



# **Blessed are the Peacemakers**



## **Annual Report**

April 2011 - March 2012

# **YWCA of Japan**

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## President's Message



On March 11<sup>th</sup> 2011, we have experienced the great earthquake, the tsunami, and the Tokyo Electric power Company Fukushima Nuclear Plant Accident. Pain and struggle still remain. In the midst of this difficulty, we were encouraged and protected in your prayers and were able to work with Fukushima people in a coastal town called Shinchī-machi, and with Fukushima and Sendai YWCAs, which were both hit by the disasters. We were also able to implement programs to invite children and family from Fukushima to YWCAs in other prefectures. Furthermore, we were given an opportunity at the World YWCA Council in July 2011 to appeal the at-risk condition of children and women in Fukushima. In the following summer, some 200 youths had a fruitful experience in national and international programs such as the Japan-Korea Youth Conference, Pilgrimage to Hiroshima, and High School YWCAs Summer Conference. In November, we were blessed to have Nyaradzayi Gumbonzbanda, the World YWCA General Secretary to our YWCA Festa (membership gathering), which was held for the first time in 18 years! Although the scar is too deep, we are grateful for having many people to whom we can share our common mission through our activities.

The World YWCA has been showing solidarity with women in Okinawa and Fukushima in struggle. In the 56<sup>th</sup> CSW in New York, we have sent a delegate and expressed underprivileged condition of women in rural area including where there nuclear power plants were installed. We continue to appeal to the world “human beings cannot coexist with any forms of nuclear” and “peace with justice can only be achieved without oppression and violence”.

*Rejoice with those who rejoice; mourn with those who mourn. (Romans 12:15)*

I would like to emphasise today, we would like to be the ones who do rejoice with others, encourage one another, and work with others to move forward. Then, we also want to be the ones who stand beside those who mourn, and deliver the message to the world for them.

For sisters and brothers all around the world, staff members, partners, and program participants, I pray to the Lord for his mercy, protection, and guidance on us all.

**Naoko Matano**  
**President, YWCA of Japan**

## **Table of Contents**

President's Message ...p2
1. YWCA of Japan –Profile ...p4
2. 2011 Triple Disaster Response...p5
3. Vision 2015 of the YWCA of Japan ...p8
➤ No Nukes and Global Collaboration
➤ Summer Programs
4. Programs by Local Associations ...p11
➤ YWCA Festa in Nagasaki
➤ Okinawa YWCA
➤ Shonan YWCA
5. Junior & Senior High School YWCAs...p14
6. Global Arena: World YWCA Council, The 56 <sup>th</sup> CSW...p15
7. Contributions ...p16
8. Board Members and Staff ...p16

## 1. YWCA of Japan –Profile



✧ Local Associations.....	26
Members.....	2,513
Associate Members.....	326
✧ Jr./Sr. High School YWCAs.....	35
Members.....	557
✧ Program Beneficiaries.....	42,416
✧ Friends of YWCA of Japan.....	812

## **2. 2011 Triple Disaster Response**

### **For a safe and peaceful life for women and children**

Ever since the earthquake, tsunami, and the nuclear power plant accident in March 2011, the YWCA of Japan has been implementing a range of activities in collaboration with Christian churches, NGOs, and women's organizations. Based on our experience from the Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake in 1995, we quickly formed a special team to respond to the disaster.

The project team spent a month to carefully and thoroughly investigate people's needs, particularly of women and children, and developed network and trust in the disaster affected areas.

By the end of April 2011 (in a month and a half period since March 11), emergency actions such as food and water delivery was completed and we shifted our target to the following three areas.

- 1. Provision of programs and place for those who flee from radioactive contamination**
- 2. Care for mental health, counselling**
- 3. Sending volunteers and coordinators to damaged areas for labour and program implementation**



In Fukushima particular, the Tokyo Electric Power Company's nuclear plant accident has caused people unimaginable sufferings. Whether to flee or to remain, a decision will affect their life almost eternally that people hold heavy stress within them and that is also causing them health problems. Acknowledging such complexity, YWCA of Japan provides flexible services such as house/room for those who want to flee and detoxification programs/counselling/short stay for those who remain. Regular measuring of radiation levels by Geiger counter is necessary for people to make decision to flee as well as for remaining people to take the best practice to avoid excessive exposure to radiation.



## 1. Provision of programs and place for those who flee from radioactive contamination

### Housing Support

- ❖ Summer 2011 : 9 local YWCAs across Japan coordinated houses for 14 families 42 people.
- ❖ Winter 2011–2012 : 7 local YWCAs, 9 families 36 people.

### Seasonal Camps (detoxification and emotional stress care)



For those who cannot leave the damaged hometown for various reasons, invitation to our seasonal events and camps were made available. Support within Fukushima prefecture remain needed, Fukushima YWCA provided events for the people to gather.

#### Summer 2011:

- ❖ Sapporo YWCA: Summer Camp, groups of 10 children and parent(s), 20 participants
- ❖ Fukushima YWCA: Cultural activity for relaxation “calligraphy”, 21 children
- ❖ Tokyo YWCA: Summer Camp, 29 children
- ❖ Kyoto YWCA: Summer Kids Program, 14 children and 2 adults
- ❖ Osaka YWCA: Summer Camp, 12 children and 5 adults
- ❖ Kobe YWCA: Summer Camp, 11 children and 3 adults
- ❖ Fukuoka YWCA: Summer Camp, groups of 6 children and parent(s), 22 participants
- ❖ YWCA of Japan: Pilgrimage to Hiroshima invited 6 youth for free
- ❖ YWCA of Japan: Japan–Korea Youth Conference invited 3 youth for free
- ❖ Shonan YWCA: Symposium “Mental care for children”, 22 participants
- ❖ Fukushima, Osaka, Kobe, Hiroshima, Kure YWCAs: Symposium “Radiation and Situation in Fukushima After 4 Months”

#### Winter 2011–12 :

- ❖ Sapporo & Hakodate YWCAs: groups of 14 children and parent(s), 31 participants
- ❖ Hiroshima YWCA: Hiroshima–Fukushima Youth Meets Through Art, 17 students and 5 adults
- ❖ Fukushima & Japan YWCA: Christmas Concert, 30 participants

## 2. Care for mental health, counselling

### Counselling through TV

Nagoya YWCA, the only YWCA that can provide a professional counselling service, works for pupils in 3 elementary schools in Shинchi-machi, a Fukushima northern coastal town. The video conference system kindly provided by Cisco Systems, Inc. made this communication in far distance possible.

### Volunteers and Care Station in Sendai

Sendai YWCA, one of YWCAs hit by the earthquake, opened its survived facility to volunteers to station, for space to implement counselling services, and for volunteer trainings. From April to November 2011, programs such as short trip to safer areas for mental relaxation, mental care and empowerment workshop, volunteer trainings were held. 15 to 20 participated each time thus total participants count nearly 200.

## 3. Sending volunteers and coordinators to damaged areas for labour and program implementation

**Emergency Action:** Our YWCA members and staffs supported the following as volunteer workers and volunteer coordinators.

❖ Sendai Christian Alliance Disaster Relief Network(TOHOKU HELP)

April to August, 2011, 13 volunteers for the head office management

❖ Shинchi-machi Disaster Response Volunteer Center

April to August, 2011, 40 volunteers for emergency labour and volunteer coordination

**The Second Phase Action:** Study support volunteer for junior high school students in Shинchi-machi, Fukushima. October to present, 2 teaching volunteers a month.

Immediately after the earthquake and the series of disasters, YWCAs and friends across the world forwarded us heart-touching and empowering messages, and kindly offered material and monetary support and prayers. We thank you from our heart, we never forget your care and solidarity. The scar still left on the northern coastal areas and radioactive contamination never disappears from our land and from the earth. Furthermore, the damaged nuclear power plant continues to be in a severe condition. However in Japan, there is a feeling that the disaster is one of “past” experiences. YWCA of Japan reconfirms our mission is to continue to raise our voices for the life of people in suffering.

### 3. Vision 2015 of the YWCA of Japan

The YWCA of Japan launched “Vision 2015 of the YWCA of Japan” at the 29<sup>th</sup> National Council in November 2006, which consists of the following six movement priorities for the next 9 years. Our goal is to achieve peace in society through non-violent and non-nuclear strategies and with women’s leadership. Details of the movement priorities are available on “Annual Report 2006–2007, 2007–2008”.

<http://www.ywca.or.jp/english/report.html>

#### **Six Priorities:**

1. Develop peace in society without nuclear technology and without violence.
2. Retain Article 9 of the Japanese Constitution that renounces war and possession of military forces, and expand globally the principle of the article.
3. Peacemaking in Northeast Asia through civil network and solidarity.
4. Protect women and children’s rights
5. Support and work in solidarity with the YWCA of Palestine for peace in the region.
6. Develop young women’s leadership

#### ➤ **No Nukes and Global Collaboration**



The year 2011 started with a great tragedy caused by the earthquake, tsunami, and the nuclear plant accident in March. YWCA of Japan received numerous contributions, countless prayers, and immeasurable solidarity from sisters and friends around the world, and that give us power to move forward from despair.

Besides support and relief works for the survivors, the YWCA of Japan re-focused on

the abolition of all forms of nukes which has been our priority agenda since 1970. Because it has been our focus, the YWCA of Japan is in deep regret that we could not stop the social dependency on nuclear energy and technology before our country ended up having 54 nuclear plants.

The YWCA of Japan called different levels of actions locally and globally. In March 2011, right after the accident in Fukushima prefecture, we demanded Japanese government and the electric power company immediate stop of the nuke plant in Shizuoka prefecture which is located on a zone of active faults which may cause earthquakes, and a powerful aftershock was concerned to cause another plant accident. Later in May, the concerned plant was stopped operation by the Prime minister’s (Mr. Kan) order.



Soon after the government order, the Cabinet was re-organized. The new Cabinet under a new prime minister (Mr. Noda) pushed the Atomic Energy Agreement with several countries including Jordan, Korea, Russia, Vietnam, India, South Africa, and Turkey, while the damaged nuclear plant in Japan was still in severe condition and no single effective protection and compensation measures were found here in Japan. The YWCA of Japan called an action around the world to send a message to the Japanese prime minister and ambassadors of the countries to re-consider and cancel the agreement. Many people joined the action though the agreements are still effective that more action is needed to prevent people, especially children and young women, from suffering from radiation, community disruption, and loss of local business due to monopoly by big nuclear business.

Later in January 14–15, 2012, the Global Conference for a Nuclear Power Free World was held in Yokohama, Japan, where speakers from Fukushima and dozens of countries gathered. The YWCA of Japan was a supporter organization and met with Ms. Mona Makhamreh, a member of the YWCA of Jordan who was here as a speaker. Her presence encouraged us to be sure that nuclear plant abolition really was a shared agenda around the world and among YWCAs.

The petition “10 Million People’s Action to say Goodbye to Nuclear Power Plants” started by a group of NGOs and famous novelist, journalist, musicians, and professionals in Japan. The YWCA of Japan joined it as a support organization and invited people locally and globally to participate to the action. At the World YWCA Council in July 2011, and by individual YWCAs’ around the world, nearly 2,700 signatures from the global sisters and brothers of YWCAs/YMCAs were collected for the abolition of nuclear power plants!



“The YWCA of Japan Policy Statement on Women and Girls Right to a Nuclear Free World” was appealed and handed to the World YWCA on July 16<sup>th</sup>, 2011, at the 27<sup>th</sup> World YWCA Council business session and its essence was partially included in the world YWCA statement on CSW 2012 in New York. The YWCA of Japan Policy Statement is available on the website <http://www.ywca.or.jp/english/topnews.html>

## ➤ **Summer Programs**

Despite the disaster, we are blessed to be given opportunities to have annual peace-making programs this summer.

Detail of report is available on our website <http://www.ywca.or.jp/english/topnews.html>



### ❖ **Korea-Japan Youth Conference 2011**

Theme: “The Korea-Japan Youth March for the Peaceful World: Living Together with North Korean Defectors and ethnic Koreans in Japan”

Host and venue: YWCA of Korea, Seoul, Korea

Schedule: August 30<sup>th</sup> – September 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2011

Participants: 22 youth from Japan, 42 youth from Korea

### ❖ **Pilgrimage to Hiroshima 2011**

Theme: “Remembering and Passing on”

Venue: Hiroshima, Japan

Schedule: August 8<sup>th</sup> – 10<sup>th</sup>, 2011

Participants: 26 youth, 3 guests from YWCA of China, 19 adults



## **4. Programs by Local Associations**

*Local Associations in Japan provide services to meet the needs of local populations particularly of women, children, elderly people, and foreign nationals in communities.*

### < Main community services of YWCAs in Japan >

- Classes: peacemaking, Bible study, foreign languages, volunteer works, environmental issues

- Health and physical education and programs, including day care services, counselling
- Outdoor education and camps
- Peer educator programs for youth
- Support group and activity for/with; foreign nationals, international students, women with small children, survivors of domestic violence

## ➤ **YWCA Festa in Nagasaki**

Theme: Women Creating a Safe World

(following the World YWCA Conference theme)

Guest: Nyaradzayi Gumbonzbanda,  
the World YWCA General Secretary  
3 guests from YWCA of Taiwan

Date: November 26<sup>th</sup> –27<sup>th</sup>, 2011

Venue: Kwassui Women's University  
(Nagasaki, Japan)

Participants: 220 including 44youth



Kwassui Women's University is the place where Nagasaki YWCA was first founded. 220 people gathered in this special place and held a silent prayer for opening, remembering the lives lost in the disaster in March 2011. Testimony by a Nagasaki A-bomb survivor, appeal by the Nagasaki High School Peace Messengers, and report by Fukushima YWCA about current life condition followed.

For the Keynote Speech, General Secretary Gumbonzbanda called and invited YWCAs as a global movement to join the social change, as countless women are in suffer and having difficulty in the world we live in. At poster session and during welcome party, everyone enjoyed talking and dancing. In an advocacy discussion session, participants split in 7 groups with all having the shared theme “Women Creating a Safe World”, enjoyed unique workshops and positive discussions.

YWCA Festa in Nagasaki held the following purposes and achieved results as follows.

### 1. **EMPOWER by meeting one another**

The Fest was held for the first time in 18 years. We reconfirmed importance of intergenerational collaboration where there were teenagers up to seniors in 80's. We also confirmed uniqueness of each local YWCAs. 7 local YWCAs provided workshops in the advocacy session and both workshop providers and participants were encouraged and given new ideas. Each one of participant's positive participation was the key for mutual empowerment.

### 2. **BE CLOSE to the global movement**

Generous and positive contribution by General Secretary Gumbonzbanda and the 3 guests from Taiwan YWCA made our members aware of our everyday activities are in solidarity with the YWCA global movement.



### 3. NUCLEAR ABOLITION

In Nagasaki, a city that suffered the A-bomb as well as being a city with rich Christian tradition, we were given this special opportunity to learn from the grassroots effort by the Nagasaki YWCA such as peace education for youth and advocacy. We reconfirmed our mission to “deny and abolish all forms of nukes” in Nagasaki.

### 4. VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

In the advocacy session, we carefully listened to the voices of women suffering from DV and from military violence in Okinawa, Japan, where the U.S. military bases are concentrated. Further actions need to be taken.

### 5. YOUTH networking

Youth members are unfortunately not the majority in the membership of the YWCA of Japan, so this Festa has given them a rare chance to network with one another. 44 participating youth members expressed their leadership throughout the event.



## ➤ Okinawa YWCA campaigns against military bases



The extreme concentration of the US military bases in Okinawa, with 75% of the bases concentrating in the Southern islands consisting of only 0.6% of the Japanese land, still continues despite the residents' protests. Recent major issues include the move for a new base in Henoko district, which threatens to destroy valuable environmental riches, and construction of six helipads in Takae district taking down a rich forest, and surrounding villages already suffering from noise pollution from the US

bases. Both areas are threatened by forcible execution of construction. The Okinawa YWCA joined the protests in these areas, campaigning for a peaceful land without military bases. For overall information and more details on the situation of Okinawa, please see the 2008–2009 Annual Report of the YWCA of Japan: [http://www.ywca.or.jp/image/Annual%20Report%202008-09\(web\).pdf](http://www.ywca.or.jp/image/Annual%20Report%202008-09(web).pdf)

## ➤ **Shonan YWCA's childcare group celebrates 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary**



Shonan YWCA is one of the many local YWCAs which work on childcare support for young children and mothers. In August 2011, its childcare group “Hot Space Nanohana” celebrated its 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary. A total of 102 families have benefited from this group during the 10 years. This year, the group gathered twice a month in members’ homes, community centers and parks for games and activities, where 12 volunteers looked after 8 children between 2–3

years old, watching them growing and getting ready for kindergarten.

## **5. Junior & Senior High School YWCAs**

35 school YWCAs held annual Regional Summer Conference in collaboration with local YWCAs. We usually have it in 3 regions (North, East, and West), however due to the disaster in March 2011, northern region had to give up on having one. Instead, 2 high schools in northern region out of disaster hit areas held a small training session.

### **1. Training session by two high schools in Northern region**

Date: August 4<sup>th</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup>, 2011

Venue: Hokusei Gakuen Girls’ Junior & Senior High School

Participants: 26 students, 6 teachers

Program: Sessions to learn about Christian values led by teachers from Bible teaching dept

Support: Sapporo YWCA

### **2. Regional Summer Conference in the Eastern Region**

Date: August 2<sup>nd</sup> – 4<sup>th</sup>, 2011

Venue: Yamanashi Eiwa Junior & Senior High School Chapel

Theme: Respond to the Voice of the Lord

Speaker: Mr. Masato Oki, Yamanashi Eiwa school Bible teaching dept, chair

Participants: 37 students, 10 teachers and staffs

Program: Worship service, keynote speech “Who is Takumi Asakawa?”, field trip, discussion session, nature orienteering, star observation, bible study, Word YWCA Council report, activity by Kofu YWCA.

Support: Kofu YWCA



### **3. Regional Summer Conference in the Western Region**

Date: August 1<sup>st</sup> – 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2011

Venue: Kinjo Gakuin Senior High School

Theme: “Live by the WORD: my life guided by Bible”

Program: Worship service, keynote speech, appeals by national and local YWCA, field trip, discussion session, welcome party

Participants: 89 students, 23 teachers, 8 from Nagoya YWCA

Support: Nagoya YWCA

The school YWCAs plan to have a National level Conference in 2014, with the whole 35 school participation.

## **6. Global Arena: World YWCA Council, The 56<sup>th</sup> CSW**

In the year 2011–2012, the YWCA of Japan sent delegations to two major international conferences, namely the World YWCA Council held in July 2011, Zurich, Switzerland, and the 56<sup>th</sup> session of the Commission on the Status of Women, which took place in New York, March 2012. During these unique opportunities, the YWCA of Japan kept special focus on sharing the experiences and challenges of women in Japan after the massive earthquake, tsunami and nuclear power plant accident in March 2011.

### The World YWCA Council

The delegation to the World YWCA Council consisted of 18 members. They hosted a workshop where it shared the situation and concerns regarding the nuclear plant accident and radiation in Japan with some 50 participants, coordinated a lively discussion about ways to combat violence, and led an activity to express messages for peace through traditional Japanese calligraphy and origami paper–craft cranes. The YWCA of Japan also organized a booth displaying its work in Japan, where many delegates from around the world wrote supportive messages for the people in disaster–affected areas on a large banner. On the final plenary meeting, the YWCA of Japan made a statement, addressing the danger and threat of nuclear plants as a global issue, and calling for women around the world to take steps toward elimination of nuclear power plants and nuclear weapons. The statement was met with a loud applause from the floor, which was a strong encouragement for the organization to continue with its challenges. The YWCA of Japan also issued a joint draft resolution with the YWCA of Korea: “Calling for Peace: Strengthening North Korean Women and Children’s Human Rights“, which was a fruit of the long–term joint effort between the two YWCAs.

### Commission on the Status of Women

Two experienced members attended the CSW session, the theme of which was “Rural Women”. While following the plenary meeting, the delegates spoke in a number of panels and roundtables, addressing the difficulties for rural women in Japan, caused by nuclear power plants and military

bases, both of which concentrate on rural or remote areas. Particularly, the YWCA of Japan shared a testimony of a member living in Fukushima as a farmer, pointing out the unsafe situation of women and children in Fukushima, and calling for necessary support and the abolition of nuclear power plants.

## 7. Contributions (in JPY)

[Contributed in 2011]

Pakistan Y and Thailand Y flood relief actions	Haiti Y Earthquake relief actions	World YWCA Power to change	Palestine Support Fund	Olive Tree Campaign
66,609	442,054	263,000	554,725	1,041,232

[Received in 2011]

For Japan earthquake and tsunami relief operation, total of 10,760,916 JPY was kindly contributed from individual members and YWCAs from around the World. The names below are those of direct contributors; we equally thank many of you who helped us through the World YWCA.

Jean Doman, Siraya Hasisook, Rhoda Hall, Elspbeth Herzog, Claude Le Jeune, YWCA Australia, YWCA of China, Chengdu YWCA-YMCA (China), France YWCA-YMCA, German YWCA, Gwangju YWCA (Korea), YWCA of Ireland, YWCA Kankakee (USA), YWCA-YMCA of Sweden, YWCA of Taiwan, YWCA Thailand

## 8. Board Members and Staff

**President:** Naoko MATANO, **Vice-President:** Ritsuko MIBAE, Chie YOSHIIMURA **Secretary:** Chikage TEJIMA,  
**Board Member:** Rieko AMEMIYA, Noriko ARAKI, Yuriko FUKUSHIMA, Satoko FUJITANI, Reiko FUJIWARA,  
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 Izuho HAGIO(Communications & Networking), Tomoko NEGISHI (International Relations/Advocacy),  
 Hiroko NITTA (Administration & Advocacy)



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