

## **Japan after March 11: 6 of 10 families in temporary houses are low-income earners**

Monday 20 February 2012, by [Kyodo News](#) (Date first published: 2 February 2012).

MORIOKA (Kyodo) — More than six out of every 10 families who have been living in makeshift homes or housing units run by the Employment Development Association in Iwate Prefecture since last year's March 11 earthquake-tsunami disaster are low-income earners with an annual income of 3 million yen (about \$40,000) or less, a survey by the Iwate prefectural government has found.

About 30 percent of the residents in the homes surveyed have no plans for when to move to housing of their choice, it also showed. Iwate is one of the three prefectures hit hardest by last year's magnitude-9.0 earthquake and subsequent tsunami.

A local government official, who is in charge of housing policies, said many survivors of the March 2011 disaster cannot decide on their future course due to economic difficulties.

The local government surveyed 613 families in December last year, including 339 who began to live in makeshift homes in July 2011 or later and 274 in housing units run by the association, an organization operating housing across the country to support job seekers under the jurisdiction of the Health, Labor and Welfare Ministry.

Of the families who live in makeshift homes, 48.4 percent replied that their annual income is less than 2 million yen, and 17.1 percent said their annual income is between 2 million yen and 3 million yen. Of these, 28.9 percent had no plans to move out of their temporary homes.

Of the families who live in housing supplied by the employment association, 36.9 percent said their annual income is less than 2 million yen and 25.9 percent said their income is between 2 million yen and 3 million yen. Of these, 34.3 percent replied they have no plans to move.

Asked what type of home they wish to move to in the future, 36.6 percent of those in makeshift homes and 31.8 percent in the association's units replied they plan to buy a home on a hill. Just over 20 percent of residents of both types of dwelling plan to move to public housing.

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\* Kyodo Press, February 2, 2012

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