

PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release



WORLD VISION DISTRIBUTES AID IN HARDEST-HIT COASTAL TOWN

World Vision relief distribution begins for thousands in hard-hit Japanese coastal area:

- ✓ *As Japan reels from its biggest crisis since WWII, World Vision assists those in tsunami area*
- ✓ *Distribution of blankets, water and other basic supplies have started today in Tome. Another distribution is scheduled to reach 6,000 survivors in Minami Sanriku on Saturday*
- ✓ *100% of donations received by the World Vision Singapore office for the Japan Disaster Relief Fund will be designated for this specific response*

SINGAPORE – 18 March 2011 – As Japan approaches the one-week mark since the destructive 9.0 earthquake and tsunami, World Vision relief distribution operations began today in the city of Tome and will reach Minami Sanriku, one of the hardest-hit coastal towns in the country, on Saturday.



Blankets, bottled water and sanitary and hygiene supplies are among the items in World Vision's distribution to assist more than 6,000 people in urgent need in Minami Sanriku, where 9,600 townspeople have been displaced into 40 shelters. This tsunami-swept town in Miyagi prefecture, like many other areas of Japan, is experiencing below-freezing temperatures and snowfall.

The town's deputy mayor, Mr. Endo, who lost several employees in the tsunami, said to World Vision aid workers: "This area is disaster prone...so we all had preparedness training. But this was beyond what any of us could expect."

World Vision is working with the local authorities who are organising non-governmental assistance and helping assess which items are most needed by displaced survivors.

"The first step in any response, for children and adults, is to provide shelter, food and safe drinking water," said World Vision relief manager Kenjiro Ban, who also worked in World Vision's quake response in Haiti last

year. “Priority needs also include supplies for babies and small children, and next steps will include setting up Child-Friendly Spaces, which are safe places for children where they can be protected, have structure and playtime, and begin to deal with the stress of the traumatic events they’ve just experienced.”

According to World Vision relief experts, financial support is the most practical way to help survivors, as they allow help to be mobilised most efficiently. 100% of donations received by the World Vision Singapore office for the Japan Disaster Relief Fund will be designated for this specific response. To date, World Vision Singapore has received more than S\$260,000 for the relief response.

Receive updates and find out more about World Vision’s relief response in Japan today by visiting www.worldvision.org.sg/japandisaster.

Please do not hesitate to contact **Ms Lynette Lim** or **Ms Sharon Lim** at **(65) 6511- 7115/ 33** should you require additional information, images, or would like to conduct tele-interviews with our spokespeople on the ground.

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