



From Relief to Reconstruction

Japan Multicultural Relief Fund · 3rd Annual Newsletter 2013

PHOTO COURTESY OF PACHARA YAMAZAKI



PHOTO COURTESY OF AMELIA SASAKI

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Dear Supporters,

It's hard to believe another year has passed and it's been nearly three years since the Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami. News of the effects of radiation spillage is continuing to come from Fukushima, but this hasn't prevented the people of the region from rising up and rebuilding their home.

The creation of a supportive multicultural community in the Tohoku region couldn't have been accomplished without your generous donations to the Japan Multicultural Relief Fund (JMRF). Going strong in its third year, we have developed several vital, exciting services: a national multi-lingual crisis hotline service; a program to train bilingual hotline counselors and their Japanese allies; established a network of local support groups to facilitate follow-up visits to survivors living in isolated rural regions of Tohoku; and strategized to provide commu-

nity building skills for and by minority women survivors of domestic violence and of the disaster. JMRF plays a crucial role in patching up a community in the aftermath of disaster—but what makes us truly stand out is our commitment to the kind of long-term change that will ensure a diverse and inclusive community for residents of the Tohoku region.

The next step for us is to continue leading projects for and by minority women in Japan for their independence and empowerment. We are committed to focusing on counselor training as well as developing educational materials to raise awareness and

understanding about marginalized communities in Japan.

We are grateful for your annual support. As you'll see in the pages of this newsletter, every contribution has made a meaningful difference in the lives of these very courageous on-the-ground individuals.

Please renew your tax-deductible gift today this holiday season.

Thank you for choosing JMRF for your giving.
Happy holidays!

In community,

Miho Kim
Zainichi Korean and Co-Representative of JMRF,
Member, Eclipse Rising



PHOTO COURTESY OF
THE DATA CENTER

Special Interview

Laying the Foundation for Diverse Communities: Immigrant Women Help to Shape Japan's Future

JMRF is honored to introduce to you two women with whom we partner in organizing projects by and for non-Japanese women survivors of the disaster in Tohoku. Pachara Yamazaki, a survivor of domestic violence, manages a multi-lingual hotline group staffed by immigrant women, called WAELAA WAAREE, it means "time of gentle river stream" in Thai. Amelia Sasaki has been a Miyagi community leader for three decades. After the Tohoku earthquakes, she led the community recovery in Minami Sanriku, organizing Filipina women.

Pachara Yamazaki Founder of WAELAA WAAREE

JMRF: What's your motivation, and how did you get involved in hotline counseling?

Pachara: As a domestic violence survivor, I knew fellow migrant women are vulnerable to sexual and domestic violence. When I joined the government pilot hotline program in 2011, I found the highest numbers of calls were from Thai women married to Japanese. As a Thai woman, I felt responsible for those women's safety and survival, and their fundamental right to pursue happiness. I know government services for foreign residents aren't widely known due to language and cultural barriers, so I wanted to connect people who need help with the resources created for them.

JMRF: What are the realities faced by non-Japanese women in disaster-stricken areas? Tell us what you've found through your hotline services.

Pachara: At shelters and temporary housing they often face sexual harassment and violence by Japanese men who view non-Japanese women useless beyond their sexuality. They harassed women, trying to force them into sex, and there were said to be cases of rape. These female survivors had

no choice but to remain in the housing because they'd lost everything in the disaster. These incidents have been kept hidden amid Japan's national recovery efforts, as Japanese nationalism overrides and denies voices of marginalized people.

JMRF: Are there any trends or common circumstances among those seeking help?

Pachara: The majority of the women who call us are homemakers in their 30s and 40s married to Japanese men, and many of them are facing multiple, interconnected issues. A typical story is a non-Japanese woman suffering domestic violence. She wants a divorce, but needs to endure the violence to renew her visa in order to stay in Japan and raise her children. We also have many cases involving women who were forcefully brought to Japan through sex trafficking.

JMRF: What is the background of WAELAA WAAREE counselors?

Pachara: The majority of our twenty registered counselors are bilingual non-Japanese women who have experienced sexual or domestic violence but managed to survive, and

gained financial and legal independence through social welfare services and job training. They've also worked in various social welfare services.

JMRF: What is the most rewarding experience?

Pachara: I first thought I was helping our clients, but I realized that we were helping each other. If our client's situation improves, the people around her will have better lives. I appreciate this cycle of mutual support; it's why our work is so important.

JMRF: What's your next step? What would you like to tell Americans?

Pachara: In order to become skillful and knowledgeable counselors, we want to do more counselor training. Because the government budget is likely to run out, WAELAA WAAREE and other groups are unsure to what extent our hotline service can continue, and we urgently need your support! Please help us continue this important hotline service so crucial to women's survival!!

PHOTO COURTESY OF AMELIA SASAKI



PHOTO COURTESY OF PACHARA YAMAZAKI



Knitting Communities Together: Sansa Café Continues Making Minami Sanriku a Home for All

Since its opening in Minami-Sanriku, Miyagi prefecture, Sansa Café has served not only as a popular eatery where local survivors share delicious hot meals but also as a space for the multi-generational and multicultural members of the community to rebuild their lives.

The café's leadership team includes low-income immigrant women and single mothers, but people of all ages come to Sansa Café every day.

The café has become home to Sanshins Junior, a local children's band specialized in

the *sanshin*, a traditional Okinawan musical instrument. The band, which performs locally and as far away as Okinawa, formed while survivors still lived in evacuation housing, using Sansa Café as a studio.

Initially, Sansa Café was run by volunteer labor until a network among supporters across Japan was developed. A JMRF grant (made possible with your generous support!) provided the necessary upfront capital to stabilize its infrastructure so that the team could shift their focus onto the operations of the facility.

To support the Café, volunteers and supporters all over the country have been mobilized. First, volunteers knit small keychains, which are then wrapped with Sansa Café postcards

by the project team. These are sold around Japan to subsidize meal vouchers issued to local residents in Minami Sanriku. As of June 2013, more than 2,200 meals have been provided through this campaign.

More than two years have passed since the disaster, but the reconstruction process remains slow, and some have left town for more viable livelihood. Sansa Café continues to be an invaluable community center that provides hope for the future, one meal at a time.

You made this wonderful development in Minami Sanriku possible. Thank you for your support!

Amelia Sasaki Founder of Sampaguita

JMRF: How did you start Sampaguita?

Amelia: I came to Japan over 30 years ago to learn Japanese and interpretation after college in the Philippines. I ended up settling in Sizugawa, Miyagi prefecture, with my Japanese husband and kids, where I had a hard time being accepted by local Japanese. I saw fellow Filipino women, also married to Japanese men in rural Miyagi, going through the same struggles, and I felt a responsibility to help them integrate. That's how Sampaguita started.

JMRF: What are your current activities?

Amelia: We provide weekly Japanese lessons and a bi-weekly computer literacy course to Filipino women, free of charge. Knowing Japanese was essential to the survival of Filipinos when the tsunami hit: many of them were unfamiliar with the words for "evacuate" or "hill" (there were orders given to "evacuate uphill") in Japanese, and subsequently two Filipino women in my area were killed by the tsunami. Mothers need to be fluent in written Japanese in order to communicate with their schools and fellow community members, on behalf of their mixed race children. Finally, language and computer skills enable Filipino women to explore other career paths than

working at night in the entertainment industry, which is unfortunately one of the only options for many Filipinas.

JMRF: What are you most proud of?

Amelia: After the Tohoku earthquake and tsunami, Filipino women gained visibility and took assertive roles in their families and communities. Their continued, dedicated work was ultimately recognized by the local Japanese despite deeply ingrained racial and ethnic prejudices, and I can finally say they've become full members of the community.

JMRF: What are the challenges?

Amelia: Money is always an issue. We have a lot of ideas in mind, but it's hard to gain financial support. Also, I make sure to talk to the Japanese husbands of the Filipino women—before their wives participate in Sampaguita—to help them understand how important it is for Filipina wives to learn Japanese and build community with other Filipinas. With their family's support, women are more likely to stay involved with Sampaguita.

JMRF: What's your next step? What would you like to tell Americans?

Amelia: We're preparing to open a crafts shop. I hope this will help us create a sustainable structure for our community's economic development, which I believe will lead to the empowerment of Filipinas, and cultivate more friendship and trust with Japanese people! We need support from everyone to continue our on-going programs and start new ones!!



Interviewer
Kyung Hee Ha

"I had the honor of learning how these women leaders transformed difficult situations into great opportunities, exposing post-3.11 Japan's failure to address issues confronting marginalized populations; and rising to bring about a more inclusive, culturally-sensitive model of community in Tohoku and beyond!"

“They Couldn’t Understand ‘Takadai’ (Hilltop); Only Community Support Can Help [Foreigners],”

– The Chunichi Shimbun, October 17th, 2011

Many foreigners in disaster-stricken areas lost their lives because they did not understand Japanese such as “Takadai Ni Hinan (evacuate uphill).” A seafood manufacturing company in Onagawa, Miyagi was a rare case, in that all 162 Chinese trainees at its 19 factories evacuated safely due to the efforts made by their Japanese co-workers. The survival of non-Japanese residents depends on the support and consciousness of their Japanese allies in the case of an emergency.

The ongoing Fukushima nuclear accident has made many areas no-go zones.
(PHOTO COURTESY OF TRAI)



Many shelters are closed because of government budget.
(PHOTO COURTESY OF TRAI)

From Tragedy

“Atomic Divorce: Fukushima Disaster Survivors Suffering Marital Discord,”

– The Japan Daily Press, February 25, 2013 (available at <http://japandailypress.com/atomic-divorce-fukushima-disaster-survivors-suffering-marital-discord-2524003>)

Cases of discrimination against people from Fukushima are slowly rising within Japanese society. “We are starting to see more cases of suicide, depression, alcoholism, gambling, and domestic violence across the area,” says psychologist Noriko Kubota.

“Spousal Abuse Grows in Disaster Areas—Over 60% in Fukushima Alone—Child Abuse Reaches Historic Highs [2 years After the Earthquake],”

– Jiji Press, March 10, 2013

Domestic violence (DV) and child abuse in Japan’s tsunami and nuclear disaster zone have risen dramatically, increasing over 64% in Fukushima since 2011. Wives are particularly vulnerable to spousal violence within the confines of small temporary housing. Child abuse cases reached a record high in 2012, with a 76% increase in Fukushima, and Miyagi reported a 42% increase in emotional abuse of children from effects of witnessing DV.



Radiation level exceeds the measureable limit with Geiger counter in Fukushima. (PHOTO COURTESY OF TRAI)

Raised public awareness about the 'hidden' realities of ongoing ethnic discrimination in Japan!

In the regional conference on the 2nd anniversary of the Fukushima nuclear accident, JMRF co-founder and advisor Sugok Shin reported to an audience of 3,500, including members of NGOs and governmental representatives, about the underreported realities of discrimination against non-Japanese and single mothers living in disaster-stricken areas. As a Zainichi Korean human rights advocate, she co-founded "Norikoe Net (We Shall Overcome Network)" to educate the public and organize against discrimination and hate speech. JMRF and Norikoe Net have worked to increase media coverage of discrimination against migrants in Japan and have raised awareness nationally by appearing in major media. We see this as an important first step to effectively ensure that all people in Japan have the resources to eradicate racism and prejudice.



TRAI Founder/JMRF Advisor Sugok Shin leads anti-nuke marchers. (PHOTO COURTESY OF TRAI)

To Hope

Launched Japan's first-ever national, multi-lingual hotline for minority survivors! Reached 600+ cases nationwide!

The JMRF supported multi-lingual hotline group WAELAA WAAREE, run by foreign-born women has grown into a 9 language service, and has been incorporated into national support operations. For a long time, non-Japanese women have been perceived as foreigners and denied access to support services; those who don't speak Japanese have even less access. WAELAA WAAREE fills the critical gap between needs and services for many isolated, destitute women determined to find resources and community. The hotline consulted with women over the phone in 600 cases, and assisted 72 cases with in-person support and intervention. Many counseling groups and Japanese ally organizations worked collaboratively to follow up difficult cases, as well as for mutual trainings. As a result, the "Fukushima Round Table for Migrant Support" was convened nationally by the Social Inclusion Support Center, featuring Thai women as leaders. Foreign women are no longer mere "clients" but are becoming real contributors toward a diverse Japan.

Established Japanese-language classes by, and for, non-Japanese residents in Minami Sanriku!

The Filipina women's group "Sampaquita," led by Amelia Sasaki, organized Japanese-language and computer literacy classes at Sansa Café, a multi-cultural community center dining hall established by JMRF and the Solidarity Network with Migrants Japan (SMJ) in 2012. Amelia tirelessly reaches out to the surviving family members of those women to provide moral support and encouragement to continue attending classes. The group's next objective is to build a craft shop to promote economic independence for non-Japanese women in the region, and to foster mutual understanding with local Japanese.

JMRF By The Numbers

945,000

Magazine articles and reports distributed nationwide through media outreach

15,704

Services provided to individuals via our presentations and workshops

630

Hours of work provided by the hotline workers

600

Calls received by our multi-lingual hotline

400

Non-Japanese survivors interviewed in Ishinomaki City

70

Referrals provided to partnered organizations

60

Organizations networked by our project

40

Bilingual hotline workers trained



PHOTO COURTESY OF TRAI

Fukushima, the New Caste with an Old Familiar History

understand. We need a hotline for them to get help in their own languages.

Single Mothers Blame Themselves

Japanese media's narrative of fathers and mothers in "normative families" helping children recover from trauma of earthquake, tsunami and nuclear disaster made single mothers feel it's their fault their children have difficulties. They blame themselves for not having a "normative family," not providing for their children. Many worked 2 or 3 part-time jobs, without benefits, to meet basic needs. Now there are fewer jobs, and they suffer even more. Their debts grow ever faster.

Discrimination

After 3.11, foreign-based insurance firms refused to sell cancer insurance to Fukushima residents because of their high risk. Hotels refused to rent to Fukushima residents because other guests feared them. At an evacuation shelter, cars were destroyed. At schools, children were bullied, told their bodies were radioactive, and were contaminating others. This caused mental disturbance for many children. Many feel divided, their "life" left behind, for futures uncertain of relief, in hell although they evacuated from the radiation.

Fukushima is the new "Buraku (an outcaste group at the bottom of Japanese society)." Discrimination against Fukushima means that discrimination against the 2nd and 3rd generation survivors of the atomic bombs in Nagasaki and Hiroshima. 3.11 caused similar environmental pollution and victimization of vulnerable people to those atomic bombs. We must build a society where people work together against the nuclear industry, without discrimination against those who suffer, who are vulnerable. This is our way to see justice in life.

Sugok Shin

Co-Founder of Trans-Pacific Research Action Institute (TRAJ), and Advisor to the Japan Multicultural Relief Fund (JMRF)

From Sugok Shin's Speech at the "Bye Bye Genpatsu (Nuclear Power Plant) 3.9 Kyoto." Translated by: Eclipse Rising and JPRN Volunteers, available at <http://youtu.be/LiWATq6Djho>

How Can I Help You Today: Voices of Our Multi-lingual Hotline Clients

(All names have been changed to protect privacy)

Min-Jee, Married, Zainichi Korean, 40's

After the tsunami destroyed her house and killed her father, Min-Jee had to care for her mother with dementia and her depressed sister while living in a shelter. She traveled four hours roundtrip every day to bring them supplies. The psychological trauma of discrimination Zainichi face every day often makes them afraid to seek government assistance; counselors in the disaster area don't understand discrimination experienced by non-Japanese, so are unable to provide proper support. Her mental health was compromised, but through the Iwate Teachers Union she was able to arrange shelter, transportation, and minority counseling for her mother. Her situation is improving, and she's still receiving help.

Dakila, Single Mother, Filipino, 30's

Dakila, a divorced domestic violence survivor, was irregularly employed before 3.11. She wasn't able to leave her workplace during the disaster, and her child was left alone in the exclusion zone and suffered serious radiation exposure, for which she blamed herself. Her mental health suffered. She abandoned Fukushima, but returned when villagers wanted her back. Her child became depressed and stopped studying, saying "My life is over." Trans-Pacific and Action Institute (TRAJ) guided her to Filipino events and churches, who introduced her to volunteers from the Fukushima International Association. She attended their study meetings, and with their support was able to find new employment.

I've been going to Fukushima, Miyagi and Iwate prefectures for two years because 90,000 foreign nationals were living there on 3.11. Twenty-three were confirmed dead; I wanted to know what happened to the others.

"Resilient victims who keep trying" on TV: I've never met them. Nuclear accidents destroy bodies, spirits, dignity, everything else. It's often hard to connect, as survivors don't know whom to talk to. If they mention radiation in Fukushima, they're attacked, ignored or excluded.

Suppressed Emotions And Violence

Parents and children suppress their emotions, but they end up expressed toward women and other children, with increased domestic violence. A woman in temporary housing asked me to tell the Ministry not to raise cigarette prices: "Only when my husband smokes outside, does he not hit me."

Foreign-Born Wives

Non-Japanese wives called me from the exclusion zone during 3.11, saying, "There's no Japanese here;" they didn't know the Japanese words, "Genpatsu (nuclear power plant)" or "Takadai Ni Hinan (evacuate uphill)" and they were left behind. Many women from the Philippines, Thailand, South Korea, China and Vietnam married Japanese men in the three prefectures; but with no multi-lingual support. For two years they tried to speak to me in Japanese, but when I ask, "What really happened? How do you feel now?" they suddenly speak their native tongue, which I don't

2012 Annual Report

2012 Financial Statements

Statement of Financial Activities (Unaudited) Year Ended December 31, 2012

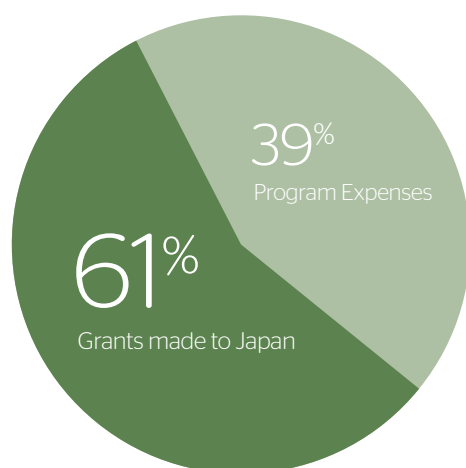
Total Revenue	62,970.00
Total Expenses	75,671.53

Revenue

Total Revenue	62,970.00
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Expenses

Grants made to Japan (Multi-lingual Hotline Project)	46,121.75
Salaries and benefits	15,806.70
Insurance	3,704.80
Accounting and legal fees	1,099.40
Professional fees and services	3,905.00
Telephone, Email	1,440.00
Office supplies, printing and postage	2,526.79
Equipment	560.25
Bank Services	70.00
Misc.	436.84
Total Expenses	75,671.53



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Thanks to all the donors who make our work possible.
For a list of a supporters and donors, see relief.jpnr.org



The JMRF was selected as a 2013 grantee by Spark, an enthusiastic group of young women and men who invest in grassroots women's empowerment organizations around the world:

"The pool of applicants has been very competitive this year. Spark members felt that your work in under-resourced communities in Japan stood out and was deserving of our support. Thank you for the important work you do. We are looking forward to supporting JMRF with a grant and pro bono services."

— Shannon Farley, Executive Director

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Our Mission

The Japan Multicultural Relief Fund (JMRF) is a U.S.-based grantmaking program jointly established by Japan Pacific Resource Network (JPRN) and Eclipse Rising (ER) in March 2011 in the wake of the Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami. JMRF is dedicated to the empowerment and leadership by and for vulnerable communities in the post Tohoku disaster region towards an inclusive and multicultural Japanese society.

Eclipse Rising (ER) is an organization of, by, and for Zainichi Koreans, or postcolonial exiles of Korean descent in Japan. ER recognizes and celebrates the rich and unique history of Zainichi Koreans in Japan, promotes Zainichi community development, peace, and reunification in the Korean Peninsula, and social justice for all oppressed groups in Japan, the United States, and beyond, through transnational education, advocacy, and solidarity.

JMRF posts news updates from community partners on its website.
Tax-deductible donations can be made online at relief.jprn.org.

For questions and inquiries, please contact
JPRN at (510) 891-9045 or info@jprn.org.

More about JPRN: jprn.org
Eclipse Rising: eclipsesrising.blogspot.com

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