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Provision of logistics assistance to support Japan's response to earthquakes in Kumamoto and surrounding areas
Standard Project Report 2016
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Country Context and WFP Objectives



Country Context

Japan is the world's third largest economy and is a major donor for WFP. While WFP does not have operations in Japan, it builds strong partnerships with Japanese institutions to support WFP operations around the world. Japan is vulnerable to risks of earthquakes and other natural disasters and sometimes requires limited technical support from the international community. The Japanese Government has requested WFP technical assistance in the past, such as for the Great Eastern Japan earthquake and tsunami of 2011.

On 14 and 16 April 2016, two powerful earthquakes of 6.5 and 7.3 magnitude respectively, struck the south-western part of Japan, affecting nearly one million people in Kumamoto and other prefectures on Kyushu Island. According to official figures, the earthquakes caused 70 deaths, 1,700 injuries, and 180,000 evacuees at its peak and resulted in considerable destruction of homes, businesses, livelihoods and infrastructure. The effects of the earthquakes were exacerbated by an additional 1,400 earthquakes and aftershocks in the following month.

The Government of Japan declared a “Disaster of Extreme Severity” on 17 April 2016 and mounted a massive search and rescue and relief and recovery operation, which included the dispatch of 26,000 personnel from the Japan Self Defense Forces.

Response of the Government and Strategic Coordination

Upon the request from government authorities, WFP launched Special Operation 200976: 'Provision of logistics assistance in support of Japan's response to earthquakes in Kumamoto and surrounding areas'.

Under the overall coordination of the Japanese Government, WFP worked in close partnership with the Kumamoto Prefectural Government as well as the Japan Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (JVOAD), a coordination body supported by the government sector, the non-governmental organization (NGO)/non-profit organization (NPO) sector, and the private sector engaged in the humanitarian response in Japan.

Through this Special Operation, WFP supported the Kumamoto Prefectural Government through the deployment of technical experts to augment the Government's emergency response to the disaster, including targeted provision of logistics services.

WFP was invited by JVOAD to participate in a rapid logistics assessment in the earthquake-affected areas immediately after the earthquake struck, and the assessment results were shared with the UN Country Team in Japan.

The logistics assets established by WFP were properly handed over to the local municipalities and partners, while WFP also built the capacities of the local partners in supply chain management.

Summary of WFP Operational Objectives

The Government of Japan led all aspects of the disaster response. Nonetheless, upon a request from the Kumamoto Prefectural Government, endorsed by the Government of Japan, WFP supplemented the relief efforts for two months by providing critical logistics and coordination support to local municipalities and coordination bodies.

The Kumamoto Prefectural Government received large volumes of relief cargo, resulting in congestion and hampering distribution. The Kumamoto Prefectural Government set up a logistics hub, with support from JVOAD, to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the humanitarian supply chain.

The areas worst affected by the earthquakes suffered major damage to infrastructure; therefore, no suitable storage facilities were available to establish logistics bases. To augment storage spaces and establish an effective supply chain system, the Kumamoto local municipalities requested WFP to erect mobile storage facilities in the disaster areas.

The planned project budget was USD 606,000 for a duration of two months from 02 May to 01 July 2016.

Country Resources and Results

Resources for Results

The operation was fully funded by the Japan Association for WFP (JAWFP), a fundraising nonprofit organization for WFP from the Japanese private sector, and there were no budget revisions. A synergy of effective communication and fundraising campaigns for the private sector contributed to operation's resourcing success.

WFP immediately mobilized Japanese staff worldwide, contributing to the smooth operation without language or cultural barriers. Out of nine WFP staff dispatched to the affected areas, eight were Japanese, and one was a Malaysian MSU expert from UNHRD Subang.

The WFP Logistics Emergency Team (LET) was activated in a timely manner and provided significant support to the operation.

By effectively utilizing internal and external resources, including WFP Japanese staff, UNHRD and LET partners, WFP demonstrated good value for money by minimizing the project budget and maximizing timely results.

Achievements at Country Level

WFP assistance addressed specific technical logistics issues in the affected areas and enhanced the humanitarian supply chain for the disaster response through augmented logistical capacities of the Kumamoto Prefectural Government, local municipalities and humanitarian partners. The increased field presence of the WFP team over a period of two months enabled more engagement with humanitarian actors in the field and allowed for strong partnerships with local institutions and coordination bodies.

WFP also supported field coordination, needs assessment and capacity building of the JVOAD. Support to the JVOAD secretariat and its related activities enhanced the coordination capacities among the prefectural government, local municipalities and other humanitarian actors and promoted public-private partnership in the disaster response.

The five MSUs were successfully installed by the end of May 2016 before the rainy season hit Kumamoto. MSUs were greatly appreciated by the government authorities and humanitarian partners for the logistics hubs and other humanitarian purposes.

Supply Chain

Establishment of an efficient humanitarian supply chain system was supported at the prefectural government warehouses, by significantly reducing relief items and closing one major government warehouse by early June. Pipelines, stocks and distribution plans for relief items were well-managed through the prefectural coordination mechanism. A new application system on stock management was introduced by Information Technology Disaster Assistance and Response Team (IT-DART) in collaboration with the University of Kyoto.

In partnership with JVOAD and the Kumamoto Prefectural Government, WFP provided support to local municipalities, Social Welfare Councils and other humanitarian partners. WFP developed a long-term assistance package that bridged humanitarian and development contexts and included the mobilization of local resources and enhanced local ownership. WFP also assisted in developing a government strategy for the affected people to move from evacuation centres to their home communities or temporary shelters.

Cluster meetings at the municipality level were actively chaired by the local communities, contributing to sustainability/hand-over from government authorities to the local communities in terms of debris clearance, management of evacuation centres and other focused areas. By the end of the operation, local NGOs and communities played a leading role in coordinating with government bodies and other humanitarian actors.

WFP supported a national initiative to establish Community Mutual Support Centres, which served as local coordination bodies to promote social welfare and early recovery programmes, in each municipality. The main coordination function was transformed to the Centres, which were managed by Social Welfare Councils with support from the municipality governments, humanitarian partners and local communities.

The JVOAD secretariat capacity was also augmented. Secretariat staff received on-the-job training, and various information management systems were established, including a registry of relief items and an evacuation centre

database that greatly helped the JVOAD secretariat to manage its humanitarian coordination function. The frequency and thematic focuses of coordination meetings was changed, which improved efficiency and effectiveness at the prefectural level and highlighted a results-oriented approach. The detailed hand-over notes, including suggested future assistance/coordination strategies, were shared with the JVOAD secretariat.

Ownership of five MSUs was formally transferred to local municipalities and humanitarian partners in Kumamoto. The MSUs have been actively used as emergency relief logistics hubs, a storage facility, and a volunteer/community support centre.

Implementation of Evaluation Recommendations and Lessons Learned

While the Government is capable of responding to major earthquakes and other domestic natural disasters, additional/complementary capacities of WFP and other international partners could be considered in future national disaster management preparedness and response plans as needed. WFP also recognizes the need to strengthen emergency preparedness and response strategies with LET partners.

Project Objectives and Results

Project Objectives

The objectives of this special operation were to:

- provide technical experts to the Kumamoto Prefectural Government to establish an effective humanitarian supply chain for the disaster response;
- assist local authorities and humanitarian partners for the needs assessment and general coordination; and
- establish field storage facilities in disaster-affected areas for effective receipt and distribution of relief items, and for other humanitarian purposes as necessary.



Approved Budget for Project Duration (USD)

Cost Category	
Capacity Dev.t and Augmentation	505,036
Direct Support Costs	61,585
Indirect Support Costs	39,663
Total	606,284

Project Activities

WFP's swift support was extended to the Kumamoto Prefectural Government, local municipalities, JVOAD and NGOs working in the affected areas. Activities included:

- 1) the deployment of logistics experts to establish an effective humanitarian supply chain for the disaster response at the prefectural level;
- 2) the deployment of programme experts to assist humanitarian partners for the needs assessment and (general) emergency response coordination; and
- 3) the immediate provision of five Mobile Storage Units (MSUs) from the UNHRD network in Subang, Malaysia, and establishment of field storage facilities in disaster-affected areas.

The logistics experts supported the disaster response coordination cell established by the Kumamoto Prefectural Government, assisted in establishing effective logistics hubs, and liaised with humanitarian actors on supply-chain issues. A large volume of relief items received by prefectural-government warehouses was efficiently distributed to the affected areas through the supply chain management system supported by WFP.

The programme experts were deployed to JVOAD and enhanced humanitarian response capacities among the Prefectural Government, local municipalities and other humanitarian actors in terms of needs assessment and general coordination. JVOAD general coordination and cluster meetings at the prefectural and municipality levels were successfully managed by government authorities, NGO partners, the private sector, and local communities. Dozens of evacuation centres were regularly monitored, strong relationships were established with the local municipalities through regular meetings, and the coordination mechanisms and capacities of government authorities, Social Welfare Councils and NGO partners were strengthened at the municipality level. The JVOAD information management system was also strengthened due to the technical assistance provided by WFP experts. The JVOAD information management system was augmented through the establishment of information tracking sheets and active follow-up actions so as to reduce the humanitarian gaps. A 3W (who, where and what) matrix and templates of activities were developed and updated on a regular basis, which facilitated coordination between humanitarian partners and evacuation centres.

Five MSUs were erected in Kumamoto, including in Mashiki town, one of the most severely-affected areas. The MSUs helped to resolve storage capacity problems and improved the humanitarian supply chain. The MSUs were

officially transferred to local authorities and humanitarian partners who continued the distribution of relief items and other humanitarian works in the affected areas.

Operational Partnerships

The UNHRD in Subang played a critical role in dispatching MSUs to Japan and installing them in the affected areas. An MSU expert from Subang provided overall management and supervision of the installation on the ground and greatly contributed to ensure that the operation was successful within a limited timeframe.

WFP LET was activated at the initial stage of the operation, and the LET partners (Agility Japan and UPS Japan) provided highly professional logistics services, free-of-charge, including processing custom clearance at airports, 1,300 km of overland transport of MSUs from Tokyo to Kumamoto, and provision of 440 pallets. Their rapid and seamless logistics support significantly contributed to the timely delivery and successful installation of MSUs in Kumamoto.

The JVOAD played a critical role in supporting the operation by inviting WFP to conduct a needs assessment and providing a platform for information sharing and coordination among government authorities and humanitarian partners. With its extensive network in Japan's natural disaster response system, the JVOAD provided multiple entry points for WFP to apply its expertise to the Kumamoto earthquake response.

The other humanitarian partners also played important roles in establishing an effective humanitarian supply chain system in Kumamoto by using WFP-provided MSUs as logistics hubs. WFP also worked closely with social welfare councils and other humanitarian partners on management of evacuation centres, volunteer centres, community mutual support centres, and prefectural government warehouses, which helped to maximize the humanitarian response capacity in Kumamoto.

Government partners, including the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA), the Cabinet Office Disaster Management Unit, the Kumamoto Prefectural Government and local municipality offices were supportive of the WFP operation. The regular meetings were organized with government authorities and ensured that WFP interventions contributed to the national and local framework on the Kumamoto disaster response. The special operation met immediate needs on the ground in terms of logistics, coordination, and needs assessment, which were evaluated highly by government partners.

Results/Outcomes

Two major logistics hubs established by the Kumamoto Prefectural Government were efficiently managed with WFP experts' technical advice, resulting in successfully closing one logistics hub by early June through the facilitation of dispatch of stored relief items to the most needy evacuation centres. As the need for relief items decreased during the initial two months, the remaining relief items were consolidated into the other hub, which could be more easily managed by the Kumamoto Prefectural Government.

General coordination meetings and cluster meetings among government authorities, NGOs and local communities were established and were well-supported at the both prefectural and municipal levels, including in Mashiki Town. The meetings helped government authorities to identify and prioritise the most urgent needs of the affected communities (e.g., wet-feeding, evacuation centre management, debris clearance and child protection). Daily coordination meetings at the prefectural level were also supported—the meeting agenda was set up and the proceedings were recorded. In the affected municipalities, needs/capacity assessments to identify gaps in assistance were utilised, and information-sharing was augmented.

Five MSUs were utilised as logistics hubs, a storage facility and a volunteer centre managed by local municipalities and humanitarian partners. At Ozu Town, an MSU was used as a storage of relief items. At Kashima Town, an MSU served as the Volunteer Centre managed by the Social Welfare Council. On average, 70 volunteers per day were registered, briefed, and debriefed on their activities. The MSU provided 240m² of water-proof and wind-resistant working space. At Kumamoto City, two MSUs were used as logistics hubs managed by humanitarian partners—Second Harvest Japan and Team Kumamoto. Food and non-food items (NFIs) were received from donors at the hubs and were distributed to humanitarian partners who managed evacuation centers, relief items and wet-feeding. At Mashiki Town, one of the most-severely affected areas, an MSU served as a logistics hub managed by Kumamoto Yu-Kyu-No-Kai. Food and NFIs were distributed from the hub to evacuation centres in Mashiki as well as surrounding affected villages.

A WFP lessons learned mission determined that since the JVOAD and local NGO/NPOs had limited capacities, WFP's expertise in needs assessment, coordination and information management were highly appreciated by

JVOAD and the government authorities.

Figures and Indicators

Data Notes

Photo credits: © WFP/Kazuhiko Yamazaki.

WFP and partners install a Mobile Storage Unit, which stored relief items and served as a distribution hub.

Project Indicators

Output Indicators

Output	Unit	Planned	Actual	% Actual vs. Planned
SO3: Special Operation (Logistics)				
Total storage space made available (m2)	unit	1,280	1,280	100.0%