Supporting Areas Struck by Natural Disaster

Natural disasters are a tragic part of life in every part of the world, and local communities damaged in disasters need help with reconstruction. The Ajinomoto Group uses the expertise gained through its food and healthcare businesses to provide support for each area’s particular needs.

Highlight

Assisting areas of the Philippines affected by Typhoon Haiyan

Typhoon Haiyan swept across the central Philippines on November 8, 2013, causing widespread devastation, especially on Leyte and Samar islands. The casualties included approximately 6,200 dead and more than 16 million people affected. Some 1.14 million homes were destroyed, and the economic damage was estimated at US$887 million. (Based on figures released in January 2014.)

The Ajinomoto Group established its first subsidiary in the Philippines in 1958 and currently operates 36 business locations there, including one on Leyte Island. Although employees of the Leyte office and their families escaped unharmed, some of their homes sustained serious damage. AJINOMOTO PHILIPPINES CORPORATION stepped in to ensure that affected employees received food, water, and medical supplies, and company managers volunteered to visit disaster areas and employees raised funds and helped organize aid supplies.

Ajinomoto Co., Inc. donated some 10 million yen (US$95,000) to the Philippine Red Cross to support recovery efforts, and companies of the Ajinomoto Group and its workers union council raised some US$38,000 in donations. Of these funds, US$22,000 was donated to Gawad Kalinga Development Foundation, Inc., an NGO operating in the Philippines, while the remaining funds were donated to employees of AJINOMOTO PHILIPPINES CORPORATION who were affected by the typhoon, to help them rebuild their homes and lives.

Employees of AJINOMOTO PHILIPPINES CORPORATION express their thanks for the support.
Highlight

Assisting reconstruction after the Great East Japan Earthquake (1)

I Donating a portion of proceeds to recovery efforts
The Ajinomoto Group donates a portion of the proceeds from certain products to aid reconstruction in areas that were affected by the Great East Japan Earthquake.

The “Joy of Food” project

Ajinomoto Co., Inc. continues to implement the “Joy of Food” project, which gives customers the opportunity to support reconstruction in Tohoku by purchasing food products. In fiscal 2013, the company conducted the following programs under the project.

• One yen for every box of Knorr® Cup Soup (photo below) shipped in August and September 2013 was donated to the non-profit organization, Fukko Yataimura, for a total of 9 million yen. This donation has been used for a meal delivery project which helps elderly people with health or nutrition issues in temporary housing in the Kesennuma area.

Ajinomoto Co., Inc. also organized a meeting in collaboration with the “Joy of Food” project and the Ajinomoto Group’s “Red Apron Project” to help owners of local food stalls to develop a new delivery menu.

Assistance for farmers

For the third year in a row, Ajinomoto Frozen Foods Co., Inc. donated one yen from the sale of each package of frozen Gyoza Chinese dumplings shipped October–December 2013. The initiative raised 22,296,000 yen to assist reconstruction in the Tohoku area. The funds were donated to three organizations that are working to restore agriculture in Tohoku. Over the last three years, the initiative has raised almost 71,794,000 yen.

Assistance for potters

Ajinomoto General Foods, Inc. donated a portion of the proceeds from sales of Blendy® instant coffee to assist the pottery industry in Tohoku with needed repairs. In fiscal 2013, the funds enabled the repair of kilns used to make Bakke-yaki pottery in Miyagi Prefecture. Pottery makers and local residents gathered to mark the occasion over tea.

In addition to donating funds, Ajinomoto Frozen Foods Co., Inc. highlights the activities of the assistance organizations on its website to publicize the work being done to restore agriculture in Tohoku. These activities range from rice and cotton harvesting in the fall and winter, respectively, to work being done by the company’s employees who give their time to help the organizations.

In fiscal 2014, the focus of the initiative will shift from repairs to efforts aimed at reviving the pottery industry in Tohoku.

Ajinomoto Group Sustainability Report 2014
The Ajinomoto Group operates the “Red Apron Project” to support reconstruction after the Great East Japan Earthquake. Launched in October 2011, the project revolves around Health and Nutrition Seminars for residents of temporary housing.

Supporting people living in temporary housing

The “Red Apron Project” revolves around the implementation of Health and Nutrition Seminars, which were launched in order to address health and nutritional challenges faced by residents of temporary housing as well as the fading sense of community among residents. The seminars bring residents together to prepare delicious meals and enjoy conversation, supporting both the physical and mental health of temporary housing residents.

Meeting the needs of disaster areas

The Ajinomoto Group’s “Red Apron Project” is expanding the scope of its initiatives to address the specific circumstances and needs of areas affected by the disaster.

Nutrition and Health problems faced by temporary housing residents

1. Increased risk of diabetes, kidney disease, and heart trouble
2. Vitamin and mineral deficiency caused by lack of vegetables
3. Reluctance to prepare food (fewer items prepared and less often)
4. Fewer opportunities for conversation, due to the destruction of communities
5. Risk of alcohol dependency

*Based on interviews with professionals on the ground.*

Efforts focused on residents of temporary housing

In the three years since the Great East Japan Earthquake, the percentage of elderly among temporary housing residents has grown steadily. The Health and Nutrition Seminars supply information to improve daily nutrition for the elderly, e.g., reducing salt intake and eating more vegetables. It also engages public nurses, dental hygienists, and other professionals to help with strategies for maintaining and improving health. Seniors enjoy the valuable opportunity to gather and enjoy conversation, which helps to prevent isolation.

For children (Secrets of Taste)

Residents of the Tohoku region are known for having high salt intake, making it important to educate children’s palates as part of the strategy to reduce salt intake. The Ajinomoto Group conducts food and taste workshops at schools, using them to teach children about umami as a crucial way of reducing salt intake. These workshops are conducted at preschools that serve children from families who are living in temporary housing. The workshops also feature the endearing Umami-kun character to reach out to children.

For the support community

Many residents of temporary housing still face the uncertainty of not knowing when they might be able to move into permanent public housing for disaster victims. Furthermore, people are continuing to assist disaster areas, not knowing what the future holds. The “Red Apron Project” also develops and implements programs for this support community, by conducting nutrition workshops that emphasize the importance of reducing salt intake and eating protein.
Working in the field to assist disaster areas

As of March 2014, approximately 100,000 people were still living in temporary housing. There is growing demand for the activities of the “Red Apron Project” in the disaster-stricken area.

In response, the Ajinomoto Group established a new office for the “Red Apron Project” in Iwaki City, Fukushima Prefecture in August 2014. This will help the project to expand and better respond to needs in the field.

Feedback received on the “Red Apron Project”

“I appreciate how the company embraces its social responsibilities as a leading food company.”

I am very grateful to the Ajinomoto Group for its long-term commitment to assisting disaster areas, from shortly after the disaster until temporary housing becomes a thing of the past.

The reconstruction support activities of the Ajinomoto Group are led by its employees. The Group has taken it upon itself to assist disaster areas by tackling the challenge of improving the diet and health of residents of temporary housing. This type of commitment is rare among Japanese companies, and it shows that the Ajinomoto Group is embracing its social responsibilities as a leading food company.

It has been three years since the disaster. Areas that were affected by the disaster continue to face difficulties, and nearly 90,000 people are still living in temporary housing. Simply moving these people from temporary housing to public housing is not enough to significantly improve their lives. Government workers are doing everything they can, but these people also need continued support from companies with extensive resources. I sincerely hope that the Ajinomoto Group will continue to support people in the disaster-stricken area over the long term.

Yoshihiro Murai
Governor, Miyagi Prefecture

Multiple offices reflect a commitment to efforts rooted in local communities

The Ajinomoto Group should be praised for its efforts to assist disaster areas. The staff are attentive to what is happening in municipalities across three prefectures, and they understand the issues in the field, even though the situation is constantly evolving. The Group continues to develop initiatives to address these issues, with a clear focus on food and health.

The Group has built an extensive network that encompasses residents, government, and the support community. It has made a concentrated effort to identify groups that are vulnerable and find ways to support them, in communities affected by the disaster. These include helping persons with disabilities and food education for children in disaster areas.

The decision to open a new office of the “Red Apron Project” in Fukushima, three years after the disaster, reflects the commitment of the Group to pursue initiatives that are rooted in local communities. It is based on an objective understanding of where things stand at the moment and what will happen down the road. I hope the “Red Apron Project” will continue to expand and grow to encompass active collaboration with other companies and organizations.

Tetsuya Myojo
Director, Tohoku Office, Japan Platform

Tackling issues in ways only a private company can

I trained at Ajinomoto Co., Inc. for one year starting in April 2013, as part of a program that dispatches judges to learn about private sector companies. I became familiar with the “Red Apron Project” during this time, and became involved in the Health and Nutrition Seminars due to my office experience with the Koriyama branch of the Fukushima District Court.

Upon getting involved with the project, I was amazed to find that the company was working so closely with communities affected by the disaster. The Group is efficiently leveraging resources it has acquired through its business activities to address issues that have been brought into sharp relief because of the disaster, such as rapidly aging demographics and the socially vulnerable. The Group is tackling these issues in ways that only a private company can.

I hope that the Group would keep trying to publicize its efforts to reach even more people, and find ways to get more outside people involved to anchor and support its initiatives.

Ayumi Imamura
Assistant Judge, Yokohama Local District Court

Scope of activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Number</th>
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<tr>
<td>Total participants</td>
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<td>Events conducted</td>
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<tr>
<td>Places conducted</td>
<td>43 municipalities in three prefectures</td>
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<tr>
<td>Employees donating their own time</td>
<td>973</td>
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As of September 31, 2014

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