



## The New Normal: Typhoon Hagibis Update



*Typhoon Hagibis made landfall in Japan on October 12, leaving widespread flooding and landslides in its wake in many parts of Central Japan. In just two days the typhoon brought 30-40% of the annual rainfall to the area, and the highest warning level (category 5) was issued in 13 prefectures. More than 7 million people were told to evacuate. The initial death toll*

*was reported at 72 people, and more than 45,000 households were left without power. As Week of Compassion partners continue to assess the situation, 181 rivers in 16 prefectures have breached, and water inundation continues to force the evacuation of millions of people.*

Following a disaster, aid workers face tremendous challenges in trying to reach affected areas with immediate supplies like food, water, and medical care. When a community that is still recovering from one disaster experiences another, the prospect of reaching those in need becomes even more daunting.

Typhoon Hagibis in Japan caused significant damage and loss of life. In many cases, the affected communities were in areas already weakened by previous disasters-- including September Typhoon Faxai. In the early stages of recovery from the first typhoon, Hagibis has now caused even more devastation to an already vulnerable area.

Through our partner, CWS Japan, Week of Compassion is responding to an urgent call for support. With our help, local partners will work to meet the most urgent needs from these subsequent disasters, such as clean water and basic sanitation; and then, they will help families rebuild their homes and begin livelihood restoration for the long-term.

“I’ve never seen such intensity and scale of Typhoon coming to Japan before,” says Takeshi Komino, General Secretary, CWS Japan. “It seems like the whole of central and eastern Japan were hit by heavy rain, flooding, and landslides. Historically, our dikes became higher and higher trying to mitigate flood risks and half of Japan’s population now lives lower than river water level. Recent intensified weather disasters are causing unprecedented damage. Particularly in aging communities, those who were affected need helping hands to cope and recover.”

Komino also remarks that these circumstances indicate a “new normal,” in

which unprecedented weather events are more and more common. As disasters compound each other with growing frequency and severity, it is possible to feel immobilized--it can seem as though no amount of aid will ever make a difference, and no amount of support will ever end the suffering.

But the Prophet Isaiah reminds us of God's promise:

*Though the mountains be shaken  
and the hills be removed,  
yet my unfailing love for you will not be shaken  
nor my covenant of peace be removed,"  
says the Lord, who has compassion on you.*

As the Church, we have known the far-reaching compassion of God, and are called to respond in kind. God is close to the brokenhearted; and so we are, too. As God is present in places of suffering, so the Body of Christ is present as well. Through your generous support, our wider church is present as the hands and feet of Christ to those who suffer.

Through our many global and ecumenical partners like Church World Service, Week of Compassion helps to provide that presence in multiple sites, all over the world. As the need increases, so too does the generosity of the church. Though the mountains be shaken and the hills be removed... the unfailing love of God remains unshakable.

And so does your compassion. Thank you for your continued support.

*Photo Credit: CWS Japan*



### **Mission**

*As the relief, refugee, and development mission fund of the Christian Church*

*(Disciples of Christ), Week of Compassion works with partners to alleviate suffering throughout the world.*

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