

Vulnerability and Characteristics of Great East Japan Earthquake Victims:

Focus on Kirikiri, Otsuchi, Iwate

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Concept: Many, many people died in the Great Tohoku Earthquake and Tsunami. They were victimized by the disaster. In Otsuchi, Iwate Prefecture, where we conducted our study, 1284 (H25.8.1) people lost their lives to the tsunami. However, it's not a statistic that died, but a collection of individuals. The main theme of this project is to investigate the circumstance and cause of each individual person's death, and to record the testimony of each person's life.

Objective: To make clear the characteristics of Great East Japan Earthquake victims, especially focusing on pre-disaster demographic attributes and vulnerability.

Methods: The study was a case study/statistical analysis combination, with geographic software also used during analysis. Information was gathered through interviews of persons involved with the deceased: their estimated place and cause of death and primary attributes.

Results: The very high rate of elderly victims in this aging regional community was reaffirmed. Victimization of people in their 70s and 80s and above was high. The study found multiple examples of victimization in seniors in nursing care, handicapped people, and their respective families. Pre-disaster vulnerability can be said to have affected victimization. In contrast, there were few child victims. The survey also showed residents contributed to life saving efforts.

Figure1 Kirikiri Region Damage Survey

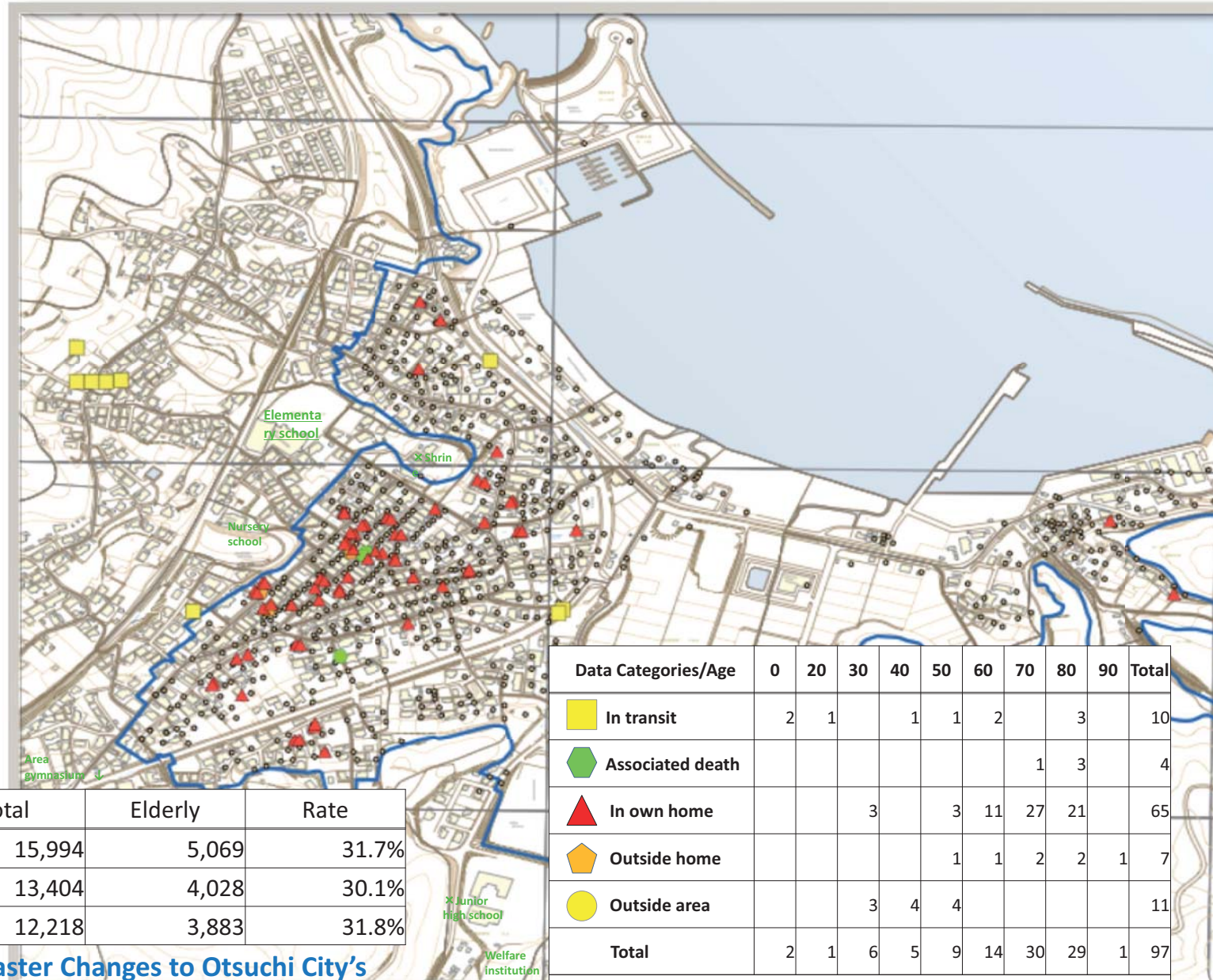


Table 1 Post-Disaster Changes to Otsuchi City's Population and Elderly Rate

	Total	Elderly	Rate
2011.2	15,994	5,069	31.7%
2011.9	13,404	4,028	30.1%
2012.1	12,218	3,883	31.8%

Table2 Circumstance of Death and Age

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Figure2 After a big tsunami(1933), the house group which moved to the hill.

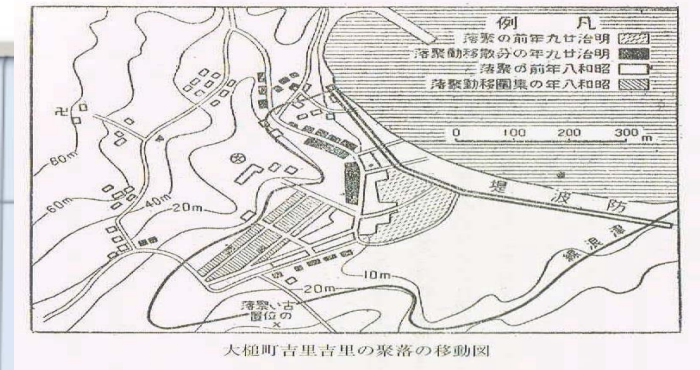


Figure3 Iwate Prefecture, Otsuchi City's hazard map (Inundation areas of Meiji, Showa tsunamis).



Inundation area that exceeded expectations, damage that exceeded that shown on hazard map Force and power that exceeded expectations. Showa tsunami was not as strong.

Figure6 Recovery of Kirikiri, Otsuchie from Showa Sanriku Tsunami



Movement of residences to 2-chome area and other recovery activities (Photo provided by 藤本俊明さん、関谷晴夫さん)

Figure4 Victims by cause

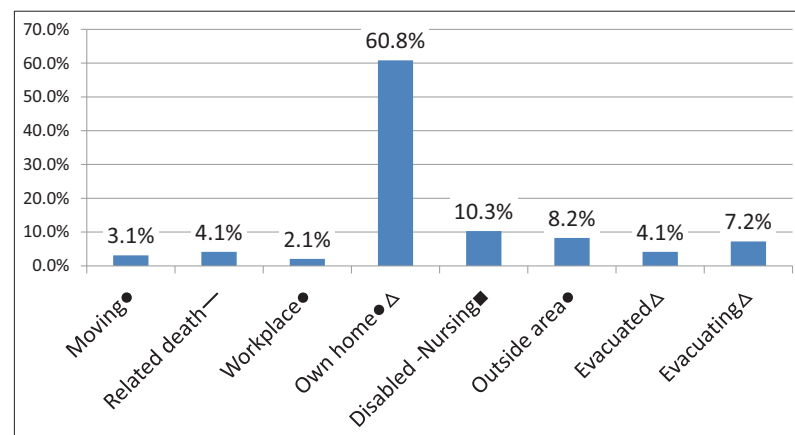


Figure5 Victims by age

