

Among other things, we aim to offer a ^{free} pet boarding service for people who are temporarily unable to take care of their dogs. We're also trying to form a network of people who can take in dogs, cats, birds, etc., until their owners get back on their feet.

ARK volunteers are making regular nighttime trips into Kobe to try to rescue stray pets. Our people are also putting up Japanese language posters in the area explaining to people that there is a lifeline. You don't have to abandon or destroy your pet just because you can't keep it in your present situation. We will board it for up to a year—until you are able to take care of it again.

Do pet owners who lose their homes face special problems?

Often, yes. They may find suitable rented accommodation for their families only to hear that the landlord won't accept pets in the building. This is forcing some people to abandon their pets, which is a tragic situation all round. In some cases, people have lost everything in the quake and their pet is the only thing they have. It is cruel to force people to separate from their pets. I'd like to appeal to property owners and government officials alike to show compassion to the human victims of this earthquake by allowing them to keep their pets, even if this means bending a few rules.

If the authorities can organize things so that owners and pets can stay together, that would solve much of the problem. My feeling is that living in cramped temporary accommodation will create a lot of stress in the months to come. This may lead to increasing problems between tenants with pets and those without. Maybe it would be better to segregate the two groups in order to prevent problems down the road.

How well do you think uninjured cats and dogs can survive if left to roam the streets and will this lead to any long term problems?

A lot of animals fled to the mountains in panic after the quake. Now, three or four weeks later they are growing hungry and desperate. Many of the dogs are beginning to form packs and becoming less friendly to people. Un-neutered animals will start to breed. Once they become a nuisance or a danger to people, the authorities will have no choice but to destroy these animals. My guess is that they will use a poison such as ynnine. This will kill wildlife indiscriminately and is not a very pleasant scene.