many people who live on the second floor without a kitchen or a refrigerator because the first floor was flooded. Such a living environment is causing adverse effects on their health and mental conditions. As the number of volunteers has been limited because of the coronavirus, mainly local residents are currently performing services such as serving and delivering hot meals. However, as the rain continues, the disaster victims feel anxious about their lives ahead and future prospects.” Thus, he appeals for the need of long-term support.



“It is very helpful,” “Thank you so much!” – Messages from the disaster-affected areas

Civic Force has been receiving quick and enormous support from many people for the flood disaster. We are very grateful for your warm support, and we will report in detail about our activities for the disaster-affected areas on our website. We ask for your continued support for the disaster-affected areas where restoration efforts have been slowed due to the pandemic. Here are some messages from the flood victims who are still living in difficult conditions:

“I managed to survive but I couldn’t bring anything from my house. So, I am glad to be able to change my clothes after three days.” — A woman who received the relief supply of underwear

“I couldn’t help but worry about them. At last we are together again.” — A man after reuniting with his dogs and cats for the first time in a week. He had been rescued by helicopter from an isolated settlement, forced to leave his pets behind, but the pets were rescued later by ARROWS.

“These supplies are really helpful because we can’t get around to sufficiently handle infection control...”
— An evacuation center manager, upon receiving relief supplies such as thermometers and masks.



Please Donate Now!

■ Sumitomo Mitsui Banking Corporation
Aoyama Branch Savings Account
No. 6977180 (Assistance for the 2020 Kyushu Heavy Rains)

■ Japan Post Bank
Account No. 00140-6-361805
*Please enter “Assistance for 2020 Kyushu Heavy Rains” in the message section on the payment slip.

Account holder: Civic Force

■ Credit card or electronic money
<https://bokinchan3.com/civicforce/donation/bokin/page1.php>

*Fifteen percent of donations will be used to cover our operating expenses, which allows us to provide various types of assistance for people in need of help.

[Emergency Assistance] Supporting Medical/Welfare Frontlines in Japan

COVID-19 has become a pandemic and has been wreaking havoc all over the world. Civic Force opened a donation account at the end of January named “COVID-19 Emergency Assistance.” Starting with shipping medical supplies to China, Civic Force then assisted medical organizations and welfare facilities in Japan from February. Also, until the end of July, we conducted the following assistance activities as a member of ARROWS (Airborne Rescue & Relief Operations With Search).



Cooperative Training of Medical Air Transportation for Islands

Civic Force conducted a training session on transporting severely infected patients from Rishiri Island, Hokkaido, to medical institutions outside the island by civilian aircraft. We organized a mechanism to save lives while mitigating infection, dispatching ARROWS doctors and by working cooperatively with hospitals, fire stations and the local government of the island. We are planning to link up with local municipalities and hospitals of other islands in addition to Rishiri Island.

NPO Partner Projects

Civic Force has been collaborating with three organizations. Please refer to page 5 for details.

Sending Infection Control Materials to Disaster-Affected Areas

As disaster assistance specialists, Civic Force delivered anti-septic solutions and masks to NPOs who assisted rehabilitation and reconstruction efforts at sites damaged by past earthquakes or floods, while maintaining infection control protocol. Thanks to donations from companies, we also delivered energy gels and supplements.

(Receivers)

- Ishinomaki Revival Support Network (Miyagi Prefecture)
- Sanriku Hitotsunagi Nature School (Iwate Prefecture)
- Peace Jam (Miyagi Prefecture)
- Hope Apple (Nagano Prefecture)
- Hearty Deco (Nagano Prefecture)
- Soul Visiting Nurse Station (Okayama Prefecture)



Offering 1,440,000 Masks to Medical/Welfare Facilities

From January to July, Civic Force delivered 1,440,000 masks to more than 1,300 medical, welfare, or childcare facilities. The masks were either previously stockpiled for disaster support or procured domestically or internationally. In cooperation with the Tokyo Medical Association, local governments, and NPOs, Civic Force also sent a portion of these masks to people who received minimal public support such as those staying at clinics without beds, after-school daycare centers, and children requiring medical care.



Trailers and Tents Leased to Hospitals

To prevent in-hospital infection, Civic Force leased trailers and tents to medical institutions in Kansai and Kyushu, the southwest regions of Japan. We transported and installed them as well as delivering portable X-ray devices, air purifiers, and protective equipment according to needs. We are receiving messages of thanks from the hospitals: “The trailers and tents are utilized as triage cabins to determine fever or urgency of treatment on patients. They are invaluable and play a great role in maintaining the local medical mechanism.”



To dispatch to disaster-affected spots more quickly, ARROWS (Airborne Rescue & Relief Operations With Search) was jointly established in December 2019 by Civic Force and NPOs based in Hiroshima and Saga prefectures. ARROWS responds to the increasingly frequent natural disasters occurring in various areas of Japan. The team makes full-scale efforts not only to save lives but also to assist the affected people return to normalcy as quickly as possible, working hand-in-hand with a variety of partners including hospitals, local governments and enterprises.

NPO Partner Projects

- Saving People Suffering from Natural Disasters and COVID-19

Civic Force has provided assistance for disasters including the Great East Japan Earthquake, 2016 Kumamoto Earthquake, 2018 West Japan Floods, 2018 Hokkaido Earthquake, and Typhoon No.19 (Hagibis) in 2019. The people in these disaster-hit areas are still in the process of recovery and reconstruction. Due to the impact of COVID-19,

the reconstruction events and salons have been postponed or canceled one after another, putting the bonds of local communities in danger of decline. In response, Civic Force launched the COVID-19 NPO Partner Projects this May to assist various efforts in disaster-affected areas under the threat of COVID-19.

Assistance for Children

Infection Control and "Aozora Park"

Sanriku Hitotsunagi Nature School
Representative Director
Satoshi Ito

Children have felt cramped due to the pandemic and based on lessons learned from the Great East Japan Earthquake, Civic Force found it necessary to take measures without delay to protect the healthy growth of children. We have been operating "Aozora Park" – an open-air event for children – every weekend since May in cooperation with companies and organizations in Kamaishi City, Iwate Prefecture. Many of the children who joined the event have stayed away from playing outside. A participating child said with a smile, "Here, I can move my body as much as I want." We will also share with our peers in other areas an infection prevention manual created based on guidance from doctors to establish spaces where more children can be active and release stress.



Assistance for Children



We will Protect Disabled People's Workplace!

Arts and Sports for Everyone(ASE)
Representative Director
Yuichi Yoshida

The economic downturn due to the spread of COVID-19 has made a major impact on the workplaces of disabled people. To help them get through this difficult situation, Civic Force held a series of online seminars aimed at managers of support centers for disabled people since June. In the first seminar, Kazuhiro Kuzuma, director of the Fundraising Network for Community Welfare in Japan (COMMNET), gave a lecture, titled "Welfare activities and fundraising: aiming for social welfare that is sustainable without money" and about 20 people participated from the welfare facilities in Kumamoto Prefecture. ASE has also supported the launch of an online shop to expand the sales channels for miscellaneous goods made at facilities for the disabled.

Child Care Assistance

"Giving Chance for Mothers to Work Again"

Peace Jam/ Representative
Ken Sato

Since the 2011 Great East Japan Earthquake, Peace Jam has created communities for mothers based in Kesennuma City, Miyagi Prefecture, through producing local fruit jams. But due to the pandemic, their sales channels and income have declined, and the places for parents and children to gather and opportunities for children to play actively have decreased. Moreover, implementing effective infection prevention measures have increasingly mattered, adding to worry. Under these circumstances, Peace Jam has changed its business strategy and focused on current needs including the production of portable air cleaners and disinfectant sales. To support the communities, Civic Force is promoting and helping to prevent the "Three C's": closed spaces, crowded places and close-contact settings to protect against COVID-19.



Survey on Evacuation Shelter Life

In June – when natural disasters frequently occur – a survey on evacuation shelter life was conducted together with the Asia-Pacific Alliance for Disaster Management Japan (APAD Japan), a disaster assistance NPO based in Saga Prefecture. We received responses from 105 people as of the end of June. More than half of the respondents pointed out the problems with sleep and privacy in shelters. More than forty percent wanted improved lavatories, sanitary conditions and indoor temperature. The details of the result will be available on our website below:

<https://www.civic-force.org/news>

When the 2020 Kyushu Heavy Rains occurred, Civic Force set up cardboard beds and offered bedclothes at evacuation shelters, following the survey results.

< COVID-19 Emergency Assistance > Donate Now!

■ Sumitomo Mitsui Banking Corporation
Aoyama Branch Account No. 7027390

■ Japan Post Bank
Account No.00140-6-361805
*Please write "COVID-19 emergency assistance" on the message section on payment slip.
Account holder: Civic Force

■ Credit card or electronic money
<https://bokinchan.com/civicforce/donation/bokin/page1.php>

*Fifteen percent of donations will be used for our operating expenses, which allows us to provide various assistance to people in need of help.

Seven Projects in Three Prefectures: Fukushima, Miyagi and Iwate

It has been almost ten years since the Great East Japan Earthquake. Civic Force has implemented a new NPO Partner Projects x Dream Support Project and by July 2020, seven projects were launched in three prefectures. We will introduce the ongoing efforts of five organizations including Ishinomaki Jichiren (a community group supporting disaster-affected people in the Great East Japan Earthquake), who started a collaboration project this April.

NEW

Ishinomaki Jichiren

Temporary Housing Archive Project

Since the Great East Japan Earthquake, Ishinomaki City in Miyagi Prefecture set up 7,000 temporary houses in 134 housing complexes, the largest number in the disaster-affected areas, and by January 2020, all the residents have left. To do a follow-up evaluation about materials, structure and location of the housings, as well as the effect on communities, Ishinomaki Jichiren (formerly Ishinomaki Temporary Housing Self-government Promotion Association) is conducting a survey to former residents and their supporters. The results of the survey will be utilized to reveal challenges regarding temporary housing for future disaster preparedness.



Because of the frequent occurrence of disasters, improving evacuation life is vital and requires evaluating policies to sufficiently take into account evacuees' needs. Photograph: Kaisei and Minamizakai districts, the greatest cluster of temporary housings in Ishinomaki City. (2019)

Full House

Reopening of Bookstore



A book café was open to provide local residents and high school students with a place to relax in Odaka, Minami-Soma City, Fukushima Prefecture this March. Though it was closed for a while due to COVID-19, only the bookstore section was able to reopen in June. Preparation for obtaining a business license is currently in process.

Bridge for Fukushima (BFF)

Education Program Administered Online

Bridge for Fukushima runs human resource development programs for high school students in Fukushima City. In consideration of the pandemic, BFF decided to implement a part of the training program online. An online lecture, "Ready to Go," in which the students can listen to presentations from adults and university students active in various fields received highly favorable reviews. In response, BFF increased the frequency of the lecture to several times a month.



Ishinomaki Revival Support Network

Bentos Instead of Cafeterias for Children

At Cafeterias for Mothers and Children, the staff members have not cooked meals but provided bentos ("lunch boxes") to parents and children in the local communities to prevent the spread of COVID-19. Additionally, community support activities have continued with infection control measures established. An online live show was held on July 25, where participants got into the spirit with smiles on their faces.



311 Ukeire Zenkoku Kyogikai

Support for Summer Retreat Program

27 member organizations of the 311 Japan Nuclear Disaster Aid Association had planned summer retreat programs for children and their parents that promoted physical activities. However, more than half of the programs were postponed due to COVID-19. In response, Civic Force is providing

support so that they can reschedule the programs to other seasons, such as winter and spring holidays.

*Retreat: Since the Great East Japan Earthquake, volunteer organizations across Japan have hosted summer retreats for families affected by the nuclear fallout. The retreats provide safe spaces for the families to relax without worry.

Creating an Emergency Preparedness

We are undertaking various efforts to develop our emergency preparedness mechanism in the face of disasters. This page introduces media coverage of our activity and information associated with our partner organizations.

Media

From Flood-Affected Area

ARROWS, which Civic Force is a member, held an online press conference on July 8 to present its one-week emergency assistance operations for flood-affected people during the 2020 Kyushu Heavy Rains. Thereafter, the press conference was reported through various media channels.

- July 9, NHK: "News 7" and "Asaichi"
- July 9, Huffingtonpost: "An 'obvious difference' seen in evacuation shelters under the threat of the COVID 19 pandemic and present condition of flood affected areas - something doctors have raised issues of"
- July 9, TV Asahi: ANN News "Dispatched Medical Team; Conducting search and rescue and distributing relief goods too"
- July 12, Kumamoto Nichinichi Shimbun: "Accidental landing leading to rescue of 17 people in an isolated settlement in Kuma Village, in the Kumamoto Flood"
- July 21, Sankei Shimbun: "Doctors operating emergency supports in Kuma Village are concerned about delay in reconstruction"

Emergency Preparedness Mechanism

Support Our Activities Easily!

《General Donations》

- Heads: "Charity Happiness Shopping Bags"
<https://www.e-heads.co.jp/products/detail2/3219>
- SUNNAP (sales limited in ASKUL)
"Phase-free Certified Paper Cup with Measurement"
<https://www.askul.co.jp/p/P678379/>
- Value Books: "Charibon"
<https://www.charibon.jp/partner/cf/>
- Hondana-Otasuke-Tai: "Donation by Selling Second-Hand Books"
<https://hondana.biz/second-hand-books-selling-for-charity/charityhtml>
- EC Navi: "Smile Project"
https://ecnavi.jp/smile_project/

《2020 Kyushu Heavy Rains》



- Yahoo! Net Donation (T points accepted)
<https://donation.yahoo.co.jp/detail/3747019>
Readyfor Emergency Assistance Program
<https://readyfor.jp/projects/EMG0705>
- Hapitas Points Donation
<https://hapitas.jp/exchange>
- EC Navi: "Smile Project"
https://ecnavi.jp/smile_project/bokin/202007_kyushu/
- GlobalGiving (English site)
<https://www.globalgiving.org/projects/flood-and-landslide-relief-in-kyushu-japan-2020/>

《COVID-19 Emergency Assistance》

- GlobalGiving (English site)
<https://www.globalgiving.org/projects/coronavirus-relief-aid-distribution/>

《Great East Japan Earthquake》

- Value Books: "Books for Japan"
<http://www.booksforjapan.jp/action/>

Notice

Change in Civic Force Chairperson

The chairperson of Civic Force has been changed from Mr. Kensuke Onishi to Ms. Kaori Neki (also serving as Secretary General). We sincerely thank those of you who have supported Civic Force during Mr. Onishi's service since establishment. In times of emergencies and disasters, we will strive more than ever to deliver your support to the affected areas as much and as quickly as possible. We would appreciate your continued support and cooperation with Civic Force under the new leadership.

Emergency Preparedness Mechanism

Start Your Support with Only 33 Yen per Day

In order to be better prepared for future disasters, we need your support. Become a monthly supporter and you can donate a fixed amount each month (in 1,000 yen units) and help prepare for future large-scale disasters. Payments can be made through bank transfers to Civic Force:

•Sumitomo Mitsui Banking Corporation:
Aoyama Branch Account No. 6953964

•Japan Post Bank
Account No. 00140-6-361805
Account holder's name of the above banks is "Civic Force"

•Credit card:
Please check the "Donate Now!" section of the Civic Force website below
<https://bokinchan3.com/civicforce/donation/bokin/page1.php>





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