

TZU CHI FOUNDATION AND ITS RELIEF WORK IN 311 JAPAN EARTHQUAKE

Speaker:

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Tzu Chi Foundation was founded in 1966 by Dharma Master Cheng Yen, in Hualien, Taiwan, focusing on 4 missions and 8 areas of service: Charity, Medicine, Education, Humanistic Culture, International Relief, Bone Marrow Registry, Community Volunteerism and Environmental Protection. Tzu Chi has nearly 10 million volunteers and supporters in 50 countries and has provided disaster relief in more than 70 countries. (Recently - Pakistan, Australia, NZ and Japan). In 2003, Tzu Chi was recognized by United Nations as a NGO (non-governmental organization) and in 2010 became a NGO in special consultative status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council (UN ECOSOC).

Following the principles of disaster relief work: directness, priority, respect, timeliness, practicality and gratitude, Tzu Chi formed the Japan disaster relief coordination centre from day one of the 311 Japan Earthquake. In the first week, hot meals were provided to tsunami affected residents at Ōarai, Ibaraki; 2 weeks later, a relief team successfully gained access to Ōfunato and Rikusentakda of Iwate Prefecture to assess the severity of this disaster and also distributed 20 tons of relief goods such as blankets, shawls, instant rice to about 7000 people at 13 shelters.

Beginning June, an average of ¥50,000 per household of emergency relief cash were given to disaster survivors in Iwate and Miyagi Prefecture, already benefiting over 27,000 households out of the 150,000 qualifying households. The relief work in Japan has just begun.