

# Reflection on the Past Decade of Reconstruction Policy from the Great East Japan Earthquake

## Key Points

August 2023



Reconstruction Agency

Reconstruction, revitalization and beyond

To pass on the lessons learned from the Great East Japan Earthquake, the Reconstruction Agency collected and organized materials on the changes in government structures and efforts related to reconstruction, as well as the progress of the reconstruction, up to the completion of the first reconstruction/revitalization period. By gathering opinions from external experts and others, this review reflects on the past decade of reconstruction policies, compiling evaluations and identifying challenges.

## Objectives

- ① **Comprehensive organization of recovery and reconstruction measures**, including efforts not only by the Reconstruction Agency but also by other ministries and agencies.
  - \* Organized the history and evolution of government structures, laws, and systems
  - \* Compiled the purpose, developments, and outcomes of national policies
- ② Given that the Great East Japan Earthquake was a complex disaster, this review **evaluates unprecedented policies implemented for recovery and reconstruction and summarizes the challenges**.
- ③ To ensure that the **lessons from the reconstruction policies of the Great East Japan Earthquake can be applied** to the **recovery from future large-scale disasters**, such as the Nankai megathrust earthquake, the findings are compiled and preserved for future reference.

## Structure of the compilation

- General overview (organized into pre- and post-establishment of the Reconstruction Agency)  
Summary of the earthquake, organizational structure, legal frameworks, budget, financial resources, etc.
- New efforts  
Reconstruction grants, acceleration measures, general subsidies to support disaster victims, etc.
- Specific topics (support for disaster victims / reconstruction of homes and cities / revitalization of industries and livelihoods / collaboration and posterity)  
Mainly focused on earthquake and tsunami-affected areas, while also addressing common issues in areas affected by the nuclear disaster
- Specific measures for the nuclear disaster  
Organized efforts such as decontamination, promotion of return and resettlement, and dispelling harmful rumors
- Other related materials

## Expert committee

In fiscal year 2022, an expert committee was established to seek the opinions of experts in light of the objectives outlined above. A total of four meetings were held.  
(October 24, December 5, February 27, March 23)

### Constituent members

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| ◎ Akiike Reiko, Japan Co-Representative, Boston Consulting Group                                    | Takashi Onishi, Chairman, National Land Planning Association       |
| ○ Hiroya Masuda, President and CEO, Japan Post Holdings   | Keiko Tamura, Director, Risk Management Center, Niigata University |
| Fumihiko Imamura, Director, International Research Institute of Disaster Science, Tohoku University | Retsu Fujisawa, Representative Director, RCF                       |
| (◎: Chair, ○: Deputy Chair)   |  |

# 1. Challenges and Lessons Learned from Reconstruction Policy

## Summary of opinions from the expert committee on the reflection of a decade of reconstruction

### (1) The ideal form of reconstruction and objective indicators

- The promotion of comprehensive policy packages and the creation of new mechanisms aimed at rebuilding the livelihoods of disaster victims and revitalizing industries and livelihoods during the reconstruction from the Great East Japan Earthquake was groundbreaking.
- The concept of "build back better" is multifaceted, requiring the presentation of the ideal form of reconstruction, as well as evaluations and indicators to perform assessments from that perspective.
- In addition to infrastructure development rates and economic indicators, it is necessary to objectively measure the conditions of disaster victims to determine whether the reconstruction efforts have fulfilled their role.
- From the perspective of preventing future disasters, further promotion of comprehensive measures that combine both physical and institutional strategies is needed.
- In light of population decline, it is important to monitor trends in exchange populations and related populations as part of the reconstruction process.

### (2) Reconstruction policy framework

- While setting a framework for the reconstruction period and financial resources promotes consensus-building in communities, it is important to note that it can also impose time constraints on careful discussions.
- For issues remaining after the reconstruction period, it is important to ensure a smooth transition to flexible responses tailored to individual cases through general policies such as regional revitalization and social security.

### (3) Complexity of reconstruction measures

- There is an inevitable time lag between infrastructure restoration and prevention of future disasters, and rebuilding the livelihoods of disaster victims.
- Visualizing the reconstruction timeline for disaster victims can lead to increased motivation for return and rebuilding.
- It is essential to recognize the complexity of different timeframes for rebuilding lives and regional reconstruction, as well as the interrelationship between various policies that affect each other.

### (4) Reconstruction planning amid population decline

- After the disaster, there was insufficient time and human resources to incorporate population decline and other issues in the reconstruction plans, making it difficult to build consensus with residents.
- The increasing maintenance and management costs of public facilities developed through reconstruction projects are a concern.
- Reconstruction projects need to be scrutinized based on future population projections.
- When restoration to pre-disaster conditions leads to oversized facilities, it is necessary to pursue sustainable "build back better" initiatives that consider facility closures or reductions in response to population decline.
- Pre-disaster recovery initiatives are necessary, and it is crucial that municipalities are supported by the national and prefectural governments in these efforts.

### (5) Balance between self-help, mutual assistance, and public assistance

- The Great East Japan Earthquake highlighted the limits of public assistance.
- It is important to encourage self-help and expand mutual assistance, while ensuring public assistance provides the necessary support environment.
- Given the anticipated decline of communities due to aging populations and declining birthrates, there is a need for support beyond traditional community-based networks.

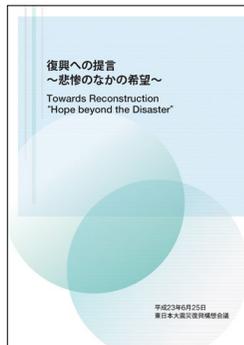
### (6) Main entities and support frameworks for reconstruction policies

- The one-stop function of the Reconstruction Agency helped expedite reconstruction projects.
- There is a need to streamline the dispatch of staff between municipalities and institutionalize the dispatch of national government personnel.
- To consolidate public facilities, conduct regional restructuring, and promote resettlement, frameworks and entities for broader coordination are necessary.
- Reconstruction projects fully funded by the national government may lead to overly ambitious projects, so it is necessary to consider local financial contributions in line with the fiscal capacity of affected municipalities.
- To reduce the burden on local governments, it is necessary to standardize and simplify project applications and expand their discretionary authority.
- For medium- to long-term institutional support by NPOs, it is essential to establish and operate reconstruction funds that allow for multi-year grants in advance.

## 2. Measures Based on the Basic Act (Chapters 1 and 2)

### ■ Background and overview

- Established the Extreme Disaster Management Headquarters (March 11), Local Response Headquarters (March 12), and Special Headquarters for Measures to Assist the Lives of Disaster Victims (March 17)
  - Implemented rescue operations, secured emergency transportation routes, improved living conditions in evacuation shelters, dispatched staff to municipalities, disposed of disaster waste, provided emergency temporary housing, and accepted overseas support
- Established the Nuclear Emergency Response Headquarters and the Local Response Headquarters (March 11), as well as the Nuclear Sufferers Life Support Team (March 29)
  - Secured evacuation and acceptance sites for victims, transported and supplied goods to affected areas and evacuation shelters, provided medical care related to radiation exposure for victims, conducted environmental monitoring, and provided information
- Established the Reconstruction Design Council in Response to the Great East Japan Earthquake (April 11)
  - Seven Principles for the Reconstruction Framework (May 10)
- Enacted the Basic Act on Reconstruction and established the Reconstruction Headquarters (June 24)
  - Defined the basic principles, Basic Guidelines for Reconstruction, issuance of reconstruction bonds, establishment of special zones system, the Reconstruction Headquarters, the Reconstruction Design Council, and the basic policy for establishing the Reconstruction Agency
- Proposal by the Reconstruction Design Council (June 25)
  - Proposed the concept of disaster mitigation, established measures for categorizing regions and reconstruction, emphasized reconstruction led by municipalities, suggested using the special zone approach, considered temporary tax increases, suggested reducing local financial burdens, proposed "New Public" initiatives, and promoted the recording and passing down of lessons learned
- Approval of the Basic Guidelines for Reconstruction (July 29)
  - Reconstruction period: 10 years, with the first 5 years being the concentrated reconstruction period
  - Project scale: Approximately 19 trillion yen over five years



### ■ Subsequent strengthening of disaster prevention measures

- Established the National Council for the Promotion of Disaster Prevention (as a successor, followed by the Disaster Prevention Policy Implementation Council to discuss cross-ministerial issues)
- Amended the Basic Act on Disaster Management and enacted the Act on Reconstruction from Large-Scale Disasters

### ■ Key evaluations and lessons learned

- The Great East Japan Earthquake provided lessons that laid the foundation for new disaster prevention initiatives. Moving forward, it is important to focus on disaster mitigation and strategies to save lives.
- There was a lack of clarity on what exactly should have been done as part of reconstruction. The focus often shifted to annual projects, leading to evaluations of project completion but not from the perspective of what the ideal form of reconstruction should have looked like.
- Some suggest that the goal of reconstruction should include objectively measuring whether disaster victims feel that reconstruction has been achieved.
- Some suggest that there is a need to clearly define reconstruction and clarify the indicators, and create a mechanism to judge whether projects should continue or be concluded.
- Some suggest that it is important to set boundaries for reconstruction in advance, signaling when it will transition into general social security measures, and to reflect on what the ultimate goal of reconstruction should be.
- Some have pointed out that initial emergency responses became bottlenecks for the transition to recovery and reconstruction, with differences in municipal capacity leading to varying progress in reconstruction.
- Some suggest that there is a need for an independent entity that can prioritize regions and projects across local governments and manage reconstruction accordingly.
- While some have pointed out that setting the initial 10-year reconstruction funding framework period constrained careful consensus-building, others argue that having a deadline enabled consensus to be reached.
- Some suggest that when considering the reconstruction period, it is important to also consider how to provide support for damage caused by aftershocks.

### 3. Organizational Structure (Chapter 2)

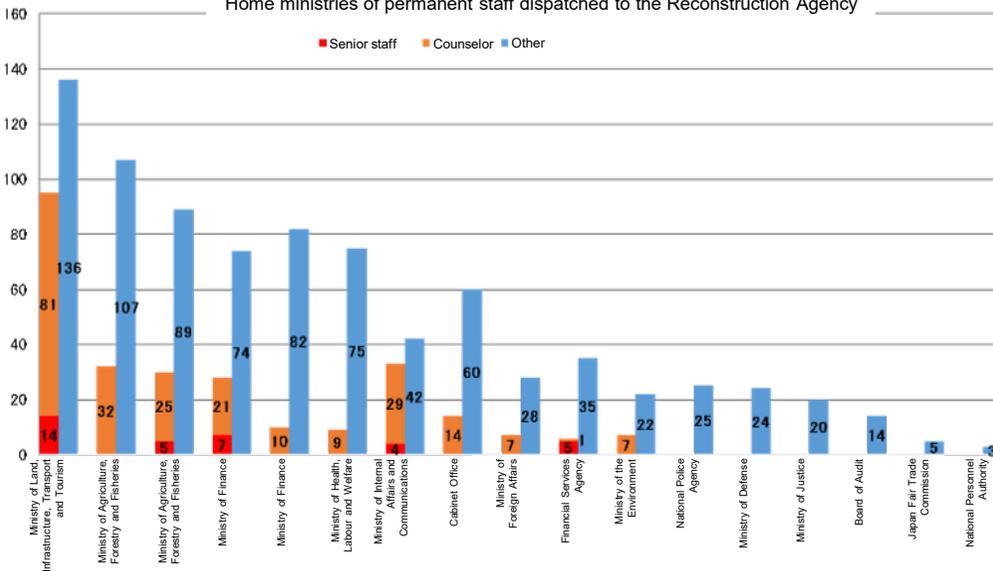
#### Background and overview

- Immediately after the disaster, the Extreme Disaster Management Headquarters and the Nuclear Emergency Response Headquarters were established. Teams dedicated to specific challenges were set up as subordinate organizations to these headquarters.
- As an organization for reconstruction, the Reconstruction Design Council and its supporting secretariat (preparation office) began operations in April 2011.
- Following the enactment of the Basic Act on Reconstruction in June 2011, the Reconstruction Headquarters and Local Response Headquarters were established. The law also outlined the policies surrounding the establishment of the Reconstruction Agency.
- In February 2012, the Reconstruction Agency and its bureaus were launched as a temporary organization under the direct authority of the Cabinet, with a higher status than individual ministries, to operate for 10 years. Their responsibilities included comprehensive coordination and the distribution of reconstruction grants, as well as individual implementation duties.
- The term of the Reconstruction Agency was extended by 10 years, from the end of March 2021 to the end of March 2031.

#### Key evaluations and lessons learned

- There is positive feedback from affected municipalities, recognizing that proposals made by governors in the Reconstruction Design Council were incorporated into the national government's basic policies, leading to the realization and institutionalization of these ideas.
- The establishment of the Reconstruction Agency, which enabled comprehensive coordination in various aspects and created a one-stop contact point for affected municipalities, was significant for the subsequent reconstruction efforts.
- The establishment of the Reconstruction Agency ensured that affected municipalities were supported fairly and served as an important channel for addressing the concerns and dissatisfaction expressed by these municipalities.
- Affected municipalities evaluated the creation of a structure with a dedicated minister and a Reconstruction Agency equipped with comprehensive command and coordination functions as a reassuring measure for supporting the reconstruction efforts.
- While the Reconstruction Agency was crucial in securing budget allocations and establishing new systems, there is criticism that, given the limited capacity of the affected municipalities, the national government should have taken on more direct implementation responsibilities beyond coordination.
- There are criticisms that the establishment of the Reconstruction Headquarters around three months after the disaster and the Reconstruction Agency approximately one year later were too late.  
In response, a general framework was created allowing the Reconstruction Headquarters to be established through a Cabinet decision for large-scale disaster reconstruction efforts.
- The Reconstruction Agency, being an organization with higher authority than the ministries, benefited from the proactive cooperation of various ministries, including personnel dispatch (secondment), budgetary support, tax measures, and local financial arrangements, and thus there was no need to exercise the Agency's advisory authority.
- Some suggest that it is necessary to establish an organization or function that can prepare and consider reconstruction plans during ordinary times. Suggestions include extending the Reconstruction Agency's term while further developing its functions.

Home ministries of permanent staff dispatched to the Reconstruction Agency



## Overview

- Legal responses were necessary for the recovery and reconstruction of the areas affected by the Great East Japan Earthquake and in rebuilding the livelihoods of disaster victims.
- About 50 legislative measures were enacted, with about 30 government-proposed laws and about 20 legislator-initiated laws, due to the urgency of the situation and the political climate at the time.
- About 30 laws were passed during the 177th Session of the Diet (Ordinary Session of 2011), and about 10 were passed during the 178th Session of the Diet.

## Fields and major legislative measures

- ① Laws related to the basic framework for reconstruction  
Enacted laws such as the Basic Act on Reconstruction, the Act on Special Zones for Reconstruction, and the Act on Special Measures for the Reconstruction and Revitalization of Fukushima, which form the basic framework for reconstruction.
- ② Legislative measures related to recovery, reconstruction projects, urban development, and business revitalization  
Enacted laws allowing the national and prefectural governments to take over recovery projects, and new legal frameworks for disaster-resilient urban development in response to tsunami damage.
- ③ Legislative measures related to temporary special provisions for earthquake damage  
Enacted laws for raising subsidy rates and providing special grants to disaster victims, covering a wide range of areas from the restoration of public facilities to social insurance.
- ④ Legislative measures related to nuclear disasters  
Enacted laws related to securing and expediting nuclear compensation, new frameworks for decontamination and disposal of contaminated soil, and laws for providing administrative services to residents from wide-area evacuation zones.
- ⑤ Other legislative measures  
Enacted laws to secure financial resources for reconstruction and other related measures.



Diet session at the time of the disaster on March 11, 2011  
(House of Councillors Committee on Audit)

## Key evaluations and lessons learned

- Some of the legislative measures applied only to the Great East Japan Earthquake have since been evaluated as necessary for future large-scale disasters and have been incorporated into permanent general laws as follows:
  - Special provisions related to the reconstruction development plans created under the Act on Special Zones for Reconstruction have been incorporated into the Act on Reconstruction from Large-Scale Disasters as a general system.
  - The delegation of recovery projects and disaster waste management to the national or prefectural governments has been generalized under the Act on Reconstruction from Large-Scale Disasters, the various laws related to public property management, and the Basic Act on Disaster Management.
  - The extension of the deliberation period for inheritance renunciation during disasters has been added to the options under the Act on Special Measures concerning Preservation of Rights and Interests of Victims of Specified Disaster.
  - Free legal consultations for victims of large-scale disasters, regardless of financial capacity, have been incorporated into the Comprehensive Legal Support Act as a general system.
  - Measures to prevent environmental contamination by radioactive materials have been positioned within the framework of the Basic Act on the Environment.
- As a result of the Great East Japan Earthquake, the following new laws and amendments have been enacted to apply to all disasters, including the Great East Japan Earthquake:
  - The Act on Development of Areas Resilient to Tsunami Disasters was enacted to establish new concepts and legal frameworks for disaster-resilient urban development in preparation for tsunamis.
  - A law was enacted prohibiting the seizure of funds to support the livelihoods of disaster victims, in light of the purpose of these systems.
  - The Nuclear Damage Compensation Facilitation Corporation Act was enacted to prepare for nuclear accidents.

# 5. Act on Special Zones for Reconstruction (Chapter 2)

## ■ Background

- Based on the Basic Act on Reconstruction and the recommendations from the Reconstruction Design Council, the Basic Guidelines for Reconstruction (July 2011) clearly stated the creation of the special reconstruction zone system and the establishment of flexible and easy-to-use grants. On December 7, 2011, the Act on Special Zones for Reconstruction in Response to the Great East Japan Earthquake was enacted.

## ■ Reconstruction development plans and interest subsidies

### ■ Reconstruction development plans

- In urbanization control areas, special provisions allowed the implementation of land readjustment projects (11 cases).
- Through special provisions for the conversion of agricultural land, including prime farmland, reconstructive urban development was enabled (411 cases).
- Monthly meetings of one-stop councils for approval cases, which would normally be reviewed once a year, led to a significant reduction in processing times.
- As a special provision, prefectural governments undertook small-scale land improvement projects on behalf of municipalities, which were overwhelmed by reconstructive urban development and lacked the expertise. This facilitated farmland consolidation and increased farming efficiency, including the establishment of agricultural cooperatives (6 cases).

\* Number of cases as of the end of March 2022

### ■ Interest subsidies

- Used by 225 businesses in total.
- Created more than 9,000 new jobs.
- Expected loan amount exceeded 400 billion yen.
- Triggered investments of more than 1 trillion yen.

\* As of the end of March 2022

Kamaishi (Shimoarakawa District)  
Land improvement project (Photo: Iwate Prefecture)



## ■ Special provisions for regulations

- A total of 42 reconstruction promotion plans were formulated in local governments across seven prefectures, utilizing 11 types of regulatory exemptions.
  - For temporary emergency buildings, extensions for over 700 buildings were approved.
  - In the three disaster-affected prefectures, 120 public housing units were transferred to residents of public housing.
- \* Number of cases as of the end of March 2022



Disaster public housing in Hosodahigashi Danchi,  
Soma  
(Photo: Reconstruction Agency, May 12, 2022)

## ■ Key evaluations and lessons learned

- The use of the special provisions under the Act on Special Zones promoted progress in the conversion of agricultural land. The approval criteria became a special provision under the reconstruction exemptions, and reviews were conducted collectively, significantly reducing the burden in terms of the number of consultations and required documents compared to regular procedures.
- The implementation of land readjustment projects enabled by special provisions increased the flexibility of urban planning, leading to faster project completion.
- Some have pointed out that certain special provisions did not lead to significant changes compared to prior requirements, such as the need for consultations with relevant agencies and the total amount of paperwork.
- In addition to creating new jobs, the interest subsidy system had a certain positive effect by promoting investment decisions and increasing the amount of investment.
- By reducing costs, such as for green space development, the system lessened the financial burden on businesses and contributed to creating an environment that facilitates company location decisions. The special zone system played a key role in determining the location of businesses.
- A review of measures that were underutilized revealed that although certain cases were not counted under the application of the Special Zones Act, they were cases that were permitted under the law, and the flexible application of the general regulations led to faster approvals and permissions.

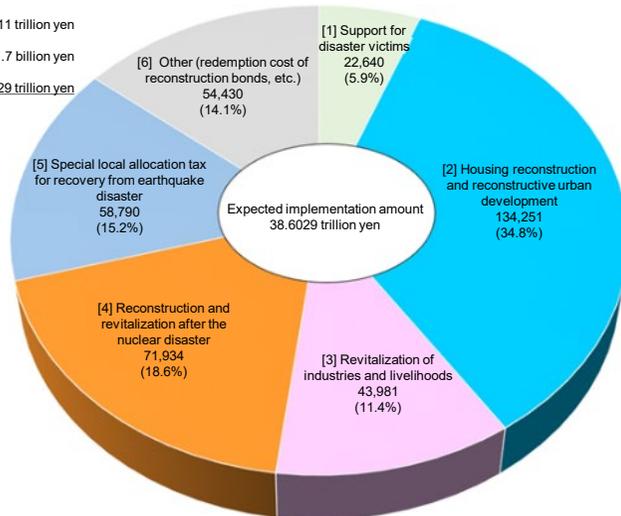
# 6. Budget and Tax System (Chapter 2)

## Funding and budget

- From the early stages after the disaster, a reconstruction funding framework was created, which provided an estimate of the project scale for the reconstruction period and pre-determined the financial resources.
- \* Initially estimated at around 19 trillion yen over the first five years. Following multiple revisions, the estimate was adjusted to around 32.9 trillion yen over 15 years.
- Reconstruction funds were secured through spending cuts, non-tax revenue, and temporary tax measures (special income tax for reconstruction), while reconstruction bonds were issued to bridge the gap until revenues from the special tax were collected.
- To ensure transparency in the flow of national funds related to reconstruction, the Special Account for Reconstruction from the Great East Japan Earthquake was established on April 1, 2012.

Execution details of the reconstruction-related budget (FY2011–FY2020)

- Amount of disbursed expenditure: 38.1711 trillion yen
- Amount carried forward: 431.7 billion yen
- Expected implementation amount: 38.6029 trillion yen



Reference: Expected implementation amount for expenses subject to the Reconstruction Fund Framework from FY2011 to FY2020 is about 31.1 trillion yen

\* Expenses covered by the Reconstruction Fund Framework exclude expenses covered by reimbursements to TEPCO, redemption cost of reconstruction bonds, etc. from reconstruction project costs.

## Tax system, grants, and reconstruction funds

- In light of the widespread and devastating damage, more extensive tax exemptions were implemented compared to the Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake. In addition, the special reconstruction zone tax system was established to accelerate reconstruction. Furthermore, tax measures based on the Act on Special Measures for the Reconstruction and Revitalization of Fukushima supported the resumption of businesses and promotion of new business locations in areas where evacuation orders were lifted.
- Given the expected financial needs far exceeding the fiscal capacity of the disaster-affected local governments, an unprecedented measure was taken by creating special grants for reconstruction projects, which covered the full local financial burden.
- In order to flexibly and precisely address local needs, such as stabilizing residents' livelihoods, rebuilding communities, and revitalizing local economies without being constrained by annual budget frameworks, a special grant was provided for the establishment of funds. (Prefectural governments were given the authority to decide on the use and management of these funds.)

## Key evaluations and lessons learned

- The creation of the reconstruction funding framework allowed disaster-affected municipalities to confidently engage in reconstruction projects.
- The decision to secure reconstruction funds through tax increases, which had been proposed by academic councils and other groups, was considered significant.
- Regarding the reconstruction budget, some argued that it was necessary to consider the balance between allowing local governments' discretion and defining how much direction the national government should provide, prioritizing speed in the process.
- There were criticisms that, since there was no local financial burden, some projects became overly large in scale.
- Some have pointed out that the management of the reconstruction fund could have been more flexible by adopting a foundation model that allowed for long-term support, such as providing multi-year grants in advance to NPOs for necessary institutional support activities.

## ■ Issues and background

### ■ Overview of the system

- Based on the Basic Guidelines for Reconstruction in Response to the Great East Japan Earthquake (decided by the Reconstruction Headquarters in July 2011), it was stated that a flexible and easy-to-use grant system should be created to allow local governments to implement various necessary reconstruction measures based on their own reconstruction plans. As a result, the system was established under the Act on Special Zones for Reconstruction in Response to the Great East Japan Earthquake (Act No. 122 of 2011)
- The system consolidated necessary projects, allowed applications based on a single project plan, and streamlined the application procedures by centralizing them with the Reconstruction Agency as the point of contact, thus reducing the administrative burden on local governments and enabling simplified and faster procedures. Through the establishment of funds and the flexible transfer of funds between projects, it allowed flexible execution.
- The grants covered necessary physical infrastructure projects for the development of reconstruction areas in disaster-affected local governments. Projects from five ministries (Ministry of Education; Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare; Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries; Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism; and Ministry of the Environment) and 40 programs were consolidated.

### ■ Improvements in response to feedback on the flexibility of the grants

- Creation of a lump-sum allocation for effectiveness-enhancing projects (May 2012)
- Of the allocation for core projects, 20% was provided as a lump sum, allowing for the implementation of certain projects without requiring grant applications or approval, but simply by submitting a detailed use report to the relevant ministry.
- Announcement of the "Policy to Promote the Use of Reconstruction Grants in Line with the Progress of Reconstruction Stages" (November 2014)
- The addition of disaster public housing development projects to the lump-sum allocation for effectiveness-enhancing projects; reconstruction grant support for municipalities in developing memorial and tribute facilities for local residents after verifying the appropriateness of their plans in terms of scope and other criteria; the promotion of community resource-based reconstruction in collective relocation areas, etc.

## ■ Achievements

- Allocations have been made in 29 rounds to 102 municipalities, with a total allocation amounting to 3.3284 trillion yen (project costs totaling 4.1695 trillion yen).
- Core projects accounted for approximately 3.6745 trillion yen, while effectiveness-enhancing projects amounted to 501.8 billion yen in project costs.



Ichigo Danchi (Watari, Miyagi Prefecture)



Kamaishi Unosumai Memorial Stadium (Site development: Kamaishi, Iwate Prefecture)

## ■ Key evaluations and lessons learned

- Some projects that did not meet the requirements for core projects were effectively addressed through the flexible implementation of effectiveness-enhancing projects.
- The Reconstruction Agency scrutinized the project plans, which contributed to optimizing the scale of projects and narrowing the scope as needed.
- There were criticisms that, since there was no local financial burden, some projects became overly large in scale.
- Disaster-affected local governments expressed the need for increased financial measures, with more discretionary funding provided to local governments.
- Some affected local governments noted that, for the approval of the reconstruction grants, in addition to the centralized application to the Reconstruction Agency, consultations with various ministries were required, which increased the administrative burden.
- Some point out that, in preparation for future disasters, discussions should be held in advance to clarify the scope of the national government's policies on the use of grants and the areas where local governments should have discretionary flexibility.

## ■ Issues and background

- The smooth implementation of reconstruction projects faced challenges such as dealing with unknown landowners, archaeological surveys of buried cultural assets, shortages of materials, and failed bidding processes.
- Under the direction of the Minister for Reconstruction, a task force for accelerating housing reconstruction and urban development was established, composed of bureau-level directors from relevant ministries, which introduced five rounds of acceleration measures.
- When utilizing the land expropriation system, there were concerns about the lengthy procedures involved. In the fifth round of acceleration measures, based on the revised Act on Special Zones for Reconstruction (effective May 1, 2014), an acceleration package for land acquisition in disaster-affected areas was introduced.

## ■ Achievements and effects

### Measure ①: Accelerating the property management system

Sufficient property management candidates were secured (659 people as of December 2017), and flexibility was introduced in the selection process, including the location of applications and the submission of required documents.

(Effect)  
Shortened procedure duration  
Selection procedure: Normally about 1 month → reduced to 1–2 weeks

### Measure ②: Elimination of the need for farmland conversion permits under the Agricultural Land Act

At the time of land purchase, farmland conversion permits under the Agricultural Land Act are no longer required (February 2013).

(Effect)  
Increase in purchased farmland area: 1.6 hectares (as of February 2013) → 248 hectares (as of March 2014).

### Measure ③: Flexible area changes

Even when changes to relocation areas are required, if the project cost is within 20% of the original estimate, ministerial approval is not necessary, and a simple notification will suffice (March 2013).

(Effect)  
Number of districts with plan changes  
317 districts (as of March 2016)

## ■ Case studies

### Miyako (Kanehama District) Kanehama Coast tsunami barrier project

- There were two pieces of land, each co-owned by multiple parties and with numerous heirs (24 registered owners and over 250 heirs). By applying for emergency use at the same time as filing an expropriation application, the start of construction was advanced by about one year from the original schedule.

### Otsuchi relocation project

- Urban planning approval was granted for a housing complex with fewer than 50 units (utilizing the land expropriation system).



Small-scale housing complex development project (Left: Ando District, Right: Akahama District)

### Kamaishi (Unosumai District) Katagishi Coast tsunami barrier project

- The time needed for the survey and acquisition of project land, including land co-owned by 41 individuals since the Meiji era, was shortened by about three years.



## ■ Key evaluations and lessons learned

- Acceleration measures for on-site use were implemented, such as shortening the duration of procedures that had high demand for use.
- The acceleration measures served as a catalyst for various legislative reforms, such as amendments related to land with unknown owners.
- It is essential to pass down the know-how and mechanisms related to acceleration measures.

# 9. Creation of a "New Tohoku" (Chapter 3)

## Background

- In December 2012, the basic policy of the Second Abe Cabinet included a vision to create a "New Tohoku" as a place of creativity and possibility.
- In June 2013, an interim report was published by the Reconstruction Promotion Council. Subsequently, the Leading Model Projects were launched.
- In December 2013, the Public-Private Partnership Promotion Council was established to facilitate information sharing among the various stakeholders active in the disaster-affected areas.
- In April 2014, the Reconstruction Promotion Council proposed accelerating and expanding advanced initiatives to create a "New Tohoku."
- Several initiatives were launched, including the Reconstruction Business Contest (from 2014), the Concentrated Expert Dispatch Support Program and Hands-on Support Program for Local Governments (from 2015), the Commendation Program (from 2016), and the Hands-on Support Program for Regional Development (from 2017).
- Additionally, the Reconstruction Agency itself supported business development by facilitating the regional reconstruction matching network "Yui no Ba," dispatching experts, and providing assistance with market development and new product creation.

## Leading Model Projects and Public-Private Partnership Promotion Council

- The New Tohoku Leading Model Projects (2013–2015) supported 146 organizations and 216 pioneering initiatives.
- The Public-Private Partnership Promotion Council had 1,310 registered member organizations, both within and outside the disaster-affected areas, as of March 2022. Between 2013 and 2020, 17 networking events were held.
- The Hands-on Support Program for Regional Development/Local Governments supported municipalities and NPOs tackling regional issues and exploring new initiatives (between 2014 and 2020, 47 municipalities and organizations were supported).



Example of hands-on support for targeted organizations

## Reconstruction Business Contest and awards

- A total of 47 organizations were supported through the Reconstruction Business Contest.
- Awards were given to a total of 41 organizations for industrial reconstruction and 47 organizations for reconstruction and revitalization. Through these commendations, successful case studies were disseminated both inside and outside of the disaster-affected areas.
- Information about the New Tohoku initiatives was shared through various case studies, events in collaboration with private companies, and public outreach via the council's website and social media.
- The Yui no Ba facilitated 699 collaboration projects between companies in disaster-affected areas and supporting businesses, while the Concentrated Expert Dispatch Support Program provided assistance for 283 cases as of June 2021. These efforts helped businesses in disaster-affected areas overcome challenges related to market expansion and new product development.



Various case studies

## Key evaluations and lessons learned

- By making the most of private sector talent and expertise, examples of success were created that contributed to resolving regional issues such as community-building, and the revitalization of industries and livelihoods suited to the region's characteristics.
- Nearly 70% of the pioneering initiatives supported by the Leading Model Projects achieved their goals and yielded tangible results.
- Given that these projects were initially experimental, it was suggested that the selection process be simplified and expedited.
- The Hands-on Support Program for Regional Development differed from mere subsidies and had the potential to increase the self-sufficiency of the supported organizations. However, it was noted that insufficient involvement from the government could reduce the effectiveness of the support.

## ■ Issues and background

- In the wake of the Great East Japan Earthquake, in addition to the restoration and reconstruction of infrastructure and other physical aspects, it became necessary to address the more abstract issues such as health problems arising from prolonged evacuation and challenges in adjusting to new lives in disaster public housing.
- In the concentrated reconstruction period, while housing reconstruction, reconstructive urban development, and moving to permanent housing are progressing, some disaster victims are forced to live in long-term evacuation, such as living in temporary housing for a long time, which is unprecedented in past disasters. It became clear that the issues faced by each disaster victim are diversified according to the stage of reconstruction, depending on the environment of the individual.
- In fiscal year 2016, the general subsidy to support disaster victims was established to provide support for victim assistance, including community building, creating purpose in life, safeguarding and consulting for the elderly, and supporting evacuees outside the affected prefectures.

## ■ Achievements

- Through the general subsidy to support disaster victims, the following initiatives implemented by local governments and other organizations were supported:
  - At the peak (as of March 2017), 790 life support counselors were deployed to provide daily safeguarding and consultation services to disaster victims.
  - As part of the mental recovery initiative aimed at supporting connections among people and creating purpose in life for disaster victims, activities such as "disaster victims working alongside local residents in farming" and "art workshops led by experts" were supported.
  - Mental care centers were established in the three disaster-affected prefectures to provide consultation and mental care support for victims.
  - To support the daily lives of the elderly in temporary housing, support centers were established and operated to provide comprehensive services, including general consultation and in-home care services.
  - In response to inquiries from evacuees living outside the affected prefectures, 26 livelihood reconstruction support centers were set up nationwide to provide support.
- In the education sector, additional teachers were assigned, and material support such as school supplies was provided.

## ■ Effects

- Of the approximately 60,000 households that were eligible for safeguarding and other support, more than 28,000 households no longer required concrete support by the end of fiscal year 2019, achieving the numerical targets set in fiscal year 2014.
- As a result of supporting the smooth formation of communities after the relocation from temporary housing to disaster public housing, the number of residents' associations established in disaster public housing reached 572 by the end of fiscal year 2021.



## ■ Key evaluations and lessons learned

- It was groundbreaking to include human connections as part of the policy target. This approach has since been applied to subsequent disasters.
- Some have pointed out that an indicator should be established to objectively measure the level of recovery in daily life.
- Given the long-term nature of support for disaster victims, there are calls for setting outcome goals, such as maintaining the social connections of affected individuals.
- Concerns remain about how to structure national systems to support local responses to adequately support mental health and daily living care.
- Some have pointed out that there was a timing gap between when victims sought options for rebuilding their lives and when the government was able to offer corresponding policy measures.

## Background

- To ensure smooth and rapid reconstruction, necessary revisions were made to systems related to urban reconstruction projects, including the Disaster Prevention Collective Relocation Promotion Project and land readjustment projects.
- In tsunami-affected areas, not only residential and business facilities but also public facilities such as schools, hospitals, and government buildings suffered extensive damage. In response, a new system for projects related to building tsunami reconstruction bases was created to urgently develop reconstruction bases for the entire region.

## Challenges

- Progress in reconstruction projects took time as it required building consensus with local residents. At the same time, the speed of rebuilding the livelihoods of disaster victims varied, as their circumstances and intentions changed over time.
- The uncertainty regarding the future immediately after the disaster, the fluidity of reconstruction plans, subsequent changes in individual circumstances and environments, and the concreteness of reconstruction projects all led to shifts in residents' preferences, resulting in the problem of unused land.
- Concerns have been raised about the rising costs of maintaining, managing, and updating public facilities built with financial support from the national government.

### Utilization status of land developed through land readjustment projects (65 districts, as of the end of December 2022)

	Total land area supplied through land readjustment projects	Completed developments	In-use land	Percentage of in-use land relative to completed developments
Iwate Prefecture	308 ha	308 ha	175 ha	57%
Miyagi Prefecture	622 ha	622 ha	494 ha	79%
Fukushima Prefecture	79 ha	79 ha	58 ha	73%
Total	1,009 ha	1,009 ha	727 ha	72%

Note 1: Residential land area excludes agricultural land, railway land, shrines, temples, cemeteries, and power line towers.  
Note 2: "In-use land" refers to land in use for construction, agricultural purposes, parking lots, or any other form of utilization.

## Achievements

- In the implementation of urban reconstruction projects, various acceleration measures were taken to rebuild the livelihoods of disaster victims as quickly as possible. The completion of these projects within the reconstruction/revitalization period facilitated the early reconstruction of housing.

### State of development of residential land for private housing (as of December 31, 2020) (Period and total residential land supply) (Unit: Housing units)

	(End of FY 2015)	(End of FY 2016)	(End of FY 2017)	(End of FY 2018)	(End of FY 2019)	(End of FY 2020)	Planned
Iwate Prefecture (rate of progress)	2,385 (32%)	4,164 (56%)	6,064 (81%)	7,138 (95.5%)	7,418 (99.3%)	7,472 (100%)	7,472
Miyagi Prefecture (rate of progress)	5,064 (57%)	7,273 (82%)	8,308 (93%)	8,823 (99.1%)	8,901 (100%)	8,901 (100%)	8,901
Fukushima Prefecture (rate of progress)	730 (39%)	1,294 (70%)	1,817 (98%)	1,838 (99.1%)	1,854 (100%)	1,854 (100%)	1,854
Total (rate of progress)	8,179 (45%)	12,731 (70%)	16,189 (89%)	17,799 (98%)	18,173 (99.7%)	18,227 (100%)	18,227

Note: Residential land for private housing refers to land developed under three types of projects: collective relocation promotion projects for disaster prevention, land readjustment projects, and fishing village disaster prevention function enhancement projects.

## Key evaluations and lessons learned

- If projects are planned after a disaster occurs, there is a risk they may become too large in scale. Therefore, it is necessary to consider future social trends, such as population decline, as projected by organizations like the National Institute of Population and Social Security Research, and to plan the future vision of towns during ordinary times. Furthermore, efforts for pre-disaster reconstruction planning should be promoted, and the national and prefectural governments should support municipalities in these efforts.
- There were concerns about the sustainability of small settlements that could not be consolidated during relocations due to issues related to livelihoods. Therefore, efforts to consolidate and pursue development in appropriate scales, considering long-term sustainability, are necessary.
- The mix of public and private property in land left after relocation has caused challenges in utilizing these areas. It is important to proceed with projects, such as land readjustment and the public acquisition of agricultural land, while keeping the future vision of these areas in mind.

## ■ Challenges

- Rapid recovery and reconstruction were required.
- There was a need for planning and design that coordinated with reconstructive urban development.

## ■ Achievements and effects

- Roads
  - The development of the Sanriku Coast Expressway shortened travel times, reducing the time between Sendai and Miyako by approximately 2 hours and between Miyako and Hachinohe by about 1.5 hours, thus shortening travel times between cities.
  - The development of the Soma Fukushima Road improved access to inland areas (such as Fukushima's Nakadori and Yamagata Prefecture), promoting the establishment of businesses in the area behind the Port of Soma (corporate transaction volume increased by 1.2 times in Fukushima and 1.5 times in Yamagata).
- Coasts and rivers
  - Of the 621 planned sites for coastal projects in six disaster-affected prefectures, approximately 95%, or 590 sites, were completed by the end of March 2022. These projects helped avoid tsunami inundation, reduce tsunami run-up heights, and delay tsunami overtopping times.
  - River projects in all five river estuaries (about 48 km, 2,115 sites) under the direct control of the national government were completed. Of the 1,070 sites managed by prefectural and municipal governments, 1,058 (about 99%) were completed by the end of March 2022. These projects contributed to reducing tsunami inundation damage.
- Ports
  - Immediately after the disaster, work was carried out to remove obstacles such as submerged containers from the sea. By the end of March 2011, some piers were made available at all 14 key ports located between the Port of Hachinohe and the Port of Kashima.
  - Based on the Industry and Logistics Reconstruction Plan, breakwaters and seawalls were constructed. These developments reduced tsunami wave heights and promoted new private investment and job creation.
- Farmland
  - Due to disaster recovery and salt removal projects, 18,640 hectares of farmland were made available for farming again by the end of September 2022. In addition to recovery projects, large-scale consolidation was implemented on approximately 7,000 hectares of farmland, utilizing direct national projects and reconstruction grants by the end of March 2022.

## ■ Key evaluations and lessons learned

- Roads
  - Immediately after the earthquake, efforts were made to consolidate and clarify inland access routes to the disaster-affected areas. Intensive inspections and surveys were carried out, contributing to swift emergency repairs.
- Coasts and rivers
  - Coastal projects took into account local residents' opinions, with many examples of innovative designs to preserve beaches, ensure views of the sea, and consider the local landscape. For example, seawall designs were customized based on community input.
- Ports
  - The volume of container cargo handled by ports in the Tohoku region increased by about 1.5 times compared to pre-disaster levels (2019 compared to 2010), and cruise ship calls increased by about 2.4 times in the same period. These infrastructure improvements related to port facilities have significantly contributed to the local economy.
- Farmland
  - Along with farmland restoration, large-scale consolidation was carried out, contributing to the expansion and rationalization of farm management. This improved agricultural productivity and stabilized farm operations.

Case study: Otani Coast (Kesenuma, Miyagi Prefecture)



To preserve the sandy beach, the seawall was set back, and National Route 45 was raised and integrated with the seawall. Additionally, a roadside station with a Bus Rapid Transit station was developed, contributing to local vitality.

Case Study: Eastern area of Sendai



Large-scale consolidation projects were implemented to improve agricultural productivity, resulting in efficient farming on 1,900 hectares

## ■ Issues and background

- About 800,000 businesses in areas affected by the tsunami and earthquake were impacted, with the total damage to commerce and industry estimated at about 1.2558 trillion yen in the three hardest-hit prefectures.  
The early resumption of business activities became a critical issue, leading to the construction and free leasing of temporary shops and factories, as well as the creation of group subsidies in fiscal year 2011.
- Some have pointed out that the extensive infrastructure support provided to the disaster-affected areas might have hindered economic renewal. In response, the group subsidy program was improved in fiscal year 2015 to include facility and equipment costs for new sector ventures.
- Government subsidies are subject to property disposal restrictions under the Act on Regulation of Execution of Budget Pertaining to Subsidies, etc. For group subsidies, detailed responses have been made based on individual circumstances, in accordance with the Act on Regulation of Execution of Budget Pertaining to Subsidies, etc. and related directives.
- Financial support, including through the Industrial Revitalization Corporation of Japan and the Support Organization for Companies Damaged by the Great East Japan, addressed the issue of double debt and contributed to the reopening of businesses through the Great East Japan Earthquake Recovery Special Loans.
- Since fiscal year 2012, various corporate relocation subsidies have been provided.
- Damage to fisheries facilities due to the earthquake and tsunami was estimated at 1.2637 trillion yen. The Fisheries Recovery Master Plan was developed to facilitate the early restoration and reopening of this key industry, including fisheries and the seafood processing industry.
- Starting in fiscal year 2017, measures were taken to secure personnel in disaster-affected areas, attracting young people and skilled workers while also supporting the efforts of local companies to improve productivity, strengthen their ability to attract talent, and spread best practices.



Abalone farming facility rebuilt using group subsidies

## ■ Achievements and effects

- Manufacturing shipment values in the three hardest-hit prefectures have recovered to roughly pre-disaster levels.
- More than 90% of temporary shops and factories transitioned to permanent facilities. The group subsidy program supported 737 groups and 11,877 projects, totaling 534.1 billion yen as of December 2022.
- The Industrial Revitalization Corporation of Japan and other organizations reached agreements with financial institutions on 1,415 cases, including 339 debt buyouts, and the Support Organization for Companies Damaged by the Great East Japan supported 747 cases as of March 2021.
- Corporate relocation subsidies supported a total of 1,259 corporate relocations as of December 2022.
- In the seafood processing industries of the three hardest-hit prefectures, 98% of facilities that wished to reopen had resumed operations as of December 2021, and shipment values had recovered to 98% of the levels seen in 2010 by 2019.

## ■ Key evaluations and lessons learned

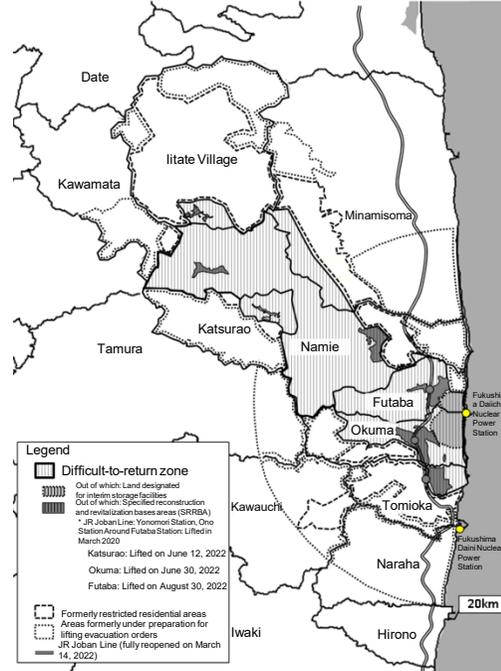
- Economic indicators related to business activity have generally recovered to pre-disaster levels, contributing to the rapid overall recovery and reconstruction of the disaster-affected areas.
- Some businesses using group subsidies faced difficulties repaying loans for their share of excessive facility investments. It was pointed out that businesses tended to make overly large applications immediately after the disaster, and that phased support would have been more appropriate. For this reason, cooperation with support organizations and financial institutions was established to provide planned and appropriately scaled recovery support, a strategy that should be applied in future disasters.
- In terms of financial support, it is important to respond to each affected business with tailored solutions, taking into account changes in business environments and other factors.
- On the industrial side, it is necessary to consider pre-disaster reconstruction planning and analyze the gap between the ideal state of recovery and the current situation to inform future recovery efforts.

# 14. Specific Measures for the Nuclear Disaster (Chapter 7)

## Challenges, background, and achievements

- Decontamination was completed in 100 municipalities across eight prefectures by March 2018, excluding the difficult-to-return zones, and evacuation orders were lifted in all areas except the difficult-to-return zones by March 2020.
- The number of people subject to evacuation from areas under evacuation orders decreased from approximately 81,000 (as of August 2013) to around 21,000 (as of March 2022).
- The Fukushima Revitalization Acceleration Grants were created in 2014 to support a range of initiatives, from aiding long-term evacuees to promoting early returns.
- Regarding the difficult-to-return zones, evacuation orders were lifted for the entire specified reconstruction and revitalization bases areas (SRRBA) in Katsurao and Okuma in June 2022, and for Futaba in August 2022.
- Efforts to dispel harmful rumors have resulted in 43 out of the 55 countries and regions that had imposed import restrictions lifting those measures.
- Based on the Fukushima Innovation Coast Framework, the Fukushima Hydrogen Energy Research Field (in Namie) and the Fukushima Robot Test Field (in Minamisoma and Namie) opened in March 2020.
- By January 2023, the Fukushima Soso Reconstruction Corporation (Public-Private Joint Team) visited approximately 5,700 businesses to provide support, including assistance in market development.

Conceptual map of areas under evacuation orders (as of August 30, 2022)



## Key evaluations and observations

- While recovery efforts in various fields, such as improving living conditions and revitalizing agriculture and industry, have steadily advanced through the use of national reconstruction policies, many challenges remain.
- Some have pointed out that if the lifting of evacuation orders is delayed, occupancy rates and return rates will decrease.
- There are calls to clarify the current status of progress, what still needs to be addressed, and the responsibilities and roles of the national government and TEPCO.

## Future efforts

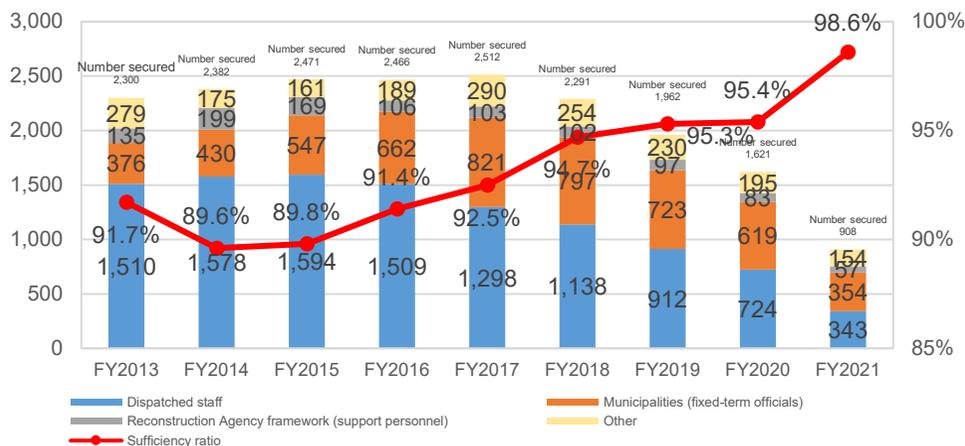
- Measures for the decommissioning of TEPCO Fukushima Daiichi NPS and the handling of contaminated water and treated water
- Development, management, and operation of interim storage facilities
- Final disposal of decontaminated soil and other materials outside Fukushima Prefecture within 30 years of the start of interim storage
- Improvement of living environments in areas where evacuation orders have been lifted
- Support for long-term evacuees
- Development of specified reconstruction and revitalization bases areas (SRRBA)
- Efforts to lift evacuation orders in areas outside the SRRBA
- Promotion of Fukushima Innovation Coast Framework
- Rebuilding of businesses, agriculture, forestry, and fisheries
- Efforts to eliminate harmful rumors
- Promotion of relocation and settlement of new residents, and expansion of exchange populations and related populations
- Establishment of Fukushima Institute for Research, Education and Innovation (F-REI) as a core center for creative reconstruction, etc.

## ■ Issues and background

- Immediately after the disaster, many volunteers and NPOs, among various other entities, made significant contributions to the recovery and reconstruction of disaster-affected areas.
- To accommodate and coordinate these diverse entities, the Councils of Social Welfare played an active role, along with intermediary organizations that facilitated and coordinated the activities of NPOs.
- For disaster-affected municipalities, securing a labor force and employees with specialized knowledge became an urgent priority.
- Support was provided through the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications' framework for dispatching supporting personnel from municipalities nationwide, the Reconstruction Agency's framework for recruiting part-time national public employees to be stationed in affected municipalities, and the dispatch of national staff through personnel exchanges.
- For municipalities whose main government buildings were damaged, temporary office recovery was supported through subsidies allocated to emergency restoration of municipal government functions.

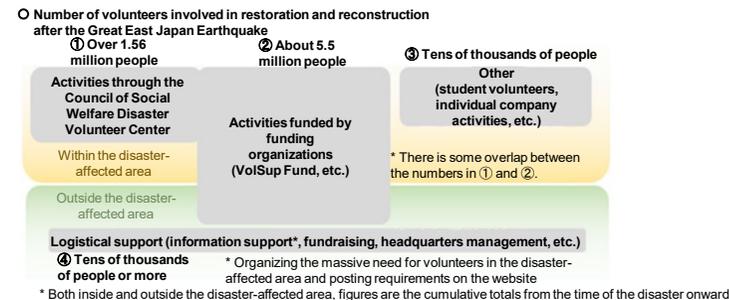
## ■ Supporting personnel

- The number of supporting personnel peaked at 2,512 in fiscal year 2017, with approximately 90% of the necessary personnel secured.



## ■ Dispatch of national staff and volunteers

- From January 1, 2011, to December 2, 2022, 45 national government officials were dispatched to disaster-affected municipalities to serve as vice-mayors and deputy town mayors (21 from the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism, 12 from the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications, six from the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry, three from the Ministry of Finance, etc.).
- During the Great East Japan Earthquake, more than 7 million volunteers, significantly exceeding the number during the Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake, were active.



## ■ Key evaluations and lessons learned

- It has been evaluated that the role of volunteers expanded from individuals to groups and companies, with businesses conducting activities in disaster-affected areas on a continuous and purpose-driven basis, which was seen as a significant change.
- NPOs have pointed out that the budget system is structured on a single-year basis, making it difficult to plan projects several years into the future.
- Intermediary organizations acted as coordinators, providing effective support by assisting with network formation, offering funding assistance, training personnel, and providing organizational management know-how.
- Private companies also actively dispatched not only general administrative staff, but also technical personnel such as civil engineers, which proved effective.
- The framework for dispatching municipal employees from all over Japan functioned effectively.
- The dispatch of national government officials as deputy mayors and other roles was effective for disaster-affected municipalities as it increased direct communication opportunities with the national government.

## Background

- As the first principle of the Seven Principles for the Reconstruction Framework, the Reconstruction Design Council called for mourning and remembrance, the transmission of records and lessons learned from the disaster to future generations, and the sharing of these with both domestic and international audiences.
- In the Basic Guidelines for Reconstruction issued in July 2011, it was clearly stated that a system for collecting, preserving, and making available the records and lessons learned from the earthquake, tsunami, and nuclear disaster should be developed, and that local initiatives should be encouraged to create memorial forests, hills, and facilities as symbols of remembrance and reconstruction.
- The Basic Guidelines for Reconstruction revised in March 2021 emphasized the importance of sharing information between memorial facilities, earthquake memorial sites, and legacy facilities in the affected areas, as well as ensuring that the diverse lessons learned and memories of the Great East Japan Earthquake are passed on to future generations without fading, and used in future disaster prevention, mitigation, and reconstruction efforts.

## Overview

- For the first time in response to a natural disaster, the government held a memorial ceremony, hosted annually for 10 years.
- In March 2013, "HINAGIKU," the National Diet Library's archive for the Great East Japan Earthquake, was made public. It supports the creation of archives in disaster-affected municipalities.
- Special treatment was given to the storage of government documents related to the earthquake, transferring them to the National Archives of Japan after the designated storage period.
- The preservation of earthquake ruins was supported through reconstruction grants.  
The Earthquake Disaster Legacy Network Council was established to promote the creation of a network of legacy facilities called the "3.11 Densho Road."
- In each of the three disaster-affected prefectures, the prefectural governments opened legacy facilities.
- Prefectural governments promoted collaboration between local groups involved in memorial activities. In addition, the national government supported activities such as the dispatch of *Kataribe* (storytellers).
- In March 2021, a compilation of "Lessons Learned and Know-How Gained" from various efforts by local governments and other groups during the reconstruction process was published.
- The Tokyo Olympic and Paralympic Games were positioned as the Recovery and Reconstruction Games, with the Olympic torch relay starting in Fukushima Prefecture and some events held in disaster-affected areas.

## Achievements

- As of October 2022, there are about 470 searchable items in "HINAGIKU" across 57 databases.
- The Earthquake Disaster Legacy Network Council has registered 309 legacy facilities, including earthquake memorial sites. It has also developed unified signage with common pictograms and information signs, among other efforts.



HINAGIKU website



Tsunami Remains Taro Kanko Hotel



Legacy facility pictograms

## Evaluations and lessons learned

- Digital archives are vital for preventing the scattering of materials and the fading of memories. HINAGIKU has been recognized as highly significant.
- Since disaster-affected municipalities have a limited labor force, it is essential for prefectural governments to take the lead in collecting materials and building archives during large-scale disasters, to reduce the human and financial burden on municipalities.
- As the disaster destroyed much of the local history, culture, traditional arts, and folk life, it is crucial to archive these materials beforehand.
- Disaster-affected municipalities have positively evaluated the use of reconstruction grants for preserving earthquake memorial sites and establishing memorial facilities.
- Some suggest that the overall content of real-world archives, such as earthquake memorial sites, should be updated in a timely manner.
- There are concerns that the understanding of the current status of earthquake memorial activities and follow-up efforts are insufficient.