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Information bulletin

Japan: Kumamoto earthquakes

 International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

Information bulletin n° 2

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This bulletin is being issued for information only and reflects the current situation. The Japanese Red Cross Society (JRCS) has mobilized its staff and resources nation-wide to assist affected communities and domestic donations are being received to assist affected communities. The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) and JRCS welcome contribution from Red Cross Red Crescent national societies and other partners in the spirit of solidarity after the devastating earthquakes.

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The situation

14 April 2016: A 6.5 magnitude earthquake struck Kumamoto Prefecture, Kyushu Island, Japan at 21:26 local time, resulting in at least nine people dead and 800 injured. More than 120,000 people evacuated. Japanese Red Cross Society (JRCS) immediately activated its emergency response in support of the authorities.

16 April: Another quake (7.3 magnitudes) hit in the same area at 01:25 local time. Early assessment reported 42 people dead and thousands injured and 9 missing as a result of the second quake, with dozens trapped in the rubble of collapsed buildings. Some 953 evacuation centres activated, of which 723 are in Kumamoto). An [Information bulletin](#) was issued.

17 April: Gas, electricity and water supply to thousands of houses in Kumamoto City have been cut off. No damage was found at the 4 nuclear plants that are in the affected area.

18 April: An aftershock of 5.8 magnitudes struck at 08:41 pm local time.

19 April: Kumamoto Airport has been operational. Shinkansen Rail bullet trains have been suspended.

20 April: The IFRC and JRCS welcome international contribution to its humanitarian assistance for the people affected by the earthquakes. The situation continues to be uncertain with continuing strong quakes and aftershocks, storm and landslides, further damages have been reported around the evacuation centres. Some evacuees who sought shelter in these evacuation centres have been moved to other safe shelters. JRCS is monitoring the situation closely in coordination with the government and local authorities to ensure humanitarian assistance is provided timely and effectively.



Medical staff at the Red Cross Kumamoto Hospital have been working around the clock to treat hundreds of injuries resulting from the earthquakes.

Photo Credit: Japanese Red Cross Society.

Actions by the authorities and other agencies

Rescue workers, including police, firefighters, voluntary fire brigades, are undertaking emergency operations, with some having been active since the first earthquake. The Japan's Self-Defence Forces also deployed its resources to the most affected areas to bolster the response.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action

Japanese Red Cross Society (JRCS)

In response to the two earthquakes, JRCS is undertaking an emergency operation in accordance with its mandated role as auxiliary to the public authorities during disasters. The National Society's contingency plan has been activated.

Assessments and relief response

To date, the local chapters of JRCS have distributed more than 18,400 blankets, 654 family emergency kits containing basic personal items¹, 5,051 sleeping mats (with pillows) and 2,700 tarpaulins to people who were evacuated and are staying in evacuation centres. Further assessments and relief distributions are ongoing.

Emergency medical teams

Water outage increases the risk of gastroenteritis and infectious diseases² in affected areas. Twenty emergency medical teams³, and staff of JRCS chapters and hospitals across the country have been deployed and are focusing on the provision of emergency medical assistance, management of injuries and distribution of relief items.

JRCS is operating round the clock service in a large evacuation centre and its mobile clinics are moving between other evacuation centres to provide medical. Since 21 April, JRCS further mobilized resources in remote and more isolated areas. Majority of the JRCS medical teams were dispatched from neighbouring prefectures.

On 21 April, three field hospitals with surgical facilities and intensive care unit are operational in heavily affected and isolated areas – Nishihara, Mashiki, and Minami.

Kumamoto JRCS Red Cross hospital

Since the onset of the first quake, JRCS's Kumamoto Red Cross Hospital has received more than 2,000 injured patients for the first week and an average of 300 people daily. Medical service infrastructure in Kumamoto was severely damaged in the earthquake and the Red Cross hospital played a key role in covering the needs of people who were injured as a result of the disaster. Other Red Cross hospitals in Japan are providing support to Kumamoto to increase their capacity. A total of 50 doctors and 250 nurses will join the team at Kumamoto Red Cross Hospital in the coming weeks.



(Top) JRCS mobilized its emergency teams to provide medical support, distribute relief items and provide psychosocial support to affected families sheltering in evacuation centres.

(Below) JRCS disaster response teams have been deployed to support relief efforts following the series of quakes. The teams are distributing relief items to affected families sheltering in evacuation centres

Photo Credit: Japanese Red Cross Society.



¹ Kit includes a torch, a radio with battery, towel, cotton work gloves, bandage, mask, and detergent.

² Infections of eyes and skin are commonly reported in situation where there is inadequate water supply for a period of time.

³ JRCS has 500 emergency medical teams on roster at its branches nationwide, comprise of a total of 7,000 medical and support personnel who are trained in disaster response.

Psychosocial support (PSS):

On 19 April, JRCS deployed its PSS assessment team (two members) to work in the affected area, supported by staff trained in PSS in providing PSS services to the affected people as well as to JRCS staff and volunteers who have been working long hours under tremendous stress. In addition, PSS services are also provided to the affected people in evacuation centres by the JRCS mobile clinics.

The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC)

The IFRC Asia Pacific regional office in Kuala Lumpur is in regular contact with JRCS and providing the relevant coordination to support the National Society's response. The communications delegate of the IFRC country cluster support team (CCST) in Beijing has supported JRCS in producing [web stories](#) and other form of external communications. An [infographic](#) was also issued, along with twitters [@IFRCAsiaPacific](#) and [@JRCS_PR](#) on the JRCS response.

IFRC is working closely with JRCS to facilitate international contribution to support the National Society's relief and recovery efforts.

Contact information

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How we work

All IFRC assistance seeks to adhere to the **Code of Conduct** for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO's) in Disaster Relief and the **Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Humanitarian Response (Sphere)** in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable. The IFRC's vision is to inspire, encourage, facilitate and promote at all times all forms of humanitarian activities by National Societies, with a view to preventing and alleviating human suffering, and thereby contributing to the maintenance and promotion of human dignity and peace in the world.

The IFRC's work is guided by Strategy 2020 which puts forward three strategic aims:



Save lives.
protect livelihoods,
and strengthen recovery
from disaster and crises.



Enable healthy
and safe living.



Promote social inclusion
and a culture of
non-violence and peace.