

Foreword: On the Publication of This Booklet

Six years have passed since the Kumamoto Earthquake. The 1995 Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake was an impetus for many people to get voluntarily involved in relief activities to help those who were affected, and since the Great East Japan Earthquake in 2011, we have seen many instances of collaborations among various persons in the communities affected by disasters.

While disaster relief and assistance for the survivors have become more and more active over the years, some of you may have felt troubled at times, thinking, "I want to help, but I don't know where to begin," or "I feel a bit at a loss when I provide relief and assistance." Others may have pondered in hindsight, "Was what I did the right thing to do at that time?"

This booklet intends to provide tips for people searching for answers to these questions. Based on the Core Humanitarian Standard on Quality and Accountability (CHS), the following pages provide readers with an easy-to-understand compilation of tips on how to assist those affected by disasters. The CHS contains nine commitments based on knowledge and reflections gathered from responders around the world, and this booklet introduces key points and examples* of aid implementation for each commitment.

At the end of the booklet, you will find interviews with people who had provided assistance in Kumamoto in various capacities while being affected by the earthquake themselves. You will also see suggestions from experts on disaster relief activities, as well as links to useful resources regarding aid provision.

In 2020, Kumamoto had been not only affected by the COVID-19 pandemic but was also struck by another natural disaster, this time flooding caused by torrential rain that was part of the July 2020 Kyushu Floods. Response to the floods took place while communities were still recovering from the earthquake. For the relief providers, this was a time of trial responding to the disaster during the new coronavirus pandemic. They had to shift their thinking drastically from their usual method of overcoming disasters by bringing many helpers and working together to a new one better fit for the times.

Floods and earthquakes occur in many parts of Japan every single year. It has been said that super disasters can hit Japan in the near future, such as the Nankai Megathrust Earthquake or a megaquake occurring directly under the Tokyo metropolitan area.

It is our sincere hope that as you refer to this booklet before and during your assistance activities as well as when you decide to end them, it will offer help to you in providing better support to those in need.

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*This booklet refers to examples of Japan Platform's (JPF) aid and relief activities within Japan and overseas.

Kumamoto Castle tower after the completion of restoration work

