

**East Japan Great Earthquake Disaster Deaf Victims**

**Relief Support Project**

**Deaf Support Nakama**

**Third Interim Report**

August 1, 2012

Japanese Association of Social Workers

for Deaf and Hard of Hearing



## Acknowledgment

Thirteen months have passed since Japanese Association of Social Workers for Deaf and Hard of Hearing (JASWDHH) started the relief project in July 2011. The name of relief project is called Deaf Support Nakama. The financial support from the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, the Jewish Coalition for Japan Relief, and American Jewish Committee, has been used effectively in order to provide clinical social work services or other services to deaf survivors of East Japan great earthquake for improving their life and mental health condition. The result of East Japan Great Earthquake, many deaf survivors and their family members have faced up to life problems such as health condition, mental health problem, looking for jobs, and other needs. Looking toward the long-term impact of Japan great earthquake, JASWDHH and clinical social workers that are fluent in Japanese sign language (JSL) have been working with deaf survivors and their family members. Again all of us, JASWDHH members, would like to express our gratitude to the financial support to Deaf Support Nakama. JASWDHH would address the second interim report hereunder.

## Summary of Project

Deaf support Nakama has started relief project in Miyagi prefecture in July 2011. The project coordinator, Mr. Hidasumi Komi, a deaf Certified Social Worker (CSW), has been staying the apartment in Aramachi, Wakabayashi-ward, Sendai-city, Miyagi-prefecture for this project. Deaf Support Nakama located office in the East Japan great earthquake deaf relief Miyagi headquarters in Saiwai-town, Miyagino-ward, Sendai-city.

In headquarters, the local project coordinator collaborated with two Miyagi deaf peer counselors, and responded to requests of the deaf survivors who came to our office in Sendai-city, and visited to houses of deaf survivors, or held clinical consultation in meetings with any deaf organizations. Moreover, the project coordinator received requests from public organizations and local governments, and was performing the visit to houses of deaf survivors due to they did not know how to provide a social work services or information for deaf people. For a case that needs ongoing support, the project coordinator accepted requests and conducts social work analysis, then requests the dispatch coordinator Mr. Koji Yano, Certified Social Worker at JASWDHH office in Shibuya-ward, Tokyo to send a clinical social worker that hold a Certified Social Worker or License of Psychiatric Social Worker (LPSW) for individual service and

group therapy.

## Project's Progress

July 2011

Deaf Support Project faced difficulties in finding an apartment for the project coordinator during July. The reason was most apartments were used for disaster victims' refuge life. And it was also because it is rare for the local society that a single deaf person rents an apartment. The project coordinator made greeting visits to the Miyagi Welfare Division for Persons with Disabilities and Miyagi Mental Health Center and the local governmental offices.

August 2011

In intense heat of August, Deaf Support Nakama did: (1) a round of courtesy calls to the every place concerned – 11 places, (2) visits to deaf survivors' houses - 3 visit activities in Sendai, Watari-cho, and Ishinomaki. Also this project visited to 4 visit-to-an-office consultations. The contents of consultation are health consultation, employment consultation, and living consultation. Especially about health consultation, there was a case of deaf diabetic person that company was crushed and discharged by earthquake and tsunami. Deaf person was troubled with living expenses and his medical treatment was interrupted for such a heavily situation. Moreover, since local medical professionals

could not take sign communication, therefore, deaf person does not have the right information about diabetes and health condition. Our project supported this point preponderantly.

September 2011

There are 6 greeting visits to local governmental offices, 8 visit activities, 3 clinical consultation acceptances and 2 dispatches. Among dispatch cases, there was a request from a daughter of deaf mother who seemed to have a mental health problem after the earthquake disaster. The project coordinator asked deaf psychiatric social worker and supported this case for improving their life and mental health in Miyagi. For second case, a deaf man continues living in his house that is partially destroyed in the dangerous state. Including a house reconstruction proposal, Deaf Support Nakama and clinical social worker have cooperated with local governmental administration and provide social work services to this case.

October 2011

The privately-owned car which the project coordinator is using broke through 9321 mile within half a year. In many cases, the project coordinator went to distant places like Kesenuma and South Sanriku-town from Sendai, tires were worn out, and had to exchange them on the way. Moreover, roads were destroyed in the earthquake, and

sludge and rubble of tsunami had deposited the road, and it sped up wear of the tire.

There were 13 greeting visits to local governmental offices, 15 visit activities, 1 new consultation acceptance and 5 dispatches. The feature of consultation support this month is as follows: (1) Ongoing support to the case accepted in September, (2) Collaboration with private sector NGO, (3) Clinical consultation booth establishment in the East Japan great earthquake deaf relief Miyagi headquarters-sponsored event "talkative salon", (4) Supervision to the local staff and deaf peer counselors.

The "talkative salons" is the contents of watching interesting talks of deaf talents. The public meeting place having also suffered a great deal of damage after an earthquake disaster and tsunami. The deaf people without full telecommunication access are very isolated and they gather and enjoy performance with tea and snack in Miyagi prefecture.

In this case, we provided group work and group therapy for deaf people as a peer group in Miyagi. At this time, by preparing a consultation booth, Deaf Support Nakama accepted some cases.

Collaborating with governmental and private organization is as follows. (1) Collaborating with the Life Support Center established by the Miyagi Association of Certified Social Workers and Miyagi prefectural government for disaster survivors, this collaborating team discovered deaf persons that have been living in solitude in the

makeshift housing unit, and tie to consultation support. (2) Cooperating with the Miyagi Case manager Association, this cooperating action discovered elderly deaf persons and offer support and assist to a case manager for improving their services and communication skill. Deaf Support Nakama has promoted that cooperating action lead to discover buried cases of deaf persons through our project.

Deaf Support Nakama has also spread leaflets of the nursing home for the elderly deaf persons because Deaf Support Nakama has cooperated with the National Elderly Deaf Nursing Home Association, which is one of the cooperation organizations of East Japan great earthquake deaf relief central headquarters in Tokyo.

In spite of having flooded the first floor of the house by tsunami, there is deaf man who is living alone without any communication and support. Although deaf man lived with 4 families before, he has been living alone now sadly. Obviously, he has been unable to go to a local city office without any social support, has no access to earthquake disaster information support services, transportation, and other services. The local government administration grasps this case and has requested the member of Deaf Support Nakama to visit this case. Deaf man has been living solitary, and has not known how to ask any social work services based on his needs through his lifetime.

November 2011

Deaf Support Nakama received fifty-two visitors during round consultations. Next, Deaf Support Nakama counted forty-five attendances for group work activities in makeshift housing unit. Likewise, this project collaborated with independent action of the East Japan great earthquake deaf relief Miyagi headquarters and the Sendai Deaf Association. By this, the numbers of dispatch have increased sharply with 16 cases.

In other words, the project coordinator, the deaf peer counselor, and a dispatch clinical social worker had to work independently each one. Sometimes they had to work seven days a week, could not take a day off. The number of greeting visits was decreased: we made three visits. Deaf Support Nakama received five new clinical consultations.

There was a case that an elderly deaf person that family were scattered by tsunami and faced a difficulty for living, a case a person in morbid state after the earthquake and a case in which the marital relationship became complicated. These surfaced problems in fact existed since before the earthquake disaster. Especially this month, requested from the administration of Natori city, Deaf Support Nakama made visits to all eight makeshift houses in the city and investigated the number of deaf individuals.

Most community of the makeshift housing unit complex replied that there were no deaf persons. Although there was one place where several deaf persons lived in a makeshift house, since the person in charge of the community was absent, we could not have any

details. When the project coordinator and deaf peer counselor visited again later, we had a chance to discuss with deaf persons who were living there. Deaf Support Nakama proposed to a community leader to have a chance to hear requests from deaf persons through a sign language interpreter.

Aside from this, Deaf Support Nakama participated for the briefing session in Iwate prefecture when the prefectural government planned to performed questionnaire to the deaf survivors. On that occasion we explained about the Deaf Support Nakama project. Nippon Foundation lent the tablet terminal for remote place access support project to us in case the project coordinator could not find a sign language interpreter in the field.

December 2011

The Tohoku district served as winter completely and protection-against-the-cold construction of a makeshift house was in full charge. Although visit-to-an-office consultation and visit consultation decreased as compared with November, this was because Deaf Support Nakama included the number of group cases for November counts. The number rather increases compared with October counts. The dispatch counted ten cases. New consultation acceptance was four cases, all by females. These are a woman who lives in an institution for the hearing elders, a woman with a trouble at her workplace, a woman who worries about family relationship and a woman

who lost the relative from tsunami. As for ongoing support case, there is a case of a deaf person without diabetic consciousness, a case where adjustment of family relations is required and a case of a person who aims to shift to regular work from vocational aid center for the disabled. A round consultation was held in the form of collaboration with the Miyagi deaf peer counselor in Kesenuma and Tome, and the dispatched clinical social worker also participated. Since Kesenuma was far from Sendai, our team spent overnight-stay two days. However, hotels in the city were full and could not but stay at the detached island. The island was a center of tsunami damage and Deaf Support Nakama members learnt its seriousness by the disaster.

January 2012

The project coordinator knew by his experience of clinical practice that any problems may arise at year-ends and New Year holidays, so the project coordinator decided to stay his office and did not go back to his hometown during winter vacation. Although the Nakama project was to be closed according to the East Japan great earthquake deaf relief Miyagi headquarters taking a holiday at year-ends and New Year holidays, the project coordinator stayed in Sendai city and prepared for call and any crisis situations.

However there was no urgent call during the year-ends and New Year holidays, Deaf Support Nakama received the e-mail asking for a clinical consultation on mental health

case soon after the New Year holidays. It was by a same person when we once received a clinical consultation at the "talkative salon". The deaf person asked to talk with the same dispatched social worker at that time, so the project coordinator contacted dispatched clinical social worker and arranged an urgent meeting.

Moreover, asked by the local government, Deaf Support Nakama made a re-visiting to a home in January 7. Dispatched clinical social worker and the project coordinator made an urgent home visit. Thus, cases that demanded severe correspondence were occurred.

When writing this second interim report, the number of cases in January has not been collected yet, it is certain to exceed the number of December. On the other hand, for some cases problems had been solved and dispatch services had evaluated and terminated. After the end of case, the project coordinator and the Miyagi deaf peer counselor take over the case and continue other support.

February 2012

The coldness of winter is still severer and we had every morning below the freezing point in area of Miyagi. As a feature this month, Deaf Support Nakama held the round consultation meeting in Ishinomaki city for 2 times. As a result of cooperation with dispatched Audiologist who is able to communicate in sign language, our consultation service had attendance from local community and received positive response from the

governmental administration. In the clinical view of Audiologist, many residents of an area along the shore have hearing loss that may be affected by the otitis media caused by fisheries.

On the other hand, Deaf Support Nakama recommended deaf people to check their hearing aids. Deaf Support Nakama figured out in some cases example for deaf people have used defected or nearly defected hearing aids. Those deaf people had not noticed the defects due to profound hearing loss and their environment.

When the project coordinator asked deaf people who came to our office of Deaf Support Nakama, they only told us that they had never met Audiologist who is able to communicate in Japanese sign language. The project coordinator realized that not only Ishinomaki city but also Miyagi Prefecture's social welfare system has not met actual needs of deaf people at medical service.

The project coordinator participated in gatherings of elderly deaf people and hearing parents of deaf children with other disabilities, and explained the concept of "Deaf Support Nakama" project. In this month, twelve dispatch, one new acceptance of an appointment. Deaf Support Nakama also held a round consultation meeting, the number of visit-to-an-office consultation and visit consultation has increased.

March 2012

The Deaf Support Nakama's activity in Fukushima Prefecture started this month. Deaf Support Nakama provided the consultation booths during deaf conference and event in Fukushima on March 3.

With full cooperation of the Deaf Relief Fukushima headquarters and Fukushima Deaf Association, there were visits of ten persons. Unlike Miyagi Prefecture where the earthquake and tsunami disaster are severe, as for some nuclear accidents, the contents of our consultation services in Fukushima Prefecture were related with nuclear power plants.

On the same day, in Sendai city in Miyagi, another dispatched social worker provided the consultation booth in the deaf event of Miyagi deaf headquarters on March 3. And Deaf Support Nakama tried not to adhere to the idea of the consultation support, the activity of mental health care was started in Tagajo city. By the dispatch social worker's request, the trainer of Yoga activity was dispatched for the purpose of making the body flexible for their mental health.

At the time, some dispatched social workers were no longer continued their social work activities due to a job transfer order in their social work agencies on a new fiscal year. About this case, Deaf Support Nakama changed the social worker to new social worker after our deaf survivor understanding.

To others, Deaf Support Nakama project responded for the local deaf organization and introduced a deaf lawyer. Thus, our feature is not only consultation; we need to provide cooperation services with each various professionals started little by little.

In addition, although it originally was not included in the Deaf Support Nakama project, we did training for deaf high school students from Tokyo. The round consultation meeting held in Ishinomaki city ended the plan of all the four times, and reported it to the director of the social welfare division for persons with disabilities including the activity outcome and the outline. From the local deaf community there was request of continuous consultation work provided by Deaf Support Nakama. The number of dispatch is 12 cases. Also we had three new cases of acceptance. Adding the participants in a round consultation meeting and a talkative salon, visit-to-an-office consultation increased with 45 cases. A continuation case is included and six cases are focused on mental care.

April 2012

The Miyagi deaf headquarters moved to new governmental office called "Mimi Sapo Miyagi" in December 2011, however, the local coordinator worked in the office of Miyagi Deaf Association because the deaf peer counselor belong to Miyagi Deaf Association. The deaf peer counselor ended her job in Miyagi by March, and then

deaf peer counselor was transferred to “Mimi Sapo Miyago”.

By this relation, the local coordinator moved to the Miyagi headquarters (originally located) from this month. “Mimi Sapo Miyagi” takes care of our cases in Miyagi, and the local coordinator provided various round consultation meeting, or supervision.

The number of cases decreased to five cases considered to new fiscal year while the number of support activities in Fukushima headquarters increased. Although round of courtesy calls are the main activities for the local project coordinator, it is likely to be connected with new cases from now on.

Unlike the method of a round of courtesy calls in Miyagi, based on the result of the disaster deaf person investigation conducted with governmental administration, we took the method of offering future cooperative relation in Fukushima prefecture, with concrete data such as the number of deaf persons, the number of registered sign language interpreters and the existence of the broader-based dispatch contracts. Deaf Support Nakama offered side support. The local project coordinator visited Minamisoma city, Soma city, and Shinchi-cho city. Although we received in general in a friendly way, the chief of Soma told us "whether it is more rational than human arrangement of installing a translator to use the remote sign-language interpreting by a tablet."

May 2012

Mimi-Sapo-Miyagi has been almost taking care of cases. The local coordinator suggests about Miyagi prefecture if needed. In Fukushima prefecture, Deaf Support Nakama continued round of courtesy calls; to Okuma-cho, Katsurao-mura, Tomioka-cho, Iwaki, Naraha-cho, Sendai-mura. It is alert zone of Fukushima 1 Nuclear Power Plant, and the function of governmental administration has transferred with residents for refuge. In Sendai-mura especially, a deaf person living alone in a mountain area was taken care of by the policeman after one week of the refuge broadcast that he could not hear. We received two dispatches and no new acceptance in this month.

June 2012

Fukushima headquarters and local project coordinator made round of courtesy calls administration to Iitate-mura, Namie-cho. In the case of Namie-cho, since data had been left when the agency takes refuge after the earthquake, they have difficulty to make the program for residents with disabilities. Although it has not led to case yet, we will explore the method of support through consultation corners in the various events of the Fukushima headquarters. On the other hand, "disaster prevention" workshop in the conference of the Japanese Foundation of the Deaf the local project

coordinator reports about Deaf Support Nakma's activity. The local project coordinator also took along to activities of Miyagi headquarters. At the round consultation meeting in Natori and Kesenuma, we gave advice and driving support respectively. Most support contents became driving support in the end of our activity. Those supports were possible by non-social workers, thus we would like to realize it to be one of the conclusion materials of the support. We contributed the car was donated by Nippon Foundation on 29<sup>th</sup> to the welfare facility for the deaf with multiple handicaps, "Tamashiro no Sato" (Ome-shi, Tokyo).

## Activity View

In the area along the shore where the damage of a tidal wave is serious, deaf community faces extinction. The place of life, the place of work, means of transportation, families, all were lost in an instant. Deaf survivors do not have the enough level of social work service based on sign communication in Miyagi prefecture before the earthquake disaster and tsunami. Even if deaf people receive basic life support of clothing, food, etc., there is no place to talk by sign language as a peer in order to keep mental health and motivation for moving to new life stage. Although Deaf Support Nakama has to focus on individual social work now, group work support will also be needed for deaf people and supporters in the future. The inland habitants also do not have

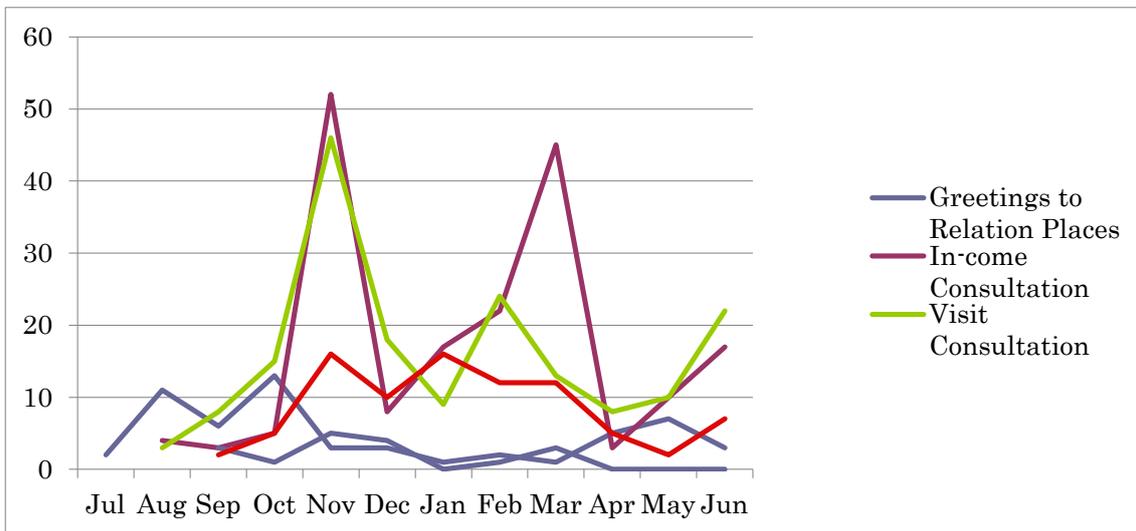
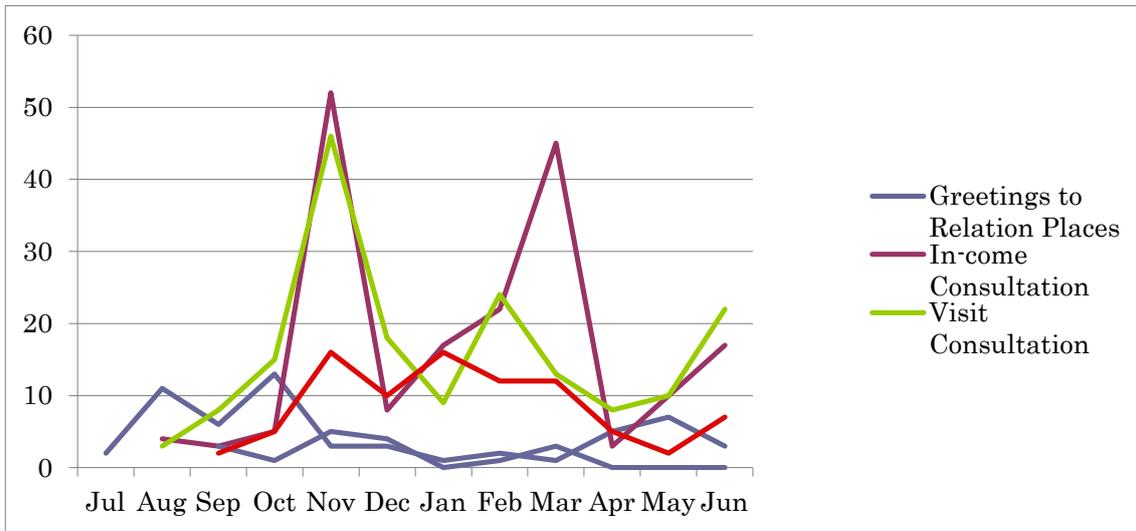
transportation. It is not easy for the deaf people to gather because buses or other transportations do not run around Saturdays and Sundays.

Generally, Deaf Support Nakama members can state the following as the climate and a disposition of the Tohoku district as same as stigma: (1) they avoid being indebted to the administration, (2) handicapped children in local area are hidden from the public and social services, (3) the consciousness to protect the handicapped is higher than making them become independent traditionally, (4) stranger are looked out for. Since there are the above characteristics, understanding of consultation support and social work services for deaf people does not permeate easily. JASWDHH would like to free and advocate deaf people from living dead state, to assert a right as a human being, and to support deaf person in order to support rebuilding their lives with an empowerment.

## Nakama Activity Record

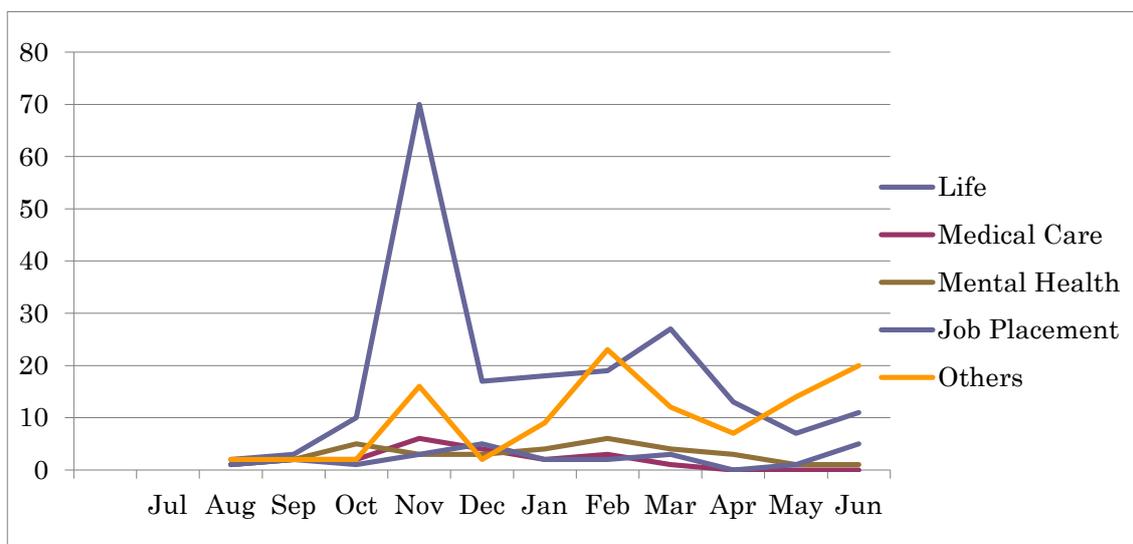
※Total numbers are shown accept greetings

	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Total
Greetings to Relation Places	2	11	6	13	3	3	1	0	1	5	7	3	57
In-come Consultation	0	4	3	5	52	8	17	15	45	3	10	17	186
Visit Consultation	0	3	8	15	46	18	9	18	13	8	10	22	176
Acceptance of Consultation	0	0	3	1	5	4	0	1	3	0	0	0	17
Dispatch	0	0	2	5	16	10	16	8	12	5	2	7	87
On duty days in Miyagi	14	22	23	24	24	22	26	18	25	23	25	22	272



### Contents of Consultations

Contents	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Total
Life	0	2	3	10	70	17	18	8	19	27	13	7	11
Medical Care	0	1	2	2	6	4	2	2	3	1	0	0	0
Mental Health	0	1	2	5	3	3	4	6	6	4	3	1	1
Job Placement	0	1	2	1	3	5	2	1	2	3	0	1	5
Others	0	2	2	2	16	2	9	23	23	12	7	14	20
	0	7	11	20	98	31	35	53	47	23	23	37	242



### Comment of the Miyagi deaf peer counselor

My name is Hikoko Tawaki, a deaf peer counselor of Miyagi Deaf Association. Thank you for your financial support. Firstly, the local project coordinator, Mr. Komi, and I made greeting visits to the Miyagi Prefectural Health-and-Welfare Office and cities, towns and villages, the organs concerned. Before March 11, I visited there when the Deaf Support Consultation Project of Miyagi Prefecture was begun two years ago; however, as for this, I and other deaf members only visited places where sign language interpreters were provided for communication issues.

As for Deaf Support Nakama had decided to provide a sign language interpreter for the project coordinator for communication with any key persons of local government. It was the big difference with my last visit. The project coordinator and I explained

about Deaf Support Nakama project and educate government people about the needs of deaf people in Miyagi prefecture. I evaluate highly what our activity has achieved, on the other hand, it remains a problem of communication access for deaf peer counselors in Miyagi.

Not only for the organizations concerned but also at the “talkative salon” sponsored by the East Japan great earthquake deaf relief Miyagi headquarters and at events sponsored by the Miyagi Deaf Association, the project coordinator and I have explained about Deaf Support Nakama. It took time to have deaf people understood about Deaf Support Nakama and consultation project. Then, gradually the activity has been accepted. As the result, the project coordinator, Mr. Komi was requested for a lecturer about social work services in the area. And direct e-mail consultation requests come to the project coordinator increasingly.

Miyagi deaf people may understand Deaf Support Nakama activity. It led to smooth run of dispatching clinical social workers. Those clinical social workers know how to communicate deaf persons according to each one. Deaf Support Nakama has provided clinical social work services for some cases.

The contents and needs of single cases are very various. There is not only one problem but multi problems may have overlapped. Communication barrier may be

hidden in the bottom as a cause. Moreover, there may be several environmental factors that impact on deaf person's independence and this sigma and problem solution has not been easy. Considered characteristic of deaf, clinical social workers and Deaf Support Nakama are carefully in charge of cases. Their works encourage me a lot.

As the project coordinator, Mr. Komi, has stated with his assessment, understanding of consultation support in this area has not proceed easily because of misunderstand of limited information. I would like to advance my activity, cooperating with the local area, the organizations concerned through Deaf Support Nakama.

Miyagi deaf community and I thank to the local project coordinator who finished his duty at the end of June. Not only support needed deaf survivor or the Miyagi deaf peer counselor, but also the Miyagi headquarters and deaf organizations, the local project coordinator greatly supported our members. Everyone see the local project coordinator's activity but dispatched social workers in the progress of individual supports were not visible activities. The result has come out each case deaf survivors who has obtained support by dispatched social workers becoming little by little good, or leading to expression of an intention. Therefore, for continuation of "Nakama" activity, I am glad as a Miyagi deaf peer counselor. I myself would like to learn from dispatched social workers such as professional ethic, interview technique and so on.

## Future Tasks for Deaf Support Nakama

### 1. Enforcement only Miyagi Prefecture

Although the purpose of Deaf Support Nakama project is a providing clinical social service for Iwate, Miyagi, and Fukushima prefecture, Deaf Support Nakama has not enforced project activity in Iwate prefecture and Fukushima prefecture. JASWDHH has already tried to explain about Deaf Support Nakama project to governments and deaf associations in Iwate prefecture and Fukushima prefecture.

The reason why Deaf Support Nakama has not started services in Iwate prefecture and Fukushima prefecture, in the case of Miyagi prefecture, JASWDHH had provided clinical survey and needs assessment. Second reason is that Miyagi headquarters had been active and cooperative with JASWDHH and one of the members of JASWDHH has been working as a Miyagi deaf peer counselor and a member of Miyagi Deaf Association; therefore, introduction of the Deaf Support Nakama activity had smooth. As for Iwate or Fukushima prefecture, both deaf associations don't have such background as same as Miyagi Deaf Association.

The project coordinator has been on his duty in Miyagi prefecture, and the project coordinator has been working with deaf peer counselors of Miyagi prefecture and has provided supervision. This team were digging up cases and educating local

organizations concerned. As a result, social resources and information services for Miyagi deaf community have been enriched. JASWDHH has to decide that now it is a time to consider enforcement in Iwate and Fukushima prefecture in this spring.

In Iwate prefecture, there is the Deaf Support Center established by Iwate prefecture as well as Miyagi Prefecture and systematic consultation has been organized for deaf community already; however, there has not been Deaf Support Center yet in Fukushima prefecture. Therefore, JASWDHH may have to consider Deaf Support Nakama project enforcement in Fukushima prefecture first for deaf people and their family members.

Since Deaf Support Nakama project started in July 2011, Miyagi deaf peer counselor has accompanied with the project coordinator. Deaf peer counselor will be able to manage coordination at the area of Miyagi prefecture. Therefore, Deaf Support Nakama would like to hand down the coordinate activity in Miyagi prefecture to Miyagi deaf peer counselor and Miyagi deaf community. Deaf Support Nakama would also have the project coordinator transferred to Fukushima prefecture for preparation. Then Deaf Support Nakama would like to propose how to support deaf survivors in cooperation with deaf peer counselor of Fukushima prefecture and Fukushima Deaf Association.

## 2. Shortness of Project Enforcement term

The enforcement term of Deaf Support Nakama project supported by our grateful sponsors is to be from July 2011 to June 2012. Even if JASWDHH considers extension of the Deaf Support Nakama project, it should be by end of March 2013 based on view of the current budget implementation situation and needs of deaf people in Fukushima prefecture and Iwate prefecture. However, clinical social work service has a desirable conclusion by independence of the deaf person himself/herself. For that purpose, JASWDHH must expect some single cases require for several years or the whole lifetime support.

Consider the enforcement period; Deaf Support Nakama would end the project when the time is ready when Deaf Support Nakama is able to hand down the work to the local deaf community. However, the project is halfway in fact, Deaf Support Nakama members are anxious about the burden of the deaf peer counselor in Miyagi Prefecture. Moreover, Deaf Support Nakama members are concerned about a possibility that local government would claim that "people outside the prefecture came, and they messed up cases". For those reasons, JASWDHH has to ask for the continuation of project enforcement for at least several years in order to achieve social work activity for deaf survivors.

### 3. Cultivation and Training of Social Workers

There are about sixty regular members within JASWDHH. Amongst regular members forty clinical social workers have signed up for Deaf Support Nakama to work for deaf survivors and their family members. Yet not all of them have obtained great deal of social work experience and case management.

As of now there have been less than ten clinical cases in Miyagi prefecture that need ongoing support, most dispatched clinical social workers have their own regular jobs and the field of clinical practice. Therefore dispatched clinical social workers could manage to handle one clinical case and work once or twice a month at best for deaf survivors in Miyagi or other place.

Deaf Support Nakama has expected that the number of cases in Miyagi Prefecture and other Place such as Fukushima Prefecture will rapidly increase from now on. Moreover, since Deaf Support Nakama would expand this project in the Fukushima Prefecture, Deaf Support Nakama need to improve the number of qualified and registered clinical social workers. For that, JASWDHH has to provide training program for clinical social workers to improve their clinical social work skills. This problem is main issues of activity in the 2012 fiscal year of JASWDHH.

In March 1 2012, subjects are as follows. About the enforcement area serving as only Miyagi prefecture, enforcement in Fukushima prefecture also started in April 2012.

Although Fukushima prefecture had made little progress due to the radioactivity by the Fukushima 1 Nuclear Power Plant, Fukushima deaf community and Deaf Support Nakama started assisted living and consultation services. About the Deaf Support Nakama's enforcement period, our project would extend by March 2013 from the original schedule of being about Nakama enforcement till June 2012, and is considering enforcement of the dispatch services not only to a disaster area but nationwide from April 2013.

About professional training for the social workers in this project, the training program would be held on October 14, 2012. In training program, we will discuss case history. Priority to this, JASWDHH and Deaf Support Nakama hold annual conference on June 30 and July 1, 2012.

In order to correspond to such a social needs with social responsibility, juridical personality acquisition of an association is also united and considered for the purpose of April 1, 2013 establishment.

August 1, 2012

Japanese Association of Social Workers for Deaf and Hard of Hearing

President Junko Ina, LPSW, CSW