

8th Volunteer Activity Supporting Restoration and Recovery



Date	Thursday, September 8 through Friday, September 9, 2011
Activity site	Rikuzentakata-shi, Iwate
Participants	26 (22 men, 3 women, 1 administration office staff)

● Activity Details



On the first day, we went to the Haneana district in the town of Hirota of Rikuzentakata City to help cut the weeds and clear out the rubble from rice paddies and vegetable fields.

The debris covering these fields that would have otherwise been ready to harvest were telling signs of the severe damage that everyone had sustained from the earthquake and tsunami.

We joined forces with the various other volunteer groups there to do what we could toward restoring the rice paddies and vegetable fields as soon as possible.



On the second day, we went to the Wakinosawa district in the town of Yonesaki of Rikuzentakata City to scoop out the mud and clear away the rubble from an irrigation channel of vegetable fields.

Here, the farmer who had requested the help worked side-by-side with us volunteers. When it was time to quit for the day, the farmer showed his thanks by giving us a memoir he had written of the day the catastrophe struck. This memoir contained stories about the earthquake and tsunami told in the farmer's own words, and so struck an emotional chord with us entirely different from the news reports.

We rarely have an opportunity in our daily lives to hear stories that are told by the disaster victims themselves. Being a volunteer helped us understand the catastrophe on a very real and tangible level, as well as instilling in us the importance of volunteering to help these communities that have sustained enormous damage.