

**Preparing for and Responding to Large Scale Disasters in High Income Countries  
Findings and Lessons Learned from the Japanese Red Cross Society's  
Response to the Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami**

Recommendations	Responsibility	Comments/Response	Time frame
1 That JRCS take a lead to develop a framework for cooperation with the appropriate government authorities at central and local levels, NGOs and other relevant organisations to better share information, understand each others' plans and foster coordination of activities in the future.	JRCS	JRCS will enhance cooperative relations with government agencies, such as Health, Labour and Welfare Ministry, Japan Coast Guard, and Fire and Disaster Management Agency at ordinary times through implementation of joint exercises to strengthen the effectiveness of the existing agreements on relief activities after large scale disasters. JRCS will also develop close ties with NGOs and cooperate with other related institutions which procure and transport relief goods, accordingly.	March 2013
2 That national societies continuously nurture a close working relationship with the disaster management authorities at all levels to enable effective and efficient liaison when large scale disasters strike and decision-making bodies come under heavy pressure.	JRCS	JRCS acknowledges the importance of building face-to-face relationships at all levels of the Cabinet Office and other related institutions as part of the preparedness for large scale disasters in the future.	March 2013
		Following the adoption of Resolution 7 at the 31st International Conference on Strengthening normative frameworks and addressing regulatory barriers concerning disaster mitigation, response and recovery, the IFRC Secretariat has started following up with different countries on their pledges	—
	IFRC	IFRC Secretariat will hold a regional seminar on the role of customs in disaster relief in collaboration with UN OCHA and World Customs Organisation. National societies with their national disaster management and customs authorities will attend the event. This will provide a platform for the national societies and their disaster management and customs authorities to build their relationships and discuss their respective roles in major disasters.	May 2012
		IFRC Secretariat together with national societies and disaster management authorities initiate a process of reviewing the implementation of the legal framework after large-scale disasters.	July 2012
3 That JRCS develop a contingency plan for large scale disasters after considering the following issues: ① the relationship with GoJ in implementing the disaster management plan (see recommendation 1) ② a strategy to scale up and meet abnormally large needs in the case of mega disasters and/or when two or more chapters are seriously affected (see section 4) ③ the possible role of JRCS health institutions, such as hospitals, in providing a forward disaster management coordination centre in large scale disasters ④ the need for capacity in making assessments, including in situations where municipalities are rendered dysfunctional (see recommendation 5) ⑤ JRCS role and responsibility in case of large scale industrial accidents (see recommendation 8) ⑥ the need for a JRCS recovery policy (see recommendation 14) ⑦ a strategy for the most effective deployment of human resources within the Society, including those with practical experience and expertise in overseas large scale disasters and those familiar with Movement policies and standards (see recommendation 18) ⑧ the need to strengthen the corps of JRCS trained volunteers to give added outreach to the communities and provide surge capacity to deliver emergency relief services (see recommendation 13) ⑨ the basis on which additional resources (e.g. funds, international tools, supplies and personnel) may be mobilized from within the Movement (see section 5) ⑩ stronger coordination with the government, NGOs, the private sector and other organisations (see recommendation 1)	JRCS	As lessons learned from GEJET, JRCS will establish a flexible disaster response system, enhance DM capacity, and draw up a response plan maximising resources available from the Red Cross network for a possible large scale disaster in the future.	March 2013
		1. Develop further relationship with GoJ, NGOs and private corporate sector	
		2. Develop operational centers in the affected area along with the development of human resources for management of the relief activities.	
		3. Establishment of the operational hubs as well as logistic base in or nearby an affected area.	
		4. Strengthen capacity for proactive information gathering by the staff members and volunteers.	
		5. Develop JRCS response policy, appropriate equipment, operational procedures and the training system in response to nuclear radiation disaster.	
		6. Review expected role of JRCS from the public perspective in the recovery operation and develop a policy as well as scope of activities for future recovery operations.	
		7. Review the operational linkage among NHQ, chapters, and hospitals and enhance effective use of experienced human resources not only from domestic domain but also from the international emergency relief as well as from the RCRC Movement.	
		8. Examine the role and scope of activities of JRCS volunteers and volunteer centers, including management of such centers.	
		9. Review effective use of the global response tools from RCRC Movement at a time of large scale disasters (including Wat-san ERU which was proven to be effective during GEJET).	
4 That national societies undertake adequate contingency planning for large scale disasters, including arrangements to access resources and assistance from within the Movement, to respond to events which, while highly unlikely, may have catastrophic effects in their country.	JRCS	In GEJET operation JRCS immediately requested a support of communication delegate from the International Federation as per the existing contingency plan for a large scale disaster. The scale of GEJET, however, was far bigger than expected, as such needs of the affected people were enormous. As a result a traditional relief activities of JRCS turned to be not sufficient enough to address unmet needs that existed in wide range for a long period. Learning the lessons from the operation, JRCS will review its contingency plan to be flexible enough to cope with various disaster scenarios, thus maximizing effective use of external support from the RCRC Movement. (e.g. relief goods, equipment, specialized delegate and ERUs).	March 2013
	IFRC	In an effort to enhance the effectiveness of Asia Pacific National Society disaster response National Societies are encouraged to hold pre-disaster meetings together with IFRC Secretariat, partner national society and ICRC representatives. The overall goal of the meetings are to assist National Societies in being better prepared to respond to future disaster events through timely and efficient coordinated humanitarian assistance to affected populations. While the pre-disaster meetings are one component of a wider preparedness agenda, they provide a platform to review disaster preparedness measures such as contingency plans and operational procedures etc; identify gaps and prioritise preparedness measures; and increase the awareness of the global disaster response system through identifying the complementarity of regional and global tools. Furthermore the meetings review the existing coordination mechanisms and work towards agreement on the roles and responsibilities of all Red Cross and Red Crescent partners in times of crises.	—
		The IFRC AP Zone DMU will continue to promote the holding of pre-disaster meetings and preparation of pre-disaster agreements for all National Societies.	Ongoing
		The IFRC global DM team has revised the Disaster Response and contingency Planning guideline based on the experiences of National Societies. This will be disseminated along with complementary training material to all National Societies.	July 2012

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5	That JRCS build capacity within its domestic disaster response personnel to conduct assessments on the basis of IFRC developed methodologies in order to better target assistance and reach the most vulnerable. Trained assessment teams should be available to be deployed at short notice to help municipality authorities assess the needs of their communities, especially in areas where JRCS can deliver services. JRCS should also review its volunteer base at municipal level and consider more systematic training and organisation for disaster intervention.	JRCS	JRCS normally gets disaster information from the affected municipality authorities. In case of GEJET local authorities became dysfunctional. JRCS recognises the need to boost its own capacity to assess the situation in order to meet the various needs of the affected people. JRCS will strengthen human resource development for effective use of volunteers, JRCS overseas experienced staff, and chapter staff to carry out its own needs analysis and information gathering in affected area.	March 2013
6	That IFRC develop tools for post disaster needs assessment in high income countries and systematically share best practice.	IFRC	The IFRC is in the process of developing Operational Guidance on multi-sectoral Needs Assessment. The Operational Guidance is intended to enhance multi-sector rapid and detailed needs assessments to provide in a timely manner consistent and reliable data on humanitarian needs in slow and sudden-onset crises with the overall objective to strengthen informed decision making and to improve the humanitarian response. The tools are the same for any range of income country.	2012
7	That IFRC assure the flexibility of the ERU model and make national societies aware of this so that ERUs can be more expeditiously made available and integrated into existing national society structures and systems in high income countries.	IFRC	ERUs are designed and maintained to provide life-saving services in all countries (low-income as well as high-income). As such their standards are not benchmarked or set for any income level. Once requested / accepted by a National Society, their deployment is immediate.	—
			Within Asia Pacific, IFRC will continue to disseminate the role, purpose and deployment options for ERUs to ensure National Society representatives are fully aware of how to request and integrate into their own structures.	Ongoing
			The AP Zone DMU will continue to promote cross-National Society department exchange with regard to understanding, contributing to and preparing to receive support from the global disaster management system.	
8	That the RCRC Movement continue to partner JRCS both in giving assistance to the affected population after the Fukushima Daiichi power plant nuclear accident and in contributing to the development of a strategy (ideally expanded to an approach that includes all NRBC industrial accidents) to address the humanitarian consequences of such disaster events.	IFRC	The topic will be further discussed in the upcoming Partnership meeting hosted by JRCS.	May 2012
9	That a strategy for the Movement be developed to elaborate domestic and international roles in dealing with the humanitarian consequences of nuclear accidents, drawing on the extensive experiences of humanitarian interventions after the Chernobyl and Fukushima Daiichi nuclear accidents.	IFRC	Following adoption by the IFRC General Assembly in November 2011 of the Resolution on the enhancement of the National Societies response to the nuclear and radiological accidents, the IFRC Secretariat has taken initiative, in close coordination with the Japanese Red Cross (the sponsor of the Resolution) to elaborate on the potential roles of National Societies in dealing with the humanitarian consequences of nuclear accidents.	—
			IFRC Secretariat participated in the Nuclear Summit organised in South Korea, contributing to building awareness among the external parties, governments on the RCRC existing and potential contribution in dealing with these important risks.	April 2012
			Hold a meeting of interested and concerned National Societies with the IFRC Secretariat and participation of the ICRC and several invited agencies (IAEA, WHO, OCHA) to look into menu of options and preparation of operational guidelines to develop further these specific capabilities as well as systems to facilitate knowledge and experience exchange will be established.	May 2012
			Take stock of existing capabilities and future directions in close interaction with the ICRC, and linking up with the external parties, notably IAEA, OCHA,	
			The preparing of an action plan for the nuclear and radiological preparedness and response building on the national, regional and global levels.	
Investigate operational agreements with the IAEA and other international agencies concerned are being envisaged.	2012			
10	That the Movement continuously reviews and updates its restoring family links (RFL) and tracing services to take advantage of evolving technology and the social media.	JRCS	In GEJET the tracing services provided by social media, such as Google were remarkable. Incorporating rapidly growing interface technology such as Facebook is considered important. JRCS needs to clarify its role and organizational competence in the area of RFL in natural disasters.	March 2014
			IFRC	Within in the framework of the Movement Strategy for RFL, under the stewardship of the Movement RFL Implementation group, work is underway to exploit developments in information technology and to reach out to newly emerging actors in this field, including Google and into incorporating RFL into NS Disaster management plans. The progress report on the implementation of the RFL Strategy that was presented to the 2011 CoD noted the following, The trend towards incorporating RFL in strategic and development plans and disaster response plans needs to be sustained, reinforced and translated into operational capacities. Particularly in the area of emergency response, a fuller knowledge of all the resources that are available globally is required. These resources need to be incorporated at the national and regional level. RFL should also have a place in NS agreements with authorities on national emergency response plans.
		The way people communicate and look for family members has changed. This presents a challenge to the Movement in the provision of services to beneficiaries and the sharing of information within its Family Links Network. It is addressing this challenge by developing new information and communication technology (ICT) projects		—
		All components of the RCRC Movement engage in delivering on the Movement Strategy for RFL and in particular pursue the better integration of RFL services into the National Society DM plans.		Ongoing
11	That JRCS undertake investigations to establish needs and the feasibility of providing long-term, volunteer delivered PSS programming in support of individuals and communities affected by the GEJET as part of the recovery programme.	JRCS	Roles and activities of Psychosocial Support Programme (PSP) were not fully understood internally or externally. JRCS needs to reaffirm its roles and activities of PSP and clarify the position in disaster relief activities, as well as the possibility to increase the number of PSP staff and volunteers.	March 2013

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12	That national societies both plan to send and to receive trained PSP personnel to support their expatriate communities when large scale disasters strike, given the presence of many different nationalities in most high income countries. The deployment of such personnel must depend upon usual travel protocols being respected including the agreement of the host national society.	JRCS	Many foreign workers and permanent residents married to Japanese were also affected by the GEJET. International Organization for Migration (IOM) provided PSP support to these people and JRCS did not target foreigners in particular. After the nuclear accident in Fukushima, many foreigners returned to their home country, but some remained in Japan. For those remaining who had limited access to information, may have needed PSP support by compatriots. In fact, JRCS dispatched PSP team during Christchurch EQ operation in New Zealand to support family members of Japanese victims. In future, JRCS will continue to regard PSP as a priority activity to meet the needs both of foreigners in Japan and Japanese abroad.	March 2013
		IFRC	IFRC Psychosocial Centre provide National Society PSS specialised personnel with training and backup support to be able to respond to PSS needs of vulnerable groups, including significant expatriate communities, during a large scale disaster.	Ongoing
13	That JRCS strengthen and diversify its trained volunteer base and have effective systems in place for their efficient mobilization and deployment. As well, effective systems should be developed to manage a surge in the recruitment of new volunteers in times of disaster.	JRCS	JRCS reaffirms the important roles of DM volunteers in disaster relief and will examine effective ways of establishment and management of volunteer centers.	March 2013
14	That JRCS develops a national recovery policy and a plan to build relevant capacity as part of its disaster management strategy.	JRCS	The JRCS placed high priority in supporting the life of survivors from the emergency to recovery phase in GEJET operation. However, due to the lack of a coherently elaborated vision as well as past experience in the domestic recovery activities, JRCS could not sufficiently develop projects in a structured manner in early stage. In light of GEJET experience (and the recommendations from IFRC evaluation), JRCS developed a vision and policy that spell out the goals and direction as well as priority activity areas for the recovery programme in March 2012. JRCS is committed to enhance its capacity to address long term needs after the large disaster, including nuclear accident, in the future.	2012
15	That national societies in high income countries adopt disaster recovery policies, taking account of their unique national context, the disaster risks present and drawing on the work being undertaken by IFRC in developing an IFRC recovery policy.	JRCS	An unique system of cash grant exists in Japan and JRCS acts as a main fundraiser. Due to this system JRCS has never been engaged in recovery operation. Having received a large amount of international donation from sister national societies, the JRCS has implemented recovery operation for the first time. In the process of reviewing the cash grant system, JRCS recognises the necessity of clarifying its policy in regard to JRCS future involvement in the recovery operation.	—
		IFRC	In the latest reviews of disaster policies (2007 and 2011) it was identified that the majority required updating, while the most urgent need was to fill the policy gap around recovery programming. However, rather than focusing on updating individual policies or developing new policies to fill specific gaps, the DCMAB has decided to focus its efforts on clearly defining a disaster management policy framework – with a view to develop one holistic disaster management policy under the Strategic Aim 1 of the Strategy 2020. This holistic policy would include disaster preparedness, relief and recovery programming approaches.	—
			The IFRC Disaster and Crises Management Advisory Body in defining one holistic disaster management policy will ensure adequate reference is made to recovery	2012 2013
			The IFRC Secretariat is developing Recovery Programming operational guidance to support National Societies capacity in recovery programming. These will be finalised and disseminated in 2012.	2012
16	That IFRC consult with partners to consider and develop a coherent operational framework for national societies in high income countries to use when accepting spontaneous donations from partner national societies. This should regulate ways in which assistance can be efficiently and effectively channelled via the Red Cross Red Crescent to reach the beneficiaries and specify the responsibilities of the operating national society in accounting for the use of these resources. The development of this operational framework must take account of existing policies and procedures and may result in the need for amendments to and/or new policies.	IFRC	Within the IFRC-Wide Resource Mobilization Strategy a key activity is “Improving resource mobilization (RM) in emergencies”, which will look into aspects of improving RM in disasters – including disasters in high income countries. An expected output is an operational framework for National Societies in high income countries to use in case of disasters in their countries and when accepting donations from partner National Societies.	October 2012
17	That IFRC undertake a study on the adequacy of the secretariat’s direct and indirect cost recovery during GEJET and determine a new formula for such “no appeal” situations, if needed.	IFRC	The proposed study related to direct and indirect cost recovery is not considered necessary. The application of a single rate of indirect cost recovery for all projects and services is a matter of policy and has been addressed by Management with the Finance Commission during the preparation of Budget 2012–2013, which has been approved by the General Assembly.	—
			The AP Zone and JRCS will share with the IFRC Disaster and Crises Management Advisory Body the recommendation for consideration the implications of resourcing IFRC Secretariat actions within the potential alternative modalities for resourcing disaster and crises operations within the revision of the Principles and Rules for Disaster Relief process.	—
18	That national societies in high income countries consider how best to organise access to relevant experience and knowledge about international disaster management best practice available within their national societies and plan to deploy their human resources accordingly in the emergency phase of domestic large scale disasters.	JRCS	JRCS will examine the way of utilising RC network such as utilising human resources deployed for relief operation and not only in cooperation within the JRCS HQ, branches and hospitals etc, and domestic relief operation.	March 2013
		IFRC	IFRC will work with JRCS to document its experience providing clear guiding points for National Societies in high income countries.	2012
			IFRC will recommend to the Australian Red Cross to incorporate this learning into their proposed ‘Large-scale disasters in high income countries (2011 ) – workshop and synthesis report’ expected to be undertaken in 2012.	May 2012

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<p>19</p> <p>That national societies, including JRCS, prioritise the importance of having and building capacity and competence in communicating critical post disaster information via the internet and social media.</p>	JRCS	JRCS will utilise the tools (e.g. homepage, facebook, twitter as social media) to communicate with the survivors even more effectively since the JRCS has recognised the effectiveness of such social media.	—
	IFRC	Supporting National Societies in AP Zone to develop emergency communications approaches that fully integrate the use of social media is a high priority for the IFRC's zone-wide communications team. Increasing focus is being placed on developing technical and strategic skills amongst NS communications staff through country, regional and Zone level forums. In addition the evolution of FedNET as a collaborative platform provides scope for greater online engagement and sharing of best practise between IFRC and NS communications practitioners.	—
		IFRC and Movement partners support NS capacity building trainings that build understanding and expertise in the field of emergency communications	Ongoing
		IFRC supports the mainstreaming of good practise in social media usage amongst NS through FedNET's communities of practise and modules developed for the Learning Platform	June 2012 onward
		NS provide training in emergency communications and social media to first responders and identified communications focal points at branch level	Ongoing
		NS have web sites in place that facilitate online donations	Ongoing
<p>20</p> <p>That national societies and IFRC plan for the placement of an IFRC representative and technical delegates, as needed, in times of large scale disasters in high income countries when there is widespread Movement support. The placement of an IFRC representative is for coordination and experienced technical delegates with substantive consultative skills should be made available as needed and integrated into the host national society structure. The delegates assigned need to respect and work with colleagues according to the host national society's established standard operating procedures.</p>	JRCS	Immediately after 3.11, the JRCS requested the Federation Secretariat to send a IFRC representative (liaison) and communication delegate and decided to receive high level support/liaison mission. The communication delegate was integrated into the JRCS as a member of the JRCS team. In case of receiving a large amount of donation from overseas after large scale disaster, the placement of a representative from IFRC should be the norm regardless with an appeal or without appeal. Furthermore, when a large amount of donation is collected from overseas, it is necessary to define role/mandate of Federation Secretariat in helping Operating National Society to ensure accountability to donors, even without appeal.	March 2014
	IFRC	The provision for the placement of IFRC representatives and technical delegates at the country level in times of disasters (including large scale disasters) is well documented in various policies, procedures and preparedness planning processes of the IFRC. Specifically the Principles and Rules for Disaster Relief provides direction regarding the possible coordination and technical function of IFRC Secretariat staff being deployed to assist a National Society respond to a disaster event. Further complementary processes in Asia Pacific include contingency planning and pre-disaster agreements.	—
		In conjunction with recommendation 18, IFRC will work with JRCS to document its experience providing clear guiding points for National Societies.	2012
		AP Zone and JRCS share with the IFRC Disaster and Crises Management Advisory Body the recommendation for consideration within the revision of the Principles and Rules for Disaster Relief process.	2013
		The AP Zone DMU continue to promote across Asia Pacific for National Societies to incorporate the acceptance of international assistance – specifically for this recommendation human resources – within their contingency planning and pre-disaster agreement processes.	Ongoing