



# East Japan Disaster Relief Projects Report

September 2013

Enjoying meal preparation at Little Lambs Camp.

## A Time of Refuge for the Children

~ 「Little Lambs Camp -- UCCJ East Japan Disaster Relief Projects」 ~

“Let the children play freely outdoors without the fear of radiation.”

This is the wish that started the Little Lambs Camp. This past June 7-9 the 7th Little Lambs Camp was held at the YMCA Lake Yamanaka Camp in Yamanashi Prefecture.

“One day upon returning home I noticed Japanese sliding doors were peppered with holes. It was obvious that stress that filled our home had reached a boiling point. There was no question that something needed to be done,” shared one of the mothers at the camp as others joined in with the stories of their experiences.

On July 9 members from child care facilities in three districts impacted by the disaster came together. The one thing that all shared in common was how the radiation problem has been impacting the children and their families throughout the two years following the 3-11 disaster – unable to freely play outside children suffer from cabin fever and parents live in constant anxiety with worries about the amount of radiation they have been exposing themselves to. In some areas children are allowed 30 minutes of outdoor activity and in others up to one hour.

Unlike other children in rural Japan who mess around in the mud in the rice paddies or play in the piles of autumn leaves, these children are total forbidden to have contact with the outside environment which surrounds them. Finally be allowed back into the sandbox after two years, some children had totally forgotten how to play in the sand. I could not help but wonder how much the development of these children will be impacted by the way in which they have had to grow up with such a distance from their natural surroundings. (Makoto Iijima, UCCJ East Japan Disaster Relief Projects, Executive Director)



At Airin Preschool in Fukushima nearly all play time has to take place indoors.



The playground of Airin Preschool in which children cannot spend time because of the radiation levels.

### Total Domestic Giving

(through July 22, 2013)

¥ 580,616,493

Donations can be sent to our account at Sumitomo Mitsui Banking Corporation (SMBC) (SWIFT:SMBC JP JT) Takadanobaba Branch(273) 2471703, for US dollars 3291280, for other currencies