

Kumamoto Immediate Relief

Early in the morning on April 14, 2016, a 6.5 magnitude earthquake struck Kumamoto Prefecture. Two days later a 7.3 magnitude quake hit right under Kumamoto City. The two quakes killed 50 people, while 170 died due to causes indirectly linked to the disaster. More than 3,000 were injured, and 190,000 structures were destroyed or damaged.

On April 15, Peace Winds was on the ground performing search-and-rescue, setting up shelters, and providing immediate relief supplies of food, water, medicine, and hygiene kits.



Peace Winds opened camps in Mashiki town on an outdoor field.



Peace Winds rescued missing people using trained search-and-rescue dogs.

Available shelters were insufficient to meet the number of evacuees. Many were sleeping in cars—especially those with pets, which were banned at many shelters. Peace Winds moved quickly to set up pet-friendly shelters and provided additional support to main shelter evacuees, including showers, toilets, refrigerators, and TVs. Peace Winds had been especially mindful of the needs of the vulnerable, including elderly, disabled, and women evacuees.

Kumamoto Recovery & Capacity Building Projects

Temporary Housing

Hundreds of evacuees will be living in temporary housing sites for a prolonged period. Peace Winds is providing stable, supportive living environments so that families and communities can recover long-term. The elderly especially need assistance to overcome devastating setbacks. Peace Winds provides help to achieve individual, family, and community resilience.



Peace Winds distributes a TV to one of the families.



One of the temporary housing sites in Mashiki, Kumamoto.

Household Supplies for New Homes

In late October 2016, Kumamoto evacuees moved out of shelters to temporary housing constructed by the government. Peace Winds raised funds to provide household supplies to make the homes more comfortable. Supplies included heated carpets, TVs, dehumidifiers, and vacuum cleaners.

Caring for Elderly Evacuees

In Kumamoto stress, isolation, and related illnesses have been devastating, especially among the elderly, who accounted for 90 percent of post-earthquake deaths. The temporary housing residents, particularly the elderly, have expressed strong desire and need for community-building activities to combat isolation and stress. Peace Winds has planned and executed seasonal events, such as the Doll's Festival (Hina-Matsuri) in March, while regularly sponsoring various music and game activities and other casual get-togethers such as tea, lunch, and dinner parties. We hear from all ages that the community-building events raise spirits and help residents move forward during this difficult period.



A monthly music activity for the elderly at the temporary housing sites.



Pets sheltered in Mashiki, Kumamoto.

Pets Need Shelter and Forever Homes

Pets have been an important source of comfort for the earthquake survivors. Throughout our work in Kumamoto, Peace Winds has supported pets and their owners by providing pet-friendly shelters, dog runs and dog training. Despite this help, not everyone can keep animals while they rebuild their lives. Temporary housing living quarters are quite small, and many families have reluctantly decided to turn their dogs over to pet shelters because of their limited living space. Now the pet shelters are full. Since February Peace Winds has supported local dog rescue organizations to hire more staff to take care of sheltered pets.

SUMMARY OF THE RELIEF MISSION

- ◆ Three-day search and rescue operation in Mashiki town and Minami-Aso village.
- ◆ Provision of meals, water, medicines and hygiene kits.
- ◆ Shelters provided for evacuees and pets: Balloon shelters, tent camps, trailer houses, and Unit-House camps.
- ◆ Provision of facilities: Lavatories, shower rooms, laundries, pet daycare centers, dog runs, communal kitchens, community rooms, study rooms, and counseling rooms.
- ◆ Community events: Lunch/dinner parties, children's activities, festivals, concerts, Christmas/New Year parties, music activities for elderly evacuees.
- ◆ Distribution of home appliances: TVs, heated carpets, vacuum cleaners, and dehumidifiers.
- ◆ Installation of outdoor security lighting at the camps and now at temporary housing.
- ◆ Support for leadership and operations of the 18 townships formed at the temporary housing sites.

Peace Winds Japan is an international NGO based in Japan, providing immediate humanitarian relief and development assistance.

Peace Winds America is a U.S.-based non-profit that strengthens disaster preparedness in the Asia Pacific responding with local partners to provide effective and appropriate relief and recovery. Visit us at www.peacewindsamerica.org