



A snapshot of the displacement of Fukushima residents: as of the first anniversary of Japan's 3.11 disasters

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This short report presents the result of a GIS (Geographic Information System) mapping conducted to create a simple snap shot of the displacement of Fukushima residents. As we are approaching the first anniversary of the 2011 East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami, this report is aimed to serve as a reminder of the ongoing predicament of those who are affected by the disasters.

Almost a year has passed since the 3.11 disasters and the subsequent Fukushima Dai-ichi Nuclear Power Plant accident, which occurred in Japan in March 2011. According to the latest figures put together by the Fukushima Prefectural Government¹, as of February 23, 2012, 62,674 persons, who were the residents of Fukushima Prefecture, are officially reported to still be stranded outside their home prefecture².

As reported by Oda (2011)³ in the August 2011 edition of this Bulletin, not only have the multiple disasters displaced tens of thousands of people, they have also resulted in the relocation of the municipal governmental functions of the townships in and around the nuclear power plant.

While the tendency to remain close to the home prefecture continues, a significantly high number of people who evacuated Fukushima are located in Yamagata Prefecture (12,973 persons), which exceeded the number in Niigata Prefecture (6,723 persons), a popular destination back in June 2011. A majority of evacuees either live in their own temporary residential houses/units or rely on their relatives and acquaintances. Those who evacuated the township of Futaba still live in Saitama, and a small number of them are residing in temporary shelters in Tokyo. Some have still been reported as living in hotels or inns in Yamagata (67 persons), Shizuoka (10 persons), and Okinawa (28 persons) Prefectures since the disasters.

While the figure in this report *only* reflects the number of evacuees living *outside* Fukushima Prefecture, it does not include the evacuees who live *abroad* and *within* Fukushima Prefecture. According to the Prefectural Government, over 97,000 evacuees living *within* Fukushima Prefecture stay in temporary housing units and are scattered across the prefecture⁴. Others, residing within Fukushima, who are not included in this figure rely on relatives; some of these evacuees do not report their whereabouts to the authorities.

Continuous attention needs to be paid to the displacement, the lives of evacuees in new communities, host-guest relationships, and related issues concerning the welfare of the evacuees. Careful assessment of the conditions of those who had to leave their homes is vital in order to refine aid policy for the displaced who are uncertain of their return home.

¹ <http://www.pref.fukushima.jp/j/kengaihinanuchiwake240223.pdf> released on March 5, 2012

² These figures were obtained by Fukushima Prefectural Government from the Reconstruction Agency's evacuee survey except for Miyagi Prefecture. Miyagi's data, as of February 27, 2012, is based on the reported data that was provided to the Fukushima government by the Miyagi government through "Nationwide Evacuee Information System."

³ <http://www.soc.nii.ac.jp/tga/disaster/articles/e-contents24.pdf>

⁴ <http://www.pref.fukushima.jp/kenchiku/04topix/shinchokujoukyou.pdf> as of March 6, 2012

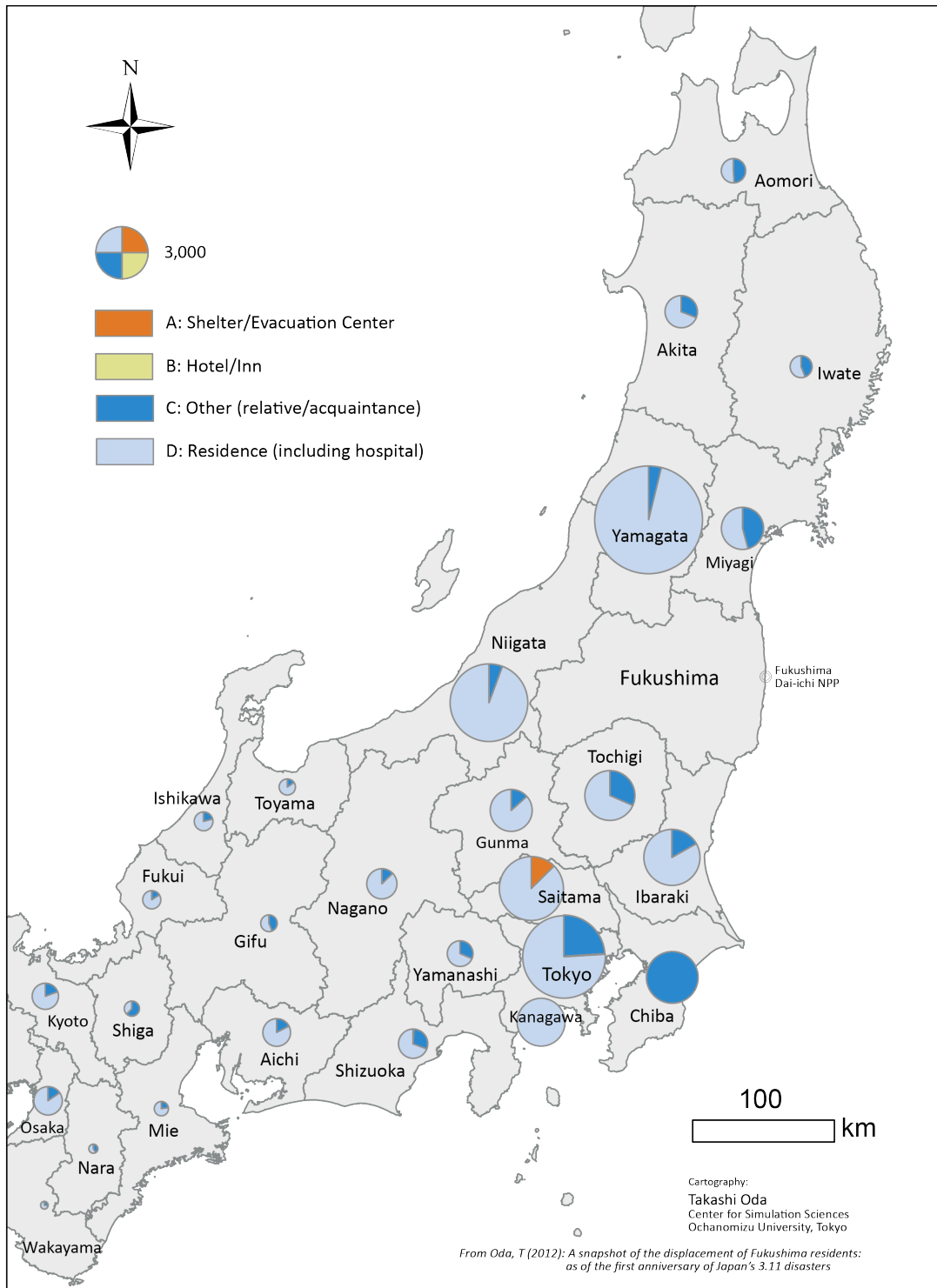


Figure 1. Distribution of evacuees from Fukushima Pref. and the types of evacuations, February 2012
 Source: Fukushima Prefectural Government report, based on the Reconstruction Agency's data; map created by T. Oda

Note:

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