

JAPAN

One Year On:

Save the Children's
response & recovery
program



Save the Children

Introductory note from Hironobu Shibuya, CEO

It's been one year since the earthquake and tsunami that devastated the north eastern coast of Japan. Looking back over the past twelve months, we have seen first-hand how children truly are the most vulnerable when a disaster hits – we've seen this as their homes have been washed away, their parents, teachers and siblings lost, and their schools have been destroyed. But what's not as often highlighted is just how resilient children are when faced with these losses. Over the past year as our teams work with children and their families in tsunami-hit Japan, we have heard from parents, from teachers, from caregivers, from government and even from the children themselves – they are bouncing back.

Children today in Japan are back in school, living with their families and making new friends. They are trying to move on, and are looking to the future. But they cannot do it alone.

Over the past year, Save the Children has mounted a large-scale emergency response, and we have set up a long-term recovery program spanning over five years. We know that recovery does not start and finish in one year, and we still have a long way to go. But I can't help but feel overwhelming pride at what we've accomplished so far. From a small domestic program in the south, we've scaled up our operations and responded to meet the need and be there for children and their families when they needed us most – and we continue to meet these needs today. In the days following the disaster, Save the Children teams travelled to the hardest-hit areas, met with children, their families and authorities to identify what they most needed, and began providing relief. Over the past year, our teams have built on these relationships and scaled up our programs to meet longer-term needs. Today, we're working with children, local communities and municipal governments to ensure that the changing needs of children and their families are identified – and we're addressing these needs together, building on community resilience and providing support where we can most make the difference for children.

We wouldn't be where we are today without the massive support of our donors. With your incredible contributions, Save the Children has been able to reach over 65,000 people – and this is only the first step. Over the next year, we will be building on our success and learning from our experiences – even launching a global initiative to improve learning worldwide on disaster preparedness and response for children, including how to reduce risk before disaster strikes.

In this report, we are proud to show you our progress in the past year, present the next steps in our recovery program, and share the voices and gratitude of children and their families who have benefited from your support. You have been with us every day of this year, and your support will allow us to continue working for children in Japan every day of the recovery process. On behalf of the children of Tohoku, thank you.

Situation for children today

When the Great East Japan earthquake and tsunami hit the north eastern coast of Japan on March 11 last year, children were among the most vulnerable. Thousands had their homes devastated, countless lost family members and friends, and children of all ages saw their schools damaged or destroyed.

One year later, children are back in school and the vast majority of families have moved out of evacuation centers and into temporary housing. Material needs that were so essential immediately after the disaster – blankets, food, warm clothes, and other essentials – have now been met.

As the emergency stage phased into a longer-term recovery phase, other needs became clear. As families moved out of evacuation centers, rows of temporary houses were set up in schoolyards and parks, limiting the space children had to play. The temporary houses were a vast improvement from the evacuation centers, but space is limited, so children and adults alike can no longer invite friends or family over to visit. As parents returned to their jobs or in some cases found new ones, children returned to school and needed after-school care and support while their parents put in the work hours.

In addition to the new needs presented by an evolving situation, some of the original needs – less tangible – remain. Last March, children and their families felt the earth shake beneath them, saw the giant wave cascading over their towns, witnessed their homes being swept away, and felt the pain of loved ones lost. One year later, this pain is still felt.

In some cases, children and their families have moved to a new town, children have enrolled in new schools, are making new friends, and trying to settle down in a new environment. In other cases, children stay in the same town and drive past the ruins of their old neighbourhood. In one town along the coast, rows of temporary houses sit on a hill overlooking the ruins of the residents' old homes; a constant reminder of what was lost.

One year after the disaster, much work has been done to clear the rubble and build anew – but still, much work remains. Local governments are developing their recovery plans with funds allocated from the central government, however the funds aren't always sufficient to meet the level of need that remains. Over the past year, Save the Children has been working with municipal governments and local community groups to identify the needs and gaps in services, and provide support to make sure children are able to return to normalcy as smoothly and quickly as possible. In Fukushima, our on-the-ground research talking to children and their families have helped identify some of the needs children are facing today, and the uncertainties felt towards what the future may bring. Through our education, child protection and child participation programs, our projects address the needs identified together with children, families and authorities, working in partnership with these groups to help them improve the situation for children in their communities.

In numbers: impact of the disaster one year o

Immediate impact:

387,000 Total number of people initially displaced as a result of the disaster

15,845 Total number of deaths, of which **727** are children and young people (0-19)

1,567 Number of children who lost one or both parents

7,524 Number of school damaged (includes elementary, junior high, high schools, kindergartens and nursery schools)

Today:

25,751 Total number of children attending new schools today

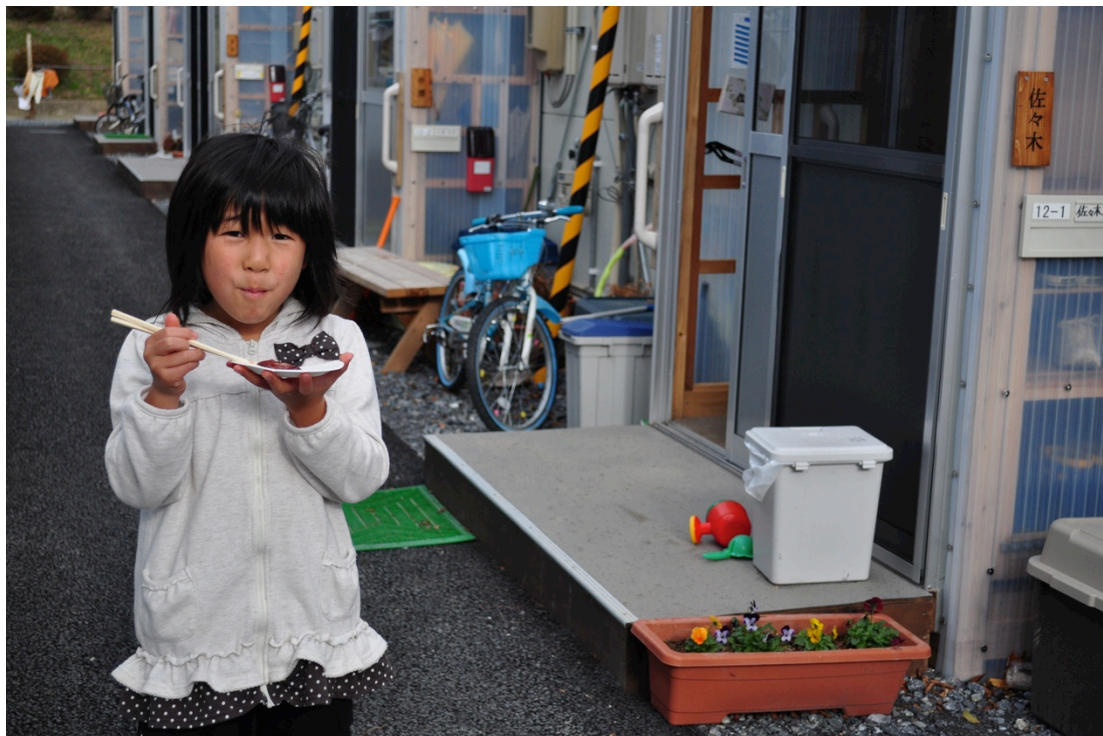
337,819 Total number of people still living in temporary accommodation (as of Jan 2012)

613 still staying in Evacuation Centers

17,256 with friends or relatives

319,801 living in temporary houses or receiving government housing support¹

Honami's story: one year on



¹ 52,000 temporary housing units built; 66,000 households are receiving rent subsidies (minashi kasetsu)

7 year-old Honami Sasaki used to live in a big house in Ofunato, a seaside town in Iwate prefecture, north eastern Japan. When the earthquake and tsunami hit her home last March, Honami and her family were among the thousands that ran from their homes to escape the colossal waves advancing from the coast. Honami's family sought refuge at a local evacuation center, and watched as the water swallowed up their town. It was over two months before the family could move into one of the temporary housing units set up for those who had lost their homes in the disaster.

Almost one year since the disaster, Honami remembers the day the earthquake and tsunami came – she was at kindergarten when the earthquake first hit. “The teachers told us to get out, and they took our jumpers for us.” Terrified, Honami went home to find her family. When she got to the front of her house, Honami remembers how relieved she felt to see her parents standing outside. But they couldn't stay long – a tsunami warning had been issued. Honami knew they had to leave, but didn't know what to take with her, not knowing when she would be able to come back again. “My mom told me, ‘you don't need to take your pajamas, just come.’” Honami says, remembering the urgency in her mother's voice. In the end, she says, “I just took two blankets.”

After she and her family had safely arrived at the evacuation center, Honami turned and looked back on her town. She could only watch as the tsunami crashed over her neighbourhood, wave after wave striking down the homes and shops in her community. “I just saw the tsunami – it came over the town and then destroyed the houses. I just saw it,” she repeats quietly.

After the water had receded, Honami and her family returned to where their home used to stand, trying to salvage what they could among the wreckage. Although they were able to find a few belongings – including her school satchel – some things were lost forever. “We had two small fish,” she shares sadly.

One year later, Honami says she is getting used to life in her new home, one of the thousands of temporary housing units set up after the disaster. But with two bedrooms for six people – her grandparents also live with Honami, Tonami and their parents – space for playing is tight. “I like playing outside but I can't now. It's getting cold.”

Save the Children has built a community center for the children and their families living in the temporary housing compound in Hirota peninsula, giving children a safe space to play and adults a place to meet away from the cold, providing an alternative to their houses – often too small and cramped to invite friends over. “The children play in the small roads, but it's a narrow space,” explains Hiroe Sasaki, Honami's grandmother. “There's a gakudo [after-school center] nearby, but you have to enrol to be able to go, and you have to pay.” Honami says she's excited to start going to the center to play with her friends. She is planning to play cards – especially “Babanouki,” her favorite card game.

Progress over the year:

How Save the Children's programs have impacted children

Disaster relief

In the days and weeks following the disaster, Save the Children's teams sent out essential household and hygiene supplies such as blankets, towels, soap, diapers and first aid kits for families who had lost everything and were living in evacuation centers, directly reaching a total of **3,060** people, including **1,606** children. We also set up 19 Child-Friendly Spaces, providing safe places for displaced children to play while they stayed in the evacuation centers with their families – directly benefitting **389** children.

Education

In the month following the disaster and as children returned to school, Save the Children distributed back-to-school kits for children who had lost their school materials; and began contributing to children's school lunches where previous lunch provision services were not yet back up and running. In the past months, we have been working with the Boards of Education in Iwate and Miyagi to respond to specific needs identified by the schools – and have been providing transport for students, school lunch support, and materials for schoolchildren, including stationary and school supplies, musical instruments, and school uniforms. In the past months, Save the Children has begun providing scholarships to high school students, whose families' income was affected by the disaster, ensuring their children will be able to continue their education. To help children be prepared in the event of another disaster, we've distributed emergency kits to schools and provided disaster hoods for children to use during emergency drills.

In numbers

Total number of people reached through education activities: 28,057

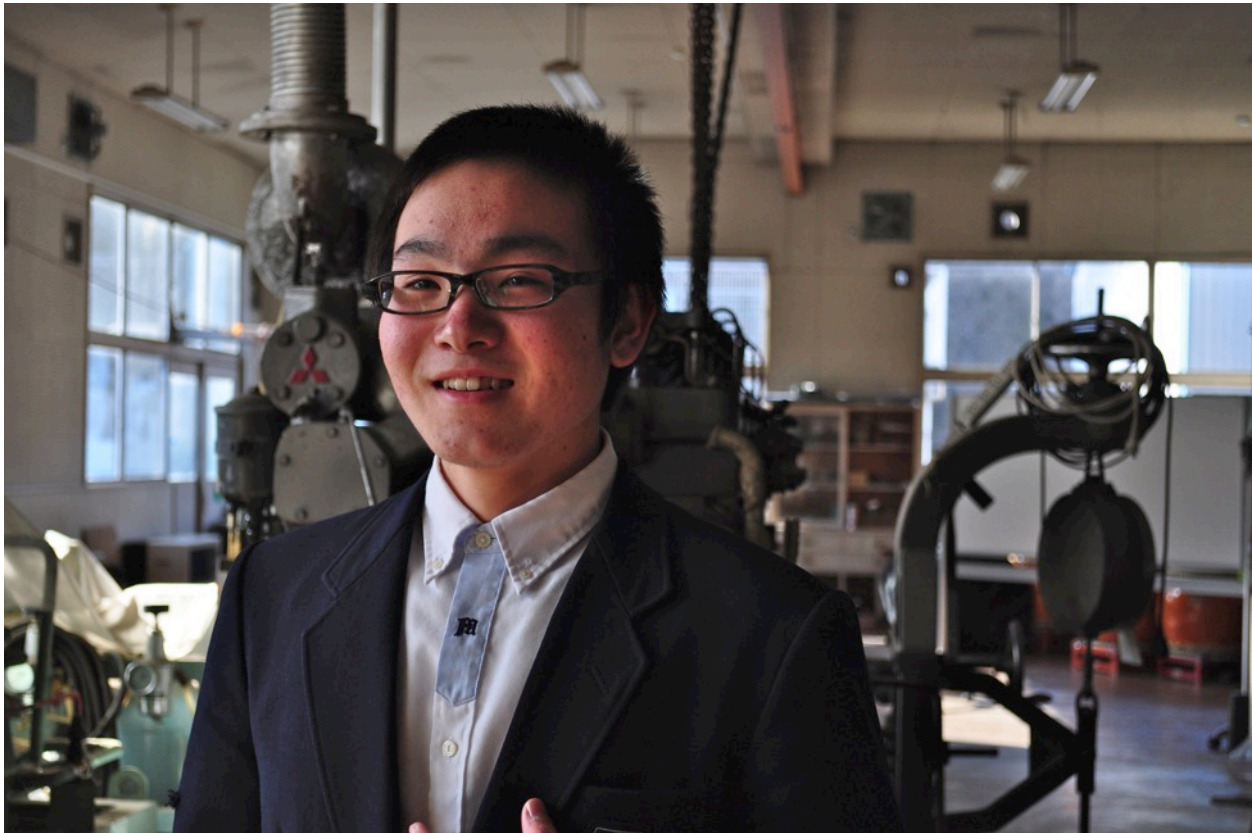
Children who have received school lunch support: **21,342**

Children benefitting from material support to schools: **17,864**

Children provided with transport to school or extra-curricular activities: **2,849**

Children who have received scholarships: **1,030**

Hiroe's story: overcoming a fear of the sea



When the earthquake and tsunami hit his hometown of Miyako on March 11th last year, 17 year-old Masahiro Fukushi – called Hiroe – was on a school boating trip outside the country. Stuck on a boat and with limited outside communication, it was five days before Hiroe could speak to his parents.

When Hiroe finally made it home, he quickly realized his house had now been destroyed. His family was no longer there, having been forced to abandon their home to avoid being swept away by the powerful wave of the tsunami. “During the earthquake there was a fire and when I finally got back, I saw that everything was burnt and destroyed. My family had been evacuated to my relatives’ home.”

The family has lost everything – not just their home, but their entire business. Before the tsunami struck their town, Hiroe’s family was one of hundreds in their town to make their living off of the sea, running a fish-drying factory in town.

Although he and his family lost so much last March, Hiroe has not lost his hope for the future – or for the fishery industry so vital to his family’s wellbeing and that of his hometown. “I’d like to be an engineer on a fishery boat. I don’t know yet for sure, I’m still young – but I know I’d like to contribute to the fishery industry somehow.” Hiroe admits that this won’t be easy, after seeing with his own eyes how much damage the sea wreaked on the industry and his own family’s business last year. “I still love the sea, but I’m a little bit afraid now,” he confesses. “I used to go fishing, but today I can’t anymore. I don’t want to.”

Despite his lingering fear of the sea, Hiroe still feels at home on the coast, and maintains his family's connection with the ocean. He is quiet as he thinks about his community's ties to the sea, considering his role in it all. "I've lived by the sea since I was young, I grew up by the sea...I'd like to keep this strong tie to the people."

Through its scholarship program, Save the Children is supporting Hiroe and other children in Iwate prefecture, to continue their studies and vocational training as they work towards careers in the fishery industry, one of the hardest hit by the tsunami that struck the north-eastern coast of Japan last March. Spanning three years, the scholarship program provides children's families with approx. \$375 per month to support the costs associated with education.

Hiroe is keen to continue his studies so he can overcome his fears of the sea, and contribute to the industry when he gets older. "The scholarship program is really important for me because I'd like to continue my studies in junior college, and this scholarship would help me do that."

Child Protection

Save the Children is supporting the psychosocial recovery of children and their families by establishing safe play areas for children in the affected areas and providing ongoing training and support to children's caregivers at local child-care centers. Specific activities include provision of materials to the child-care centers and existing play areas for children, as well as rehabilitation or construction of new play areas in the hardest-hit areas. In Fukushima, we have been providing activities for children impacted by the nuclear crisis, running weekend or summer camps in areas further removed from the power plants, providing children a chance to play outside with friends, attend special events for children, and provide relief from ongoing stress and anxiety associated with the nuclear crisis.

In numbers

Total number of people reached through our child protection program: 11,829

Children benefitting from our Play Zones: **3,259**

Children benefitting from our "gakudo" (after-school child-care) and other child-care support activities: **4,539**

Children benefitting from our weekend camps and other play activities in Fukushima: **1,559**

Caring for her children: Takako Makabe's story



When Takako Makabe smiles, her whole face lights up, her eyes scrunch together, and she exudes happiness and contentment. Today, she has occasion to smile. Today, her daycare center in Ishinomaki, Miyagi prefecture, is back up and running, and the children line up one after the other to come into this space.

One year ago, Takako Makabe did not have occasion to smile. She explains how when the earthquake and tsunami hit, this space she was so proud to provide for the children in her care, quickly became unusable. At the same time, more children than ever needed her help, and needed a place to play after homes were destroyed and schools closed.

“After the earthquake hit, I took the children to the school gymnasium. When the water level started rising, we took them upstairs. The kids were very scared. Some of them didn’t have their family members with them, so we – the teachers – looked after them. Most of the kids were crying.”

Despite losing her home and belongings in the tsunami, Takako says the hardest part was not having enough to give the children when they asked her for help.

“The hardest was when we ran out of food. The children were coming up to me, saying ‘Teacher, teacher I’m hungry.’ I didn’t have anything to give them. I couldn’t help. There were the kids I knew, that I took care of, and I couldn’t help,” she says quietly.

“We knew we could only do what we could with the little we had. The only thing I could do or say was tell them I’m sorry, I don’t have anything to give you, but I can give you a hug,” she says with a small smile. Even without food or any supplies to give, Takako was determined to do whatever she could to help these children recover. She knew that with such complete upheaval in their lives, children would need a space to have fun, to play, and to feel normal again. She knew that her “gakudo” could help provide that opportunity – if only she could get it back up and running.

“Because the school turned into an evacuation center when the tsunami came, there were so many children staying here. But they had no place to play,” she explains.

Working with Takako, Save the Children brought in new materials and games for the children, turning the old, damaged “gakudo” into one of Save the Children’s signature Child-Friendly Spaces, quickly becoming the go-to place for children staying at the evacuation center. “When Save the Children came, we got the material support we needed,” says Takako, with the happiness now visible again in her eyes.

But material support wasn’t the only thing needed to help the children recover. In the weeks and months following the earthquake and tsunami, Save the Children has also supported Takako and the other “gakudo” workers to be able to recognize signs of recurring stress or anxiety in the children, and to be able to support each other as caregivers who themselves have had to deal with their own losses and emotional stress over the past year.

Takako understands the importance of being there for the children, and has made sure she always has an ear to lend. “Early on, a lot of children were sharing their stories with us. We never asked but we always listened, whenever they wanted to share.”

“When there were aftershocks – and there were many – a lot of the kids would stop playing and wait to see what happened next. When it passed, they would go back to playing again.”

It is this exact point – getting children to get back to playing, to move past their fears and recover their sense of normalcy – that has been so important to Takako, and to Save the Children. Thanks to the dedication of caregivers like Takako, and the support they receive from agencies like Save the Children, children today can do just that. And this, above anything else, is what puts the smile back on Takako’s face as she joins in the fun with “her children.”

Creating Child-Friendly Communities

Save the Children is promoting children's active participation in the recovery process through the formation of Child-Led Clubs and regular research looking at children's needs during the recovery process and ideas for reconstruction. Our "Creating Child-Friendly Communities" activities include the "Hear Our Voice" surveys, Children's Summits and tours where children present their ideas to local and national government, and regular Club meetings where children meet and build up their plans to rebuild their towns, taking children's needs into account.

In numbers:

Children who participated in our "Hear Our Voice" survey: **11,008**

Children participating from Save the Children's Child-Led Clubs: **61**

"Even though we are children, we still have ideas"



Ryota Konno is in grade six at Southern Yamada Elementary School in Iwate prefecture, north eastern Japan. When the earthquake and tsunami hit Japan last March, Ryota's house and much of his neighbourhood was destroyed, and Ryota had to move into temporary housing with his family.

One year later, Ryota is still living in temporary housing, and through Save the Children's Child-Led Club, has been playing an active role in the recovery process – how the town should be rebuilt to better suit children's needs.

In the weeks following the tsunami, temporary houses were set up to house families displaced by the disaster, and today close to 320,000 people are living in temporary houses. Although this provides much needed shelter and accommodation for children, Ryota explains that the new housing communities have been built in parks and schoolyards, limiting the space children have to play.

"Now that they have built a temporary housing in the park, it took away our playground. There are only a few parks to begin with, but now they built temporary houses in the park, and it's taking up half of the space." He also explains that with so many children having moved to different temporary housing communities, "it takes a long time to get to school, so we don't have time to play with friends. Some children don't get to play with other children who live far away."

Today, Ryota is one of the children living far away – staying in a new part of town he had never visited before the disaster. “I had never been there before. It’s really, really cold. It’s so cold that sometimes even the water pipe freezes – but I do feel relieved that we haven’t had a Tsunami there.”

Thinking about where the tsunami hit and the devastation it caused, Ryota explains how, last year, he felt he should do something to help rebuild his town. “Because our town has been totally destroyed, it has nothing, I kept wondering if there is anything we – the children – could do to help. It is important for us because Yamada is our town, this is where we used to live. It needs to be recovered by us.”

Ryota is getting his voice heard in the recovery process through his participation with Save the Children’s “Child-Led Club”, where he shares his ideas with other children and together they come with a recovery plan that takes into account what children need as their towns are rebuilt. “Before, I wanted to speak out but I couldn’t. I wanted to recommend some ideas, but I couldn’t say anything. Now, I can speak out naturally, and express my own opinions.”

Ryota says it’s important for adults to listen to what children have to say. “Even though we are children, we still have ideas. I think they want to hear our thoughts and ideas and take them into consideration,” and adds, “I think what we are doing now for the recovery plan is actually helping the adults to rebuild.”

Community Grants Initiative

In addition to Save the Children’s direct interventions, an increasingly significant part of our recovery program focuses on providing support to local organisations and associations, enabling local communities to provide support to their children. Through the provision of small to medium sized grants and ongoing technical support and advice, Save the Children is strengthening the capacity of local organisations to identify the specific needs of children and help these organisations be in a position to meet the needs themselves. This initiative also helps ensure that the next time disaster hits, local communities are in a better position to quickly assess the most urgent needs and begin responding to improve children’s wellbeing.

In numbers:

Children reached through Save the Children-supported mobile library project: **29,680**

Children reached through Save the Children grants to Parent-Teacher Associations: **927**

People reached through Save the Children’s support to other local partners: **1,042**

Chikyu no Gakko: the mobile library project



As the bright yellow school bus pulled into the driveway of the kindergarten in Kamimachi, Miyagi prefecture, the children crowded against the window, pressing their faces against the pane in excitement. Pulling their boots on and zipping their jackets up, the children filed out of the building as the bus doors opened, revealing row upon row of picture books.

Helped by their teachers and Save the Children staff, the children poured over the books displayed in rows inside the bus and along the shelves set up in the windows, taking their time before making their selection.

Nanaka Imaizumi chose “Peter Pan” from the bus, “because it’s cool”; explaining confidently that she knows Peter Pan already, and knows she likes it. She wasn’t expecting to see the bus pull up with so many books – “I was surprised to see it, because there are a lot books!” Nanaka likes reading because she says “it’s just fun!”

Save the Children provides ongoing technical and financial support to local non-profit organisation “Chikyu no Gakko” (School of the Globe), who runs the Mobile Library project for kindergarten children across the affected areas of Japan. The bus travels around the areas hit by the earthquake and tsunami, visiting kindergartens, community centers and temporary houses, reaching at least 2,000 people per month.

Director of Chikyu no Gakko, Mr. Chiba, explains that when the earthquake and tsunami hit, “we thought that children needed to have time to feel relieved – not to escape reality, but to avoid having the children suffer from a feeling of fear. It would be like a second disaster. We

thought of sending picture books to children so that they could relax a bit. We had the opportunity to talk to Save the Children and tell them about our idea. They liked it, and so we decided to do it together.”

“[Save the Children] gives us advice on organising activities, and also gives us financial support,” Mr Chiba explains. At the beginning, “we worked with no financial help and couldn’t pay for petrol for our volunteers. But Save the Children pays the cost of running our activities and pays for maintenance of a bus, and you have also given us the funds to purchase a small car.”



Fukushima

Save the Children has been working with children in Fukushima by providing weekend and summer camps that are further away from the power plant – the source of radiation – and have lower levels of radiation than the areas they are now living in. Children living in areas around Fukushima have had very little place to play and have fun with their friends at a time when they most need to de-stress. The camps we’re organizing give children a chance to be with friends and take part in fun outdoors activities like horseback riding, nature walks and gardening.

Beyond these activities, Save the Children has been conducting on the ground research in the Fukushima area, speaking to children and their families on what they perceive are the biggest needs facing them today.

Many children living in areas close to the nuclear exclusion zone are still limited to playing mostly indoors, in an effort to minimize their exposure to radiation. This has a direct impact on their chance to play with friends. Many children from the Fukushima area have told Save the Children how they miss being able to play outside, how much they’d really love to go back to the forests to play in the bushes, go to the beach and play in the sand, or this past winter, spend time outside playing in the snow.

For parents Save the Children has spoken to in Fukushima, one of the biggest concerns is what to do to best help their children recover from the disaster. Parents are worried about whether they’re making the right decision for their children in order to ensure their wellbeing – and here this is about emotional and mental wellbeing at least as much as it is about exposure to radiation.

Looking to the future: Next steps in the recovery process

Disaster Risk Reduction

Disaster risk reduction efforts – including preparedness, early warning systems, mitigation, resilience building, and adaptation – have been shown to be effective in minimizing human and economic losses at a far lower cost than response, and are becoming increasingly prioritized by donors and implementers alike. At the same time, it is recognized that in most disasters, more than half of those who are affected or die are children. Disasters have the biggest impact on the most vulnerable people and the poorest communities, and within these populations it is children who bear the brunt: they may not know when to evacuate or where to go; they may not understand what is happening and become psychologically distressed; and they are exposed to even greater danger if separated from their parents and families.

But despite the benefits of DRR – the United Nations estimates that for every US\$1 invested in preparing for a disaster, US\$7 of losses can be prevented – not enough is being done to prepare for the specific needs of children during and after disasters, including in Japan.

Save the Children has begun working with municipal authorities and with schools to ensure that children are included in governments' preparedness plans, and that children themselves are well equipped to react and protect themselves from harm in the event of a future disaster.

Tohoku Institute for Children in Emergencies

Save the Children is committed to ensuring that the learning from the Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami is effectively used to reduce the impact of future disasters, on children across the globe. One of the upcoming initiatives contributing to this is the Tohoku International Institute for Children in Emergencies. The Institute will address the need for greater focus on children in disaster risk reduction and aims to have a measurable impact on improving the well being of children during and after emergencies through research, training, advocacy, and engagement that is rights based and evidence based.

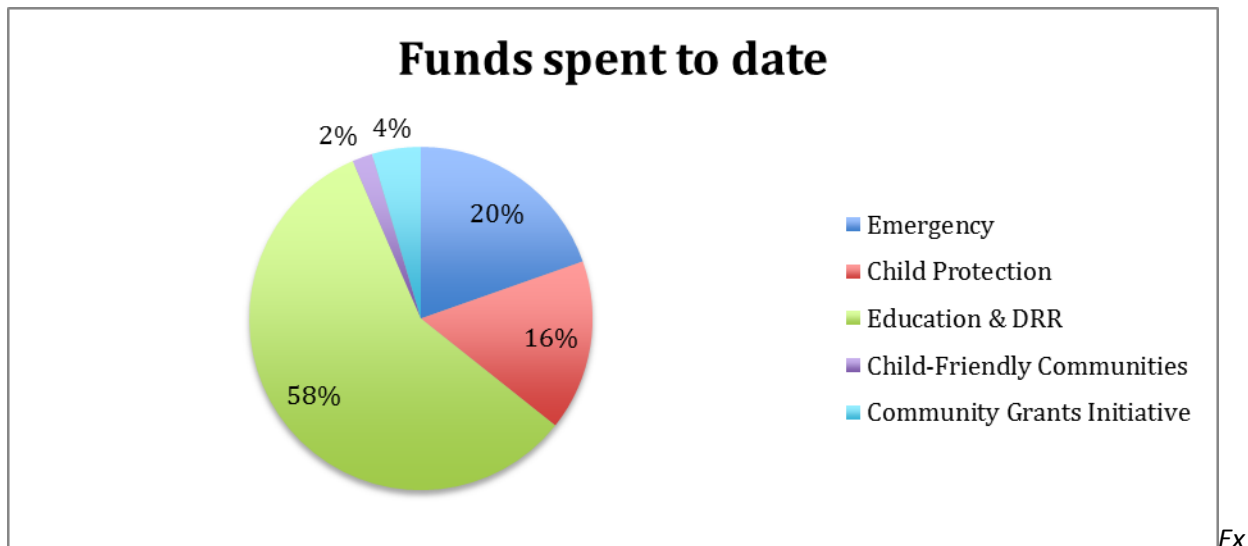
Concretely, the Institute will aim to improve the well being of children during and after natural disasters around the world, through a focus on Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR); while using an approach based on concrete evidence garnered through direct research, and based on children's rights.

Working with individual children, communities, national governments and international organisations, the Institute will strive to increase children's participation in DRR globally, empowering children to work together across countries; to build capacity of actors working with populations at high risk for disasters including a child-specific focus in preparedness and response plans; to raise awareness of issues affecting children's rights both during a disaster and in its aftermath; and to improve the overall base of knowledge globally on child-centered DRR.

Funding: breakdown of funds raised and spent

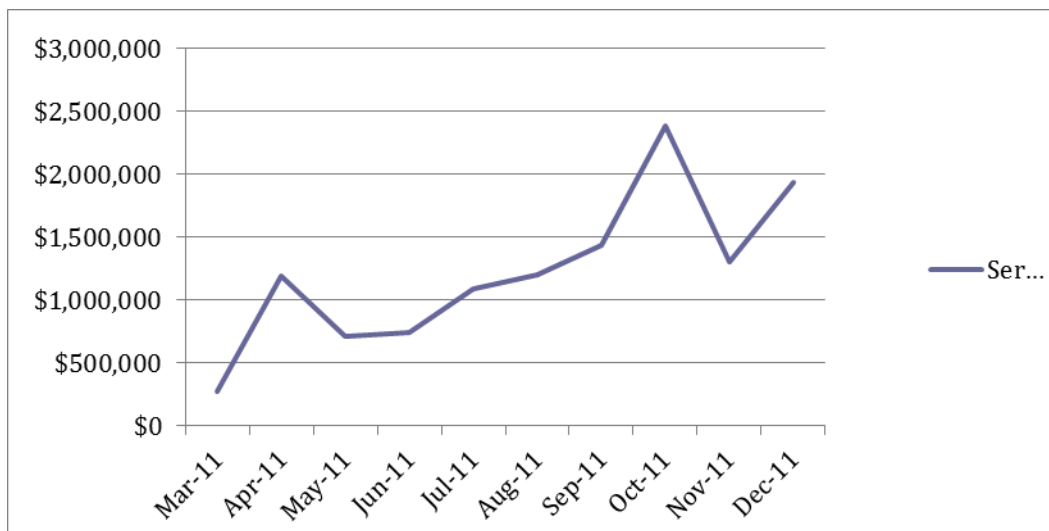
Total funds raised: Our total expected revenue for the five-year recovery program is an estimated \$72 million. Of this, approximately 75% of all costs go directly to implementing our programs, while 25% go towards overall costs supporting our program work – including running our offices, evaluating our work, and reporting back to those who benefit from and contribute to our programs.

Funds spent to date:



penditure per program activity by percent (%) through December 2011

- By the end of December 2011, Save the Children has spent an estimated \$13.6 million, and by the end of February we will have spent an estimated \$15.3 million.
- Activities carried out during the first three months following the disaster are categorized as “Emergency” activities, reflecting the nature and urgency of the needs at the time.
- Our education program has seen the highest spend in year one due to the costs associated with provision of school lunch and, in the last months of the year, the scholarship initiative.
- 74% of our overall expenditure during year one was spent directly on programs, and 26% of overall expenditure is directed to all of the support provided to make our work for children possible – including logistics, finance, fundraising and reporting back to our valued donors.
- Spending to date by month; breakdown per sector; and projected spending for year two;



- The original amount budgeted for year one was \$23.96 million, calculated based on the information available at the time on needs of children and their families, who was doing what to meet these needs, and where Save the Children could best add value for children specifically.
- Our spending to date – expected at \$15.3 million by the end of February – is based on the programs implemented over the past year according to the changing needs that have come up through the year – as well as the changing local capacity to meet these needs.

Ongoing and future expenditures:

- Save the Children is working with local authorities and communities to ensure we can provide the best support possible where it is most needed, and is committed to ensuring that children's needs are met both in the immediate and longer term.
- As we move forward with our Community Grants Initiative (CGI) and strengthening capacity of local partners, we will be increasing the percentage of spending for CGI activities.
- As our Creating Child-Friendly Communities makes increasing headway in local communities, we will be increasing the spending in this program, including helping fund the ideas children have for the recovery of their towns.
- Our planned budget for Year Two (March 2012 – February 2013) is \$23 million, reflecting the planned scale-up in our programs responding to children's longer-term needs and increased demands for support from local communities.
- Both our expenditure to date and the flexibility in our five-year budget recognize that both needs and local capacity to respond continue to evolve over time.