

## **Children submit their statement to the Reconstruction Agency (March 2, 2012)**

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Last year, as a part of “Hear Our Voice 3 ~ Interviews on the reconstruction plan,” the members of Child-Led Clubs submitted their statement to Ishinomaki City of Miyagi, Yamada-machi and Rikuzentakata City of Iwate, as well as Miyagi and Iwate prefectures. On February 25, 2012, as a part of “Hear Our Voice 4 ~ Our wish for the nation’s reconstruction,” the members visited the recently launched Reconstruction Agency, to request the opportunity for children to express their opinions and participate in the planning process of the recovery plan.

### **We want to convey our thoughts! Three regions prepared the statement cooperatively**

The members of Child-Led Clubs from three different regions discussed the content of the statement first within each region, and then together with all three regions by connecting with each other through web cameras and other means. The common opinion among the three was, “We want adults to listen more to our opinions.” They summarized their proposal that by having children express their opinions to adults, not only in disaster areas but also in many other places, they can make their communities even better because the opinions of both adults and children will be implemented. Some members had asked their teachers, classmates and neighbors of their opinions, so that comments from the community could be conveyed to the nation. Seeing these actions, we could certainly feel the extraordinary enthusiasm of the children.

### **Many questions were raised at the statement submission ceremony**

Representing the members of the Clubs, two sixth graders (boys), three eighth graders (girls) and one ninth grader (girl) from the regions, six children in total, joined in the statement submission ceremony and directly submitted their statement to Mr. Hirano, Minister for Reconstruction, as well as Mr. Tsugawa and Ms. Kouri, Parliamentary Secretaries.

- To read the statement jointly prepared by the three regions, click [here](#)
- To read the statement from the members of Rikuzentakata, click [here](#)



A commemorative photo of Mr. Hirano, Mr. Tsugawa, Ms. Kouri, and the members of Child-Led Clubs with Save the Children staff

At the question and answer session with the minister, the members raised their hands one after another to ask questions, which made the session so exciting that it required an extension of time. The children shared their common concerns, such as, “We want to have the reconstruction process go faster” and “When will railways be constructed?” They also conveyed their wishes for their opinions to be appropriately implemented and listened to even after the ceremony, by asking questions such as, “How are you going to implement our proposals?” and “Please come to the Tohoku Children’s Summit on May 5 to listen to our presentations.”

**Please continue to listen to children’s opinions**

After expressing their opinions, children commented, “I was happy that they treated us like adults and not like children” and “I recognized that I can convey my opinions through this activity. I want to continue to express my opinions further.”