



# CIVIC FORCE

## NEWS LETTER Vol.23

(April, 2021)



A gathering for mourning for 3.11 (hosted by Ganbaro! Ishinomaki) was held in Ishinomaki City, Miyagi Prefecture. Candles were lit by a pilot light ignited with wood chips from earthquake-stricken houses and flower offering tables were set up in front of the “Ganbaro! (Never Give Up!) Ishinomaki” signboard. Raised on April 2011, the sign encouraged the local people not to be defeated by the tsunami. This year, the event was broadcasted live on the internet because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

## Ten Years since the Great East Japan Earthquake: Moving Forward

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At 14:46 on March 11, 2021, which marked the tenth anniversary of the Great East Japan Earthquake, figures of people could be seen offering a memorial prayer under the deep blue sky of the Sanriku coast. Numerous balloons flew towards the sky, each carrying a message for lost ones such as “I hope to see you with a smile someday” and “I will move forward one step at a time.”

More than 18,000 people were victims of the Great East Japan Earthquake. The memorial events held every March 11 at various locations have an important meaning for the people who lost their family or loved ones – they are places to offer prayers for the victims as well as to share the pain and thoughts of revival. On the other hand, as time has gone by since the disaster, it is becoming difficult for local volunteers and sympathizers to continue the memorial gatherings. This year, organizers were faced with an especially difficult decision from the pandemic.

Under these circumstances, in March of last year and this year, Civic Force supported the groups that decided to hold a memorial event. Civic Force covered their expenses for infection prevention measures, online events, and supported their activities. (See details on p.3)

The sense of loss and sorrow for the victims will not disappear with the passage of time, and PTSD symptoms may sometimes appear. Now that ten years have passed, Civic Force will continue supporting the ongoing mental care and town planning activities to energize the local communities.

In this issue we will introduce the new projects supporting Tohoku which will start in April.

# 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.

Great East Japan Earthquake

## Offering intimate support to each affected person New partnership projects have started!

The “New Dream Support x NPO Partner Projects” provide support for communities that were devastated by the earthquake based on three themes: “community revitalization,” “retreat program support in Fukushima,” and “passing down the memories of the disaster to the next generation.” The new partnership projects starting in March and April are described below.

### ■ Kokoro Smile Project

#### Support for parents and children who have been traumatized (Miyagi Prefecture)

“Kokoro Smile Project” has been offering extensive support for children who have been deeply traumatized by the loss of family members and loved ones in the disaster. The project supports bereaved families through counseling, home visits, study support, grief care for children not attending school, and assisting those in withdrawal or having mental illness and their families. It is difficult to obtain public support for activities such as mental health care because the number of people qualified for such activities is limited. Additionally, it is difficult to raise funds for such activities.

Civic Force will continue to offer intimate support to each person through their mental recovery, as only private organizations can.



### ■ Kosodate-ship (Child-raising-ship)

#### Uninterrupted Child-Raising Support from the Pregnancy Period (Iwate Prefecture)

Kosodate-ship was organized by local midwives to develop a safe environment for bearing and raising children in the disaster-affected areas that are medically underserved. The program offers uninterrupted child-raising support services starting from the pregnancy period, including a maternity school, a baby salon, after-baby care, and a disaster prevention project for protecting infants.

### ■ SHINSEI

#### Creating a Place for People with Disabilities to Practice SDG's (Fukushima Prefecture)

Shinsei is a project to establish a welfare farm called “SDGs Implementation Hub” for persons with disabilities who had to evacuate to Koriyama City due to the nuclear accident. This farm provides a place for them to actively work and interact with diverse people in the rich natural surroundings of Koriyama City. Shinsei holds indoor and outdoor workshops throughout the year, sets up base camps jointly with enterprises and local residents, and is striving to organize study meetings on SDGs.



### ■ Ishinomaki Revival Support Network

#### Creating a place to feel at home for parents and children and providing support for public housing in disaster recovery (Miyagi Prefecture)

Civic Force will manage a shelter to protect mothers and children from abuse and domestic violence and support them in receiving professional care and public services. This need grew from “Cafeterias for Mothers and Children,” a program that we carried out during the first term. We will also continue employment assistance to help them become self-sustained. Our project at the public housing will continue to support community-building activities proactively carried out by senior citizens who are prone to be isolated as a consequence of the earthquake and COVID-19.

July 2020 Heavy Rain

## Our Sincere Thanks and a Report on Your Donation

Activity Report on the July 2020 Heavy Rain-



We have received roughly JPY7.7million (including administrative costs) in donations from July 4, 2020, when Civic Force launched the Emergency Relief Activities for the July 2020 Heavy Rain, until the end of March 2021. The donations have been used for rescue activities and delivery of relief items conducted by ARROWS (Airborne Rescue & Relief Operations With Search), and for the collaboration projects with NPOs that are working in the disaster-affected areas. The donation acceptance period ended at the end of March this year, but the collaboration projects are still ongoing. Thank you all for your donations!

## For the Future of the Next Generation

“New Dream Support x NPO Partner Projects” is one of our collaborations with NPOs that have been working for the areas affected by the Great East Japan Earthquake. Here, we report the ongoing projects as of March 2021.

### Sanriku Hitotsunagi Nature School

### Nurturing Children’s Strength to Survive Difficulties

The school has been implementing a next-generation development project in Kamaishi City, Iwate Prefecture; focusing on a combination of community youth participation and disaster management education. Activities include a seashore restoration project, supporting high school student groups’ activities for disaster management, handing down memories of the earthquake and tsunami to the next generation, and conducting a career education program for junior and high school students. These programs have been designed by carefully listening to young people’s needs to develop their strength to overcome difficulties.



### Soma Aid and Rescue Team

### Regaining the Pride of a Community Living with Horses

The Soma and Futaba areas in Fukushima Prefecture have inherited an equestrian culture. A celebrated local event is the Soma Nomaoui, a traditional festival. When the earthquake caused the nuclear accident, the whole of Futaba Town was ordered to evacuate and later led to a drastic population decline. However, the residents have been gradually returning to their town since the evacuation order was lifted in some parts of the town in March 2020. To rejuvenate the community, Soma Aid and Rescue Team has hosted fun events that include interacting with horses, photo contests, and workshops.



### 311 Ukeire Zenkoku Kyogikai

### Online Meeting Centered on Retreat Programs during Ongoing Pandemic



The 311 Ukeire Zenkoku Kyogikai (also known as 311 Japan Nuclear Disaster Aid Association) has developed a nationwide network of support groups for parents and children who have been suffering physically and mentally since the nuclear accident. While the retreat activities of the member groups have stagnated due to the pandemic, the association administered a survey to 46 member groups from January to February 2021. In addition, it held an online meeting centered on the retreat programs during the pandemic.

### Stage on Earth (Memory of Yuriage)

### Memorial Prayers Offered in Hybrid Way

### Ganbaro! (Never Give Up!) Ishinomaki

Each year, two groups have continued to memorialize the Great East Japan Earthquake. Memory of Yuriage (Stage on Earth) in Natori City, Miyagi Prefecture focuses on handing down the memories of the earthquake disaster. Ganbaro! Ishinomaki, the citizen group in Ishinomaki City, Miyagi Prefecture, holds a memorial event on March 11. This year, the events took place combining a live, in-person ceremony with an online component to mitigate the spread of infection. The picture on the right shows a memorial gathering hosted by Memory of Yuriage.



## Pick Up!

### Book to be Published in April to Utilize Experiences of Living in Temporary Housing for Future

Ishinomaki Jichiren, an association supporting disaster-affected areas under the slogan “no more solitary death,” will publish a book in April compiling the experiences and lessons learned living in temporary housing. More details can be found on their website.



Ishinomaki City has the largest number of temporary housing built among the municipalities which were affected by the Great East Japan Earthquake. After the earthquake, physical aspects such as the conditions of temporary housing have been improved, but intangible elements including the victims’ mental health has not yet been fully examined. Having conducted interviews with the local residents for more than one year, we analyzed how the operation, management, and the location of temporary housing influenced the lives of the disaster-affected people. This book is the result of that analysis. As disasters now occur in greater frequency, we hope local government officials and disaster assistance organizations will benefit from reading our book.

Mr. Takuma Tagami, Secretary General  
General Incorporated Association  
ISHINOMAKI JICHIREN



# 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.

COVID-19

## Supporting Medical & Welfare Facilities

As the impact of COVID-19 lingers on, ARROWS, an emergency response project in which Civic Force participates, sent doctors and coordinators to medical and welfare facilities where infection clusters broke out over the New Year holidays. In addition, trailers and tents supplied by Civic Force continue to be utilized by medical institutions in the Kyushu and Kansai areas to prevent the spread of infection.

Emergency  
Preparedness  
Mechanism

## SEMA Wins Award for Town Planning for Disaster Prevention

Civic Force is a member of SEMA (Social Emergency Management Alliance), which won the "President's Award of Japan Fire & Disaster Prevention Association" in the 25th Annual Awards for Town Planning for Disaster Prevention held by the Fire and Disaster Management Agency.

Emergency  
Preparedness  
Mechanism

## Support Our Activities Easily

### 《General Donations》

- Value Books: "Charibon"  
<https://www.charibon.jp>
- 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/>
- 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/](https://ecnavi.jp/smile_project/)

### 《COVID-19 Emergency Assistance》

- Yahoo! Net Donation  
NPO Partner Projects <http://donation.yahoo.co.jp/detail/3747017>  
Lease of trailers and tents to hospitals  
<http://donation.yahoo.co.jp/detail/3747016>
- GlobalGiving (英)  
<https://www.globalgiving.org/projects/coronavirus-relief-aid-distribution/>

### 《Great East Japan Earthquake》

- Yahoo! Net Donation  
<http://donation.yahoo.co.jp/detail/3747011>

MEDIA

## Posted on "THE OWNER"

Activities of the Tohoku Common Benefit Investment Fund and Civic Force were introduced on THE OWNER, an online publication in an article titled, "Ten Years After the Great East Japan Earthquake: Innovations Are Born in the Land of Adversities."



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>

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

