

To be a “bridge” that links disaster victims with volunteers.

Disaster recovery is more than just clearing away debris.

Toyota Disaster Recovery Support (TDRS)

In July 2018, in the district of Mabi in Kurashiki City, Okayama Prefecture, which had suffered severe flooding due to torrential rains, a new program called Toyota Disaster Recovery Support (TDRS) was implemented for the first time. A group of around 20 Toyota employees participated in the program as Disaster Volunteer Coordinators (Disaster VCo's); pairs of them took it in turns to spend a period of just over a month working at the Disaster Volunteer Center in Mabi district. Their roll included identifying the needs of disaster victims, and matching volunteer activities with people who could benefit from them. All of the Toyota Disaster VCo's had previously taken a training course, which has been implemented by Toyota in-house since 2015. The concept of cultivating and dispatching Disaster VCo's from within Toyota originated with an idea of a Toyota manager. “In the aftermath of the Great East Japan Earthquake of 2011, I was involved in clearing up what seemed like endless piles of debris in Rikuzentakata City, and I began to wonder whether the work was really worthwhile,” recalls Kazuhiko Ohora, of Toyota's Corporate Citizenship Division. Then, one of the Disaster VCo's told him that “everyone does what they can, and then the next group takes over. In this way, we can get everything sorted out eventually.” Disaster VCo's support the volunteers who are actually working on the “front line” by identifying disaster victims' needs, matching volunteer activities with those are in need of help, and monitoring the progress made for a smooth handover to the next group of volunteers.



Toyota Group employee volunteers providing support for disaster recovery efforts in Rikuzentakata City, Iwate Prefecture in 2011. As of 2018, a total of over 1,000 Toyota Group employees had undertaken volunteering activities in areas affected by the Great East Japan Earthquake of 2011.

Disaster VCo's get a real sense of having made a positive contribution towards the reconstruction and recovery of the disaster-affected areas Ohora thought. Toyota's experience as a business enterprise can be useful in helping to solve the problems affecting disaster-hit regions.

“Business enterprises have a responsibility to address the problems affecting society. However, disaster recovery is more than just clearing away debris. It requires helping people to regain hope for the future. To realize this goal, we carry out activities that are tailored to the heart of disaster victims.” This is how Ohora explains the idea behind TDRS.



[Toyota Disaster Recovery Support (TDRS)]

The aim of this project is to ensure that, when a natural disaster occurs, besides just donating money and dispatching volunteers, Toyota can utilize its resources and know-how effectively to provide support that is tailored to meeting the real needs and wishes of disaster victims.

Inside a tent erected within a shrine in Kurashiki City's Mabi district, a TDRS volunteer undertakes volunteer activity needs matching.