

RESPONSES TO THE EARTHQUAKE

The country had no disaster management systems or strategies

The country has trained teams of rescue services and armed forces that respond rapidly

The country has annual earthquake and tsunami drills for the population to improve the overall response

Trained healthcare personnel and resources were moved quickly from other areas to help with the aftermath

Construction teams were employed to raise the tsunami barriers from 12m to 18m

The country is so poor that it was unable to respond rapidly in the search and rescue phase and depended greatly on foreign help

The country has no seismometer stations and no earthquake prediction strategies

Shelter was provided immediately for the homeless

Early warning and earthquake/tsunami monitoring systems are amongst the best in the world in this country and warnings were transmitted by TV, phone and text messaging

The many dead bodies lying around and poor sanitation caused diseases such as cholera to become a problem that health services found difficult to deal with

1 in 5 people lost their jobs as businesses and factories were destroyed and it took many years for the economy to recover

This country depended on aid given by the USA and the European Union in particular and donations of tents, food and healthcare supplies

The rebuilding of the worst affected areas began almost immediately. The government set up a Reconstruction Design Council which had a budget of over 23 trillion Yen to rebuild houses.

Looting and other crime increased greatly and the stretched authorities found it difficult to cope

New homes were built to a higher standard although the response was slow. One year after the earthquake, over one million people were still living in temporary shelters.

Communication systems and electrical networks which were already poor were damaged further which cause rescue and aid efforts to be slow

Many manufacturers were affected by the earthquake (e.g. Toyota and Honda) because they could not restart production as factories and supply lines were damaged. It took around 1 ½ years for production to start to get back to normal.

Just 6 days after the quake a motorway was repaired – this shows the incredible rapidity with which the country can work with their capacity to cope.

6 months after the earthquake 98% of the rubble remained uncleared and some vital access roads were still blocked

1 year after the earthquake 1 million people remained displaced