

New Quake Frames Japan's Sorrows, Rebuilding Continues

Sunday marked one year since the unthinkable happened in Japan.

In the run-up to Sunday, Japan was rattled by a moderate quake (2:25 a.m. local time, Saturday) with a magnitude of 5.4 near northeastern **Japan's crisis zone**.

No tsunami warning was issued this time, but it brought back nightmarish memories of what happened when a earthquake struck on **March 11, 2011**, and a crushing tsunami did strike.

Between the damage of the quake and the force of the wave, 86 communities were leveled. In the next breath, the country was trying to hold down panic over an accident that crippled the **Fukushima nuclear plant**.

Although the country is recovering, there are still scars physically, emotionally and spiritually. The Japanese government has declared eight areas near the reactors as potential no-go zones for the next two decades.

Many residents remain homeless. According to The Evangelical Alliance Mission (TEAM), in most areas the wreckage has been gathered and sorted into "mountains." The rubble has been estimated as the equivalent of 30 years' worth of garbage, and it still awaits final disposal.

Some of the infrastructure has been repaired. TEAM's partners say basic roads and bridges are mainly passable, but add that minimal rebuilding has taken place, and many communities are waiting on direction of what **rebuilding** will look like.

Repairs could take as long as 10 years, and depression is settling in. Government data from Japan shows a 20 percent

spike in suicides after the devastating **earthquake and tsunami** last March.

TEAM's continued presence among those most affected by the tsunami has helped to open doors in building trusted relationships within the local church and the local people. The local churches are very small and few and far between, and many have become exhausted by the overwhelming needs of their communities.

By having TEAM **missionaries** as a resource, they have been able to be present at a most crucial time building relationships, while creating potential for starting churches in the future after the relief and recovery periods have finished.

They're calling not only for **prayer support** but also other resourcing help in order to continue to make an impact for Christ's kingdom as believers walk alongside and offer hope to the Japanese people.