

# Handbook for Utilization of Regional Revitalization Resources

For regional management in developing countries



October 2017

Governance Knowledge Management Network  
Industrial Development and Public Policy Department,  
Japan International Cooperation Agency

IL

JR

17-113

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<Photographs on the front cover> (from upper left)

- Shimane: Bountiful sea surrounding Ama-cho
- Nagano: Participatory road improvement in Shimojo-mura
- Kochi: “Towa” roadside station in Shimanto-cho
- Shimane: “Hata Market” operated by Hata community council in Unnan City
- Ishikawa: A cafe at Saien-ji Temple (Bussi-en), a social welfare facility open to communities
- Miyagi: A training participant from Aceh, Indonesia receiving fishery training from fishermen in Higashimatsushima City
- Kumamoto: Studying the grassland environment in the Aso Region

This handbook is created based on outputs of the project research: “Survey on the utilization of regional revitalization resources from the viewpoint of local governance” (entrusted to Mets Research & Planning Inc. and IC Net Limited)

## Introduction

In the wake of decentralization introduced in many countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America in the late 1990s as a part of public sector reforms, many donors have provided assistance for capacity development of local governments. However, the reality is that local governments in developing countries still have insufficient human resources and budget and have difficulty in providing adequate administrative services. Therefore, Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) has provided local government assistance for the development of administrative officers and the improvement of their capacity for effectively and efficiently providing public services, through participatory planning and plan implementation.

On the other hand, with progress in recovery from the Great East Japan Earthquake and “regional revitalization” in Japan, there are increasing cases of regional promotion and development that are not always carried out under the initiative of government but through collaboration among the public sector, private sector and community residents. These viewpoints are extremely important in strengthening “local governance” and also relate to assistance for local administration (local governance) in developing countries to be provided by JICA.

Against this backdrop, we started a project research titled “Survey on the utilization of regional revitalization resources from the viewpoint of local governance” in August 2016, through regional revitalization efforts of Japan, with the aim of organizing and systematizing useful organizational and human resources for supporting the strengthening of local administrations and local governance in developing countries and examining methods for utilizing the resources so that a developing country and Japan build a win-win relationship.

With the cooperation of not only the Industrial Development and Public Policy Department but also issue-based departments, Domestic Strategy and Partnership Department, Secretariat of Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers, and other domestic organizations, the project research compiled lessons for applying regional revitalization efforts of Japan to assist developing countries. We hope that this handbook, one of the outputs of the project research, will be widely used by JICA headquarters, overseas offices and domestic organizations, as well as experts/consultants engaged in technical cooperation in developing countries in order to effectively implement projects using regional revitalization resources of Japan.

Finally, I would like to express my gratitude to all relevant persons inside and outside the Agency who cooperated with the implementation of this project research.

October 2017

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## How to use this handbook

### Purpose of this handbook

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Along with the recovery from the Great East Japan Earthquake, efforts for “regional revitalization” have been made throughout Japan. This “Handbook for Utilization of Regional Revitalization Resources” answers the question “Can the regional revitalization efforts of Japan be applied to and utilized for assistance to developing countries as part of international cooperation provided by Japan and its local governments?”

Japanese local governments’ knowledge and techniques on water service and waste disposal have been utilized for assistance to developing countries. However, this handbook focuses on “**management for carrying out activities for solving regional issues through collaboration among various regional actors.**”

Based on the above, this handbook was created for the following purpose:

Targeting JICA staff, relevant persons, experts and development consultants engaged in technical cooperation in developing countries, this handbook introduces lessons learned from regional revitalization resources (regional revitalization projects of Japan and organizations/personnel implementing the projects) to be utilized for solving regional issues of developing countries in which they are engaged, how to deliver the resources while adjusting them to the context of developing countries, and considerations to be given in making requests to relevant organizations and personnel.

“Technical cooperation” provided above mainly refers to technical cooperation projects and training in Japan, but projects that involve Japanese local organizations (local governments, NPOs and private sector, etc.), such as volunteer projects and JICA Partnership Programs, etc., are also included.

This handbook compiles how to continuously utilize regional revitalization resources of Japan as well as **collaboration strategies and considerations for building a win-win relationship between a developing country and Japan** as international cooperation projects sought as a strategy to further promote regional revitalization of Japan.

## **Composition of and how to use this handbook**

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This handbook is composed of a general remark titled “Regional revitalization resource utilization guide” (Section 1) and “Case sheet for regional revitalization analysis in Japan” (Section 2) introducing seven cases.

If you are considering the possibility of using regional revitalization resources of Japan for solving issues of developing countries or a case you are working on, please read the guide (Section 1). In the guide, some of the efforts of the seven cases are introduced to support what is described in the guide, but these are just a partial description of the efforts. If you read the case sheets (Section 2) that introduce a complete picture of the efforts, you will be able to learn more about them.

The composition of the chapters and how to use the handbook are provided below.

### **Section 1 Introductory chapter Why can regional revitalization resources of Japan be applied to assistance to developing countries?**

As stated in the title, this chapter explains why regional revitalization resources of Japan can be applied to assist developing countries that are in a different situation from Japan.

In this chapter, “regional management” is set as a challenge for coordinating and managing cooperation among actors so that they can promote regional development, including sector projects, in developing countries. Regional management explains the value of applying regional revitalization resources of Japan to assist developing countries by stating the affinity of issues and efforts of developing countries and Japan.

### **Section 1 Chapter 1 How to apply regional revitalization resources of Japan to developing countries**

This chapter answers questions from the perspective of “regional management.” For example, “How can regional revitalization resources of Japan be used to assist developing countries?” and “How can we deliver them?”

Lessons learned from regional revitalization resources of Japan to be applied to assist developing countries are compiled and classified into five points in terms of how to work on regional issues and build a relationship with relevant persons for carrying out projects and activities. This chapter is written on the assumption that it will be helpful in examining resources for solving issues of developing countries or finding domestic cases that contribute to regional development in developing countries. Specifically, it suggests common points for discovering useful resources, reconsidering regional revitalization resources of Japan from the perspective of “regional management.” This chapter also introduces how to select and deliver regional revitalization resources to be utilized for the development of developing countries.

## **Section 1 Chapter 2 Considerations in applying regional revitalization resources to developing countries**

This chapter is intended for persons who would like to know what should be considered in implementing a project by utilizing regional revitalization resources of Japan.

Chapter 2-1 explains the particularity of organizations and personnel involved in regional revitalization of Japan. Based on the particularity, it introduces considerations to be given in applying regional revitalization resources of Japan to projects for developing countries (in this handbook, the projects refer to “training in Japan” that is conducted most frequently), according to the following phases: training preparation, during the training and after the completion of the training.

Chapter 2-2 describes whether a connection with developing countries is useful for regional management in Japan and introduces specific methods for building a win-win relationship between development of developing countries and regional revitalization of Japan.

## **Section 2 Case sheet for regional revitalization analysis in Japan and reference materials**

Section 2 introduces seven domestic cases. Each case is introduced according to the following order:

1. Efforts for regional management
2. Learning points from the perspective of application of regional revitalization resources to developing countries
3. Considerations in applying the case to developing countries

The beginning of Section 2 provides a list of outlines of the seven domestic cases and a list that compiles learning points of the seven cases according to lessons learned based on the five pillars of this handbook.

The end of the handbook provides regional revitalization cases other than the seven cases and a list of reference materials. We hope these will be helpful to you.

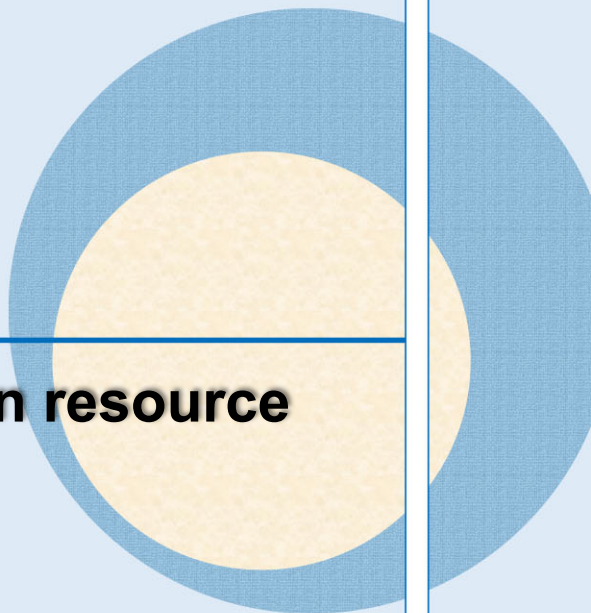




# **Section 1**

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## **Regional revitalization resource utilization guide**



## Section 1 Regional revitalization resource utilization guide

### Introductory chapter

### Why can regional revitalization resources of Japan be applied to assist developing countries?

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In addition to assistance for institution building and capacity development of the central governments of developing countries in various sectors, JICA has provided assistance for strengthening systems and capacity for promoting economic and social development and improving the quality and quantity of services in local areas. However, it is difficult for local administration (local governments or local branches of the central government) in developing countries to provide adequate services without any cooperation due to limitations in human resources and budget. Therefore, a system has been sought to effectively and efficiently provide public services with the participation of actors other than the public sector, such as residents and the private sector, etc., in the planning and implementation of the services.

To varying degrees, this situation is observed in all sectors in most developing countries. So, as shown in the examples below, sector assistance in local areas of developing countries needs not only techniques specific to the sector, but also perspectives common to all sectors, such as cooperation among various actors and utilization of regional resources, etc.

e.g. 1) **Development of local industries (including One Village One Product movement):** Before understanding market needs and developing sales channels inside and outside the region, **identification of and adding value** to regional resources are necessary, based on what is provided above. To do so, it is essential for regional actors **to know the region, share issues**, and **establish and strengthen a collaboration system with relevant persons inside and outside the region.**

e.g. 2) **Conservation of natural environment:** **Achieving a balance between conservation of the natural environment and economic development** is the key. To do so, **coordination of interests among the public sector, the private sector and residents, which are involved in both fields, and building a collaboration system and**

**promoting activities balancing conservation and utilization of local resources** are essential.

e.g. 3) **Disaster risk reduction:** Disaster countermeasures for buildings and facilities as well as the development of disaster prediction/alarm systems are necessary. It is also important **to create a disaster risk reduction map, deliver information, and carry out evacuation activities using existing know-how of the region and the structure of self-help and mutual help, through cooperation and collaboration with various actors in a community, such as residents' organizations, schools, religious facilities, and health centers, etc.**

Based on the examples above, it can be said that “**regional management**,” using regional resources for solving regional issues through cooperation and collaboration among various regional actors, is important for regional development of developing countries.

In this handbook, “regional management”<sup>1</sup> is defined as follows:

A system or structure to manage activities through cooperation among various actors inside and outside a region by fully utilizing regional resources (industry, environment, personnel, history and culture, etc.) for solving regional issues and independent, sustainable development of the region

Considering local areas in developing countries from a wider perspective, an affinity can be observed to some extent between current issues of local areas in developing countries and those in Japan.

Although populations in some capitals and urban areas of developing countries have been growing rapidly in recent years, they cannot absorb the population increase, which has caused problems related to employment, urban infrastructure (traffic congestion),

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<sup>1</sup> Katsuaki Nishino defines regional management as “developing a region where stakeholders (relevant actors) constituting the region play their most suitable function and resources are appropriately distributed through collaboration among the stakeholders, by considering regional management as an object to manage the region”. Atsushi Teratani defines regional management as “social innovation to discover the value of people, cultures, industries, materials and any other resources found in a region and to extract total added value”. What is common between the two definitions is that regional management is an effort of regional actors to voluntarily manage regional resources through collaboration among them and to maximize the value of the resources. The Association for Regional Management in Japan (<http://www.armj.org/>) aims to “conduct a wide range of academic, scientific and practical investigation and research on the appropriate management of tangible and intangible asset systems that form a city, region or district (hereinafter referred to as the “region”), from an international perspective.”

and environment (waste disposal), etc. To solve these problems, the improvement of urban functions and creation of industries and employment are urgently required. At the same time, depopulation measures need to be taken in local areas to prevent an influx of surplus population to urban areas. In many local areas in developing countries, deserted cultivated land has been increasing due to an outflow of population. This caused major issues such as family/community disruption and destabilization of future life.

In Japan, the total population has been decreasing, particularly in local areas. It was pointed out in a book in 2014 that 896 municipalities may cease to exist by 2040.<sup>2</sup>

The overall situations of Japan and developing countries are completely different, but in terms of local areas, they have common issues although the causes are slightly different, such as the progressive hollowing out of industry and depopulation. Therefore, the strengthening of “regional management” is important in developing countries as well as in Japan, as a structure for decision-making to maintain a region and for organizational operation/cooperation, in order to develop industries and add value by using regional resources and carry out activities for using the resources.

Actually, successful examples of “regional management” have been observed in Japan. In particular, with progress in regional revitalization and recovery from the Great East Japan Earthquake, there are increasing cases of independent regional promotion and development that are not always carried out under the initiative of government but through collaboration among the public sector, private sector and residents as well as with external actors for protecting and developing the regional value.

Although the basic situation varies, it is thought that “regional management” for these current regional revitalization efforts and against the abovementioned depopulation in local areas contains some suggestions, even in developing countries. These efforts may not always be applied to developing countries without any arrangement based only on the current situation of developing countries. However, considering future issues of developing countries on the whole, particularly in the local areas of such countries, efforts for regional revitalization that are currently made in Japan can be positioned as resources for strengthening “regional management” in developing countries.

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<sup>2</sup> Hiroya Masuda (2014) “Disappearance of municipalities - Rapid population decline caused by the population concentration in Tokyo” Chuokoron-Shinsho

## Chapter 1

# How to apply regional revitalization resources of Japan to developing countries

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### **1-1. Lessons learned from regional revitalization resources to be applied to developing countries**

It is stated in the previous chapter that regional revitalization efforts of Japan may become resources for strengthening “regional management” in developing countries. The Case sheet for regional revitalization analysis in Japan provided in Section 2 of this handbook introduces regional revitalization efforts of seven regions, from among a number of cases across Japan, to compile the characteristics of “regional management.”

Themes of the seven cases vary widely, such as industrial promotion, welfare, disaster risk reduction, environmental conservation, and provision and management of public services, etc. Main implementing actors of the cases also vary, such as the public sector, private sector and residents, etc. This chapter compiles lessons learned from “regional management” that are relatively commonly observed among various efforts and are considered useful for assistance to developing countries. The lessons are compiled based on the following five points.

- (1) **Basic stance** to address regional issues
- (2) **Methods to utilize resources** for solving regional issues
- (3) **How to carry out regional activities and efforts**
- (4) **Relationship among actors** in regional management
- (5) **Expansion and spread of effects** of regional activities and efforts

The interrelation of the points above strengthens regional management as a whole and contributes to the solution of regional issues more than ever.

Details of the points are provided below.

## (1) Lessons learned from “Basic stance to address regional issues”

Regional resources (industry, environment, people, history and culture, etc.) have been identified and the value of the resources has been maximized (improvement of regional resources).

What should be done first in addressing regional issues? This chapter points out the **importance of focusing on regional resources** as the first step. In other words, in fields of industrial promotion and agricultural development, the first point is that efforts have been made not by relying on external resources, but rather by revising and extracting **the intrinsic value of regional resources, which tends to get overlooked**.

### [1] Setting an occasion to realize regional issues and resources

To address regional issues, **motivation to focus on regional matters and recognition of regional issues** are necessary first of all. In carrying out activities to identify regional issues and resources in a developing country, it is important not to always focus only on things outside the region (issues) but find things inside the region (resources) and consider whether the issues can be solved by using the resources.

What is common between the following two cases is that the regions make efforts to realize their regional attractiveness and issues before carrying out specific activities for regional management.

In the case of efforts by a community organization in Shimanto-cho, Kochi, the organization first reviewed the value of agricultural products, such as tea and chestnuts, etc., that had been produced for a long time using the natural environment of the region. To produce new products, it focused on the quality of the chestnuts, which is better than other regions, and the history of the tea that had been produced in the region for a long time and was the first black tea sold in Japan. The organization actually spent one year conducting a regional resource survey to find resources that have been in the region for a long time, such as chestnuts and tea, etc. As the only staff member at the time “Shimanto Drama” was established was an employee of an agricultural cooperative, the organization used the employee’s connection at the time to visit various producers in the region during the survey. Through these activities, the organization has called on actors in the region and worked on industrial revival, environmental conservation and business start-up, under a unique business philosophy “manufacturing without placing a burden on Shimanto River.” (Section 2 p.106)

Ama-cho, Shimane reviewed the value of its geographical and social conditions as an island surrounded by the sea-which may be considered a disadvantage according to one point of view-from the perspective of its natural environment, history and culture. It has worked on community development using resources related to such conditions. The town's current efforts are made not only through the efforts of people on the island, but also through communication with people outside the island, such as product development trainees, etc. to rediscover the region's attractiveness. Based on these efforts, they add a unique value to the island to develop new industries and relationships with people outside the island, with the slogan "We have all we need." (Section 2 p.84)



Slogan of Ama-cho  
"We have all we need" poster

As described in the cases above, regional actors **add their unique value to resources, which is different from that added in urban areas, and includes the natural environment, history and culture that naturally exist in the region**, and make efforts to **maximize the value of those resources**. As the resources are familiar to **community residents and people engaged in local industries, they can carry out activities and projects without difficulty as if they are "their personal matters."** In addition, **they can feel motivation toward activity/project outputs and sustain the activity/project as its scale is moderate.**

In both cases in Shimanto-cho, Kochi and Ama-cho, Shimane, the most important thing is that they **strongly promoted the uniqueness of the value of their regional resources, including the natural environment, history, culture and "people" living in the region, by creating a story about the value.** This produced various effects, such as an increase in competitiveness of regional products in the market and an increase in tourists and people moving into the region, etc.

## [2] Sharing regional value and identification/revival of regional resources

"Regional resources" are classified into **resources to be "identified," such as industrial, environmental and tourism resources, etc., and resources to be "revived" that are in people's minds, such as customs of a community and connection between communities, etc.** The following are examples of utilization of the latter resources.



In Unnan City, Shimane and Higashimatsushima City, Miyagi, community governance organizations have been established for each elementary school zone, by using the cities' traditional mutual help and joint activities among community residents. Residents in Unnan City have provided some public services, while residents in Higashimatsushima City have developed earthquake reconstruction communities through mutual help. (Section 2 p.46 and p.151)

In Shimojo-mura, Nagano, small-scale infrastructures have been developed through mutual help, by reviving “Michiyaku (road cleaning and repair),” a traditional community custom. Residents regard the improvement of community roads as “one of the exciting events” and voluntarily carry out activities. (Section 2 p.67)

In a project for regional development assistance in developing countries, it is expected that actors (administrative officers, enterprises and residents, etc.) can foster their motivations towards their efforts by learning about efforts in Japan, like those above, from Japanese regional actors in various positions. Based on this, it is also expected that local assistance can be provided for activities to identify specific regional issues and resources (social mapping and SWOT analysis, etc.) in a technical cooperation project. In addition, it is important to support the actors in finding a unique value to be protected and fostered in their region, through activities to identify regional issues and resources. The “value to be protected and fostered” will be the core on which regional management relies.

## (2) Lessons learned from “Methods to utilize resources for solving regional issues”

In terms of utilization of regional resources, “total design” for planning, implementing and supporting a project has been developed by maximizing the regional value, and “total production” for combining regional resources with various projects and organizations has been carried out by sustaining the resources.

After identifying regional resources and finding the value of the resources, methods to utilize the resources must be examined for maximizing the value.

### [1] Total design that maximizes regional value

**For maximizing the value and attractiveness of regional resources, it is important to design a series of processes, including development, production, distribution and sales of products, project planning, coordination of actors, project implementation/operation, and follow-up, etc.**

Under the unified philosophy of “Manufacturing without placing a burden on Shimanto River,” “Shimanto Drama” in Shimanto-cho, Kochi, has developed products by maximizing the value and attractiveness of regional resources, such as Shimanto chestnuts and a historical story that black tea was produced there for the first time in Japan, etc. They have developed various distribution channels for selling their products, such as roadside stations, websites, and department stores in urban areas, etc. (Section 2 p.108)



Shimanto chestnut products sold at “Shimanto Towa” roadside station

Under the initiative of the town office (local government) and the third sector, Ama-cho, Shimane produces oysters from its beautiful sea, natural salt and Oki beef fed by grass enjoying the sea breeze and rich in minerals, with the keywords “sea, salt and sea breeze.” The products sell on Tsukiji market at high prices. (Section 2 p.84)

What is common between the two cases above is that **the sixth industry (total design) is realized by maximizing the value of regional resources for securing local employment, while maintaining the primary industry** and meeting market needs.

We sometimes provide support for regional development in developing countries, such as the One Village One Product movement, local industry promotion and tourism promotion using the natural environment, on a community or region-wide basis. It is expected that people engaged in these activities will find tangible/intangible values and resources of their region that cannot be found in urban areas, by learning about the cases above. It is also expected that the cases will help them to maximize and objectively review the values and resources and recognize the necessity to promote their products and the region itself.

## [2] Total production that maximizes and sustains regional resources from various angles

In addition to project design that maximizes regional resources based on the regional value, it is important to **totally produce regional resources for sustaining their value in the future, by combining the resources with various products, organizations and projects.**

In the cases of total production below, the project achieves a balance among regional economy, society and environment, which contributes to the strengthening of regional sustainability.

Shimanto-cho, Kochi has implemented a project in which three pillars “local, low-technology and low-impact” are mutually related, based on the business philosophy of “Manufacturing without placing a burden on Shimanto River.” In addition to products using regional resources produced by “Shimanto Drama,” the town has planned and carried out activities to protect the natural environment of Shimanto River through “RIVER,” an NPO, and build a network for cooperating with persons inside and outside the region through internship programs, settlement and employment support by “Inaka Pipe.” It has also developed bottom-up efforts, such as “Towa Okamisan Ichi,” a female group in Shimanto-cho that produces, processes and sells environment-friendly vegetables, runs a restaurant, and conducts tours. The members of the group have implemented various projects to find their direction and deepen their cooperation under their original common rules. The combination of these various projects implemented by various actors leads to regional revitalization through enhancement of the regional brand: “Shimanto.” (Section 2 p.111)

In order to embody the value of “Gochamaze Shakai (mixed society),” facilities at Bussi-en in Ishikawa have developed welfare facilities for persons with disabilities and elderly persons as well as a hot spring, cafe and gym where community residents also can visit. They plan and carry out various activities through cooperation with persons with disabilities, elderly persons and community residents, while having a chat over a cup of tea. (Section 2 p.144)



Welfare facilities of “Bussi-en” open to community residents, using the site of “Saien-ji Temple”

In developing countries, it may not be easy to implement comprehensive projects and activities like those above. However, it is considered useful for regions in developing countries to carry out activities for enlarging their circle of friends to sustain the value of regional resources, by promoting the resources as well as the value of the resources to other regions. Learning about the cases above will give an opportunity for people engaged in regional development in developing countries to consider specific activities to be carried out in their region.

### (3) Lessons learned from “How to carry out regional activities and efforts”

Measures for continuing efforts have been taken and efforts for sustaining and developing the region have been made.

To promote efforts of “regional management,” it is extremely important to maintain a region’s sustainability. In addition, emphasis should be placed on securing the continuity of individual projects.

#### [1] Selection of a project that fits the regional situation

In order to select a project fitting the regional situation, it is important not to select a project that will end without external injection, but to select **a project for which measures to establish the project in the region have been taken.**

Aso Region, Kumamoto has promoted activities for grassland regeneration to community residents and enterprises in order to attract wide-ranging interests. It also established “Aso Grassland Regeneration Fund” for procuring its own activity funds. After the Fund’s establishment, the prefecture built the “Aso Grassland Conservation and Support System” as financial measures for the stable operation of the fund. Raised funds are managed by the “Fund Office” and appropriated for subsidizing expenses for the resumption of open burning of abandoned farmland, operation of volunteers for open burning, and grassland environment learning, etc. (Section 2 p.175)

In “regional management” for regional development in developing countries that have a weaker financial base than Japan, it is important to **select an appropriate project that fits the region’s natural and social conditions and will be established in the region in the future.** It is of course important to secure a constant budget for the project through institutionalization by the central government. However, even with the budget, developing countries cannot provide adequate administrative services to residents by local governments alone. To implement a project for the maintenance, management and repair of small-scale infrastructures available to communities (road, simple water supply and irrigation, etc.) in these countries, it is particularly necessary to consider **“provision of cooperation-based services” involving residents.**

By using a traditional custom of “Michibushin (road cleaning and repair),” the project for providing construction materials implemented by Shimojo-mura, Nagano, has secured its sustainability through promoting maintenance and management of small-scale roads and irrigation facilities carried out by residents (beneficiaries). Residents who receive administrative services (improvement of small-scale infrastructures such as community roads and water channels, etc.) voluntarily planned and applied for the project. They received materials from government to conduct construction work. This resulted in a reduction of costs for the improvement and pavement construction of a road (e.g. 5 m in width x 100 m in length) to one-tenth of those for construction conducted by government. (Section 2 p.68)



Road improvement by residents of Shimojo-mura

In a community governance organization in Unnan City, Shimane, community residents identify regional issues and manage some necessary public services without depending on government. They first carried out activities that they could do without difficulty and reviewed the activities after a certain period. This has built a sustainable structure. It can be said that the sustainability of the project is maintained both in terms of finance and a sense of ownership of residents, by having the residents (beneficiaries) become the implementing actors of the project, according to the situation of the region. (Section 2 p.50)



Observation of elderly people carried out through water meter inspection in Nabeyama District, Unnan City

The above efforts where residents provide some administrative services are extremely useful for regional development in developing countries. In providing assistance to developing countries, it is considered that a strong impact will be made by showing these efforts of Japan. From the perspective of “regional management,” it is required to have interviews with local governments and residents and examine whether the efforts are applicable to developing countries. For example, why community residents provide some administrative services even in Japan where its economy has developed more than developing countries; what systems and methods the residents apply for providing and operating the services; and how government is involved in the project implemented by the residents, etc.

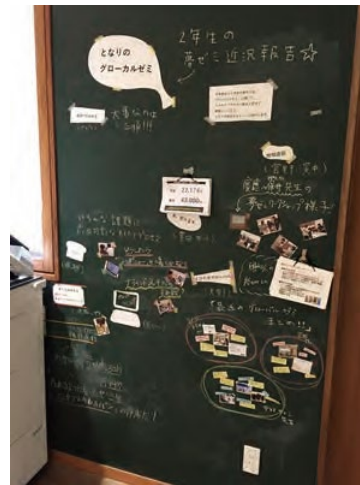
## [2] Investment in human resources development to be future leaders of communities

In addition to the sustainability of a project, **efforts for maintenance and development of a region** are very important in “regional management.”

Both in developing countries and in Japan, efforts for identifying regional issues and resources and sharing the unique value of a region are generally made by local administrative officers and residents (adults). However, considering the future of the region, it is necessary to **involve young people who are expected to be leaders of the region** in the efforts. In addition, regional issues and resources different from those found by adults are sometimes found from the young people’s and children’s perspectives.

A local high school in Ama-cho, Shimane, has carried out activities to consider specific measures for regional development and solving regional issues through learning from community residents about the region’s attractiveness and issues which cannot be learnt in urban areas, turning the issues to its advantage (“Dream workshop” and “Island study”). These activities develop human resources who are attracted to the unique resources and value of the island and will return to the island in the future even if they move away from the island after graduation.

(Section 2 p.87)



Report on “Dream workshop”  
at Oki Learning Center

Shimojo-mura, Nagano, has established the “Junior high school student council” to carry out activities whereby students find regional issues and make presentations about measures against the issues. Some of the measures they suggested have been actually adopted as the village’s measures. Through the sincere response of the municipal government, children are now conscious of being a part of the village.

(Section 2 p.71)

The activities to learn regional issues and attractiveness from community residents, like those carried out at schools in Ama-cho, Shimane and Shimojo-mura, Nagano described above, not only develop children’s problem-solving ability and creativity but also **lead to the revival of regional value by community residents, such as community customs and connections among communities, etc., through**

**communication with children.** In addition, it is expected that these activities will **develop young personnel who maximize and sustain the regional value in the future by having them recognize the value by differentiating it from urban value**, although young people receiving ordinary education are generally attracted to urban value and leave their region.

As stated in (1) above, activities to identify specific regional issues and resources may be carried out in regional development assistance in developing countries. In carrying out the activities, actors of regional development (administrative officers, enterprises and residents, etc.) in developing countries will be able to examine the usefulness of involving local university students and other young people in their regional activities and the possibility of supporting young people's voluntary activities against regional issues if they participate in regional learning activities with children in Ama-cho, Shimane and Shimojo-mura, Nagano, or hear activity reports.



#### (4) Lessons learned from “Relationship among actors in regional management”

A regional network involving various actors has been established for carrying out and developing regional activities.

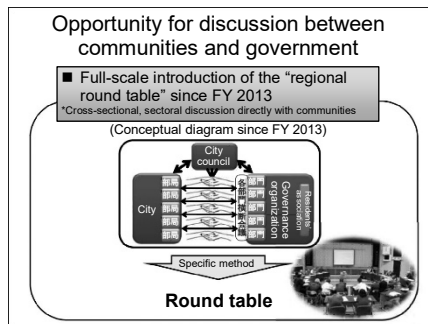
For comprehensively producing identified regional resources, it is required to enhance the added value of the resources by combining various projects implemented by various actors.

##### [1] Creation of a structure for consensus formation, coordination and cooperation among actors sharing the same goal

To realize “regional management” that can create this structure, it is important for **various actors in a region to play their individual roles and create and manage a mutual connection.**

The important point in the two cases below is that the actors **start activities in a small group, form a flexible network for information-sharing among people who have the same problem and direction, and gradually strengthen consensus formation and coordination functions for cooperation.**

Unnan City, Shimane has set up a “regional round table” as a place to hold discussions between government and community governance organizations on an equal footing. Outputs of efforts of the community governance organizations and their capacity have been improved by sharing and mutually learning their experience among actors under a horizontal relationship. Systems and structures for common activities of community governance organizations have also been improved through discussions for problem resolution between government and the organizations. (Section 2 p.51)



Conceptual diagram of the regional round table in Unnan City

In Towa District, Shimanto-cho, Kochi, regional enterprises and organizations, including “Shimanto Drama” and “Okamisan Ichi,” have established a cooperation structure called the “Association for the Future Towa.” Regional enterprises and organizations that agree with the structure have a discussion once a month on regional industrial issues and the future of the region. They take responsibility for

planning, building a system of, and implementing projects for industrial revitalization. (Section 2 p.113)

In developing countries, there are also small-scale organizations, such as a residents' association or conference bodies, etc., and organizations based on an activity theme, such as a livestock group and life improvement group, etc. It is important first to find these organizations and groups and understand their members and how they form a consensus. There are cases where a resident belongs to more than one organization or group in a community. Particularly in the case of a region-based organization and a theme-based group, members sometimes share their roles and functions based on vertical and horizontal relationships to complement one another for carrying out community development. Therefore, it is important to understand the relationship among the members.

Based on the above, a project can, as a third-party mediator, provide organizations and groups an opportunity to share their understandings and activities when they have the same issue and vision. In addition to intermediation among community organizations and groups, the project can become a bridge to government and NGOs. To solve regional issues and share and maximize regional resources, it is considered effective to introduce the cases of Japan above to actors as one of the cases for the formation of a network with other actors and to have them consider a suitable network based on the capacity of community organizations and groups.

In the case below, activities are not carried out based on problems of a community group, but based on challenges of a wide range of actors. So the **regional network involves not only local actors, but also the state, prefecture and other actors addressing a wide range of challenges.**

Aso Region, Kumamoto has established the "Aso Grassland Regeneration Council" with the aim of regenerating grassland spreading over a wide area. With the involvement of actors conserving the grassland as well as the state, prefecture, municipalities, associations, local NPOs, including persons engaged in agricultural and livestock industries, and various other stakeholders, the council coordinates priority projects and roles, within a range that the actors can agree with, towards a simultaneous realization of grassland conservation, development of agricultural and livestock industries, and rebuilding of regional communities. (Section 2 p.172)



General meeting of the Aso Grassland Regeneration Council

In developing countries, projects are not implemented only by local actors; many are implemented by local agencies of the national government using the national budget. Therefore, coordination of various actors is required even in a region-based project. Coordination is not easy, but the same applies both to developing countries and Japan. From that perspective, it is expected that the search for suitable methods for coordination among sectors and project actors of developing countries will be facilitated by showing the case of Aso Region, Kumamoto, as one of the successful cases.

## [2] Multi-layered leadership and facilitation mobilizing various actors

To strengthen an intra-regional network involving various actors, leadership and facilitation to control the actors are important. As for leadership, **leadership of a person at the top** is of course **important**, but in order to take action, **a middle leader who supports and sometimes properly uses a top leader is also important**.

In the two cases below, although the form of government leadership is different, both leaders contribute to the strengthening of “regional management.” The common important point is that **the top leader and middle leader encourage various regional actors from their positions, based on their trust relationship, and contribute to the network’s strengthening**.

In Ama-cho, Shimane, the mayor (the top government official) demonstrates his initiative, and at the same time, manager-level personnel in charge of operation plan a specific project to realize the initiative. They effectively involve resource persons in the project from inside and outside the island to make the network function. (Section 2 p.97)



Mayor Yamauchi (center of the front row)  
with the members of “Association for the  
Future Ama-cho”

In Unnan City, Shimane, under the initiative of the top leader, mid-level government officials frequently visit communities to share their issues and activities from the same perspective as residents. This has resulted in the building of a trust relationship where the communities and government can complement each other. (Section 2 p.60)

It may not be easy to form the same structure in developing countries. However, it is not impossible for a middle leader to build a relationship with communities, support their

activities, and obtain the top leader's commitment after showing the top leader an output. By introducing the cases above, including the possibility of the leadership of a middle leader, to the top and middle leaders in developing countries, they will be able to examine what actions need to be taken towards the goal in their region.

As for facilitation, as described in the case below, **a person who supports and coordinates actors behind the scenes is important for proactive cooperation among residents and other regional actors.**

At "Bussi-en," Ishikawa, staff of "Bussi-en" play the role of facilitator behind the scenes. For the construction of its facilities and carrying out regional activities with the concept of "Gochamaze Shakai (mixed society)" centered on the facilities, they visit communities to hear residents' opinions, hold a PCM workshop, and support project planning between residents and persons with disabilities/elderly persons. ([Section 2 p.146](#))

In "regional management" in developing countries, government extension officers and NGO staff visit communities to hear residents' needs and inspire their commitment and sometimes play a role in connecting various actors. Even if the field or theme is different, the basic code of conduct has something in common. For example, how the facilitator has contact with residents and how the facilitator becomes a bridge between residents and stakeholders. They have much to learn even in the context of developing countries.

## (5) Lessons learned from “Expansion and spread of effects of regional activities and efforts”

Collaboration has been established with external actors for sustaining and developing regional efforts and expanding the value of the region.

To solve regional issues and comprehensively producing regional resources, it is important to secure the sustainability of efforts of “regional management.” The sustainability can be secured by regional efforts to some extent, but the external environment surrounding the region is also one of the major factors in affecting the sustainability of the efforts. So, it is important to **increase the number of people who share the value of the region and the significance of efforts to be made through an external network, and accordingly, to enhance the value of the region as a whole.**

### [1] Utilization of external human resources contributing to the maximization of regional resources

What is important in the following two cases is that **collaboration has been developed with external resources as a partner that empathizes with regional value/needs and shares ideas/financial resources as well as sales channels, markets and activities.**

Under the slogan “We have all we need,” Ama-cho, Shimane has accepted partners from outside the island who empathize with the island’s value that cannot be found in urban areas and contribute to the maximization of the value from various angles. This leads to the development of industries, including oyster farming, the development of the attractiveness of Dozen High School, and the implementation of projects of “Megurinowa,” a private enterprise established by people moving from urban areas to the island. The projects include media (communication) projects, educational (learning) projects, and regional development (establishment) projects that use people, things and the environment of Ama-cho as materials. These external actors have become members of the region who contribute to the maximization of the regional value, together with community residents, and boosted efforts of Ama-cho made with the aim of becoming a model of sustainable society. (Section 2 p.99)

To utilize diversified external human resources, including those who come to the city for assistance to recover from the Great East Japan Earthquake, Higashimatsushima City, Miyagi, established an intermediate support organization based on regional needs. The limited capacity of the city government cannot coordinate among a huge number of actors inside and outside the region. In response to this, the intermediate support organization has built a partnership with private enterprises, universities and other actors according to the government’s reconstruction plan, based on the needs of communities. This enables the implementation of various projects, including those that cannot be implemented by government alone. (Section 2 p.154)



Efforts of an intermediate support organization “Higashimatsushima Organization for Progress and Economy, Education, Energy (HOPE)”

In developing countries, external human resources, such as university and NGO personnel, etc., may become external actors. If these external actors learn about the efforts of Japan above together with regional actors, they will have an opportunity to share the same regional value and think about what they can do with one another.

## [2] An inter-regional network to share and develop the regional value

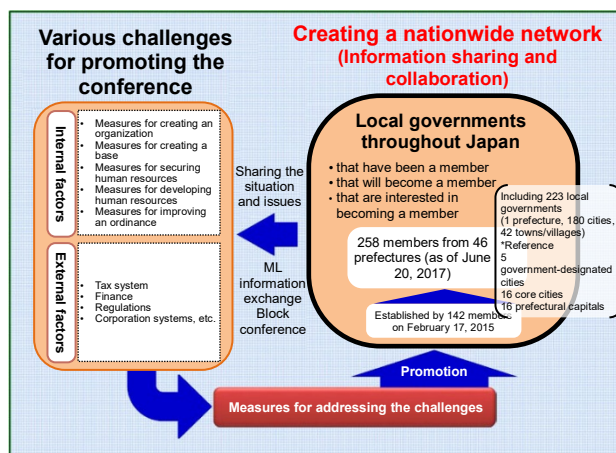
**To sustain and develop regional efforts**, it is effective to **build a network with other regions making the same efforts and other actors sharing the same regional issues and value.**

In the three cases below, **the sustainability of efforts, which are difficult to make with only internal actors, are enhanced by forming a united front with external actors that share the same value.**

Shimanto-cho, Kochi has implemented a project “Ashimoto Ippin Kaigi” under the initiative of “Shimanto Drama.” Under a common purpose to promote products using the regional value to society, the conference has become a place where producers, distributors and support enterprises in the region that are active in the front lines in Japan gather together. They communicate the know-how they have

developed in their region, conduct transactions with one another by proactively introducing know-how of other regions and establishing a mutual relationship, and jointly carry out trial development of new products. (Section 2 p.117)

Utsunomiya City, Shimane, in regard to the “Small-scale multifunctional autonomy” it has operated, established the “Small-scale multifunctional autonomy network conference” with the support of other local governments and external experts having the same issues. The conference not only enables participants to enhance one another through information sharing, but also appeals to the central government to create a corporation system to promote the small-scale multifunctional autonomy. In other words, by building a network with actors having the same regional issues and value, information on efforts is shared, and the value of regional efforts and momentum for problem resolution are raised to the national level. (Section 2 p.55)



Conceptual diagram of the network conference for promoting small-scale multifunctional autonomy

In Ama-cho, Shimane, products of the island are sold at the “Rito (Remote Island) Kitchen” restaurant jointly with other local places located on remote islands as with Ama-cho. By selling the products to people outside the island jointly with other local places, products of both Ama-cho and other regions are sold equally, and Ama-cho’s “regional value as a remote island” is increased as a whole, which increases the number of people who agree with the value. (Section 2 p.92)

In developing countries, a region-based horizontal network also has a potential to share

regional good practices. Through a JICA project as a donor, it also has a potential to bridge local problem awareness generated from a region-based network and encourage the central ministries and agencies of the counterpart to consider policy and system improvements. By introducing the efforts of Japan above to central and local actors involved in regional development in developing countries, they will be able to consider a network and activities suitable for their efforts and situation.

## **1-2. Points for applying regional revitalization resources to developing countries**

As described above, “regional management” is important for regional development of developing countries in any field and sector to cooperate and collaborate among various regional actors for utilizing regional resources. To strengthen “regional management” in developing countries, the following are important as points to note in applying regional revitalization resources of Japan.

### **[1] Comprehensive understanding on the background of efforts and inter-actor relationship**

To utilize resources of Japan, it is important not to focus only on some of the efforts of the relevant region, but to comprehensively **understand the background of the establishment of the efforts and relevant actors.**

For example, in the case of Ama-cho, Shimane, if only efforts for industrial development (oysters and Oki beef) are focused on, only technology and facilities may be subject to development, and the efforts may become the same efforts generally made in other industrial development projects. To carry out industrial development, the uniqueness of efforts and matters to be truly learned as “regional management” can be found out if the **social/economic background of the efforts, government strategy for the efforts, public-private collaboration/cooperation system, and a relationship with and impact/effect of external resources are comprehensively understood and reviewed.**

### **[2] Application of resources according to the situation of an organization and efforts of the relevant developing country**

Based on the difference in social and organizational structures between a developing country and Japan, it is important to **consider the application of regional revitalization resources of Japan according to the situation of an organization and efforts in the relevant developing country.**

For example, if the case of a community governance organization in Unnan City, Shimane, is applied to promoting regional reorganization and community revitalization in a community in a developing country, the case cannot be applied without any



arrangement because there is no community governance organization in most developing countries that has the same scale or applies the same method as those in Unnan City. Therefore, it is important, in terms of bridging, to **consider and select functions to be played by an organization or group in the community of the developing country, and examine the scope of the management of the community governance organization in Unnan City to be applied to the community.**

## Chapter 2

# Considerations in applying regional revitalization resources to developing countries

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### **2-1. Considerations in implementing a project using regional revitalization resources**

The previous chapter introduces lessons learned from regional revitalization resources of Japan that are useful for regional development in developing countries and considerations in applying the resources to developing countries having a different situation from Japan. To actually utilize these resources for supporting developing countries, requests need to be made to specific regions, organizations and persons, based on what is described above.

The following options are considered as JICA projects utilizing regional revitalization resources:

- **Training in Japan (Country-focused training, issue-focused training, young leader training)**

In addition to country-focused training intended for the counterpart of a technical cooperation project with a specific theme in a specific country, issue-focused training and youth leader training for multinational participants led by a relevant local organization of Japan are considered.

- **Dispatch of experts and study teams**

A person of a local Japanese accepting organization that cooperated with country-focused training may be dispatched as a short-term expert or a member of a study team to make a presentation about efforts for regional revitalization at a local seminar or visit a region in a developing country to exchange opinions with actors.

- **JICA Partnership Program**

At a stage when understanding on international cooperation and a relationship with a specific country are developed, experience and know-how on a specific country's specific theme may be mutually exchanged through voluntary suggestions by a relevant regional organization in Japan.

- **Volunteer project (Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers, senior overseas volunteers)**

A staff member of a local government, local organization or private enterprise working on regional revitalization of Japan may be dispatched to a developing country, and an experienced volunteer may carry out activities for regional revitalization of Japan.

- **Public-Private Partnership**

Using the experience and know-how of small and medium-sized enterprises, which play a part in regional revitalization in Japan, business development is considered in developing countries for problem-solving.

However, when considering the application of regional revitalization resources to the projects and training above, special considerations must be given as the special characteristics of regional revitalization resources differ from those of other resources. This chapter introduces considerations in implementing training in Japan according to the phase, as the training is considered most frequently requested for the utilization of regional revitalization resources among the options above.

### **(1) Characteristics of regional revitalization resources**

Before introducing considerations in implementing a project, the characteristics of regional revitalization resources will be described, compared with other resources.

It is thought that a local government often becomes a contact point for regional revitalization resources. Needless to say, a local government is not an organization for providing ODA or assistance to a developing country but an organization for providing government services to residents. A local government with a sister city relationship may have an international department, but in general, most local governments do not frequently have a relationship with foreign countries, especially with developing countries. Although the level of experience with or enthusiasm for international cooperation varies depending on the local government, not all local governments are acquainted with ODA or JICA projects. Local government personnel usually perform their tasks within the area of their local government and do not have their replacements. A local government known for its regional revitalization efforts frequently accepts visitors from across Japan on occasions besides international cooperation projects. However, local governments cannot arrange visits or provide training as a business, like private enterprises. Therefore, no matter how excellent their regional revitalization efforts are, they cannot spend time and effort in delivering their efforts to people in developing countries. In particular, the duration of a business trip to a developing country we set for local government personnel is usually short, around a week, due to the situation above. In addition, it is sometimes very difficult for them to arrange training in Japan when they are busy handling matters of the municipal council.

One of the characteristics of regional revitalization resources is that the resources often include community residents. Efforts of community residents are not made as business, like those made by enterprises or organizations, but made as a part of their lives. So, seeing efforts of community residents means seeing a part of their lives and visiting their personal spaces. In addition, community residents usually have jobs. Therefore, for example, a resident engaged in agriculture cannot participate in regional efforts in a busy farming season, such as a rice planting and a harvest season. Turning to local communities, each district or community has its specific traditions, consensus formation and human relationships. When they do something on a community basis, these tangible and intangible regional rules will function.

## **(2) Considerations in implementing training**

### **[1] Basic stance**

Based on the characteristics of regional revitalization resources above, it is necessary not to consider that “ODA contributes to the development of a developing country as a matter of course,” but to have a basic stance that the “implementation of training means to have local governments and residents take the time that would originally be spent for providing public services or for their daily lives.”

Most of the local governments and community residents that cooperated with training in the past did their utmost to extend their best hospitality for training participants from developing countries and treated them as important guests. It is important to appreciate their kindness and have a stance to repay it in some way.

Costs for ODA projects are covered by taxpayer money, and some of the projects are implemented through community residents’ goodwill. When persons involved in a project are satisfied with cooperating with the project although it is not easy for them, taxpayer’s understanding of ODA projects will improve.

### **[2] Considerations at the training preparation phase**

#### **• Prior collection of information on regional revitalization resources**

Needless to say, to apply regional revitalization resources of Japan to training in Japan, efforts must be made to collect information in advance on the background and actors of the relevant regional revitalization efforts, through literature and the Internet ([refer to p.201 “List of reference materials and information”](#)) and to clarify what should be learned based on issues of the relevant theme of the relevant country. This enables a request to be smoothly made to the actors of the efforts.

#### **• Clarification of the focal contact point**

As there are many cases where regional revitalization efforts are maintained through

various activities by various actors, there are usually multiple actors that will become training resources. However, confusion may be caused if contact is made with different actors. In the case of a region known for its regional revitalization efforts, it sometimes accepts visitors from across Japan. In such a case, an organization that has become a contact point for accepting visitors or that plays a central role in making efforts should be found out first. It is considered better to consult the organization about specific arrangements of training, after giving the organization an outline of the training to be conducted in the relevant region and what participants from developing countries should learn.

#### • Examination of an appropriate timing for training

As stated in (1) above, since local governments and residents have a busy season, they cannot always accept training participants. Needless to say, the busy season must be avoided if making a training request. If the busy season is unknown, contact must be made early to ask the season to coordinate the training timing.

If efforts of community residents are introduced in training, the training may often be conducted in the evening or night or on weekends because the residents usually do their jobs, except regional efforts, during the daytime on weekdays. The situation of the residents must be considered in creating a training schedule.

#### • Preparation meeting

As stated in (1) above, not all the local governments and residents are acquainted with international cooperation projects. In addition to preparation of training materials, detailed arrangements, such as accommodation, transportation, food and exchange with community residents, etc., and payments for these expenses are necessary for accepting training participants. However, it is very difficult to appropriately make these arrangements and payments without being acquainted with international cooperation projects. In addition, as regional revitalization efforts involve various actors, including community residents, it is expected that training introducing such efforts usually includes lectures in a conference room as well as visits, opinion exchange, and fieldwork sometimes. Therefore, before conducting training, it is important to visit relevant actors and have a preparation meeting with them to the extent possible. Unlike urban areas, a face-to-face relationship is still extremely important in local areas for building a trust relationship. In that sense, it can be said that visiting and talking to actors become absolute requirements for successful training.

At a preparation meeting, JICA's procedures must be explained in as much detail as possible. If you are requested to arrange the procedures by an actor due to regional circumstances, you should consider how to meet the request. If the request cannot be accepted, you should carefully explain what is available or unavailable and should not just answer that the request cannot be accepted according to the rules.

JICA training projects also involve various organizations other than JICA such as companies entrusted with training and consultants, etc. However, as JICA staff are ultimately responsible for inquiries about training, it is useful for them to visit relevant actors and build a relationship with them even if an entrusted company conducts the training.

- **Information sharing with a domestic office in charge**

A training request is often made to the same region from various angles and themes if the region becomes more famous for its regional revitalization efforts, even if the purpose of the training is international cooperation. Particularly in the case of training in Japan (country-focused training) intended for the counterpart of a technical cooperation project, training requests may be concentrated in the same region in the same season because a consultant, who is an expert of the project concerned, makes contact with a company entrusted with training to arrange the training.

Although these situations cannot be avoided, in order to smoothly implement a project, the project management department and consultant should make contact with a JICA domestic office having jurisdiction over the region before selecting a region to be regional revitalization resources. In particular, if a training request is made to the region for the first time, contact must be made with a JICA domestic office having jurisdiction over the region before making a request, for collecting information on the region. Sharing information with a JICA domestic office enables the office to provide advice as well as to serve as a traffic controller when a request is made to the same region for more than one project and to consider cooperation setting the region as a resource.

If the region is selected as a place to visit in issue-focused training, it is desirable to share information with a JICA domestic office having jurisdiction over the region after a JICA domestic office having jurisdiction over the training makes contact with the office having jurisdiction over the region.

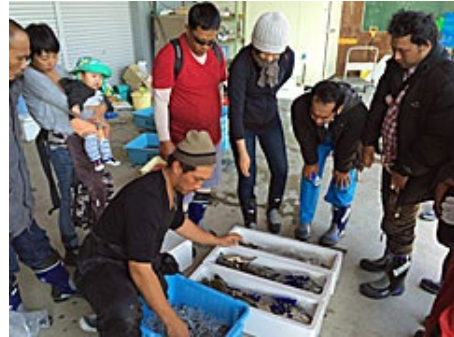
### **[3] Considerations at the training implementation phase**

- **Sensitization of participants**

Before conducting training in Japan and leaving for Japan, an explanation must be provided about the training contents and significance to the project in order to clarify and share problems concerning the training. This applies to any training, but particularly to country-focused training. In addition, as stated in (1) above, in case of the regional revitalization resources involving community residents, training participants will visit the residents and see a part of their lives. Therefore, it is important to make the participants recognize beforehand that they must give due consideration.

### • Flexible response to an unexpected situation

As stated in [2] above, regional revitalization efforts are maintained by various activities carried out by various regional actors, and most of the community residents have their jobs besides regional efforts. In such a case, they sometimes cannot participate in the training due to a sudden change of their situation even when a preparation meeting was held, or residents who are not scheduled to participate in the training sometimes participate.



Visit by training participants in Higashimatsushima City (from JICA website introducing the know-how of “Advanced local governments in international cooperation”)

In addition, as stated in [1] above, community residents often treat training participants as important guests from overseas. Therefore, residents giving a lecture sometimes participate in the plenary discussion on very short notice or prepare a meal not scheduled originally.

If their actions are taken to improve training contents or promote a better relationship with training participants even if they are unexpected, a flexible response should be taken in consultation with a JICA domestic office having jurisdiction over the region, in order to be able to return their goodwill as much as possible.

Responding flexibly enables community residents to positively accept training participants from developing countries, which leads to the establishment of a sustainable, win-win relationship between them.

### • Intervention and coordination of JICA experts and senior advisor

It is absolutely impossible to apply regional revitalization efforts of Japan to a developing country without any arrangement as the situation between the countries is different. Therefore, it is important to translate the efforts of Japan into those fitting the context of the developing country and deliver them as “important learning points.”

When regional revitalization resources are introduced in training in Japan intended for the counterpart of a technical cooperation project, the project expert and office staff in charge should temporarily return to Japan to participate in the training and provide additional explanations on how the regional efforts are important for the project output. They also should become a facilitator when training participants compile what they learned during the training and consider actions to be taken in their country. These will dramatically enhance training effects.

In the case of country-focused training that is not linked with issue-focused training or a technical cooperation project, it is possible to have JICA senior advisors participate in

the training from the planning phase, explain about the recipient country to regional actors in Japan, and serve as a mediator between regional actors and training participants during a discussion and opinion exchange in the training implementation phase.

- **Feedback to local governments and residents**

Not only actors of international cooperation but also regional actors think that regional revitalization efforts of Japan cannot be applied to a developing country without any arrangement. Local government personnel and residents worry whether their efforts introduced during training are actually helpful to training participants from developing countries.

In this case, it is effective to have a session to give feedback to the personnel and residents who cooperated with training in order to summarize what participants learned as well as what they realized during training. It is expected that the session enables them to obtain further information and knowledge from presentations of participants as well as have an opportunity to find something new.

#### **[4] Considerations after the completion of training**

- **Feedback about the situation after returning to their country**

After the completion of training, participants become less involved with people who conducted and cooperated with the training as the training goal is essentially achieved. However, in a region, where human relationships are closer than in urban areas, there are many residents who worry if participants, who visited their region and shared the time with them, can use the training output after going back to their country, even if they meet only once in their lifetime.

Therefore, participants' feedback to community residents largely increases the residents' motivations. In this case, the feedback should not be a simple, formal gratitude letter but should be a report, including photographs if possible, on their situation after going back to their country. For example, how they reported the training output, what efforts they started, and what issues they are facing, etc.

The above feedback leads to the provision of further information from community residents and their cooperation with training in the future, which gradually develops a "face-to-face relationship" between Japan and a developing country.

- **Identifying issues in carrying out procedures for training**

Despite a preparation meeting in the training preparation phase and flexible response in the training implementation phase, there may be cases where a region cannot appropriately arrange training or the arrangement does not always comply with JICA's regulations when the region accepts training participants for the first time.



In order to avoid these situations, a meeting for reviewing the training should be held with the region to find out considerations for the next training, regardless of the next training schedule, and agendas for JICA's system by identifying issues in arranging the training. This enables a smooth implementation of training using regional revitalization resources.

- **Examining the possibility of the next cooperation**

In case of a region that does not have much experience with training, it is first necessary to examine whether they can cooperate with the next training. In case of a region that has some experience with training or is interested in the situation of a country they cooperated with, it is possible to consider a choice to dispatch a key person of the region to the country as an expert (member of a study team), or to cooperate with the country on a full scale as a region (organization) in JICA Partnership Program.



Dialogue with residents in Aceh, Indonesia (from JICA website introducing "From the field")

As stated in [1] above, the duration of a business trip of local government personnel is generally short at first and they are not always fluent in English. Depending on the activities the key person carries out in the country, it should also be considered whether the person can conduct a seminar or consultations with an interpreter during their stay if the period of the stay is short.

As just described, the quality of a visit or a lecture will increase by providing adequate support even if it is a temporary program or a part of training. In addition, a deeper cooperation relationship may be developed by building face-to-face relationships with training participants from developing countries.

## **2-2. Building a win-win relationship between a developing country and Japan**

In the previous chapters, considerations in applying regional revitalization resources of Japan to the development assistance of developing countries were introduced. At the same time, as stated in the introductory chapter, developing countries and Japan have a certain affinity in regional issues, and the perspective of "regional management" is important in both countries. Based on the fact that efforts for regional revitalization and regional management of Japan have not been completed but are currently made through trial and error and evolution on a daily basis, it is conceivable that the application of regional revitalization resources of Japan to developing countries may contribute to not only the development of developing countries, but also to "regional management" efforts of Japan in no small part.

This chapter describes how important it is for “regional management” of Japan to have a connection with developing countries and introduces specific methods to build a win-win relationship between the development of developing countries and “regional revitalization” of Japan.

### (1) What is a win-win relationship?

By learning about regional revitalization resources of Japan, training participants from developing countries will realize the affinity in regional issues and needs between Japan and developing countries. As stated in 2-1. (2), **giving feedback from training participants from developing countries to community residents in Japan about what they realized during training** enables the community residents to **gain confidence and realize that their efforts** they take for granted **are worthy of global attention**. This also enables the residents to simply accept their weak points, which they know but cannot overcome, through the perspective of overseas participants who are “ultimate strangers” rather than receiving feedback from Japanese people in the region. It can also be said that the residents and participants find it easy to share their experiences and empathize with their issues in the global structure, as the participants are from developing countries where the situation is different from Europe and the U.S. It is expected that such **confidence, awareness and recognition of issues lead to the launch of new activities and a review of efforts which are apt to become sluggish as they are endless**.

Reconsidering regional revitalization efforts of Japan from the perspective of the development of developing countries, it is considered that participatory problem consciousness and solution methods commonly used in the development of developing countries, such as assistance for facilitation/organization of community residents, PCM and SWOT analysis, etc., are applied to regional management of Japan. “Bussi-en,” Ishikawa, has held a PCM workshop to confirm residents’ needs. Shimojo-mura, Nagano has carried out “Michibushin (road cleaning and repair)” as the village still has a traditional relationship developed in history. However, it is thought that communities in Japan that voluntarily carry out activities have been decreasing. Conversely, due to limitations in government capacity, community residents in developing countries have various knowledge and know-how for cooperation because promoting their activities is an important requirement for the development of communities. Some of the knowledge and know-how is based on the past experience of Japan, but in the future, **knowledge and know-how once utilized in developing countries will be reimported and utilized for the regional development of Japan**.



Material provided by Ama-cho

As shown in 1-1. (5), regional revitalization resources of Japan collaborate with external actors to sustain and develop regional efforts and increase regional value. **In order to share the regional value and sustain and develop mutual efforts through a win-win relationship, it is important to find the possibility of placing other regions and foreign countries in an equal position as an extension of external actors.**

Keeping a distance from rapid economic growth, Ama-cho has set “sustainable society” in harmony with the environment and connections between people as its regional value. It has sought collaboration with external actors that can share the regional value. This creates an opportunity to change Japanese society overall. The town is also broadening its perspective, targeting not only Japan but also the world, to examine a connection with developing countries, such as Asian and African countries, etc., rather than with the U.S. and European countries, in order to make the entire world into a sustainable society. Under the traditional, economy-oriented idea, the U.S., Europe and Japan centered on Tokyo are like a huge tanker leading the economy, and on the other hand, Ama-cho is like a boat at the tail end. However, by changing social perspective and value, the town aims to be like a tugboat that leads the huge tanker. It is also notable that the town aims to create a situation where it can move forward with regions of developing countries as its partners.

As described above, by connecting regional revitalization resources of Japan with development projects of developing countries and **delivering experience and knowledge obtained in developing countries to Japan, mutual, circular activities between a developing country and Japan will be carried out. It is expected that the activities will lead to the development of a project that makes both the developing country and Japan energetic<sup>3</sup>.**

## (2) Building a win-win relationship between a developing country and Japan

### <In Japan>

#### [1] Building a win-win relationship through training participants from developing countries

As described in the previous chapters, feedback from training participants to community residents in Japan about what they learned and realized during training will create an opportunity to have the residents realize their regional value, have confidence in themselves, and launch activities. In this respect, a win-win relationship can be built between them.

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<sup>3</sup> The thematic guidelines “Citizen participation” revised in March 2017 add an item “returning to Japanese society” to “contribution to development” and “promoting understanding of and participation in international cooperation,” which are the objectives of JICA citizen participation and cooperation projects, and plan to implement a mutual, circular project between a developing country and Japan with the aim of making both countries energetic.

More specifically, local government personnel and organization staff who play a central role in regional revitalization efforts and coordinate training in Japan will be able to examine their future activities if they receive feedback from training participants about what they realized and exchange opinions with the participants. In terms of interaction between training participants and community residents, the residents can have an opportunity to improve their international understanding through training participants from overseas that the residents do not usually have communication with, and can feel a sense of purpose for their routine efforts they have made by receiving an evaluation made by the participants on the efforts. It is also conceivable that residents' opinions on local government assistance and intermediation may change through an evaluation made by training participants from the perspective of an "ultimate stranger." Furthermore, interaction with young generations who will be future leaders will become an opportunity to improve community residents' international understanding as well as rediscover their regional value from a global perspective. This is not a young people's "introspective mindset," but can be called a new "outward mindset" that maximizes internal value.

There is also a possibility of creating a structure to dispatch a person who accepted training participants from developing countries, introduced his efforts, and exchanged his opinions as a regional resource person during training in Japan (local government or relevant organization personnel or a resident who is a member of a residents' association, etc.) to a developing country, as a short-term expert or study team member, so as to make a presentation about regional revitalization efforts of Japan to more people and exchange opinions with actors in the country through observation of their activities. It is also expected that the above structure will lead to sustainable interaction developed by their friendly competition, with the theme of "regional development" as the medium.

Column

**Regional development exchange between Kora-cho,  
Shiga and Thailand<sup>4</sup>**

To study resident-led efforts “Community development of Seseragiyuen,” Kora-cho, Shiga, accepted country-focused training “Capacity Building for Planning Management of Local Authorities” for Thailand from 2002 to 2004. Training participants from Thailand visited Kitaochi District to listen to stories from community residents, created a map on regional resources and issues, and made a presentation using the map. The presentation became an opportunity for community residents to review the community plan of Kitaochi District. The residents’ efforts further developed to result in a visit to Thailand by interested residents who saved money. They learned how the output of training in Kora-cho was utilized in Thailand, which motivated them to work toward their activities.

Since the completion of the JICA project in 2004, the relationship between Kora-cho and Thailand has been continuing. In 2006, an exchange agreement between Kitaochi District and Pho Ngam, Yang was signed. In 2008, international exchange planning staff were assigned from Thailand at the expense of Kora-cho. Since then, a child mission has been dispatched mutually between Kitaochi District and Thailand to continue the relationship. They wish to have an interaction through their local products in the future.

**[2] Building a win-win relationship through human resources involved  
in developing countries**

There are cases where not only training participants from developing countries, but also Japanese people engaged in regional development in developing countries contribute to regional revitalization of Japan by using their experience. In recent years, many regions in Japan have introduced “Community development volunteer<sup>5</sup>” and “Community supporter<sup>6</sup>” roles to promote “regional management.” There are increasing cases where persons who are ex-Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteer (JOCV) or who have participated in other JICA volunteer projects apply to be a community development volunteer or community supporter to carry out activities for solving regional issues, changing the scene from a developing country to a region in Japan. As a JOCV, they lived in a community in a developing country as a complete outsider to humbly learn its lifestyle, culture and human relationships and gradually provide assistance for organizing and activities of community residents. It seems reasonable to assume that

<sup>4</sup> For details, refer to 西川芳昭・木全洋一郎・辰巳佳寿子編著 (2012) 『国境をこえた地域づくり: グローカルな絆が生まれる瞬間』 by Shinhyoron

<sup>5</sup> “Community development volunteer” is a system for community residents. Volunteers carry out activities to promote moving to and settlement in their region for a certain period (one to three years), while carrying out “regional cooperation activities” including support for community development, such as the development, sales and public relations of local brands and local products, etc., engaging in agriculture, forestry and fisheries, and support for residents’ lives.

<sup>6</sup> “Community supporter” is a system for people who are acquainted with a regional situation and have know-how and knowledge on the promotion of community measures. Appointed by local governments, supporters patrol communities as a supervisor through collaboration with municipal employees and ascertain the situation of those communities.

their experience as a JOCV also applies to “regional management” of Japan in some way.

The “Ex-JOCV Association for Vitalization of Japan<sup>7</sup>,” established mainly by ex-JICA volunteers who take the lead in current community development, has shared experiences among members and conducted orientations for returnee volunteers who are interested in regional revitalization of Japan.

In FY 2016, “Glocal volunteer<sup>8</sup>” was launched. Volunteers are engaged in community development in Japan before and after being dispatched as a JOCV. There are two types of glocal volunteer: “Cultivation type” to develop practical experience in Japan before being dispatched as a JOCV, and “Practice type” to contribute to regional revitalization of Japan after carrying out activities for two years as a JOCV. By proactively using these systems, it is expected that a better win-win relationship between the development of developing countries and the regional revitalization of Japan can be built.

There are human resources other than JOCV who are engaged in the development of developing countries. It is conceivable that JICA experts and consultants in technical cooperation have plenty of scope to contribute to regional revitalization of Japan by using their skills, which are more advanced than those of JOCV.

### **<In developing countries>**

#### **[3] Exchanging experience and building a win-win relationship through JICA Partnership Program**

As the target of cooperation in JICA Partnership Program project is closer to community residents than an ordinary technical cooperation project, it can be said that JICA Partnership Program project directly addresses regional issues of developing countries. JICA Partnership Program project also has perspectives and problems that can be shared among actors because the actors cooperating with the project face a community across national borders. In recent years, efforts of JICA Partnership Programs have been emphasized because the efforts not only contribute to the resolution of regional issues of developing countries, but also are utilized for the resolution of regional issues and regional revitalization efforts of Japan<sup>9</sup>.

It can be said that the JICA Partnership Program between Higashimatsushima City,

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<sup>7</sup> For details of the “Ex-JOCV Association for Vitalization of Japan,” refer to the following website:

<http://blog.canpan.info/nippon-genki-jocv/>

<sup>8</sup> For details of the “Glocal volunteer,” refer to the following website:

<https://www.jica.go.jp/volunteer/application/seinen/glocal/index.html>

<sup>9</sup> Grassroots technical cooperation projects promote efforts to give experience with international cooperation back to Japanese communities and lead to regional revitalization of Japan. Since FY 2015, expenses for the efforts have been allocated up to 10% of the total project costs. The post-survey on grassroots technical cooperation projects in FY 2016 collected and analyzed cases that contributed to promoting resolution of domestic issues and regional revitalization.

<http://gweb.jica.go.jp/km/FSubject2201.nsf/VIEWALL/16E68182580B6D16492581630029E29F?OpenDocument>

Miyagi and Aceh, Republic of Indonesia, and that between Higashimatsushima City, Miyagi and Leyte, Republic of the Philippines, have established a win-win relationship. As regions affected by earthquakes and tsunami, they share their know-how, visit one another and seek a better cooperation relationship, towards reconstruction and regional development after reconstruction.

Shibushi City, Kagoshima, has held seminars for its residents in order to increase understanding of and promote the value of “Shibushi Model” activities to reduce waste treatment costs carried out in the city through appropriate waste separation. The seminars explain that the model is an advanced effort also applied overseas, while proactively using cases of grassroots technical cooperations. As a result of the seminars, understanding on waste separation and the Shibushi Model has led to an increase in residents’ environmental awareness and thorough efforts for waste separation. International cooperation projects contribute to the promotion of the city’s waste treatment measures and policies.

#### **[4] Building a win-win relationship through collaboration between a developing country and a private enterprise/organization in Japan**

In this chapter, private enterprises and organizations does not mean large domestic enterprises or enterprises considering a huge overseas investment but local enterprises, NGOs and NPOs rooted in a region. It can be expected that these enterprises, NGOs and NPOs solve regional issues through collaboration with local governments and the private sector in developing countries, as a region-based business. Programs providing assistance to the development of such business are the SME overseas development assistance program and the private-sector partnership volunteer program. These programs facilitate matching between local enterprises in Japan and private enterprises/organizations in developing countries and seek out their future business opportunities.

On the other hand, according to the “Data collection survey on public-private partnership for activating agricultural promotion in Republic of Indonesia”<sup>10</sup> conducted by JICA Rural Development Department, the development of business human resources is pointed out as a challenge because the technical level and production scale of a developing country are inadequate for Japanese enterprises that plan overseas development. For human resource development, private enterprises and organizations in developing countries and Japan need to deepen exchanges, develop a mutual trust relationship, and share knowledge for building a win-win relationship.

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<sup>10</sup> This project is a research project on local government collaboration and methods for utilizing techniques of the private sector, toward matching among local governments to bring advantages for both Indonesia and Japan. With the concept of two-stage matching among private enterprises and among local governments in both countries, the project promotes matching among private enterprises on a trial basis as well as extracts, knowledge and lessons on how local governments of the countries provide assistance for the matching.

Although enterprises in developing countries and Japan are not directly connected in the cases of Shimanto-cho, Kochi and Ama-cho, Shimane, they promote social business for regional revitalization by using regional resources. By setting the training theme as how the efforts of these enterprises led to the solution of regional issues, it is likely that social business itself will be promoted, not only that of developing countries but also of the relevant regions of Japan.

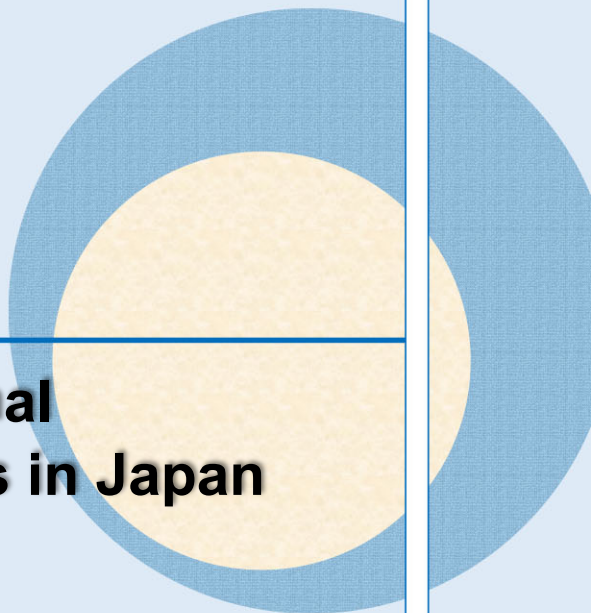




## **Section 2**

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**Case sheet for regional  
revitalization analysis in Japan**



## Section 2 Case sheet for regional revitalization analysis in Japan

Section 2 introduces seven cases of regional revitalization efforts that are partly referred to in Section 1, and learning points in applying the efforts to developing countries. Implementing actors and themes of the cases vary depending on the case, as shown in the list below.

### [List of the outlines of the seven cases]

Issue	Actor	Intended for	Main efforts	Output
<b>Case 1. Unnan City, Shimane:</b> <b>Community development led by residents through the “small-scale multifunctional autonomy”</b>				
Brink of community collapse due to municipal amalgamation	Local government, residents	City	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Public services by community governance organizations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Resolution of regional issues by implementing residents' independent projects</li> </ul>
<b>Case 2. Shimojo-mura, Nagano:</b> <b>Independent, sustainable administrative and financial reform and the development of a “miraculous village” through cooperation among residents</b>				
Brink of population outflow and financial administration	Local government	Village	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Administrative and financial reform</li> <li>Road/irrigation improvement led by residents</li> <li>Measures to support young people's settlement</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Financial consolidation</li> <li>Public infrastructure improvement by residents</li> <li>Increase in the birthrate</li> </ul>
<b>Case 3. Ama-cho, Shimane:</b> <b>Development of communities promoting challenge and exchange towards independence of the island (administrative and financial reform, industrial development, human resource development)</b>				
Brink of population outflow and financial administration	Local government, external personnel	Town (remote island)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Administrative and financial reform</li> <li>Industrial development measures</li> <li>Development of future human resources</li> <li>Comprehensive plan led by residents</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Financial consolidation</li> <li>Creation of a brand of the entire region</li> <li>Creation of local industries through exchange promotion</li> <li>Human resource development</li> </ul>
<b>Case 4. Shimanto-cho, Kochi:</b> <b>Revitalization of agricultural and mountainous villages through social business adding value to Shimanto River basin</b>				
Depopulation and deterioration of regional resources	Local enterprises	Town (Shimanto River basin)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Product development using regional resources</li> <li>Eco-tour, human resource development</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establishment of a social business model achieving a balance between utilization and conservation of regional resources</li> <li>Creation of local industries</li> </ul>
<b>Case 5. Bussi-en, Ishikawa:</b> <b>Community development based in “Gochamaze Shakai (mixed society)” facilities</b>				

Issue	Actor	Intended for	Main efforts	Output
Community revitalization in harmony with welfare for persons with disabilities and elderly persons	Social welfare corporation	Community, urban area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community activities based in welfare facilities open to the region</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Regional revitalization by making welfare facilities for persons with disabilities and elderly persons into a regional community center</li> </ul>
<b>Case 6. Higashimatsushima City, Miyagi: Earthquake disaster reconstruction led by community governance organizations and an intermediate support organization</b>				
Population decrease since before the earthquake disaster and recovery from the earthquake disaster	Local government, intermediate support organization	City	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reconstruction activities by community governance organizations</li> <li>Reconstruction projects by an intermediate support organization</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Creation of unique projects for reconstruction community development through cooperation among residents</li> </ul>
<b>Case 7. Aso Region, Kumamoto: Regional revitalization efforts using grassland through wide-area collaboration</b>				
Local industry slump and damage to landscape of a national park	Council (local government, NPO, etc.)	Municipalities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Grassland regeneration balancing with industries through the council network</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Creation of local industries through collaboration among different fields, based on conservation of the regional natural environment</li> </ul>

### [Lessons learned from regional revitalization resources and learning points of the seven cases]

	Lessons	Learning points
<b>Case 1 Unnan City, Shimane</b>	Identification of regional resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>“Small-scale multifunctional autonomy” that expands regional ties and introduces diversified human resources</li> <li>Finding issues, sharing awareness, discussion, and consensus formation by all the residents before the establishment</li> </ul>
	Measures and efforts for a sustainable and developed region	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Organizational operation that approaches regional issues of suburbs of urban areas and mountainous areas</li> <li>Rule setting, review/improvement of operation systems and structures based on verification by a project and government</li> <li>Conclusion of a basic agreement on collaborative community development</li> </ul>
	Intra-regional network involving various actors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Development of a horizontal relationship for learning among community governance organizations</li> <li>Leadership by mid-level government officials</li> </ul>
	Collaboration with external actors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Building a network with local governments across Japan that share the same issues, and appeals to the national government</li> </ul>
<b>Case 2 Shimojo-mura, Nagano</b>	Identification of regional resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase in ownership through promoting a custom of mutual help “Michibushin (road cleaning and repair)”</li> </ul>
	Measures and efforts for a sustainable and developed region	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Selection of a project suitable for the regional situation</li> <li>Increase in ownership through promoting a custom of mutual help “Michibushin (road cleaning and repair)”</li> </ul>

	Lessons	Learning points
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accepting young people who share the value of the village through project implementation by its own funds</li> <li>• Development of young people's (students') attachment to the village by having them know the village and participate in community development</li> </ul>
	Intra-regional network involving various actors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Change in the consciousness of government officials and operational efficiency</li> <li>• Efforts of government for promoting change in residents' awareness</li> </ul>
<b>Case 3 Ama-cho, Shimane</b>	Identification of regional resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The slogan of the island's value: "We have all we need" and identification of regional resources</li> </ul>
	Total production to maximize and sustain the regional value	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Revitalization of the primary industry to protect employment on the island (Adding value by using regional resources)</li> </ul>
	Measures and efforts for a sustainable and developed region	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reforms (salary reduction and reduction in public project expenses) by the entire government office</li> <li>• Development of human resources who learn from the region, and change the region</li> <li>• Planning led by highly motivated residents</li> </ul>
	Intra-regional network involving various actors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mayor's reform initiative and the formation of an implementation team by mid-level officials</li> <li>• Change in residents' awareness through efforts by government</li> <li>• Loan of personnel to collaborate with residents</li> <li>• Administrative support according to the situation of the private sector</li> </ul>
	Collaboration with external actors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introducing excellent external human resources who empathize with values</li> <li>• Appeals to the national government from the tail end to the front line while increasing partners</li> </ul>
<b>Case 4 Shimanto-cho, Kochi</b>	Identification of regional resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review of regional resources (people, goods, environment) and sustainable use of regional resources</li> </ul>
	Total production to maximize and sustain the regional value	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Total design through the manufacturing cycle (find -&gt; develop -&gt; manufacture -&gt; sell -&gt; promote-&gt;connect)</li> <li>• Total production of the regional value through various business forms</li> <li>• Promoting local production for local consumption by rural female entrepreneurs</li> </ul>
	Intra-regional network involving various actors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Business creation through connection among entrepreneurs in the region</li> </ul>
	Collaboration with external actors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Proactive utilization and development of external human resources who share the regional value</li> <li>• Strengthening of know-how alliance through exchanges outside the region</li> </ul>
<b>Case 5 "Bussi-en," Ishikawa</b>	Identification of regional resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regional revitalization through diversification by the concept "Gochamaze Shakai (mixed society)"</li> <li>• Rebuilding of "ties" among people that lead to the independence of persons with disabilities (social inclusion)</li> </ul>
	Total production to maximize and sustain the regional value	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facilities for community residents planned by community residents</li> <li>• Open facilities that do not separate persons with disabilities and elderly persons</li> </ul>
	Measures and efforts for a sustainable and developed region	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Proactive reuse of unused buildings (abolished temples, empty houses, old hospital sites)</li> </ul>
	Intra-regional network	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promoting diversified exchange among multiple cultures</li> </ul>

Lessons		Learning points
	involving various actors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>and generations</li> <li>• Provision of occasions and opportunities where community residents can deliver information</li> <li>• Facilitation of regional exchange behind the scenes</li> </ul>
<b>Case 6</b> <b>Higashimat</b> <b>sushima</b> <b>City, Miyagi</b>	Identification of regional resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community governance organizations toward civic cooperation</li> <li>• Response to earthquake disasters and reconstruction through self-help and mutual help led by the regional autonomous council</li> </ul>
	Measures and efforts for a sustainable and developed region	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creation and promotion of unique projects toward independent, sustainable reconstruction projects</li> </ul>
	Intra-regional network involving various actors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Setting a framework under the leadership of government</li> <li>• Operation of an intermediate support organization based on the reconstruction philosophy of civic cooperation</li> </ul>
	Collaboration with external actors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Structure of comprehensive coordination with external support organizations for promoting reconstruction projects</li> <li>• Proactive utilization of external industrial and academic resources</li> <li>• Intangible support by external support organizations for reconstruction community development</li> <li>• Mutual reconstruction community development using international cooperation projects</li> </ul>
<b>Case 7</b> <b>Aso Region,</b> <b>Kumamoto</b>	Identification of regional resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promoting understanding on the value of regional resources (grassland)</li> <li>• Sharing the regional vision (future vision and major issues and efforts)</li> </ul>
	Total production to maximize and sustain the regional value	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development of local industries by creating regional brands</li> </ul>
	Measures and efforts for a sustainable and developed region	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Securing the organization's (council's) own budget</li> <li>• Organizational operation by a third-party organization for increasing reliability and transparency</li> <li>• Implementation of unique projects focusing on the introduction of persons who will implement projects in the future</li> <li>• Strengthening and enhancement of environmental learning for passing grassland to future generations</li> </ul>
	Intra-regional network involving various actors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sharing information on efforts of members, and the structure of verification and evaluation (creation of opportunities for coordination among a wide range of actors)</li> </ul>
	Collaboration with external actors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strengthening of inter-government network</li> </ul>

# 1. Unnan City, Shimane

## Community development led by residents through a small-scale multifunctional autonomy

Community residents have formed a “community governance organization” combining residents’ associations for each elementary school zone and developed a “small-scale multifunctional autonomy” for carrying out projects and activities toward the resolution of regional issues. The city has set up a “regional round table” to support the projects and activities. A relationship has been established between government and community governance organizations and among community governance organizations to discuss and cooperate on an equal footing.

### 1-1. Outline of the region

#### (1) Outline of the target area

Unnan City, Shimane, was created through the amalgamation of six municipalities (Daito-cho, Kamo-cho, Kisuki-cho, Mitoya-cho, Yoshida-mura, and Kakeya-machi). The city is bordered on the north by Matsue City and Izumo City and on the south by Hiroshima prefecture.

Having a history as a prosperous city of *Tatara* (iron-making), the city is one of the main areas in the prefecture where manufacturing industries have concentrated. On the other hand, the south of the city is a hilly and mountainous area with the Chugoku Mountains, and the entire city has been designated as a depopulated area.

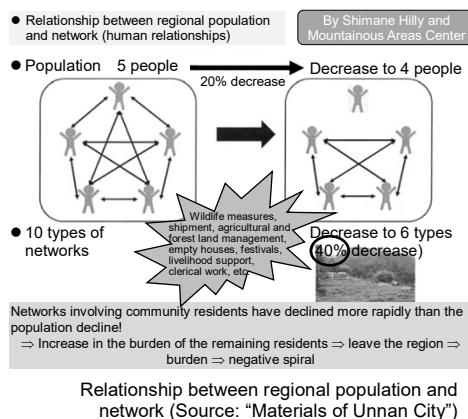


The area of the city is 553.2 km<sup>2</sup> (approx. 90% of the area of Tokyo 23 wards) with a population of 39,032 people (2015 census), but the population has decreased by about 10% in the last ten years.

#### (2) Background and issues

This area is the first depopulated area in Japan, and depopulation is currently progressing. It was predicted that the population of the six municipalities before the

amalgamation (42,000 people in 2000) would decrease by 20% in 20 years to 32,000 people. The population aging rate was also almost the same as that predicted for Japan in 20 years. It is said that networks surrounding residents will decrease by 40% if the regional population decreases by 20%. Due to the population decline and the declining birthrate and an aging population, burdens on the remaining residents increased and the ties among communities were weakened, which caused a situation where regional festivals and joint activities could not be implemented solely by residents' associations in the communities.



The population decline and the declining birthrate and an aging population also led to concerns over a decline in tax revenue as well as an increase in welfare costs and a weakening of the municipal financial base. This resulted in the acceleration of the municipal amalgamation. In November 2004, Unnan City was established by the amalgamation of six municipalities.

From the residents' perspective, there were concerns over administrative services not being able to properly meet residents' needs, and a decline in a sense of belonging to the region due to an increase in the distance to the city office after the amalgamation.

## 1-2. Efforts for regional management

### (1) Efforts at the preliminary stage (before municipal amalgamation)

#### ● A new structure for regional autonomy sought by government

The decline in community functions due to the population decline and the declining birthrate and an aging population, and the disassembly of the communities due to the municipal amalgamation caused a real sense of crisis concerning the collapse of communities. Against this backdrop, a project team was organized in 2002 by municipal employees at the stage when the amalgamation was discussed. The team started an examination on the autonomy of communities.

The "Report on the community and resident autonomy project" (September 2003) created by the team of the six municipalities, specifies that residents can establish a "community governance organization" beyond a community or residents' association for solving regional issues, as a new autonomous organization that complements the roles that have been played by the community. The report emphasizes that the new city after amalgamation makes efforts for the "creation of an environment that promotes institutionalization based on community independence," by presenting an image of the



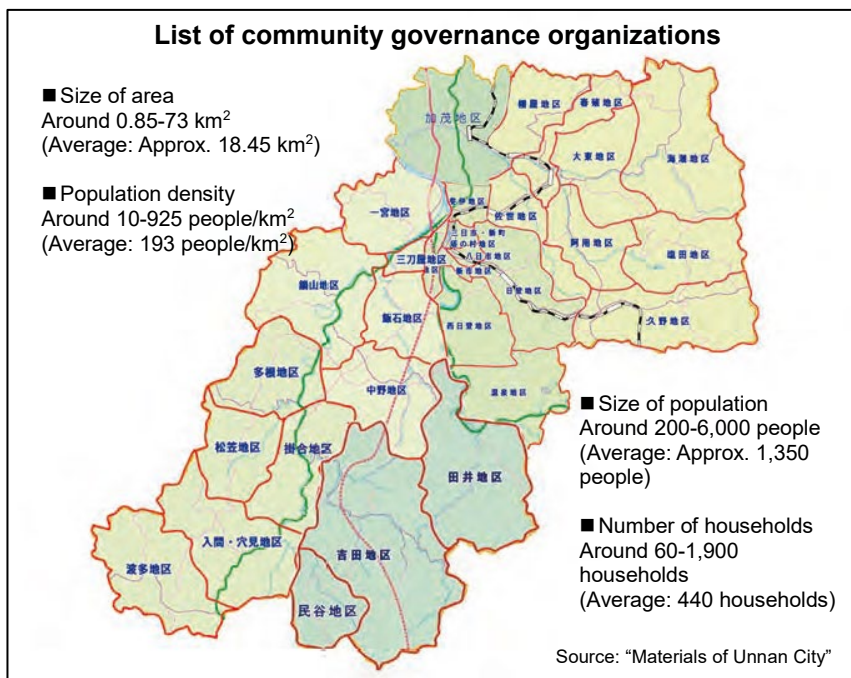
organization and activities for implementing voluntary projects on a larger scale.

## (2) Efforts at the establishment stage

- Establishment of community governance organizations to prevent communities from being disassembled after amalgamation

Between 2005 and 2007 after the municipal amalgamation, the establishment of a “community governance organization,” a new community-based resident autonomous organization, was promoted in communities in the city under the residents’ initiative. The background to the establishment of each organization varies. Some organizations were voluntarily established based on a similar organization that had already been established, and some were newly established based on a request from the city government. Forty-four community governance organizations were established by approx. 510 residents’ associations in the city, but the number of organizations has declined to 30 at present due to integration, independence and consolidation.

A community governance organization is an organization established for each elementary school zone where various people of different ages/sexes and organizations and bodies that carry out different activities are connected through regional ties. Based on a group of traditional community-based organizations, such as a residents’ association and neighborhood association, etc., a community governance organization coordinates characteristic-based organizations, such as a female group and elderly association, etc. and purpose-based organizations, such as a fire company, farming organization and cultural circle, etc., toward voluntary, independent and inclusive regional development by utilizing and complementing advantages of the organizations. The idea of the new



autonomy, that “Residents exert their originality and ingenuity to play various roles on a small scale,” was later called the “small-scale multifunctional autonomy.”

● “Small-scale multifunctional autonomy” using regional ties

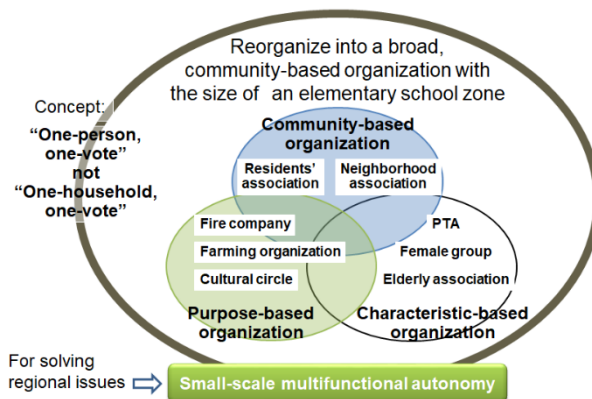
The purpose of the “small-scale multifunctional autonomy” is to implement projects led by residents in order to solve regional issues, which means to create a structure of mutual-help by sharing roles in providing community-based public services among autonomous organizations. It can be said that an elementary school zone is an appropriate size for developing a visible resident relationship and securing certain human and other resources. As one of the characteristics of a “community governance organization,” it has a permanent office as a purpose-based organization that can implement a wide range of projects such as welfare, lifelong learning and disaster risk reduction, etc.

A community governance organization has different characteristics from traditional community-based organizations, such as a residents’ association, neighborhood association, and community, etc. For example, (1) It applies the one-person, one-vote system based on the individual participation principle. (A traditional community-based organization applies the one-household, one-vote system.), (2) It is a goal-oriented organization that carries out activities rather than holding events (A traditional community-based organization mainly holds customary events.), (3) It can achieve economies of scale, such as securing various human resources, etc. (A traditional community-based organization has small-scale merits.), and (4) It has a permanent office. (A traditional community-based organization does not have regular staff.)

A community governance organization and traditional organizations maintain a relationship to complement each other. A residents’ association, an organization closest

## Community governance organization

Establishment of a new community-based model



Note: Created based on the materials of Unnan City

to residents, and other traditional organizations do what they can do (mutual help in case of a disaster, etc.) while “community governance organizations” do what traditional organizations cannot do.

- **Proactive support by government**

Unnan City developed “Unnan City comprehensive plan” in 2007 and enforced the “Basic ordinance for Unnan City community development” in November 2008 to specify that “the basis of community development is a voluntary, responsible involvement of residents as the central player of community development,” on the basis of “collaborative community development,” and to position a “community governance organization” as a cooperation system.

As described above, the city provided an activity base and financial/human support after presenting an idea and structure plan of a “community governance organization” and encouraging residents to establish a community governance organization. As for the activity base, the city made community halls, established as community facilities, available to residents and changed the community halls into exchange centers in FY 2010 to transfer the jurisdiction over the facilities from the board of education to the mayor’s departments so that the exchange centers could be used as a base of lifelong learning as well as a wide range of civic activities, such as welfare and disaster risk reduction activities, etc. At the stage of establishing a “community governance organization,” the city provides subsidies for its establishment and support through dispatch of city employees in order to motivate residents.

### **(3) Efforts at the growth stage**

- **Improvement of systems and structures based on activities**

At the first stage (establishment stage), infrastructures, such as an organization and activity base, etc. were developed. In the third year in 2012, systems of a “community governance organization” and its operation were reviewed. The review pointed out room for improvement in the system of the exchange centers (base facilities) and the necessity of new support measures for proactive efforts that were being made. It also offered visions for community welfare, lifelong learning and facilities.

Based on results of the review, the following system improvements have been made in the second stage since FY2013, in order to develop regional autonomy.

- \* Review of the designated management of the exchange centers: It was determined that personnel expenses for designated management would be included in a one-time subsidy for “community governance organizations,” and office personnel who had been employed by the city and assigned as staff of an exchange center would be directly employed by a “community governance organization.” This promoted the integration of the staff of the exchange center and the “community governance

organization” and the clarification of the chain of direction and command.

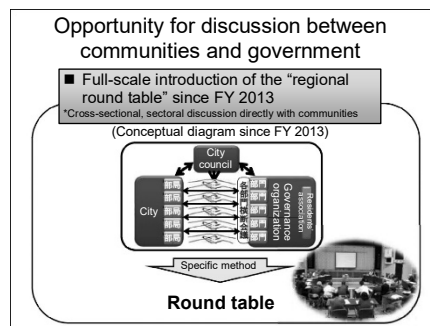
- \* Review of regional welfare: A system whereby the city’s social welfare council assigns regional “welfare promoters” was abolished and changed to one whereby a “community governance organization” assigns the promoters. Personnel and activity expenses of the welfare promoters that had been paid through the social welfare council would be included in a one-time subsidy for “community governance organizations.”

By these revisions and the introduction of new structures, appropriate support has been provided by government to “community governance organizations.” For example, the activation of not only facility operation, but also other autonomous activities, has been facilitated by adopting a system to set the amount of subsidy based on the regional situation and work volume. The average amount of subsidies by the city, including those for expenses for the designated management of the exchange centers, is approx. 8.5 million yen a year for each organization.

As for the repair and improvement of the activity base, the “Unnan City improvement plan for facilities of the exchange center” was developed. The plan indicates policies to extend facility life, secure an office room, strengthen the center’s functions as an activity base by setting up meeting facilities on the first floor, and secure the center’s function as a disaster risk reduction base.

At first, there was strong opposition by relevant persons against the transition from a community hall to an exchange center and the change in the role of the social welfare council (“community governance organizations” pay expenses and the council provides directions and support). This was because they thought that the activity initiative had been taken away. In response to the opposition, (1) the necessity of the transition and change was explained based on the opinions of residents, and (2) it was explained that the functions were reviewed and repositioned in the new structure. These explanations eased the opposition.

One more important thing in the system improvement in 2013 was the introduction of a “regional round table” as an opportunity for discussion between community residents and government. The regional round table developmentally dissolved the “regional committee” established in FY 2005 with the aim of developing former municipalities before the amalgamation. Roles given to the “regional committee” were the development of a regional plan, recommendations in response to the mayor’s advice, and support for community governance organizations, etc. However, as “community governance organizations” became more active, the



Source: “Materials of Unnan City”

meaning of dividing communities into former municipalities was diluted, and the strengthening of a direct connection between government and community governance organizations was requested for solving regional issues.

The “regional round table” is an opportunity for discussion between community residents and government where cross-sectional, sectoral dialogues are conducted about three times a year. Relevant departments of the city and special committees of community governance organizations participate in it on an equal footing.

In addition, as a part of the “regional round table,” the “presentation of community efforts” (also called the “bragging contest”) is held three times a year for mutual learning among communities. The presentation has been effectively used as an opportunity to share contents and outputs of projects by community governance organizations, share their goals and visions, and coordinate their directions, and has become a structure to mutually improve their outputs and pave the way for growth of community governance organizations.

The city has set up schedules for the “regional round table.” However, as there is meaning in discussing common themes, these play a major part of the round table. Themes are determined at the beginning of a fiscal year by relevant departments in charge of public administration after visiting all communities to exchange opinions and find out issues.

#### (4) Background to the creation of an organization and the implementation of a unique project from the perspective of residents

##### ● Establishment of a “community governance organization”

Regarding the background to the establishment of a community governance organization, let us consider “Hata community council,” located on the westernmost of Unnan City, as an example.

Hata District is one of the areas where depopulation and population aging are rapidly advancing. The district has a population of 348, 155 households, and a population aging rate of 49.7% (as of the end of December 2014, according to the basic register of residents). There are 16 residents’ associations in the district and a council has been established as the federation of residents’ associations, but activities of the council were fully started as a new “community governance organization” in 2008



Hata exchange center using a building of an abolished elementary school

after the integration and abolishment of elementary schools.

The district was selected as an area of an abolished elementary school subject to the “priority project for the regeneration of hilly and mountainous communities”<sup>11</sup> subsidized by the prefecture. A model project had been implemented for three years from FY 2008 to FY 2010 toward the identification and resolution of regional issues. From the prefecture, staff members of Shimane Hilly and Mountainous Areas Center provided assistance. From the council, more than ten members were in charge of the project and community managers (community supporters) were assigned. These staff members visited each community to conduct hearings (three times) from all households and create a community map, and provided reports and conducted reviews at a regular plenary conference. Through these detailed processes, residents’ common understanding was developed to reach an agreement with the new structure. Based on this foundation, the council clarified five priority challenges (improvement of the disaster risk reduction system, reduction in the inconvenience of shopping, securing means of transportation in the district, industrial development (creation of a small workplace), and exchange promotion making the most of nature, and set them as the pillars of the council’s “community development vision.” The vision later became the basis of organization strengthening and project management of the council.

In 1982 when the National Sports Festival was held in Shimane, Hata District had already established the council in order to respond to efforts for renting private homes and street beautification on a district-wide basis. Therefore, the transition to community governance organizations was smoothly conducted.

### ● Efforts for creative and original projects

In each district, a “community governance organization” has addressed its regional issues and implemented various creative and original projects for the “small-scale multifunctional autonomy.” In addition, an operation system (special committee, etc.) and a decision-making body have been established according to regional issues to operate autonomous organizations.

As shown in the examples below, the projects include community business, such as the operation of a farmer’s restaurant and market, etc., 24-hour mobile support for residents in need of assistance, and inheritance of *Kagura* (Shinto music and dance), drumming, and other traditional cultures.

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<sup>11</sup> As a part of Shimane Prefecture’s “revitalization plan for hilly and mountainous areas,” the project dispatched “community managers” to nine districts in Hamada City, Masuda City, Onan-cho, and Okinoshima-cho, in addition to Hata District, for three years from FY 2008 to FY 2010 as collaborators and coordinators among regional organizations and bodies. Various regional actors participated in the project, such as residents’ associations, welfare organizations and farming organizations, etc., with the aim of solving regional issues on a large scale beyond communities.





Engawa Ichi, Nakano District (Source: Unnan City  
"Unnan Challenge Site")



Hata Market, Hata District

### [Various projects by regional community governance organization]

Name of community governance organization	Population and area	Project name	Project details
Nabeyama made with throbbing pulse and the village of the ease	1,427 people 23.84 km <sup>2</sup>	Observation project for safe life	Conduct monthly water meter inspection entrusted by the city, visit all households in the district at the time of the inspection (Mamenaka-kun water meter inspection), and develop a 24-hour emergency contact system using kids mobile phones (Mamoru-kun support)
Nakano village development committee	548 people 23.50 km <sup>2</sup>	Engawa Ichi project	Open a farmer's market once a week using JA's vacant store to sell local producers' vegetables and provide a rest area. Food and drink are also sold by mobile shops (shopping support). The market has become a place to communicate among residents
Tai District development council	621 people 40.93 km <sup>2</sup>	Fukano Kagura kids' class 10th anniversary joint concert	Hold a joint concert featuring a kids Kagura class and kids Kagura groups of other regions, which has become a place to learn a traditional culture that has lasted since the Edo period, and to train Kagura members in the district. The project leads to the development of children's love for their hometown and the promotion of U-turn (returning to hometowns).
Ayo District development council	1,229 people 11.68 km <sup>2</sup>	Ayo-san exercise promotion project	Through cooperation with a laboratory in the city, the district, which promotes cultivation of organic agricultural products, created "Ayo-san exercise" based on medical evidence, for preventing back/knee pain due to farm work and aging. The project aims to develop a district where all residents continue to be healthy and active.
Shinichi Ikiiki-kai	558 people 0.55 km <sup>2</sup>	Preparation of welfare cards	Prepare welfare cards of all the members in order to understand information necessary for regional activities, and establish a registration system for "Members in need of assistance in case of a disaster" and "Support members," as a structure for centralized control and mutual help
Hata community	338 people	Hata Market	In order to reduce the inconvenience of shopping due

council	29.28 km <sup>2</sup>	project	to the closing of shops in the district, manage a mini-convenience store in the exchange center, take shoppers to and from the exchange center, and deliver ordered products through collaboration with Zennisshoku Chain, a private distributor that supports product procurement, sales and management
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(Note: The populations and areas are as of October 31, 2015. The list is created based on materials of Unnan City.)

### ● Organizational operation according to the regional conditions and issues

Community governance organizations implement projects mainly on community development, community welfare and lifelong learning, but what they focus on is determined by each organization according to its conditions and issues described above.

The organizational operation of Hata community council will be described below as an example. The general meeting of the council adopts a delegate system and is composed of 30 members including 16 chairpersons of residents' associations and 14 representatives of various organizations (elderly club, female group, children's social worker, fire company, and parent committee, etc.). The council office is composed of five staff members (concurrently serving as the staff of the exchange center) including two part-time members (welfare/lifelong learning promoter and community supporter). Work related to the filing of corporate and consumption tax returns is outsourced to a tax accountant.

In addition to community general projects, community welfare projects, designation management of the exchange center, and the Hata Market project (introduced above), which are implemented mainly in the exchange center, the council has proactively managed and operated public tourist and exchange facilities. The facilities are "Manju-no-yu," a hot spring in the district (designation management of facilities owned by Unnan City) and "Saezuri-no-mori," a camp site (operation by renting facilities from the prefecture) where visitors from outside the district are expected. The number of staff members of the former facility is nine (including one full-time staff member hired as a community development supporter) and that of the latter facility is four (part-time staff members). The facilities play a role in supporting a few job opportunities in the district.

## (5) Efforts at the development stage

### ● Establishment of an equal partnership

Through these processes, residents' ownership over regional issues was developed, which increased community independence. For example, some were of the opinion that government did not implement projects for addressing regional issues, but currently, some say that government does not allow an autonomous organization to implement projects (although the organization wants to implement the project on behalf of government).



With the development of the “small-scale multifunctional autonomy,” “community governance organizations” have become the center of residents’ autonomy, and NPOs and community development organizations have played a role in complementing residents’ autonomy. This raised government officials’ awareness so that they can consider residents as a partner for community development.

At this stage, the relationship among community governance organizations, residents’ associations and government has been organized, which resulted in the conclusion of the “agreement on community development through cooperation between communities and government” on November 25, 2015. The agreement clarifies the roles of government and a community governance organization by positioning a community governance organization as a regional contact for consulting with government and specifying that they will jointly make efforts for community development as an equal partner.

As described above, with the changing of the relationship between residents and government from a vertical (governance) relationship to a horizontal (cooperative) relationship, a new stage (third stage) was started in FY 2016.

- **Networking with external persons and organizations**

In order to disseminate the concept of regional autonomy throughout Japan, Unnan City has invited local governments, NGOs and academic experts having the same challenges to hold “Unnan seminar” twice a year in spring and autumn since 2012 as a place for mutual learning. There are organizations like Niigata NPO association that began an original study session using outputs of the seminar.

Based on an understanding that there are many local governments in Japan having the same challenges, the city also leads the “network conference for promoting small-scale multifunctional autonomy” for information exchange and collaboration. In FY 2015, a block conference was held in 14 areas in Japan to find out common challenges, such as human resource development/securing, shift towards problem resolution, promoting organization, securing base facilities, and relationship with existing organizations, etc. One of the challenges is that procedures carried out by a voluntary organization for making a contract (employment contract, etc.) are regarded as procedures for a private contract of its representative. If the organization continues to be a voluntary organization, an individual will take responsibility for a large amount of guarantee money. Accordingly, donations will not be tax deductible and the organization cannot collect donations. To address this challenge, the network conference has carried out activities to encourage the national government to create a “super community corporation” system together with municipalities throughout Japan that agree with the activities, in order to create a corporation system suitable for small-scale multifunctional autonomy.

Introduction of  
a key person

## “There is no clear border between government and residents”

-Shuji Itamochi, Director of Community Development Division,  
Unnan City supporting collaborative community development-

Since he has been in charge of the “small-scale multifunctional autonomy” of Unnan City, Mr. Itamochi has been thinking about the relationship between government and residents by making use of his experience as a member of a project team at the time of the amalgamation and as a resident involved in the establishment of a local organization.

Levels of regional issues vary depending on the region. Mr. Itamochi says, “From the perspective of fairness, government must support what it must minimally provide support to. However, it is difficult for government to address all issues including those everyone realizes and those not everyone realizes. Based on resident-led community development, a community plays a central role in solving regional issues to the extent possible, and government provides support for solving issues of the entire community while complementing each other. This is collaborative community development, and a community governance organization is generated by such development. This structure is still evolving. There is no clear border between government and residents. It is important to complement and support each other.” Mutual learning on an equal footing is common between residents and local governments throughout Japan. As a member of the secretariat of the “Network conference for promoting small-scale multifunctional autonomy” established in February 2015 as a nationwide cross-sectional organization, Mr. Itamochi has also worked on the dissemination of a nationwide structure, while supporting the mayor of Unnan City, the chairperson of the conference.

As he has a lot of opportunities to be invited to external training as a lecturer, he smoothly responds to questions with persuasive answers. He is, at the same time, a member of a local community as a resident. With the idea that the structure is very useful to secure or restore a simple attitude to think from the perspective of residents, which government tends to ignore, he has worked towards the dissemination and promotion of the structure throughout Japan.

### (6) Outputs of efforts and future issues

With the establishment of “community governance organizations” throughout the city, residents’ strengthened capacity for self-governance, and the establishment of a system for discussion between residents and government on an equal footing, regional issues have been solved by residents’ voluntary projects as symbolized by the change of opinion from “Government does not implement projects” to “Government does not allow autonomous organizations to implement projects.” Although not all the 30 “community governance organizations” proactively carry out activities and the regional round table has not been directly linked with the overall decision-making structure of the city, an image of a community-based, mutual-help society, which realizes services

different from the fair, uniform services provided by government, has become visible with the development of the “small-scale multifunctional autonomy.”

### **1-3. Learning points**

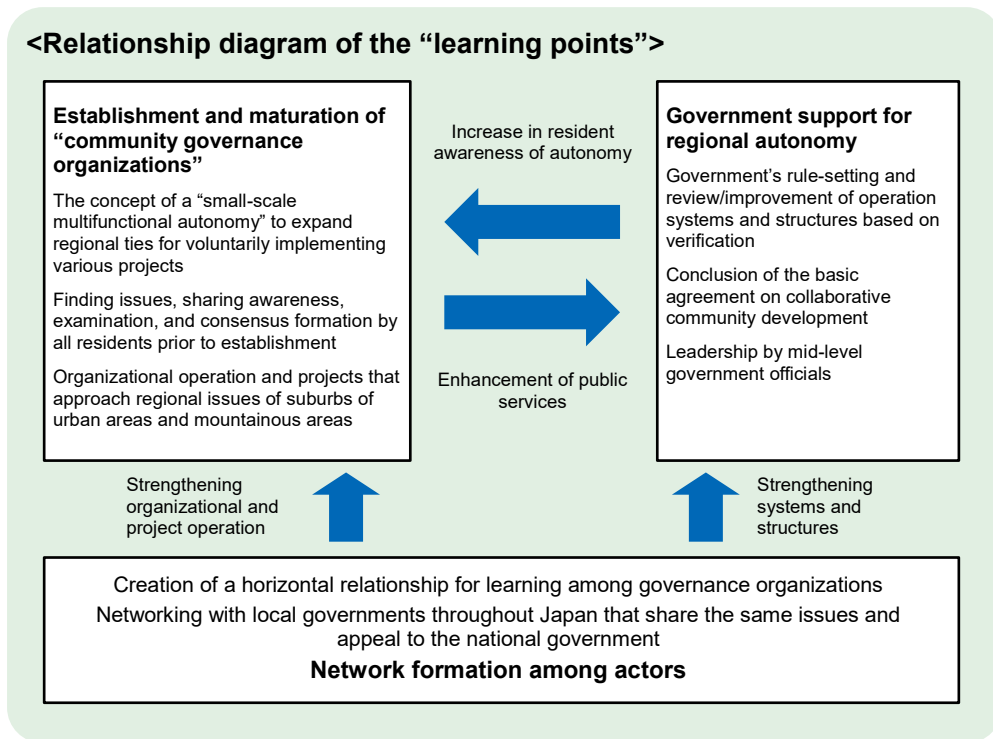
The basic theme of this case is the formation, establishment and development of the “small-scale multifunctional autonomy” and “community governance organizations” to implement the small-scale multifunctional autonomy, and community development led by residents through community governance organizations. Government and residents are closely involved with each other in their efforts.

In terms of efforts for regional issues in developing countries, there are learning points in the concept itself of “small-scale multifunctional autonomy,” the process of creating a community governance organization under the initiative of residents, and the operation of the organization and projects managed and implemented by residents according to the conditions of the district.

Government’s presentation of the organization model and operation rules, granting of budget and authority, and gradual improvements based on verification and evaluation produced effects on the promotion of resident efforts and increase in a sense of ownership. Based on the gradual improvements, the “agreement on collaborative community development” was concluded to realize institutionalization. It is also an important point that government’s support for resident-led problem-solving was facilitated by mid-level government officials who considered regional issues from the same perspective as residents and built a trust relationship with residents. Developing countries could learn a lot from the role of government described above.

One more learning point is that government created opportunities for horizontal discussion and learning among autonomous organizations within the region while disclosing the process of trial and realization of the “small-scale multifunctional autonomy” and sharing information, and built a network with other local governments in Japan having the same issues. This led to the strengthening of systems and structures and the strengthening of organizational and project operation.

Efforts of actors, i.e., government and residents, and the formation of a network between internal and external actors interact with each other to develop a maturing cooperative structure.



### (1) Establishment and maturation of “community governance organizations”

- The concept of a “small-scale multifunctional autonomy” to expand regional ties for voluntarily implementing various projects
- Compared with traditional residents’ associations and other autonomous organizations that mainly hold conventional events, the “small-scale multifunctional autonomy” covers the area of an elementary school zone, with the concept that residents recognize regional issues and think about/implement various necessary projects and activities for achieving a goal. In the situation where government cannot always provide adequate public services, residents have established an organization and implemented projects. These efforts are very useful for developing countries as well.
- It is also considered a learning point that the “small-scale multifunctional autonomy” maintains regional ties among residents acquainted with one another so that communications can be made easily, and sets a moderately large area so as to secure diversified human resources. Unnan City has set an “elementary school zone” as the area of its small-scale multifunctional autonomy. However, for applying this concept to developing countries, it is necessary to examine a well-balanced area that can meet different requirements of a country and region.

- **Finding issues, sharing awareness, examination, and consensus formation by all residents prior to establishment**
  - To consider the establishment of a “community governance organization,” the city assigns persons in charge to have them conduct hearings from all households in the district and creates opportunities to have residents find out regional issues. At a general meeting, residents give feedback about the issues to share their understanding of the issues and necessary projects. There is a district that takes three years to have discussions with its residents until they understand, which develops residents’ understanding of the organization and projects as well as develops their sense of participation. There is a learning point in the process of consensus formation up to the establishment of an organization and the implementation of a project.
  - One more learning point is that residents realize what they learned, issues are organized objectively, and a simple plan is created through the involvement of third parties in the process and coordination of discussions.
- **Organizational operation and projects that approach regional issues of suburbs of urban areas and mountainous areas**
  - Thirty organizations have been established in 30 districts, each having a different location and background to its establishment. They implement projects according to their regional issues. It is useful to developing countries that project contents and scale are determined according to the regional situation.
  - During project implementation, residents review the project and consider the direction while learning and improving themselves with residents of other districts, with financial and other support by government. Through this process, residents’ initiatives for the project are improved. This can be applied to developing countries if a mutual learning opportunity is provided to communities by a project.

## (2) Government support for regional autonomy

- **Government’s rule-setting and review/improvement of operation systems and structures based on verification**
  - At the first stage, government examines and presents the organization model and operation rules based on regional issues, which facilitates residents’ understanding and efforts. Based on the understanding, government grants a certain budget and authority in personnel affairs to a “community governance organization,” which develops residents’ independence and sense of ownership.
  - After operating the organization for a certain period, its outputs and issues are reviewed, and measures are revised based on the result of the review. This clarifies the reason and grounds for the measures and allows residents to understand the measures and reach consensus early. In the above process, government understands

the state of establishment of the organization and remaining issues, while providing support for the development of resident awareness and the maturation of autonomous activities, and creates the organization in a phased manner through trial and error. Development countries could learn something from this process.

- **Conclusion of the basic agreement on collaborative community development**

- At a stage when an organization is established to a certain degree, a written “agreement” that specifies the positioning of the new organization and project is made. The agreement allows all the residents to understand the purpose of reform and the allocation of authority, which improves resident’s independence and sense of ownership. This also becomes a learning point.

- **Leadership by mid-level government officials**

- At the stage of examining a “community governance organization” and creating its structure before the amalgamation, the mayor officially displays his leadership as a leader, but actually, the leadership of mid-level city government officials plays an important role. Mid-level government officials who understand local conditions form a team to facilitate understanding within the government organization. As they are also familiar with local events through their visits to communities, their statements and actions from the perspective of residents enable themselves to share a sense of crisis with residents and build a trust relationship to promote cooperation with residents. Administrative officials of developing countries have much to learn from this process.
- In addition, the flexibility of mid-level government officials establishes a relationship among various actors and influences the mayor to act, which in turn leads to the creation of new systems and structures.

### **(3) Network formation among actors**

- **Creation of a horizontal relationship for learning among “community governance organizations”**

- Better solutions are found out and project outputs are improved by setting up a round table and creating a structure where responsible persons of the organizations share their experiences and discuss common issues. In addition, involvement of government in the discussion leads to the strengthening of the relationship between government and “community governance organizations” as well as a further review of the system to support the “small-scale multifunctional autonomy.” These relationships developed between government and communities and among communities become a learning point for developing countries.

- Networking with local governments throughout Japan that share the same issues and appeal to the national government
- Sharing regional issues with local governments in other regions enables a gathering of knowledge and increases the possibility of solving the issues. In addition, the value of regional efforts is added, and the momentum of problem resolution is enhanced to the national level by finding and increasing people outside the region who agree with the efforts. In developing countries, support can be provided through a project for building a horizontal network with people who share the same issues and for an institutional approach to the central government. These efforts of Japan will increase the motivation of actors of developing countries to voluntarily make similar efforts.

## **1-4. Considerations in applying the case to developing countries**

### **(1) Considerations in applying the case**

**Contact:** Regional Development Division, Unnan City Government

#### **[Example of application to training]**

Training theme	Expected training participants	Training contents
Public service improvement through cooperation with and involvement of residents	Local government officials (top leader, mid-level officials) Officials of ministries and agencies responsible for local government strengthening	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promoting “small-scale multifunctional autonomy” with a small government capacity</li> <li>• Government support measures for resident activities</li> <li>• Establishment and operation of a community governance organization</li> </ul>
Rural development led by residents	Local government officials (mid-level officials and field-level promoters), representatives of resident groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rural development through “small-scale multifunctional autonomy”</li> <li>• Difference between and proper use of a residents’ association and community governance organizations</li> <li>• Establishment and operation of a “community governance organization”</li> <li>• Specific projects of a “community governance organization” and relationship with relevant actors</li> </ul>

#### **[Considerations in applying the case]**

- Contact must be made through the local government because the region has little experience in accepting JICA projects. It is necessary to convey in advance to the local government which efforts will be applied to developing countries before asking it to make overall arrangements, including arrangement of “community governance organizations.” Therefore, it is desirable to visit the region concerned before implementing a project and have a meeting on project procedures.
- Depending on the training theme, there are cases where training participants visit a “community governance organization.” As this means visiting residents’ living spaces, it is necessary to previously understand regional rules and give due consideration in order not to cause trouble.
- Although the region has accepted visits from various fields, it is desirable to share information with JICA Chugoku at the time a request is made for international cooperation, as such requests may increase in the future.

### **(2) Examination of the possibility to build a win-win relationship**

- Creating an opportunity to introduce general information about the participants’ country as well as efforts for community development made in the country, may allow people in an accepting region to know a foreign country and inspire them to learn diverse values.



- It is important for training participants from developing countries not to learn in a unilateral way, but to ask themselves questions about the benefits of a “small-scale multifunctional autonomy” and “community governance organizations,” as well as have an opportunity to give feedback to community residents and government officials about issues of the current efforts. This allows an accepting government and region to re-evaluate their efforts and regional attractiveness from an external perspective, which may lead to an increase in motivation and rediscovery.

## 2. Shimojo-mura, Nagano

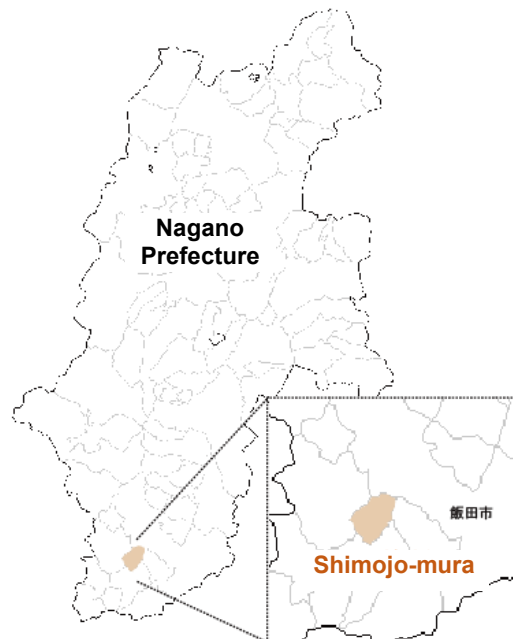
**Independent, sustainable administrative and financial reform and the development of a “miraculous village” through cooperation among residents**

Within a limited budget, the village improved community infrastructure using the mutual help of communities, while promoting change in the consciousness of government officials. By using its own revenues secured as a result of the infrastructure improvement, the village has enhanced its unique welfare services for households with small children who will play an important role in the village in the future. The village is called a “miraculous village” as it has been one of the top municipalities in terms of fiscal consolidation and birthrate.

### 2-1. Outline of the region

#### (1) Outline of the target area

Shimojo-mura was created in 1889 through the amalgamation of Mutsuzawa-mura and Hisawa-mura. The village has a population of 3,917 people (as of April 2016), but it is positioned as a core city in the region as the population of surrounding villages is less than 800 people. The area of the entire village is 38.12 km<sup>2</sup> (95% of the area of Koto ward, Tokyo). Of the area, mountain forest accounts for 70% and agricultural slope accounts for 12%. The residential area accounts for only 3%. Thirty-four communities are located at a height of between 332 m to 828 m.



#### (2) Background and issues

During the Great Amalgamation of the Showa Era from 1958 to 1959, Shimojo-mura decided not to merge with other municipalities. This caused administrative confusion in the village, such as the dissolution of the municipal council and resignation of the mayor, etc., but the village nevertheless remained an independent village.

As the village did not have abundant financial resources nor a core industry, an outflow of population was the biggest problem. The population had declined since 1965 from 4,078 people (1980) to 3,859 people (1990) due to a change in the industrial structure.



Landscape of Shimojo-mura

The financial strength index—an indicator of a local government’s financial strength—of the village was extremely low, at 0.20 in the 1990s. The village was a typical Japanese mountainous village, being greatly disadvantaged by its location in an outlying region.

## **2-2. Efforts for regional management**

### **(1) Efforts at the preliminary stage (at a stage when the former mayor was engaged in the village’s autonomy as a member of the municipal council)**

Mr. Kihei Ito (refer to p.72 “Introduction of a key person”), who became the mayor in 1992, was an owner of a small and medium-sized enterprise. He had a sense of crisis over the rapid decline in the population, including excellent young people expected to be leaders in the next generation, between 1970 and 1975. In order to curb the population decline, he repeatedly advocated the necessity of industrial vitalization of the region to the municipal government. However, the municipal government did not have any measures for industrial vitalization due to a trend at that time that a municipal government did what was requested of it by the state or prefecture. In order to change this trend, Mr. Ito ran for the municipal council with the recommendation of the commerce and industry association and became a member of the council with the most votes.

#### **● Project for installing combined septic tanks**

Shimojo-mura started development of a waterworks system around 1985, and the rate of participation in the system reached 99.5% in 1990 (total project cost: 2.98 billion yen). It also started examining a sewerage project in 1988. At that time, there were three options in the village: public sewerage system, community drainage system, and combined septic tank. The state and prefecture promoted the public sewerage system and the community drainage system based on the provision of subsidies. As there were many surrounding municipalities that had started development of the community drainage system, the overwhelming opinion provided by the mayor, government officials, council

members and residents was that the community drainage system should be developed. This opinion was also encouraged by a trend immediately before the collapse of the bubble economy whereby everyone believed that Japan would continue to grow as an economic leader.

Under these circumstances, Mr. Ito, who served as the chairperson of the municipal council, took objection that the community drainage system would have low investment efficiency because mountain forests accounted for 70% of the area and there were only a few flat areas in the village. According to the plan of the village at that time, the estimated total cost of a project to develop the community drainage system was 4.5 billion yen. The plan promoted the project as half of the project cost would be subsidized.

On the other hand, Mr. Ito had a different opinion. If the village borrows half of the project cost (2.25 billion yen) with a redemption period of 30 years, the total amount repaid by the village will be about 4.5 billion yen, which exceeds government subsidies. In addition, the efficiency of the system cannot be expected compared with other municipalities due to the terrain of the village, where mountain forests account for about 70%. This will



A combined septic tank installed in the village

increase work related to system maintenance and management. When the village pays off its debts, it needs to carry out large-scale maintenance, which will place a financial burden on the village. Compared with the community drainage system, combined septic tanks require an initial investment only (estimated total project cost: 897.83 million yen for 972 tanks from 1990 to 2015) and do not require maintenance costs. In addition, as construction work is necessary in the entire region in order to install the community drainage system, it would take a long time to obtain all the residents' agreement. On the other hand, a combined septic tank can be installed based on the decision of a community that agrees with sewerage treatment, according to its needs and pace.

Based on Mr. Ito's opinion, the sewerage committee of Shimojo municipal council conducted an objective verification for the cost-effectiveness of the community drainage system and combined septic tanks. As a result of the verification, the village decided to implement a project for installing combined septic tanks, against the intentions of the state and prefecture. This decision realized extremely high cost-effectiveness. The amount paid by the village for 14 years from 1990 to 2003 was about 200 million yen. Currently, 96% of the households use combined septic tanks. The installation of the tanks became an opportunity to raise residents' cost consciousness as they could build a

sense of managing the tanks by themselves.

## (2) Administrative and financial reform

### ● Change in the consciousness of government officials

Immediately after becoming the mayor in 1992, what Mr. Ito saw were government officials with little sense of purpose/speed and cost consciousness.

As a part of the administrative and financial reform of the municipal government, he pushed through a change in the consciousness of government officials. He divided all the officials into 11 teams of five people to conduct training at a large DIY store in Iida City. The training was conducted for each team for a week in January when they were the busiest creating an annual budget. During the training, the officials sold goods and took care of customers so that they could understand the difficulty of managing a private enterprise. Some of the officials resigned as they disagreed with Mr. Ito's idea. However, as Mr. Ito did not recruit any additional officials, the total number of regular officials declined from 51 to 37 in May 2016 (including 2 officials on maternity leave, 7 nursery teachers, 2 hygienists and 1 librarian). The number of officials per 1,000 population was 8.72 (general administration) in Shimojo-mura, which was 49.5% of the average of other similar organizations (I-0), which was 17.62 (as of April 1, 2015 by the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications).

Under these circumstances, the consciousness of government officials was gradually changing when Mr. Ito completed his first term as the mayor. As the number of officials declined, work volume per official naturally increased. However, as they could not reduce their governmental functions, they promoted operational efficiency and proactively dealt with tasks they were not in charge of when officials in charge of the tasks were busy. There is a phrase "elect few." Mr. Ito says, "It does not mean that a small number of elite members gather, but rather elite members are developed when the number of original members is reduced."

As a result of the reform, the number of regular officials of the municipal government was cut by more than 25% to achieve a salary reduction. The village could generate a surplus of approx. 150 million yen a year.

### ● Project for providing construction materials

In 1992, Mr. Ito launched another reform. It was a project for providing construction materials. While promoting change in the consciousness of government officials, he asked residents not to be completely dependent on government, but to implement small-scale projects by themselves. As a result, it was determined that construction materials would be provided to districts and residents' associations and residents would carry out a small-scale improvement and repair of roads and water channels whose construction cost was two million yen or less.

At the beginning of the project, some residents did not agree with the project, saying that the project must be implemented by government because residents paid taxes.

In response to this opinion, Mr. Ito visited all districts to explain that it was difficult for government to improve all the community roads by public works due to its financial situation. Mr. Ito had conviction that the project could be implemented. Shimojo-mura still had a traditional custom “Michiyaku” (Michibushin) that is residents’ volunteer activities to clean roads, remove weeds on roads and carry out simple repair of roads in their communities. He received strong demand from some districts that they needed to be provided with materials by government so that they could carry out additional repair activities. In response to the demand, he launched a project for providing construction materials.

Construction works subject to the project for providing construction materials are: (1) Village road improvement (paving, graveling, digging ditches, crossing work, and placing stone covers/gratings on roads having three or more beneficiaries), (2) Agricultural road improvement (the same works as those in (1) for roads having three or more beneficiaries), and (3) Water channel improvement (digging dirt ditches, repair of leaking sections, and improvement of intake facilities of roads having three or more beneficiaries). An applicant (a community resident, a residents’ association member, or a beneficiary) will confirm the necessity of the project and make an application to the community head or chairperson of a residents’/irrigation association. When the mayor finds that the application is appropriate, he will inform the representative of construction work to that effect and provide requested materials without delay. If heavy equipment is necessary, an applicant will inform a government official in charge to that effect when making an application and borrow the equipment with the approval of the official. The representative of construction work will submit a report to the mayor after the completion of construction.

In 1992 when this project was launched, the number of applications was only 25 due to residents’ hesitation, but in the following year the number doubled to 50. In 1998, the number reached a maximum of 114. This was because it had become widely understood by residents that government officials took training at the DIY store and performed their



Agricultural road improved by residents

tasks although the number of officials was declining, and an increasing number of communities were interested in the project as they saw other communities whose infrastructure had been improved by the project.

Many residents say that they find construction work interesting. It takes two to three hours to do construction work. As the village is a farming village, there are some residents in each community who are engaged in the construction industry. Therefore, construction work, including the use of heavy equipment, is smoothly carried out. Residents who are not engaged in the construction industry work while learning from those with experience. A road improved through efforts of residents is called “Oraga road (our road)”. Residents boast to children of the road and have grown fond of it. They generally have a party after the completion of construction work until late at night. A female resident says with a laugh that the party takes longer than the construction work.

Costs for infrastructure construction are reduced to one-fourth to one-tenth when construction is carried out by residents, compared with those for infrastructure construction with the same scale carried out by public works of the village. In addition, the project can promptly and appropriately meet residents’ detailed demands without being postponed. The most remarkable feature of the project is that it deepens the friendship and exchanges in the community by having residents consider regional issues and work and sweat together. This has become the basis of participatory community development based on an idea of “self-help, voluntary help and mutual help.”

#### ● Fiscal consolidation

As a result of the administrative and financial reform involving the municipal government and residents, the financial condition of the village steadily improved. The real debt expenditure ratio, which indicates the weight of debt, of the village was minus 6.6% for two consecutive years from FY 2015 to FY 2016. The village was at the top of the municipalities in Japan. In addition, in FY 2015, the current account ratio, which indicates financial sufficiency, of the village was 64.7% (A lower percentage is better (average: 70-80%). The village can spend 35.3% of its resources for investment expenses), real outstanding debt deducting the amount subject to local allocation tax measures was 192.52 million yen, and the fund balance was 6.95148 billion yen. It can be said that the financial condition of the village, as a small village with a population of about 4,000, is extraordinary sound.

Top municipalities in real debt expenditure ratio in FY 2016		
1st	Shimojo-mura, Nagano	-6.6%
2nd	Suginami Ward, Tokyo	-6.4%
3rd	Edogawa Ward, Tokyo	-6.2%
4th	Koto City, Tokyo	-4.4%
5th	Tsuno-cho, Kochi	-4.2%



### **(3) Efforts toward the future after launching the administrative and financial reform**

#### **● Project of youth settlement promotion residences using the village's own funds**

Against the background of the fiscal consolidation above, the village developed a new voluntary project as an investment for its future. The project was implemented to promote the settlement of young people to curb the population decline.

The village built ten houses as youth settlement promotion residences from FY 1997 to FY 2006. Efforts of the village for this project were unique and had not been made by other local governments. One of the characteristics of the efforts was that all the construction costs were covered by the village's budget without receiving any government subsidy. This could not be realized without the achievement of fiscal consolidation. The reason why the village carried out construction with its own funds was that it wanted to set the following unique conditions for people moving into the residences:

1. Residences are limited to young people who have children or will get married; and
2. People in the residences must participate in the village's events and become a fire company member.

As described above, the purpose of the project was to curb the population decline, but the village has put conditions on people moving to the village and voluntarily selected people with a willingness to get involved in the village and participate in the village's events. This is because the village has been working on community development focusing on regional ties, such as the traditional custom, "Michiyaku (community road maintenance)", etc. Some people who disagree with these conditions give up moving in to a residence, but the houses have been mostly full due to their low rent and comfortableness, which have been spread by word of mouth. People moving into the residences have become community members and participated in events. They have played a role in regional revitalization. The average age of the members of the village's fire company is mid-thirties, which is particularly young compared with that in other aging municipalities.

#### **● Generous childcare support measures**

In addition to tangible support measures, such as the project of youth settlement promotion residences, etc., Shimojo-mura has sequentially taken the following intangible childcare support measures since FY 2004:

1. Provided free medical care for children until they graduate from junior high school since FY 2004, and until they graduate from high school since FY 2010;
2. Subsidized 30% of elementary and junior high school lunch fees since FY 2011, and



70% of the fees since FY 2016;

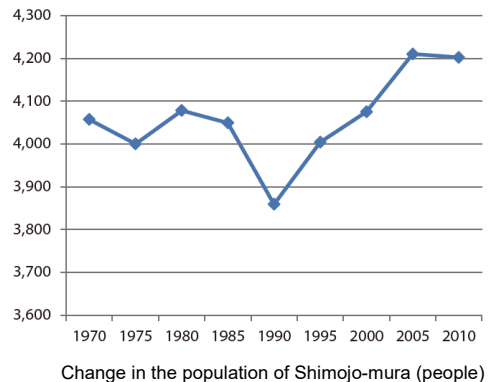
3. Reduced childcare fees by 10% since FY 2007, and by about 50% since FY 2012. Provided free childcare for a third child aged three or older since FY 2015;
4. Provided gifts of money to mothers when they deliver their second child (50,000 yen) and those who deliver their third or more child (200,000 yen) since FY 2014 (the amount increased in FY 2016 to 300,000 yen); and
5. Provided gift tickets of the commerce and industry association to children when they enter an elementary school (20,000 yen) and junior high school (50,000 yen) as a gift for admission to a school since FY 2014 (the amounts increased in FY 2015 to 30,000 yen and 60,000 yen for those who enter an elementary school and junior high school, respectively).

Since these childcare measures have also been spread by word of mouth, the village has established a reputation as a “childcare-friendly village.” The number of young people who deliver and raise their children in the village has been increasing.

#### ● Curbing the population outflow

With these tangible and intangible childcare support measures, the village’s birthrate reached 2.04 between 2003 and 2007 (National average in 2007: 1.34). The village now has one of the highest total fertility rates among municipalities in Japan.

The total population of the village was 3,917 as of April 2016. Although the population has declined slightly due to the overall population decline in Japan, it largely exceeded the estimated population of less than 3,700 without the tangible and intangible measures for promoting youth settlement.



#### ● Junior high school student council

In addition to childcare support measures, Shimojo-mura introduced a “Junior high school student council” in FY 1995 as an investment in human resources for the future of the village. The council has students think about the village from their perspective so that they can learn more about their village and develop their love for the village. Students research the village’s administration and politics and make presentations about measures necessary for the village. Through the sincere response of the municipal office, they can feel a sense of being part of the village.

Some measures suggested by the students have been adopted in the village and used for its projects, such as the installation of security street lights, etc. In 2016, the village implemented “Ainohi,” activities suggested by the student council to visit 61 elderly people living alone. Children learned the necessity of elderly welfare and involvement with the region, and at the same time, intergenerational exchange between elderly people and children could be promoted.

As described above, the most important resources of Shimojo-mura are human resources, and it promptly launched projects for human resource development. It is expected that young human resources developed through the projects will play an important role in the village in the future.

Introduction of  
a key person

### “Experience of taking the needs of residents seriously in the real world”

— Kihei Ito, the former mayor and the key player for the miraculous village

The village developed its unique and original measures suitable for its regional situation without depending on government subsidies, and made consistent efforts to solve individual regional issues with strong conviction. This realized the “miraculous village.” There are various people in a region, such as those who take a conservative stance so as not to lose vested interests, those who have a negative attitude against the local government due to their distrust of government, and those who are not interested in the crisis of the region due to their low level of consciousness. To deal with them, an excellent leader who is acquainted with his/her region is essential. In the case of Shimojo-mura, that leader is Mr. Kihei Ito, the former mayor and the “key player for the miraculous village.” What made him an excellent leader? It is thought that his background, experience with various businesses under harsh conditions, experience of leading a regional economy as a business owner, and strong conviction by nature made him an excellent leader.

When he was in the second year of high school, his father suffered from lung tuberculosis and he had to support his family as the oldest son. When he was 18 years old, he was the only person in charge of accounting at the Shimojo branch of a transportation company. He taught himself accounting and sometimes worked as a driver for the company when needed. When he was 21 years old, he realized the limitations in the operation of the transportation company and urged the management personnel in their 50s and 60s to make the shift to the civil engineering industry, in expectation of the launch of a full-scale national land reconstruction (launched in 1957). However, the management did not agree with his opinion and said, “If you insist on doing that, do it at your own risk!” Then he resigned from the company and started his own business. He worked very hard to making a profit and survive as a subcontractor for a major construction company working on dam construction. Then he opened a gas station as he noticed that there was only one gas station in the region. He also aggressively

developed and expanded his business in the fields of automobile maintenance and construction materials in accordance with demand.

These experiences were very useful for determining the implementation of projects using the originality and ingenuity of a region according to the regional situation. Examples of the projects are those he implemented as a council member, such as changing the cost consciousness at the time of installing combined septic tanks and the selection of appropriate projects, and those implemented when he was mayor, such as changing the consciousness of government officials, the administrative and financial reform, and the possibility of infrastructure development by residents during the project for providing construction materials, etc.

Politicians selected by local plebiscite usually hesitate to take actions that may be disliked by residents. However, although Mr. Ito was temporarily disliked by residents, he first clarified what he could and could not do and achieved results in the end. He gained a lot of support because he was a leader who took the needs of residents seriously in the real world. He gained individual support and also changed the atmosphere of the entire village and residents' consciousness. It is expected that the village will take over Mr. Ito's intentions and maintain resident-led autonomy as a small village without depending on the state. The ideal leadership required for the recent regional revitalization can be found in Mr. Ito's very way of life.

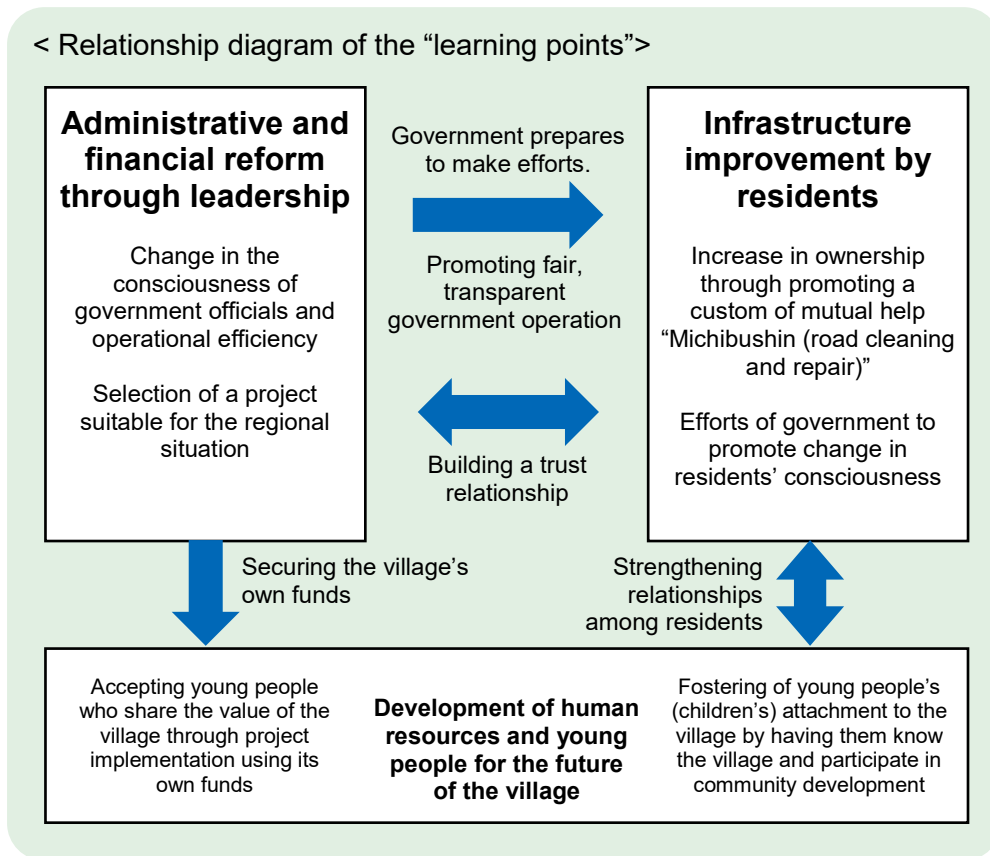
### **2-3. Learning points**

The basic theme of this case is independent "regional management." The village achieved administrative and fiscal consolidation through the change in consciousness of government officials, operational efficiency, and selecting projects suitable for the regional conditions within a limited budget, and applied its own funds obtained through the reform to projects for solving regional issues.

There are learning points in the administrative and financial reform achieved as a result of improvement of the government's operational efficiency and the selection of projects suitable for the village under the strong leadership of the mayor with cost consciousness of the private sector.

In addition, resident-led community infrastructure construction was realized while reviving the traditional custom of mutual help among residents. Developing countries that typically have many problems with the sustainability of a project will have much to learn from this case.

Furthermore, during the youth settlement promotion project implemented for the future of the village, the village attracted many young people who can share its value by setting unique requirements using its own funds. Efforts for the development of human resources for the future of a region will also be useful for developing countries.



### (1) Administrative and financial reform through leadership

- **Change in the consciousness of government officials and operational efficiency**
  - Against the basic understanding of municipal government officials that they perform their tasks according to notices and instructions of the state and prefecture, government officials of the village experienced the world of the private sector through working at a private enterprise and developed their awareness of cost-conscious and customer-oriented results. This greatly contributed to improvement of the operational efficiency of the municipal government.
  - As the former mayor did not recruit any additional officials to cover officials who resigned from the municipal government, the remaining officials had to deal with tasks other than those of which they were in charge. This removed the operational framework and increased the operational efficiency since they had to perform tasks with a limited number of officials.
  - Although local governments of developing countries suffer from a chronic personnel

shortage, they have a big challenge to perform cost-conscious and result-oriented tasks. From that perspective, the process of changing the consciousness and actions of government officials of Shimojo-mura becomes a major learning point for government officials of developing countries.

- **Selection of a project suitable for the regional situation**

- As shown in the project for installing combined septic tanks and the project for providing construction materials implemented in Shimojo-mura, it is very useful to select an appropriate project in consideration of the financial condition of a local government as well as the regional geography and the situation of activities of community residents. This also applies to developing countries. In addition, it is important to develop a project plan considering not only initial costs, but also running costs.
- The village objectively examines the cost-effectiveness of a project, clarifies advantages and disadvantages, and makes an examination while obtaining the understanding of project actors and residents. Developing countries have much to learn from this process as they have not been able to put it into practice.

## **(2) Infrastructure improvement by residents**

- **Increase in ownership through promoting a custom of mutual help “Michibushin (road cleaning and repair)”**

- In the past, there was a custom called “Michibushin” in Japanese society whereby community residents carried out joint activities (mutual help) for road improvement. The custom is called “Michiyaku” in Shimojo-mura and still exists in the village. The project for providing construction materials was implemented by using and promoting the custom of mutual help of communities in the region. As some countries and regions in developing countries carry out joint activities among residents, it is worth carrying out the same activities as above. In order to learn about “Michiyaku,” a custom of Shimojo-mura, it is important to understand the form of regional organizations (districts and residents’ associations) that implement the custom and their decision making and operation. It is also necessary to consider the application of the custom according to the form of regional organizations and groups of developing countries and their decision making and operation.
- Michibushin has the effect of developing residents’ ownership over a road they constructed through their joint activities, as well as enhancing their sense of solidarity. Their sense of achievement after the construction of a road contributes to their enjoyment of a small success and leads to the improvement of their capacity to solve their issues. The experience of Shimojo-mura is very helpful for communities of developing countries as it is very important for their capacity development to

enjoy small successes from things they achieve.

- One more learning point in Michibushin of Shimojo-mura is the “pleasure” of having a party among residents after the completion of a project. It has been realized because the project scale is appropriate for residents (to be completed in half a day). It can be said that Shimojo-mura’s Michibushin is akin to resident activities carried out in other regions in a friendly atmosphere, such as radio gymnastics and sandlot baseball, etc. The key to the ownership and sustainability of the project is that the project can improve an item necessary for the community and the residents enjoy implementing the project. It is thought that pursuit of the “pleasure” becomes an important learning point that is required for community activities of developing countries.



“Flower planting activities”  
(Source: “Situation of the village (2013)” by  
Shimojo-mura)

- **Efforts of government for promoting change in resident consciousness**

- When the project for providing construction materials was launched in Shimojo-mura, some residents raised their voices against the project. However, the number of applications for the project increased every year. One of the reasons for the increase was the encouragement by government. The mayor’s visits to districts of residents against the project in order to explain the project, and the change in the consciousness of government officials implemented in the same period led to the understanding and satisfaction of the residents. It should also be noted that government already knew which districts desired the project implementation and launched the project in one of those districts first. By showing project results to residents, a competitive consciousness was fostered among communities. Like this project, communities in Japan as well as developing countries often have residents who raise their voices for a project and against a project. It is very useful for countries to show that their government makes proactive efforts toward a project and to demonstrate project results by launching the project in a community that agrees with the project.
- One of the requirements for the success of the project for providing construction materials in Shimojo-mura is that the village has human resources with expertise in construction, such as contractors and farmers working at a construction site, etc., and uses them effectively. In addition, an application form for receiving materials is a simple, single piece of paper which does not require complex procedures, and a simple inspection is conducted after the completion of construction. It is important

for a project targeting residents to design its system in consideration of the regional situation. Although the regional situation in developing countries is different from Shimojo-mura, it is also important for such countries to design the system of a project in consideration of the regional situation.

### (3) Development of human resources and young people for the future of the village

- **Accepting young people who share the value of the village through project implementation using its own funds**
  - The acquisition of permanent residents was an urgent task for achieving one of the important tasks, the preservation of the village for the future. However, for Shimojo-mura, the “preservation of the village” did not simply mean to maintain or increase its population but to “preserve the value of the village communities.” As this idea has been thoroughly communicated in the village, tangible and intangible measures for promoting young people’s settlement can be taken using the village’s own funds without depending on government subsidies that have various requirements. In addition, as the village places importance on the preservation of its value, it has set conditions for selecting people moving into the youth settlement promotion residences. This project will be an important lesson for developing countries in taking measures not only for solving the current regional issues, but also for maintaining and developing the regional value by looking into the future.
  
- **Fostering of young people’s (children’s) attachment to the village by having them know the village and participate in community development**
  - As shown in the efforts of the “Junior high school student council” of Shimojo-mura, students’ pride in and attachment to their region are fostered by creating an opportunity to have them think about regional issues, know the region, find regional issues and suggest ideas to solve the issues. These efforts also develop human resources who will move back to the region in the future. As it often takes more time in developing countries to address regional issues, the development of human resources for the future of a region is an important challenge. It is also considered effective in developing countries to review regional issues and resources from the perspective of young people and children by having them participate in the review.

## **2-4. Considerations in applying the case to developing countries**

### **(1) Considerations in applying the case**

**Contact:** General Affairs Division, Shimojo Municipal Government

#### **[Example of application to training]**

Training theme	Expected training participants	Training contents
Local administration management	Local government officials (top leader, mid-level officials)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Process for solving local administrative and financial issues (including top management)</li> <li>• Creation of regional development and project plans intended for government officials</li> <li>• Providing local administrative services through cooperation with community residents</li> </ul>
Community infrastructure development  Site visit <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Project for providing construction materials</li> </ul>	Local government officials (mid-level officials and relevant persons of community infrastructure (community roads and water channels) development projects) and representative residents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promoting residents' regeneration activities and support by local government</li> <li>• Community infrastructure development, maintenance and management according to the community's situation and capacity</li> </ul>

#### **[Considerations in applying the case]**

- Contact must be made through the local government because the region has little experience in accepting JICA projects. It is necessary to explain in advance to the local government which efforts will be applied to developing countries and ask it to make overall arrangements, including contact with communities. Therefore, it is desirable to visit the region before implementing a project and have a meeting on project procedures. As the local government has fewer officials than other local governments, consideration must be given to the arrangement of a visit so as not to affect its regular services.
- It is desirable to visit a community on weekends as residents are busy with their jobs and farming on weekdays. In particular, as residents' infrastructure development is often carried out on Saturday mornings, Saturday should be included in a visit schedule. If it is difficult to visit a community on weekends and visits should be made on weekdays; consideration must be given so as not to affect residents' regular jobs and lives.
- Based on the necessity of collecting utilization examples and considerations in conducting training, it is desirable to share information with JICA Komagane when making a training request.



## (2) Examination of the possibility to build a win-win relationship

- Creating an opportunity to introduce general information about the participants' country as well as efforts of its local governments and residents may allow an accepting organization to know a foreign country and motivate them to learn diverse values.
- It is important for training participants from developing countries not to learn in a unilateral way, but to ask themselves questions about benefits of the efforts of Shimojo-mura, and have an opportunity to give feedback to community residents and government officials about issues of the current efforts. This will allow an accepting organization to re-evaluate its efforts and regional attractiveness from an external perspective, which may lead to an increase in motivation and rediscovery.
- Efforts to learn regional resources and issues of the region have also been made in the "Junior school student council." Participation in presentations of junior high school students and sharing opinions with the students during training will greatly motivate training participants and the students. The realization of interaction with developing countries will become an opportunity to develop young people's pride in Shimojo-mura and have them play a central role in the autonomy of the village in the future.

## 3. Ama-cho, Shimane

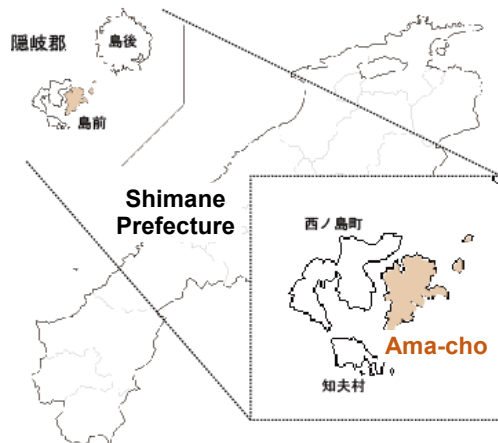
**Development of communities promoting challenge and exchange towards independence of the island (administrative and financial reform, industrial development, human resource development)**

Under the strong leadership of government, government, residents and the private sector have cooperated with one another to build a foundation for sustainable development. They merge industrial creation using regional resources and human resource development for the future of the region while using external human resources.

### 3-1. Outline of the region

#### (1) Outline of the target area

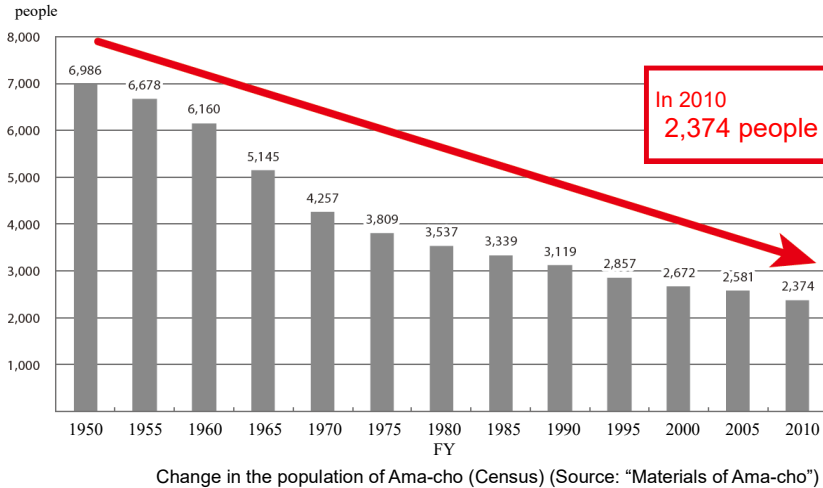
Ama-cho, Shimane is located on Nakanoshima Island (Area: 33.52 km<sup>2</sup>, Circumference: 89.1 km), one of the three inhabited islands of the Oki Dozen region in the Sea of Japan. The island has one town, and the area of the island is the area of Ama-cho. The population of the town is 2,374, the total number of households is 1,052, and the elderly population is 924 (38.9%) as of 2010 (2010 Census). The town has 14 communities, two elementary schools, one junior high school, and one Shimane prefectural high school.



It takes about two hours by high-speed vessel or about three hours by ferry from Sakai Port or Shichirui Port on the mainland to the island. In winter, the island sometimes becomes isolated due to cancellation of ferry/vessel services caused by strong seasonal winds. On the other hand, having a bountiful sea and spring water by the effect of the Tsushima warm current, the island is a self-sufficient agricultural and fishery island.

#### (2) Background and issues

The population of Ama-cho was approx. 7,000 in 1950 but decreased to 2,374 in 2010, and the population aging rate was around 40% (national average: 23.1%). Most residents leave the island after graduating from high school. The proportion of the population aged between 20 and 39 was low and the number of newborns was about 10 per year.



Since the high-growth period of the Japanese economy, infrastructure development had been carried out by investments in public works in response to the national policy. As a result of the infrastructure development, residents' lives were improved, but the outflow of the island's population continued. Although subsidies by the national government for public works expenses were sufficient, the town had to bear a part of the expenses. The municipal bonds outstanding as of the end of FY 2002 was approx. 10.15 billion yen, which was approx. 2.5 times the annual budget at the time.

The three municipalities of the Oki Dozen region (Ama-cho, Nishinoshima-cho, Chibu-mura) had a discussion about municipal amalgamation, but in December 2003, they dissolved the voluntary amalgamation council and decided to maintain independent municipal administration as they judged that a amalgamation across the sea did not have an advantage in terms of administrative and financial efficiency. However, shortly after that, it was determined that the local allocation tax was largely reduced due to the national system reform. Ama-cho faced a crisis of becoming an "organization under financial reconstruction."



The bountiful sea surrounding Ama-cho has been a reservoir of food since old times (Source: "Materials of Ama-cho")

### **3-2. Efforts for regional management**

#### **(1) Before deciding to maintain independent municipal administration**

- **A sense of crisis that “the island will cease to exist if doing nothing” - Formation of a reform group**

The current manager-level officials of Ama municipal government dedicated themselves to activities of a youth association after work when they were in their twenties, together with other community residents. They share their experience in producing a puppet play. They participated in prefectural and national puppet show competitions and won first prize for many years with consistent efforts. As they originally loved their hometown, they further developed a sense of fellowship through their efforts in the youth association. Around 1997, as a decrease in public works and an increase in municipal bonds outstanding were becoming apparent, there was a growing sense of crisis over the municipal finance. They became assistant manager-level officials at this time and strongly recognized the necessity of creating industries using the island’s regional resources and its independence.

Two government officials with a strong sense of the crisis had discussions on the future of Ama-cho day and night for a year. Against this background, they called on interested persons from the municipal government, the municipal council, and the private sector to visit independence-oriented developed regions such as Yufuin, Oita and Oguni-machi, Kumamoto, etc. After the visit, they formed an activity group (Nakanoshima Relative Club) having about 30 members who shared their ideas during the visit and started development and sale of specialty products. They also promoted a reform movement within the municipal government. At the end of FY 1998, the town’s third comprehensive development plan was developed under the initiative of assistant manager-level officials. This plan was called “Kinnyamonya Change.” “Kinnyamonya” is a word used in a popular folk song of the region about the beautiful sea and community residents of deep humanity in Ama-cho. This motto expresses the spirit of residents and government officials: “Protect our island by ourselves and build the island’s future by ourselves.” The word “Change” expresses their decision that, to survive, residents and government must change their “ways of seeing and thinking” in order to make their beloved Ama-cho an attractive town.

The group, which was formed across the boundary between the public and private sectors, became an implementation team for the reform initiative of Mr. Michio Yamauchi, the current mayor, who was from the private sector and won the mayoral election in May 2002 despite weak regional and blood relationships.

## (2) Administrative and financial reform for “defense”

### ● “Independence, challenge, exchange” – Development of the “Ama-cho independence promotion plan”

Shortly after deciding to maintain independent municipal administration, Ama-cho underwent the national system reform to significantly reduce the local allocation tax. In March 2004, representative residents, the municipal council and government cooperated to develop the “Ama-cho independence promotion plan” for the survival of the island. Although the concept of this plan had been developed when the town had discussions on the amalgamation of the three municipalities, the town held discussions with residents in all the communities (14 communities) to proactively explain the situation to the residents. The plan promoted “defensive” measures through administrative and financial reform in the short term, while promoting industrial creation and human resource development as “proactive” measures for population increase and permanent settlement in the medium- and long-term. The plan contained both “defensive” and “proactive” strategies.

The mayor held up ““Independence, challenge, exchange’ – An island with excellent people and nature” as the management guideline of the municipal administration, based on his idea of being responsible for showing the way to go as the municipal government towards the “independence of the region,” and a future vision for a “vibrant, sustainable island.”

### ● Administrative and financial reform through government efforts – Reduction in salaries of the mayor, council members and government officials, and reduction in the fixed number of public officials

The basis of government’s “regional management” was the implementation of thorough administrative and financial reform. The mayor declared a reduction in his salary based on his belief that the reform will not be supported if he does not undergo hardship. The mayor’s declaration developed government officials’ sense of crisis. The deputy mayor and managers thought that “it was strange that the mayor alone endured hardship even though the situation was caused by the nature of government since long ago.” Finally, the superintendent of the board of education, council members and staff union offered a reduction in their salaries. The salary reduction was started in FY 2004 and reduction rates were 40% to 50% for three key officials and 16% to 30% for other officials (average: 22%). As a result of the salary reduction, the town’s Laspeyres index<sup>12</sup> became 72.4. The town became a local government that paid the lowest salaries in Japan. The reduction rates declined several years later with a sign of improvement of the town’s financial condition, but various reforms were implemented continuously, such as

<sup>12</sup> Laspeyres index indicates the average salary of local government officials in general administration by setting the average salary of national government officials as 100.

the abolishment of unnecessary positions, reduction in the fixed number of officials through early retirement promotion, reduction in the fixed number of council members, reduction in expenses for public works, and review of operating expenses, etc.

- **Sharing a sense of crisis – Administrative and financial reform spread to residents**

Explanations on the critical financial condition of the town and the necessity of reforms were repeatedly provided to residents at the stage of discussion on municipal amalgamation, but because of the continuous salary reduction and administrative and financial reform, residents were sharing a sense of crisis over the town's financial condition. Residents who cooperated with the reform increased. For example, an elderly club offered an increase in bus fares and a return of subsidies provided by the town, and some committees offered a reduction in their daily allowances. Some residents made donations to support the reform.

### **(3) Interaction and industrial creation as “proactive” measures**

- **Securing and utilizing of human resources through interaction with external persons and organizations**

The “proactive” measures in the “independence promotion plan” were to utilize regional resources, create industries of the island through the revitalization of the primary industry, increase the island's population (employment opportunities), acquire “foreign money” and revitalize the island.

The “Human power promotion project,” launched in April 2005 and developed based on the plan, promoted industrial creation and human resource development at the same time, focusing on the utilization of external human resources. First, the project held a summer school by inviting foreign students from Shinjuku Japanese Language Institute, Tokyo. It also held an exchange event between students of Ama Junior High School, who stayed in Tokyo for a school trip, and students of Hitotsubashi University. In the exchange event, the junior high school students visited the university during their school trip to make presentations and share opinions on the island's nature, industries and culture that they had researched over a year. There were many university students who visited Ama-cho after participating in the event.

Since 2006, the town has implemented “AMA Wagon,” an activity whereby the town invites around 20 young entrepreneurs as lecturers from Tokyo to the island by using a van and has them deliver on-site lectures. Participants attend lectures and participate in an exchange event with farmers and fishermen of the island. Ama-cho originally placed importance on “seriousness” and had a challenging spirit without fearing failure, which attracted motivated people. The number of people moving to the town increased around this time.

An idea of moving away from public works and utilizing external human resources for product development for the “acquisition of foreign money” had already been embodied in the “participants for product development” program (one-year contract) launched in 1998. This program aimed to have young people throughout Japan focus on the regional resources of Ama-cho from the perspective of a “stranger” and try to develop products using the resources. The first product developed through the program was “Turban shell curry – an island classic!” At first, training participants thought it was unusual that people on the island used turban shell for curry instead of meat, but this became an opportunity to develop the product. The program of training participants for product development was taken over by the community development volunteer to continue discovering the attractiveness of the island and suggesting/implementing projects.

- **Industrial creation and sales channel development through cooperation between public and private sectors**

The creation of new industries was promoted through cooperation between public and private sectors. Structures by which the public sector supports the private sector are classified into three types: (1) A third sector company into which the town invests capital develops a business, (2) A public-build and private-operate partnership, whereby the town prepares facilities for business activities of a small and medium-sized enterprise, and the enterprise manages the business, and (3) The town provides systemic and financial support for the business of a small and medium-sized enterprise.

Furusato Ama Co., Ltd. (established in March 2005) falls under (1) above. In order to overcome disadvantages of the distribution process of farmers and fishermen on the island, it introduced the CAS (Cells Alive System) through capital investment by a third sector company. The CAS is a new system to freeze products without destroying cellular tissue. It can maintain the freshness of agricultural and fisheries products over a long period and provide a fresh taste even after thawing. It can be said that this project overcame the restrictions of a remote island and led to the revitalization of the primary industry and the development of successors. However, sales channels have been in the process of development. It is sometimes necessary to ask fishermen for adjustment of shipment volume or secure human resources when receiving large amounts of orders. Therefore, the CAS cannot be operated without a method unique to Ama-cho that is based on its technical strengths as well as the



It takes three years to raise oysters.  
(Source: “Materials of Ama-cho”)



understanding and cooperation of fishermen and people around them.

Ama Iwagaki Production Co., Ltd. was established in October 2006 jointly by a former diver who had moved to the town and his friend, a returnee, to become fishermen. The reason for the establishment of the company was that the former diver noticed that Iwagaki (oyster) raised in the clean, safe sea around the island would meet the market needs of the metropolitan area. In order to overcome the restrictions of a remote island, the company



“Oki Beef born and raised on the island”  
(Source: “Materials of Ama-cho”)

considered it important to be consistently engaged in the process from seedling production to sales and maintain transaction prices by producers selecting sales destinations. The company put these principles into practice and has established credibility with a perfect traceability system (system to gather production and marketing information) as its selling point. The company’s brand oyster “Iwagaki Haruka from Oki Ama” is sold only between spring and early summer and is very popular at Tsukiji Market and oyster bars in the Tokyo metropolitan area. The company falls under (2) above as the town prepares seedling and shipping facilities (by using the subsidy project of the national government) and a private enterprise manages operations.

Oki Shiokaze Farm Co., Ltd, (established in January 2004) falls under (3) above, as a private enterprise takes the lead in its business. The employer of the company, who was engaged in the construction industry, anticipated a reduction in public works and decided to enter into a different industry for the survival of the company, its employees, and the island. He established a new wholly owned company engaged in the agricultural (livestock) industry. The municipal government made an application for a “special Shiokaze farming zone (March 2004)” so that the company could handle agricultural land. The application was approved to ease the restrictions of the Agricultural Land Act. To create the company’s brand, “Oki Beef born and raised on the island,” which is produced through a consistent process and fed by grass nurtured by the sea breeze and rich in minerals, the company shipped its products only to Tokyo Meat Market Co., Ltd., known for its strict quality requirements. The products received a high evaluation, which helped to build a momentum. The president and all the employees of the company are returnees to the town.



- **Creation of a brand for the entire island – Development of multiple projects using regional resources**

“Iwagaki Haruka” and “Oki Beef born and raised on the island” are products featuring the natural condition of the island. In Ama-cho, efforts for creating these products are called the “creation of a brand of the entire island.” By effectively using regional resources with the key words “sea,” “sea breeze” and “salt” and connecting different resources to deliver the island’s food products and attractiveness throughout Japan, the town aims to revitalize the primary industry.

“Amaonshio Tsukasadokoro,” a branch of Furusato Ama Co., Ltd., started its business in earnest based on activities of interested residents for reviving a traditional salt produced by being boiled in a cooker. The name represents the island’s historical and cultural background. Salt production facilities are managed by a third sector company. The activities also led to the creation of island specialties produced by communities and groups using salt containing rich minerals, such as pickled plums, salted fish guts and dried fish, etc. In addition, with the revival of traditional food using natural salt, Amaonshio Tsukasadokoro has become a place to learn the tradition and history of Ama-cho while experiencing “manufacturing,” such as making bean curd using bitter, etc., as well as a place for communication between visitors from outside the island and residents.

In 2011, the town established “We have all we need” as its slogan to express its uniqueness and created a logo mark (refer to p.6 “Reference example”). The slogan has a double meaning, that “we do not need unnecessary things” and “all the important things are here.” In other words, the slogan embodies the regional value of Ama-cho: that it does not have convenient goods and items like those in urban areas, but is blessed with a rich natural environment and has enough resources necessary for human life.

#### **(4) Investment for the future and human resource development**

- **Crisis of consolidation of Oki Dozen High School – Not “survival” but “enhancing attractiveness”**

Shimane Prefectural Oki Dozen High School is located in Ama-cho and is the only high school in the three municipalities of the Oki Dozen region. Due to the declining birthrate, the number of students of the high school dramatically declined to 28 in 2008 from 77 in 1997, and it had only one class in each grade. The school faced a crisis of consolidation. If the high school is consolidated, children on the island must leave the island when they are 15 years old. Due to an increase in financial burden on their families, such as sending money to their children, etc., the families must also leave the island, and people who move to or back to the island decline. This causes a further population decline, causing the island to fall into a negative spiral. The survival of the high school is directly linked to the survival of the island.

Mr. Yu Iwamoto, who visited the island in 2006 as a lecturer of the on-site lecture of Hitotsubashi University, was engaged in human resource development at Sony Corporation at that time. When he was asked by Mr. Misao Yoshimoto, a government official of the island (refer to p.94 “Introduction of akey person”), about the survival of the high school, which was the island’s biggest task for developing human resources, he answered intuitively that the island should develop human resources who can enter further education as well as actively participate in society or revitalize the region after returning to the island. This answer struck a chord with Mr. Yoshimoto. Mr. Yoshimoto earnestly invited Mr. Iwamoto, saying, “Please stay on the island and realize your idea with us.” This became an opportunity for Mr. Iwamoto, who played a central role in enhancing the attractiveness of Dozen High School later on, to move to Ama-cho.

Then, with a growing sense of unease among children, parents and other residents of the island, a project for enhancing the attractiveness of the high school was launched through cooperation with the region. An organization “Association for enhancing the attractiveness and permanent development of Oki Dozen High School” was established, comprising the mayors of the three municipalities of Oki Dozen region, the chairpersons of the municipal councils, the superintendent of the board of education, and the principals of the junior high schools. The name of the association represents the idea that measures for the development of the high school should not be considered based on the negative word “survival,” but instead should be considered in a sustainable manner through “enhancing the attractiveness” of the high school so that children and parents “want to go or have their children go” to the high school. Against this backdrop, the “Project for enhancing the attractiveness of Oki Dozen High School” was launched. Based on the “benefit for all three sides” from the school perspective (teachers and students), the regional perspective (parents and government), and the global perspective (outside the island and social world), the project working team had discussions with the councils, students, parents and other community residents of the three municipalities to announce the “Concept for enhancing the attractiveness of Oki Dozen High School” in March 2009.

The project set two indicators: An increase in the enrollment rate of students from the three municipalities of the Oki Dozen region and an increase in the number of enrolled students from outside the island. The town hired “coordinators for enhancing attractiveness” for connecting the high school with the region and dispatched them to the high school. This created a structure to carry out activities between the coordinators and teachers at the high school. They proactively take various initiatives, such as a learning program for solving regional issues, public cram school through collaboration with the high school, and “island study,” etc. Members who have played a central role in implementing the project are those who moved to the island after participating in the exchange event. It can be said that the “Human power promotion project” was developmentally taken over.

### ● Enhancing the attractiveness of education learned from the island – “Dream workshop” and “island study”

The most remarkable feature of “attractive education” that can only be provided by the island, is “learning for solving regional issues,” which aims to have students develop skills to carve out the future by learning and taking up challenges in the region, which faces important issues common to Japan and in the world, such as population decline, insufficient successors and financial difficulties, etc. Students take classes in a classroom as well as visiting the three municipalities of the Oki Dozen region to learn regional issues and practical skills.

In order to enhance the attractiveness of the high school with its many limitations, the region needs to strengthen its system toward the improvement of academic skills and the realization of desirable courses. Based on this idea, “Oki Learning Center,” a public cram school, was established in April 2010 in collaboration with the high school. Oki Learning Center has a belief that “children should be raised on the island until they graduate from high school.” It aims not only to increase children’s motivation to learn and develop academic skills and basic skills as a member of society, but also to develop human resources who can solve educational inequity caused by regional and economic disparities and play a central role in the region in the future. The learning center’s unique program, “Dream workshop,” focuses on fostering children’s love for their hometown and a sense of ownership before they leave the island by having them think what they can do for their region; this is designed to encourage a change in their consciousness so that they will want to return to the island to create job opportunities. The workshop results in an increase in the number of students who go to university and college with a dream of connecting themselves with their region.

To invite motivated students from across Japan, the project for enhancing the attractiveness of the high school established an “island study” system whereby the town bears a part of accommodation and food expenses. The purpose of island study is not only to secure students, but also to promote students’ motivations and the revitalization of the school by introducing different cultures and diversity into the school, that is to say, to overcome identical and fixed values in limited human relationships at a small school.

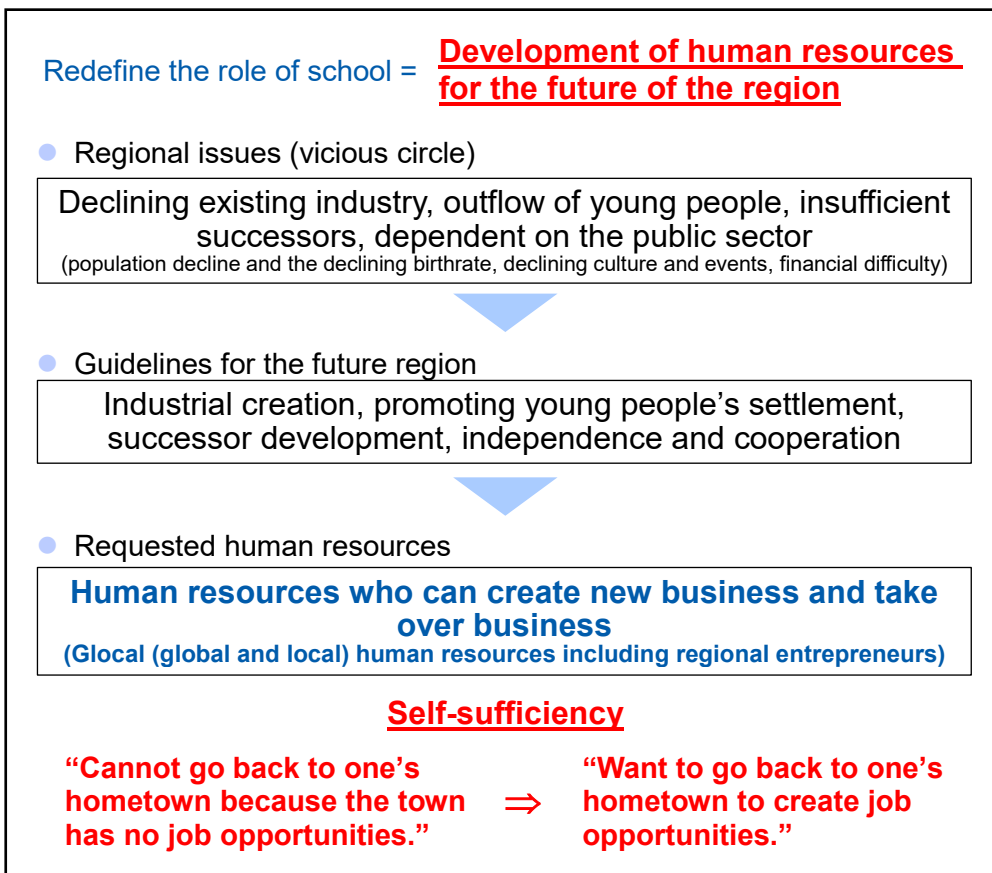
The project has also played a role in connecting the region with students. For example, it has provided an opportunity to learn the traditions and lifestyle of the island to foreign students who leave home to live in a dormitory, by establishing an “island parents” system whereby interested community residents become a



Learning knowledge from elderly people of the region  
(Source: “Materials of Ama-cho”)

sponsor for the students. Residents have participated in and cooperated with the project as lecturers of a class at the high school or the learning center. Through the project, residents also have an opportunity to review regional resources and discover the region’s attractiveness.

These efforts achieved a recovery in the number of applicants that had been declining. In FY 2012, the school increased the fixed number of students to 59 including 23 students from the Kanto region, Kansai region and other prefectures. In FY 2014, the total number of students reached 156 (189 as of 2017) to realize two classes in each grade. The number of students who go on to university also steadily increased to 17 in FY 2013, including 10 students going to national and public universities.



Source: “Materials of Oki Learning Center”

- Plan development led by residents – “Ama challenge plan,” the island’s happiness theory

Since Mr. Yamauchi became mayor, the town has moved forward with community development plans presenting a future vision toward a “vibrant, sustainable island”

through “Independence, challenge and exchange.” Examples of the plans are “Ama-cho independence promotion plan (March 2004),” “The fourth Ama-cho comprehensive development plan (March 2009),” and “Ama-cho comprehensive revitalization strategy (Ama challenge plan) (October 2015).”

The fourth Ama-cho comprehensive development plan selected 50 members from the public including young government officials to establish the “Association for creating the future Ama-cho.” The association formed four teams “People,” “Industry,” “Living,” and “Environment” to conduct various workshops and compiled a plan with the subtitle “The island’s happiness theory - pursuit of the smile unique to Ama-cho.” “The island’s happiness theory” has the meaning that individual residents recognize what is important for the island and take action to realize what they recognized. The plan compiled a book “24 suggestions for the future Ama-cho” that provides residents’ suggestions for community development that embody the theory. The book is composed of four sections: “What one person can do,” “What 10 people can do,” “What 100 people can do,” and “What 1,000 people can do.”

To develop the “Ama challenge plan,” residents in their twenties to forties who are willing to live in Ama-cho in the next five years were invited from the public, and 20 applicants, including young government officials and members of the youth group of the commerce and industry association, became members. In addition to the applicants (12 from the private sector and 8 from the public sector), 10 people new to the town and 10 returnees jointly established the “Association for the future Ama-cho (also called “Asuama”).” With the members’ sense of ownership and execution ability, they each set their own “My project” for developing and implementing their individual plans and held thorough discussions. The output of the project was called “Asuama challenge plan.” The plan was later changed to “Ama challenge plan” upon the advice of the town.

## (5) Sending information to and networking with external persons and organizations

### ● Networking with external persons and organizations

Ama-cho is also making efforts not only to invite young people from outside the island, but also to build relationships outside the island. For example, there is a private enterprise “Megurinowa Co., Ltd.” established in January 2008 by people who had moved to the town. Mr. Hiroshi Abe, one of the founders, visited the island through the introduction of the



Rito (Remote Island) Kitchen (Kagurazaka, Tokyo)  
(Source: “Materials of Ama-cho”)

wife of Mr. Iwamoto, who moved to the island for the project for enhancing the attractiveness of Dozen High School as introduced earlier. Mr. Abe said that he established the company because he had been impressed by the residents' passion and feelings for community development since he visited the town. The company has three business pillars: (1) Community development (rooted in the region), (2) Education (learn from the region), and (3) Media (sending the region's information). As community development mentioned in (1) above, it has implemented projects entrusted by Ama-cho or its original project for interaction between urban and rural areas. As an educational project in (2), it has accepted training for large enterprises and labor unions with the cooperation of community residents. As a media project in (3), it has provided mail-order services for specialty products of Ama-cho while delivering the attractiveness of the town through local music and food using local ingredients. All these efforts boost activities of the town, which aims to be a model of sustainable society by connecting people inside and outside the region.

“Rito (Remote Island) Kitchen,” a restaurant operated by Ama Tourist Association, is located in Kagurazaka, Tokyo, where there are many popular restaurants. The restaurant purchases food materials from various islands throughout Japan through collaboration with Ama-cho and other remote island regions. It has been a very popular restaurant that requires a reservation. Before opening the restaurant, it sold food products of Japanese remote islands using a food truck (October 2009). Through participation in events, provision of catering services, and operation of a restaurant on a trial basis in the Tokyo metropolitan area, it has built a network for purchasing food products and materials that are not commonly available. The network enables islands in other regions collaborating with the company to secure a sales channel and promote their food products and materials.

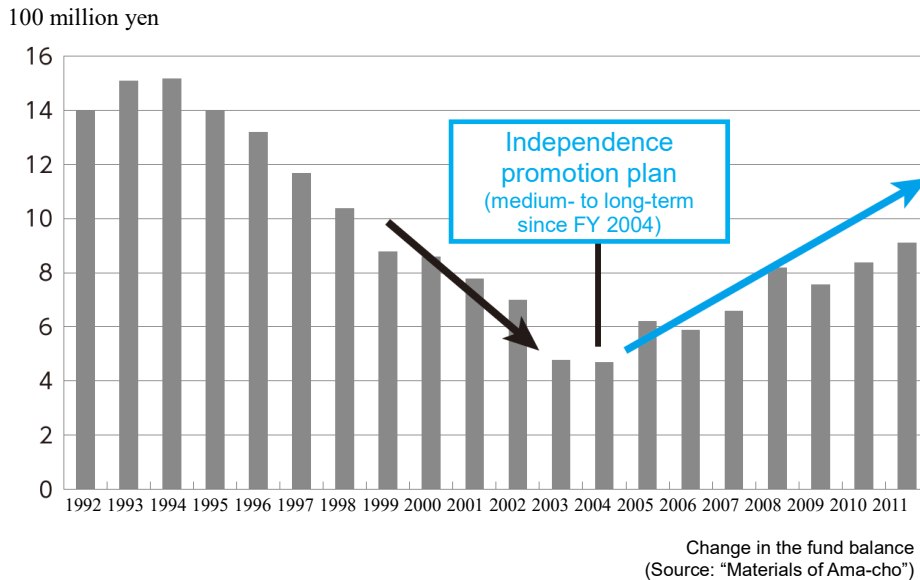
### ● Challenge and interaction outside the island and overseas

In order to create a brand of specialty products and dominate market competition, the town has targeted not neighboring areas, but instead mainly the Tokyo metropolitan area, which evaluates products strictly. In recent years, it has also participated in business conventions in Dubai and Taiwan to proactively develop overseas sales channels.

In the field of human resource development, Oki Learning Center set a goal to “develop glocal (global and local) human resources.” Dozen High School was certified as a super global high school by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology in 2015. The school is enhancing opportunities to provide programs outside the region. It has provided training in Singapore for all students in the second grade since 2014 and overseas programs (in Russia, Republic of Estonia and Kingdom of Bhutan) for students interested in the programs since 2016.

## (6) Outputs of efforts and future issues

As one of the outputs of the administrative and financial reform based on the “Ama-cho independence promotion plan,” the municipal bonds outstanding, which amounted to more than 10 billion yen in FY 2001, were reduced to approx. 6.9 billion yen in 2012. On the other hand, the general account fund balance, which can be regarded as savings, increased (refer to the figure) to steadily improve the financial condition.



In terms of industrial development, sales and numbers of employees have been steadily increasing in various industries (refer to the table). As a result of such increases, the number of people moving to the town for 11 years from 2004 to 2014 reached 483 (326 households). The retention rate was around 50%, which accounted for 10% of the population. Accordingly, the population became 2,354 in 2015 from 2,374 in 2010 (according to census figures), which is curbing the population decline.

Industry	Item	First year	FY 2014
<b>Haruka (Oyster)</b> (Since 2002)	Sales	15,000 thousand yen	79,300 thousand yen
	No. of employees (including part-time employees)	13	21
<b>Facilities for farmer's and fisherman's market</b> (Since 2002) *Including salt	Sales	125,000 thousand yen	252,120 thousand yen
	No. of employees (including part-time employees)	12	23
<b>CAS products</b> (Since 2005)	Sales	27,000 thousand yen	158,510 thousand yen
	No. of employees (including part-time employees)	14	25



<b>Oki beef</b> (Since 2006) *Fattening cattle only	Sales	55,000 thousand yen	143,412 thousand yen
	No. of employees (including part-time employees)	6	10

Past outputs of industrial development measures  
(Source: "Materials of Ama-cho")

The town has two future issues: (1) How to have government officials, including Mr. Yoshimoto, who supported the reform using relationships across public and private sectors, pass on their experience to younger generations, and (2) How to promote resident-led efforts.

However, as shown in the "Ama challenge plan," motivated residents who have lived on the island and those who have moved to/back to the island have gradually taken specific actions to develop the island for the future. In addition, people who graduated from Dozen High School, which has enhanced its attractiveness, have returned to the island and are playing a central role in the next generation. A nursery rhyme "Furusato" is slightly revised in Ama-cho as follows:

♪*Return to my hometown someday to accomplish my aim*  
(Original: "after accomplishing my aim")

Introduction of  
a key person

### "Welcome people who can carry a portable shrine together"

— Misao Yoshimoto, Manager of General Affairs Division, Ama Municipal Government who supports the reform

Mr. Misao Yoshimoto, Manager of the General Affairs Division, Ama Municipal Government, has been engaged in the town's finance for a long time. He also had experience in various other departments. He has not only assisted Mr. Yamauchi, the current mayor, to take the initiative in promoting the reform in the municipal government, but also played various other roles, such as discussions with internal and external actors behind the scenes by effectively using his network when he was a member of a youth association, and finding and persuading people to move to the town who are likely to cooperate with the regional revitalization, etc.

At the time he explained to residents about the reform, there was friction between him and the residents, as new initiatives and unusual things are often refused in communities. However, he tried to implement resident-friendly reform as much as possible. He said that he devoted himself to proactively visiting communities to find supporters, accept minimal criticism, and avoid having a fight. He also said that it was important during a project implemented by the municipal government to share roles with the central figure of the project, build equal relationships regardless of rank, and support one another. His role was to build up support while thoroughly sharing responsibilities. He developed his skills to delegate tasks out of his element to other persons.



The “Human power promotion project,” launched in 2005, promoted interactions with external persons and organizations. Mr. Yoshimoto said, “What community residents could not do only by themselves could be done by accepting external human resources and leaving a project to them. In that respect, finding motivated people is important. However, it is difficult to judge how serious they are. In addition, meeting with people has coincidental elements more than fateful elements. Therefore, I make efforts to meet many people and request a reliable person to provide recommendations, which increases opportunities to find motivated people. We do not distinguish residents who have lived in the town for a long time from those moving to the town as long as they can place importance on what we place importance on, such as tradition, culture and value, etc. (for example, a person who can carry a portable shrine together)”

The mayor Yamauchi says about Mr. Yoshimoto that his love for his hometown is his driving force. A deep trust relationship has been built between the general affairs manager and the mayor, colleagues of the municipal government and community residents.

### **3-3. Learning points**

In terms of regional management, learning points of this case are that results are achieved in fields of “administrative and financial reform,” “industrial development,” and “human resource development” and these results influence each other to enhance the effectiveness under the keywords “independence, challenge and exchange.”

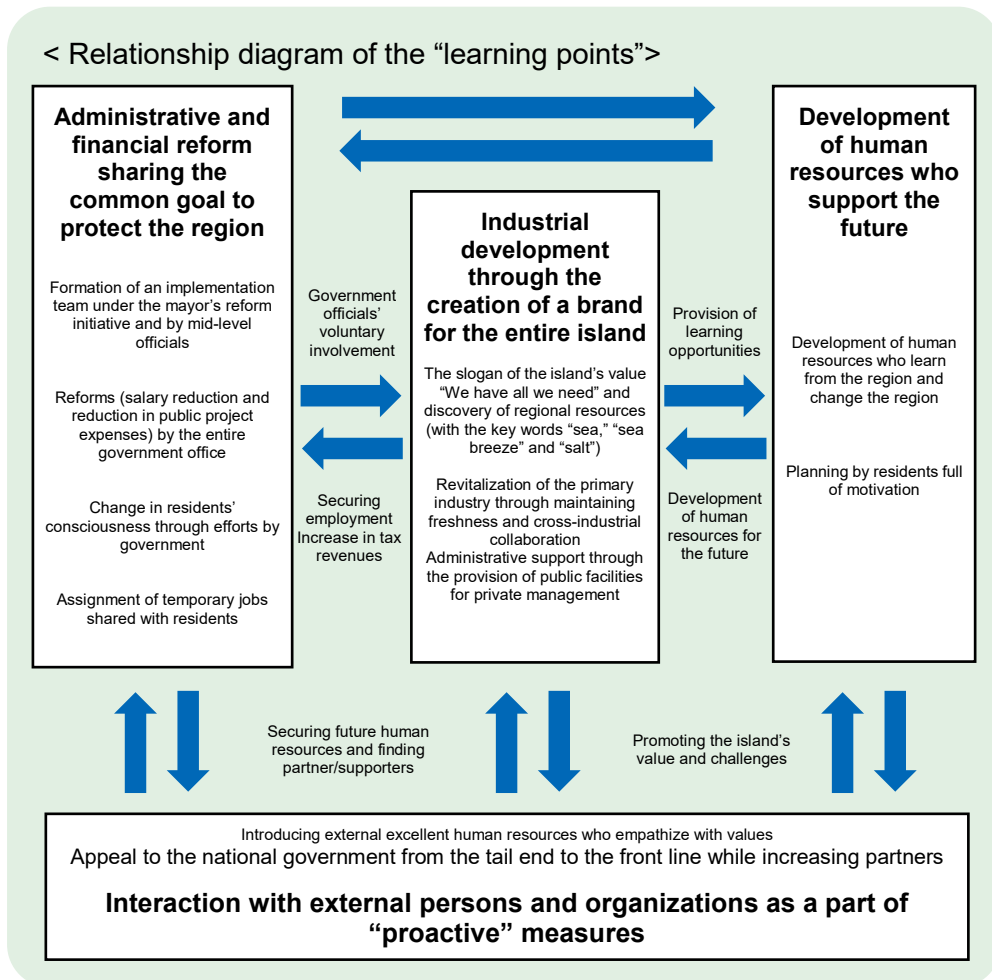
Amid a situation where the population of the town had declined and the town was in a financial crisis, residents’ consciousness of “protecting the region” was shared with government and among residents, which formed the basis of the administrative and financial reform. This is the first learning point.

Under the leadership of government that gained residents’ trust through its efforts, public and private sectors collaborated and cooperated to promote efforts for industrial development made by the entire region called the “creation of a brand for the entire region.” The efforts led to securing employment and an increase in tax revenues. At the same time, the town was closely involved in school education toward sustainable a society and tried to develop human resources necessary for the region (glocal (global and local) human resources including regional entrepreneurs) by connecting school education with community development through the project for enhancing the attractiveness of education. These efforts are the second learning point.

In order to promote human resource development and industrial development to maximize the value of regional resources under the limitations of a remote island, government intentionally utilized external resources obtained through interaction with them. This is also regarded as a learning point.

One more important point is that values of the island that cannot be identified in urban

areas attracted people who empathized with the values, and ambitious efforts and the challenging atmosphere of the island’s public and private sectors greatly increased the number of people outside the region who agree with the values and changed the social atmosphere. These led to the strengthening of regional efforts.



### (1) Administrative and financial reform sharing the common goal to protect the region

- Formation of an implementation team under the mayor's reform initiative and by mid-level officials
- The reform could be carried out through cooperation between the municipal council and the municipal government as the mayor clarified his slogan when he ran for election and took the initiative in promoting the reform. This is useful for developing countries.

- To carry out these initiatives, the function of mid-level officials, such as managers of the municipal government who are in charge of practical operations, etc., works effectively. Officials who used to carry out various activities as a member of a youth association when they were young became a mid-level official or company employee to create cooperative relationships across the boundary between public and private sectors for carrying out the reform. While having communication with the mayor (top leader), mid-class officials and employees promoted the reform through cooperation among them and with community residents. Government officials of developing countries could learn from these efforts.
- **Reforms (salary reduction and reduction in public project expenses) by the entire government office**
  - For the “independence of the region,” the municipal government took “defensive” measures by carrying out the administrative and financial reform, including salary reduction and personnel downsizing, etc., and secured funds for investment in “proactive” measures. Specific aims of “defensive” and “proactive” measures made officials think positively about hardships due to the reform. In addition, cost reduction and efficiency enhancement were realized in the short term as inspections were conducted on an organization-wide basis for the continuation of the reform. The reform was carried out while confirming its significance by clearly specifying results of the reform as necessary. Although the degree of necessity and background are different in developing countries, the reform process is useful for such countries.
  - One more learning point is that there were no officials who disagreed with or gave up the reform and their motivation toward the reform was further strengthened by clarifying the purpose of protecting the region through appealing to their love for their hometown and by carrying out the reform without changing the significance of personnel downsizing.
- **Change in residents’ consciousness through efforts by government**
  - The mayor and government officials frequently visited communities to explain the town’s financial crisis and the vision for the reform and showed their serious attitude in a visible manner, such as salary reductions and personnel downsizing, etc. These clear efforts and information disclosure promoted the residents’ understanding and awareness of the reform and enhanced their motivations for cooperation, which is useful for developing countries.
- **Assignment of temporary job shared with residents**
  - By assigning government officials to the tourist association and a third sector company, the town created a structure that allows officials to add their experience in

sharing efforts with residents. The structure enables the officials to build a relationship with residents and work on system improvement with a sense of ownership.

## **(2) Industrial development through the creation of a brand for the entire island**

- **The slogan of the island's value "We have all we need" and identification of regional resources**
  - Ama-cho is making every effort to discover regional value and resources in all aspects, including geographical conditions, natural environment, history and culture. It also delivers the resources inside and outside the region by using accurate, attractive words such as "We have all we need" and "Developed region with new issues." Through the "creation of a brand for the entire island" that promotes the attractiveness of the entire island such as "sea, sea breeze and salt," the town has added value to various products and projects unique to the island while involving community residents and connecting various resources of the island. By using the island's horizontal connections, the town has new initiatives such as the creation of opportunities for experiencing and learning the island's culture through product creation. Developing countries could learn a lot from efforts to focus on regional resources and use the resources for implementing a project suitable for regional actors.
- **Revitalization of the primary industry to protect the employment of the island - Adding value by using regional resources**
  - In order to set product prices on the basis that the primary industry of the island can be revitalized and employment opportunities can be secured, the town is making efforts to secure the quality of and add value to regional products by introducing and intensively investing in ideas and manufacturing technology leading to the effective use of regional resources. Although it may be difficult to apply the same method in developing countries, they have much to learn from an idea and efforts to prioritize the revitalization of the primary industry in the region.
- **Administrative support according to the situation of the private sector**
  - Administrative support, such as the provision of public facilities for private management, etc., for utilizing private sector vitality according to conditions, leads to various project activities carried out by private enterprises and residents and promotes industrial development. Developing countries could learn from these efforts as it is important for them to prepare activities according to the capacity and conditions of private enterprises and residents.

- Government officials voluntarily involve themselves in industrial development and revitalization by organizing relevant divisions of the municipal government according to the local situation. Government displays its initiative in creating industries and brands while maximizing the island's value. It is important for government to provide the direction of a region for developing regional industries. This becomes a learning point for developing countries as well.

### (3) Development of human resources who support the future

- **Development of human resources who learn from the region and change the region**
  - For the survival of the high school, the town launched programs for learning from community residents (“community life learning” and “dream workshop,” etc.) using characteristics of a remote island as a “developed region which has new issues.” The town effectively uses its communities and areas where residents can have face-to-face communication for providing educational opportunities. By participating in the educational programs, residents can have an opportunity to directly deliver their experience and knowledge as well as find the regional value and attractiveness. As there are cases where regional issues are examined by residents in developing countries, it should be a learning point for them to tell children the issues and have them think about the issues. This may become an opportunity to realize regional issues and attractiveness they tend to dismiss.
  - The town has attracted students from inside and outside the region by featuring learning from community residents and using characteristics of a remote island as a “developed region which has new issues.” Developing students’ ability to understand regional attractiveness and issues and think about specific solutions fosters their pride in and love for their hometown and entrepreneurial spirit. The town has raised children who are willing to come back to the town (and play a central role on the island) in the future by having them be attracted to a “developed region with new issues.” Efforts to involve young people and children in community development are considered very useful for developing countries.
- **Planning by residents full of motivation**
  - To develop a comprehensive regional plan, the town has recruited residents from the public and private sectors who can remain motivated regardless of their hometown. It has completed a feasible plan by selecting personnel with a sense of ownership and execution ability from the residents recruited and having them create a plan. Through workshops, it has also developed human resources for plan implementation by having workshop members set their own project (my project) so as to enhance their sense of participation. It makes no sense to develop a plan if there is no “person” who implements the plan. From the perspective of developing a person who can

think seriously about his/her community, it can be said that “to develop a plan is to develop human resources.” Developing countries could apply this idea.

- To develop a plan, it is necessary to “have the same perspective as community residents (and keep having the perspective).” A plan cannot be developed only by external consultants’ advice, knowhow and plan documents.

#### **(4) Interaction with external persons and organizations as a part of “proactive” measures**

- **Introducing excellent external human resources who empathize with values**
  - As human resources who play a central role in community development, the town has secured excellent external human resources who empathize with the regional value and have skills necessary for the region, such as Mr. Iwamoto, who was invited to enhance the high school attractiveness, and Mr. Abe of Megurinowa Co., Ltd. introduced in 3-2 (4) and (5). Developing countries have much to learn from efforts to increase opportunities to introduce excellent human resources who empathize with a region’s value by proactively providing opportunities for interaction and delivering the regional value.
  - Increased opportunities for interaction and external people’s evaluation on the regional attractiveness encourage residents to review their regional value and resources.
- **Appeal to the national government from the tail end to the front line while increasing partners**
  - The town has opened a restaurant in Tokyo using food materials from various islands throughout Japan. It has promoted marketing featuring values different from urban areas. Through expansion of a network among people who share the value, the town strives to lead to the transformation of values of society as a whole so as to increase the value of the island as a model of a sustainable society. By increasing the number of people who sympathize with the island’s value, it has strengthened its appeal to the national government toward improving the system for overcoming regional disadvantages. It can be said that ideas for these efforts eventually result in the strengthening of business in the region by increasing the regional value without aiming to monopolize profits. It is also possible for developing countries to connect local governments and groups that address the same regional issues and carry out activities to solve the issues and to provide an opportunity to learn from each other and jointly deliver information.

### 3-4. Considerations in applying the case to developing countries

#### (1) Considerations in applying the case

**Contact:** General Affairs Division, Ama Municipal Government  
Telephone: 08514-2-0114

#### [Example of application to training]

Training theme	Expected training participants	Training contents
Regional development and local government strengthening	Local government officials (top leader, mid-level officials), officials of ministries and agencies responsible for strengthening local government, and representatives of resident groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Administrative and financial reform of local governments</li> <li>• Identification of regional resources/issues and examination of specific solutions</li> <li>• Development of comprehensive plans led by residents</li> <li>• Government support measures for resident activities</li> <li>• Community development involving young generations</li> </ul>
Development of local industries and SME development	Local government officials (mid-level officials) and SME representatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Perspective on and methods for discovering regional resources</li> <li>• Formation of regional brands</li> <li>• Government support measures for industrial development</li> </ul>
Education and human resource development through collaboration with communities	Local government officials (mid-level officials), persons related to school education/training institutions, and representatives of resident groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regional learning and training learnt from the region</li> <li>• Participation of residents engaged in regional learning and training</li> <li>• Collaboration system to implement regional learning and training (local government, school, private sector)</li> </ul>

#### [Considerations in applying the case]

- As Ama-cho has experience with overseas exchange and has accepted JICA projects, it intends to proactively contribute to international cooperation from FY 2016. On the other hand, efforts of Ama-cho have gained much attention outside the region, the town accepted approx. 190 groups (2,400 people) for visits and training in FY 2014. When examining the implementation of training in Ama-cho, it is desirable to directly ask the General Affairs Division, Ama Municipal Government and coordinate a business trip (three days and two nights in general) to hold a meeting, while giving consideration that international cooperation is not the town's main service.
- Since Ama-cho has many results of regional efforts and learning points, it is necessary to clarify which efforts will be applied to a country subject to international cooperation according to the situation of the country, and explain in advance to the municipal government about it.
- It is desirable to share information with JICA Chugoku when a request for training acceptance is made to Ama-cho because requests for international cooperation will

be made from various sectors in the future.

## **(2) Examination of the possibility to build a win-win relationship**

- Ama-cho considers itself as a “place to learn from the process of striving for the future” when it conducts training. If training participants find resources and issues of the town through interaction with community residents from their unique perspective, the town can have an opportunity to review its resources and issues. Efforts that the town is currently making may be enhanced by creating an opportunity to have training participants learn the town’s past efforts as well as give feedback about the town’s current efforts.
- Students of Dozen High School have also identified regional resources and examined solutions to regional issues. It is considered very effective for not only training participants but also high school students and community residents to participate in presentations of the students and visit community residents to hear their stories.
- Residents of Ama-cho will be motivated to learn diverse values if training participants participate in the town’s cultural experience event held during the visit or the participants introduce their country’s culture. Posting participants’ experiences using social networking services (SNS) is also good promotion for the town.
- Ex-JICA volunteers (Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers, etc.) have already carried out activities in Ama-cho. As it is expected that their experience and know-how learned in developing countries are utilized for community development, human resources including “Glocal volunteers” are expected to be continuously introduced.
- Ama-cho is interested in overseas markets as sales channels for its specialty products. A new market may be developed in a developing country in the future by sending information on the products through training participants.

## **(3) Reference information for administrative procedures**

- It is desirable to contact the municipal government in advance if training participants visit the town in summer (between June and September) as it has many tourists in summer. If individual rooms cannot be reserved, training participants may share a Japanese room. In addition, as regular ferry services may be cancelled from late November to late February due to strong winds, it is sometimes necessary to charter a ferry.
- As halal products and seasoning are not available, it is desirable to bring them as necessary. If cooking is necessary, it is recommended to stay in “Oki Shizenmura.”



## 4. Shimanto-cho, Kochi

### Revitalization of agricultural and mountainous villages through social business adding value to Shimanto River basin

Under the philosophy of “Manufacturing without placing a burden on Shimanto River,” the town has comprehensively produced its regional value by combining businesses using regional resources and activities to protect regional resources, through collaboration and cooperation mainly with “Shimanto Drama” as well as community residents, regional designers and consumers.

### 4-1. Outline of the region

#### (1) Outline of the target area

Shimanto-cho is located in the southwest of Kochi and in the middle basin of Shimanto River running from east to west in the prefecture. Most of its communities are located along Shimanto River and its branch rivers or on a plateau. Shimanto River is called the “last river having clear streams” as dams have not been constructed and the side of the river has a natural levee that is not hardened with concrete. The river has maintained the natural environment since the old days. It is said that the river has the largest number and species of fish in Japan. In Shimanto-cho located in the middle basin of Shimanto River, the river is most closely related to the lives of residents. The town stretches 43.7 km from east to west and 26.5 km from north to south. The area of the entire town is 642.30 km<sup>2</sup> (103% of the area of Tokyo 23 wards). Of the area, forests account for 87.1% and fields and rice paddies account for 4.8%. The estimated population of the town is 17,031 as of October 1, 2016. Shimanto-cho was established in March 2006 through the amalgamation of Kubokawa-cho, Takaoka-gun and Taisho-cho and Towa-son, Hata-gun.



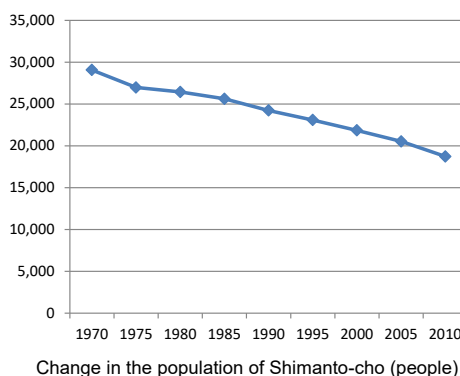
As for major industries, Kubokawa-cho has produced Kubokawa soybean and Kubokawa pork. The production volume of Kubokawa pork is the largest in the prefecture. On the other hand, primary commodities of Taisho-cho and Towa-son are *hinoki* cypress, log-grown *shiitake* mushrooms, chestnuts, tea leaves and rice. As they are cultivated on steep ground in a mountainous area where machines cannot be used,

they are mainly manually cultivated without using agricultural chemicals. However, most of the primary commodities were shipped and distributed through agricultural cooperatives for a long time. Therefore, although they had been stably shipped, their prices were affected by market prices and it was difficult to create regional brands as they were labeled just as “Grown in Kochi.”

This case sheet principally introduces the efforts of regional groups (focusing on “Shimanto Drama” and “Towa Okamisan Ichi”) around Towa District, Shimanto-cho, located in the middle basin of Shimanto River.

## (2) Background and issues

Aging of the population and depopulation have significantly accelerated in Shimanto-cho in recent years. For example, the percentage of elderly people aged 65 and over was 42.4% of the total population in 2015, which was 15.8 points higher than the national average (26.6%). The population for the five years between 2010 and 2015 decreased by 7.5%. It is estimated that by 2020, the population



will have declined by about 25% compared with that at the time of amalgamation. Due to the aging population and population decline, there is a shortage of people engaged in agricultural and forestry industries, which causes major problems. For example, forests have not been appropriately maintained, and abandoned cultivated land has been

	Towa-son, Hata-gun	Taisho-cho, Hata-gun	Kubokawa-cho, Takaoka-gun
Population (people)	<b>3,332</b>	3,138	14,057
Elderly population (%)	<b>37.0</b>	33.6	35.0
Employment rate in the primary industry (%)	<b>39.8</b>	22.2	27.8
Employment rate in the secondary industry (%)	26.8	27.9	22.1
Employment rate in the tertiary industry (%)	33.3	49.9	50.0
Agricultural output (per farmer, thousand yen)	<b>1,134</b>	1,010	3,903
Managed cultivated area (per farmer, a)	<b>49.0</b>	62.8	110.2

Source: “Regeneration of agricultural and mountainous villages through social business connecting rural and urban areas” Nishiyama (2015) (refer to p.115 “4-5 Reference materials”)

increasing.

Basic data of the three municipalities before the amalgamation (in 2005) is described below. Both Towa-son and Taisho-cho had a population of between 3,000 to 4,000 people, and the proportion of elderly population was over 30%. On the other hand, Kubokawa-cho had a population of over 14,000 people. The size of its population was remarkably large among the three municipalities. As for Towa-son, the employment rate in the primary industry was high compared with other municipalities, but the cultivated area per farmer was small, 49 a (100 m<sup>2</sup>), and the agricultural output per farmer was also small, at 1,134 thousand yen.

Based on the data above, it can be said that Towa District, Shimanto-cho, the target area of this case sheet, was a disadvantaged area as its management area was very small compared with other municipalities although it was mainly engaged in the primary industry. One more issue of the district was that industries using abundant regional resources had been steadily declining as the percentage of elderly population was the highest (37%) among the three municipalities before the amalgamation.

Shimanto River basin is suitable for the cultivation of tea leaves as it is located on a steep slope and is well drained with a lot of sunshine. The region has been known as a tea-growing area since old times. However, despite the high quality of tea leaves, they were mixed with leaves from other regions and shipped and sold under the brand of Shizuoka tea or Uji tea as they were manually picked and the production scale was relatively small. Towa District has also produced local chestnuts. The size of the chestnuts is large, and they have a high sugar content (20%). In the past, the production volume was 500 tons a year, but declined to 18 tons a year in 2000s because inexpensive chestnuts were imported in large quantities and chestnut production became unprofitable. The decline in the production volume weakened the market competitiveness and further reduced transaction prices, which caused a vicious circle. Tea leaves and local chestnuts produced in Towa District could not receive an appropriate market evaluation for their quality as they were just shipped to agricultural cooperatives and sold in markets. As for the forestry industry, planted cedar and *hinoki* cypress trees were not properly maintained due to stagnant wood prices caused by an increase in imported wood. Accordingly, agricultural and forestry industries using regional resources faded, and abandoned forests and agricultural land increased.

As described above, due to the rapid decline in the regional population and the acceleration of the aging population, agricultural and forestry industries, which are major industries of the district, have been sluggish for many years and people who take over their family business have been rapidly declining. In addition, young people do not return to the district due to an outflow of excellent human resources and few employment opportunities. This negative spiral is hindering regional economic activities as well as maintenance of the regional living environment and culture.

## **4-2. Efforts for regional management**

### **(1) Establishment of a regional enterprise supporting Towa District, Shimanto-cho, and its business philosophy**

- **Identification of regional resources and establishment of the business philosophy of “Shimanto Drama”**

Through investment by the surrounding three municipalities (Taisho-cho, Towa-son and Nishitosa-mura), “Shimanto Drama” was established in 1994 as a third sector company to be an organization implementing the hometown settlement model project<sup>13</sup> entrusted by the National Land Agency. To establish the company, only one person was hired as a regular employee from the public. The person was Mr. Risho Azechi (refer to p.119 “Introduction of a key person”) who became the president of “Shimanto Drama” later. He used to be an employee of an agricultural cooperative and worked at the management office of a local tea leaf production association at that time. Shortly after “Shimanto Drama” was established, Mr. Azechi spent one year conducting an investigation on regional resources of Taisho-cho, Towa-son and Nishitosa-mura, looking ahead three years when the subsidy project is completed, so as to understand what is necessary for community development. During this period, he visited various people in the region who were engaged in production, such as workers at a lumber company, agricultural producers, and sweetfish fishermen, etc., using his connections when he worked at the agricultural cooperative and the tea leaf production association. The investigation enabled him to grasp regional resources, producers and their techniques. When he visited the lumber company, he felt it was a waste not to use the leftover *hinoki* cypress generated during the production process of alcove posts. During a conversation with agricultural producers, he began to think that the major industries in the region were tea leaves, chestnuts and *shiitake* mushrooms.

At the end of the second year of the subsidy project, he developed the business concept of “Shimanto Drama” and launched activities to review the industrial development in the region, focusing on producers in agricultural, forestry and fisheries industries, and to re-establish weakened relationships in the region. Then he established the business philosophy of “Manufacturing without placing a burden on Shimanto River while reconsidering regional resources” in the last year of the subsidy project.

- **Background to the establishment of “Towa Okamisan Ichi” – Organizing a women’s processing group and collaboration strengthening**

Activities carried out by life improvement groups established at the end of 1965 in 19

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<sup>13</sup> With a budget of approx. two billion yen for three years, the project carried out activities related to: (1) attraction of enterprises, (2) large-scale development of forest roads, (3) construction of camping sites, and (4) intangible projects for product development, human resource development and sales channel development. Currently, the intangible projects provided in (4) have been continuously implemented to become the core of the project.

communities in the former Towa-son were the origin of activities of “Towa Okamisan Ichi.” In 1990s, there was a growing sense of crisis among community residents as they thought that development of the regional economy could not be expected if they just produced raw materials. Then a women’s processing group for making *miso* (bean paste) and Japanese pickles was established in each community. In addition, women’s groups carrying out activities for selling farm fresh vegetables and establishing a farmer’s market were gradually organized.

With the expansion of these activities, female residents had become more aware that “economic independence was necessary” for protecting their communities by themselves and voluntarily carrying out activities. On the other hand, roles of female residents in community festivals, traditional events, and residents’ association activities further increased due to a rapid aging of the population and depopulation. In addition, community activities had limitations due to a slowdown in sales of processing products and those at the farmer’s market. To deal with these issues, they established the “Local specialty council” in 1997 and started activities on a village basis so that they could work together to improve processing techniques, develop new products and increase sales channels through collaboration among the groups. One of the activities of the council was sales of “Towa Furusato Gift,” an assortment of agricultural, forestry and processing products of the village (sweet chestnut jelly, *shiitake* mushrooms boiled in soy sauce, and Todoroki *miso*, etc.), using Japan Post’s domestic parcel delivery service. The female residents realized that what they could not do by one group alone could be done through collaboration among the groups.

In 1999, they implemented “Ichikabachika in Towa,” a project to train female leaders in rural communities in Hata District, Kochi, across the village. The “Towa-son women’s network” established in the same year started selling vegetables after having an invitation from Sunday market in Kochi City. The products received an excellent reputation and directly sold at supermarkets in Kochi City later. “Shimanto Drama” played a key role in selling the products at supermarkets in Kochi City, such as selling system development and sales activities, etc.

Against this background, “Towa-son management council for local production for local consumption,” also called “Towa Okamisan Ichi,” was established in 2001. “Towa Okamisan Ichi” was composed of members of a community group in consideration of the past activities of women’s groups, such as life improvement, processing and direct sales, etc. Former Towa municipal government, agricultural cooperative, and “Shimanto Drama” were added as members to start activities with 208 members from 31 groups. The agricultural cooperative was in charge of spreading technology and technical assistance and “Shimanto Drama” was in charge of marketing support.

After its establishment, “Towa Okamisan Ichi” directly sold locally grown vegetables and produced/developed processed agricultural products with the support of the municipal government and agricultural cooperative. At the time of its establishment,

women's economic independence and their sense of satisfaction were the purposes of "Towa Okamisan Ichi." However, the members felt that what they generated through their activities would be helpful for the revitalization of the region. Their understanding on the characteristics of their activities and regional uniqueness led to the identification of regional resources including themselves.

## (2) Total design and total production

### ● Product development through total design for maximizing regional resources

"Shimanto Drama" calls itself a "local trading company." This means that it is a company that "thinks about the region and develops and sells regional specialties with community residents." What the company places importance on is that it does not just deliver regional resources to markets as raw materials, but is in charge of all processes from processing to sales of the resources. It has realized a sixth industry while revitalizing the primary industry. Development processes of three products that embody the company's concept are introduced below.

#### <Shimanto *hinoki* bath>

"Shimanto *hinoki* bath" is the first product developed by "Shimanto Drama." The remainder of *hinoki* cypress is used to form a square (10 cm on a side) and *hinoki* cypress aroma oil is applied on it. In Shimanto Region, a forestry region, lumber companies produce alcove posts made of *hinoki* cypress. The product reuses the remainder generated during the production process of alcove posts. The product focuses on the value of *hinoki* cypress from a unique perspective, which became one of the reasons why it has attracted attention.



"Shimanto hinoki bath"  
(Source: Website of Kaiyasu.net KAERU)

The product was also used by Shikoku Bank as a gift for its campaign activities for 40,000 customers, which boosted the popularity of the product. It is said that the economic effect on the region caused by the product was estimated to be approx. 200 million yen. The product generated trust in "Shimanto Drama" as an enterprise as well as disseminated the image of Shimanto basin as a forestry region and increased its name recognition.

#### <Bottled Shimanto tea>

Shimanto basin is one of the major production areas of tea leaves and was the first to produce black tea in Japan. However, the tea leaves were delivered to agricultural

cooperatives and sold as raw materials of Shizuoka tea. Bottled Shimanto tea was made with the strong desire of producers to sell their own tea products. They repurchased tea leaves after delivering them to agricultural cooperatives where they were processed, and the production association made and commercialized bottled tea. Bottled Shimanto tea has been sold by “Shimanto Drama” since 2002.



A popular product “Shimanto tea RED”

The product has been sold online and in vending machines of a major beverage manufacturer placed at roadside stations. Through these efforts, sales of the bottled Shimanto tea of the production association increased about twentyfold compared with those before commercialization. As shown in the advertising slogan “unknown tea producer” on the label of the bottle, Shimanto basin had not been recognized as a tea producer even in the region, but its name recognition was increased through the product. This has increased producers’ awareness and motivations and contributed to the development of the tea industry.

#### <Shimanto chestnuts>

Shimanto Region used to be one of the leading producers of chestnuts with a production volume of 800 tons a year. However, the production volume declined to 18 tons a year in 2000s because inexpensive chestnuts were imported, and chestnut production became unprofitable. Shimanto chestnuts can be differentiated from those produced in other regions as their size is large and they have a high sugar content, but they were sold in markets only through agricultural cooperatives until recently. Therefore, they were traded in the same manner as those produced in other regions and their characteristics were not appropriately reflected in their prices.

Communities in a mountainous area along the river had many small factories that were used for the processing of *shiitake* mushrooms, *miso* (bean paste) and *miso tofu* (bean curd). These factories had facilities for processing raw materials for the manufacturing industry. They were insufficient for full-scale manufacturing but could peel chestnuts and make chestnut paste, etc.





Chestnuts preserved in syrup produced through the revival of local chestnut production  
(Photograph: taken by Hiromi Kanamaru)



An attractive label on to a product using irregular chestnuts  
(Photograph: taken by Hiromi Kanamaru)

By combining these conditions, the chestnuts were not just sold in markets as raw materials but were processed into chestnuts preserved in syrup and chestnut paste, which enabled the development of products unique to the region and joint development with a confectionery company. Activities geared toward producing raw materials as well as commercialization led to the branding of Shimanto chestnuts and enabled trading of the chestnuts at a higher unit price.

A big feature of the product development by “Shimanto Drama” is that it is engaged in all processes including production, processing and marketing. Various relevant persons, such as persons in charge of processing, food coordinators and pastry chefs, etc., are involved in the product development over a year to examine the processes including product planning and sales. The person who takes the initiative in these processes is the designer. The designer not only designs product packaging and posters, but also designs all processes including processing and sales methods, based on the characteristics of raw materials and the situation of production sites, while maximizing the value of regional resources.

“Shimanto Drama” has a contract with two external designers according to the product. One is Mr. Makoto Umebara who used to live in Shimanto Region. Mr. Azechi met him before he became an employee of “Shimanto Drama” and received advice that community residents should recognize their regional value and place importance on the value. Mr. Umebara has designed the basic concept of “Shimanto Drama” and packaging of its *hinoki* cypress, tea and chestnut products. The other is Mr. Tsukasa Sakoda who moved to and lives in Shimanto City (former Nishitosa-mura). Mr. Sakoda has designed products sold at roadside stations. Both the designers have created design that maximizes the value of the Shimanto Region as they thoroughly understand and empathize with the value.



- Total production under the philosophy of “Manufacturing without placing a burden on Shimanto River” (Total production by “Shimanto Drama”)

Under the basic philosophy of “Manufacturing without placing a burden on Shimanto River,” “Shimanto Drama” has also developed environmentally friendly products. Of the products, “Shimanto newspaper bag” is the ultimate, representative product. “Shimanto newspaper bag” is an environmentally friendly handbag that uses old newspapers and was developed in 2002 by a housewife living in Shimanto-cho who helped “Shimanto Drama.” A combination of the idea “Do not waste” and “origami (paper folding)” is the basis of this product. Only local newspapers with articles of the region are used as the material of the bag. In addition to finished products, “instructions on how to make a newspaper bag” is also sold at a price of 1,000 yen. A bag using old newspapers has changed into a thousand yen's worth of product. A part of the sales is used for forest preservation. A balance between community development and the conservation of the local natural environment has been achieved through the product.



“Shimanto newspaper bag”

In addition, through collaboration with local governments and travel agencies, “Shimanto Drama” has implemented “Shimanto Matatabi project” as an initiative for sustainable use of regional resources of Shimanto River. In the project, residents in Shimanto Region will become a guide to introduce the nature of Shimanto River and experience in regional industries. The project has expanded its activities to implement training and human resource development projects, such as nature school and training on how to create industries in hilly and mountainous areas, etc.

Furthermore, in order to deliver the richness of Shimanto Region inside and outside the region from a self-sustaining perspective, “Shimanto Drama” established “RIVER,” a membership system two years after the establishment of the company. The concept of the system is “Thinking about the richness of Shimanto River from the standpoint of an individual person depending on where he/she lives, an urban area or a rural area.” “RIVER” has become a non-profit organization with approx. 300 registered members inside and outside the region (annual fee: 3,000 yen). It has published an information magazine three times a year.

As described above, “Shimanto Drama” has comprehensively produced the entire region by implementing various projects for sustaining the regional value.

● Various efforts towards regional revitalization through economic independence (Total production by “Towa Okamisan Ichi”)

Around the same time, “Towa Okamisan Ichi” carried out activities mainly at “Towa Kitchen,” a farmer’s market in Towa-son, and “Odekake Kitchen” in Kochi City towards economic independence. Through communication with women who run shops in Kochi City, members of “Towa Okamisan Ichi” realized their roles as “mountain wives” who manage to live and farm in mountainous areas, and had confidence and pride in their roles.

With an increase in their awareness, “Towa Okamisan Ichi” was certified according to ISO 14001 in 2003 as an organization directly selling agricultural products. Although some elderly members shied away from efforts for obtaining the ISO as the word “ISO” was unfamiliar to them, the certification could be obtained thanks to enthusiastic guidance to each member group by a former promoter who was involved in “Towa Okamisan Ichi” as a farming instructor in Towa-son. After obtaining the ISO, all the members (approx. 200 people) wrote down details of agricultural work, which enabled farming techniques to be standardized. They have become conscious of agricultural chemicals and fertilizers that they had used unconsciously.

In 2005, it started “Omotenashi Tour,” an event to invite consumers in Kochi City to the village and treat them with local home cooking. The basis of the event was “Let’s meet in Towa,” a project to invite consumers in urban areas to Towa-son and treat them with local dishes. Through this project, relevant persons in the village recognized that food cooked by female residents can play a significantly large role in community development. At the same time, “Towa-son Arumono Sagashi,” an urban-rural exchange project, was implemented on a community basis. Through the project, residents became conscious of the uniqueness of a community more than ever. They held experience events (picking tea leaves and chestnuts, etc.) and created unique menus according to the characteristics of a community. For example, a community having rice paddies held an event to eat various rice balls and to make rice cakes, while one producing *shiitake* mushrooms cooked “seared *shiitake* mushrooms.” These events and menus led to the realization of “Omotenashi Tour” implemented on a community basis.

After the establishment of “Shimanto Towa” roadside station in 2007, it started providing a buffet service once a week there. This service increased opportunities to directly meet visitors who liked food of “Towa Okamisan Ichi.” The service won a national award twice.

“Towa Okamisan Ichi” has also proactively implemented a project promoting local



Buffet service provided once a week  
(Photograph: taken by Hiromi Kanamaru)

production for local consumption in school meals aimed at dietary education. At first, it asked the board of education for cooperation, but it was ignored as it was difficult to use local vegetables for school meals due to their strict standards and management. However, through discussions with the principal and proactive opinion exchange with school dietitians and cooks, it started delivery of seasonal ingredients in small quantities. Some members said that the project did not become profitable, but they continued the project as they wanted to have their grandchildren eat the delicious *shiitake* mushrooms they produced. As the project continued, vegetables of “Towa Okamisan Ichi” were introduced over the school broadcasting system during lunch time. Currently, it has carried out activities to grow local traditional vegetables in the school grounds together with students. Dietary education has been introduced in the school, and projects and activities of “Towa Okamisan Ichi” have spread to other schools in the prefecture.

The purposes of “Towa Okamisan Ichi” at the time of its establishment were women’s economic independence and their sense of satisfaction, but the members felt that what they generated through their projects would be helpful for the revitalization of the region. Through their resources and activities carried out within their capabilities, and by having relationships with various actors including women in Kochi City, tourists and schools, they have widely shared their value and realized “Manufacturing without placing a burden on Shimanto River.”

### (3) Cooperative management of regional resources

#### ● Changing “Shimanto Drama” and “Towa Okamisan Ichi” into resident corporations

Each of the three municipalities that invested in “Shimanto Drama” merged with a city and a town. In 2005, Nishitosa-mura, one of the three municipalities and Nakamura City merged into Shimanto City. In 2006, Towa-son and Taisho-cho, the remaining municipalities, and Kubokawa-cho merged into Shimanto-cho. After the amalgamation, “Shimanto Drama” repurchased its shares owned by the municipalities and had 202 residents purchase the shares to completely privatize the company. Residents inside and outside the region who empathized with the regional value and were motivated to participate in the management of the company purchased the shares and took specific actions. One of the residents said, “The investment I made is for the region and Shimanto Drama that is making efforts for the region. I am looking forward to its initiatives and am always inspired by its activities.”<sup>14</sup> Investments in “Shimanto Drama” were mainly made by residents who would like to support the company and empathize with its values.

Positioning sale of goods, interactions, and product development as its core business,

<sup>14</sup> Extracted from the answers by investors of Shimanto Drama provided in “Regeneration of agricultural and mountainous villages through social business connecting rural and urban areas” Nishiyama (2015) (refer to p.115 “4-5 Reference materials”)

“Shimanto Drama” has been engaged in business management and product development of “Shimanto Towa roadside station” established in 2007, sold products at department stores and co-op stores, and provided products to be sent to taxpayers in return for their tax payments. The sales of “Shimanto Drama” increased to 780 million yen in FY 2016, including approx. 400 million yen from sales outside the region, from approx. 10 million yen at the time of establishment.

In 2015, the company voluntarily collected products sold at a major department store due to a defect. Although it conducted thorough product management, it keenly felt the insufficiency of regional safety standards and the necessity to work on quality control in order to sell its products nationwide and worldwide. It has currently conducted voluntary inspection of all products. Including these efforts, “Shimanto Drama” is continuously taking on challenges towards independent management as a resident corporation invested by community residents.

On the other hand, the sales amount of “Towa Okamisan Ichi,” which was 50 million yen at the peak, gradually declined due to the aging of its members and the amalgamation with Shimanto-cho in 2006 that caused the closure of a farmer’s market near the municipal government office and made it difficult to obtain sufficient support from the municipal government.

In order to overcome the situation, “Towa Okamisan Ichi” held workshops about five times a year to have regular discussions on the possibility of various organizational forms. As a result of the workshops and with reference to organizations becoming a stock company such as “Shimanto Drama,” it decided to become a stock company in 2011. When the organization announced that it would recruit shareholders from the public, there were over 100 applicants apart from its members, including not only community residents, but also people who saw newspaper reports/posters in shops along with its longtime repeaters. At the time it became a stock company, personnel expenses were covered by interest-free loans by Japan Finance Corporation, but the company increased its investors to 137 in 2013 and has been managed without administrative support. The company’s business has been the black since 2016.

In addition to its original business, “Towa Okamisan Ichi Co., Ltd.” has demonstrated and sold its products at “Okamisan Market” established in “Shimanto Towa roadside station” and local supermarkets since 2012. “Shimanto Drama” has fully supported the business management of “Towa Okamisan Ichi” through the buffet service of local dishes at the restaurant of the roadside station and direct sales of delivered vegetables at “Okamisan Market.”

#### ● Utilization of external human resources and development of young personnel

“Shimanto Drama” currently has approx. 30 employees. Most of the employees come

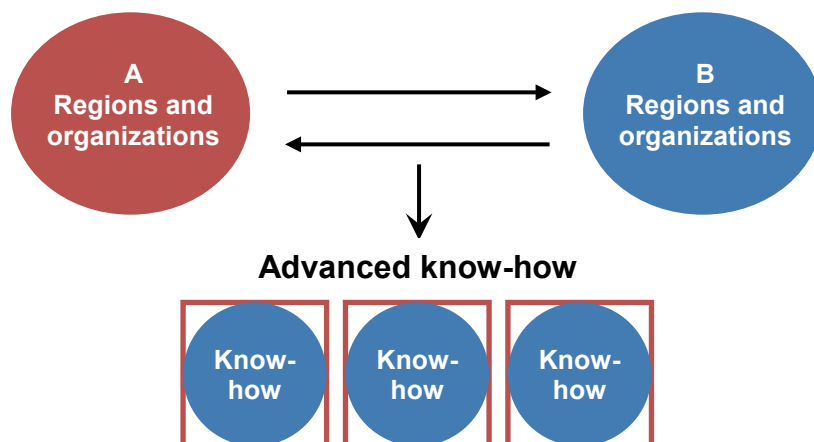
from Shimanto Region. The company has become one of the workplaces in Towa District where young people can work stably as it proactively hires regional young personnel as regular employees. Employees from the region are very honest but are not aggressive and are not full of professional ideas as they have not worked in other regions or less experience of being in a stimulating environment. Based on such recognition, “Shimanto Drama” has accepted young personnel from inside and outside the prefecture through an internship program and trained them by using the know-how obtained in the region. For example, “Ochakuri Cafe,” established in the roadside station in 2014, employs a pastry chef who worked at a confectionery company in Tokyo and moved to the Shimanto Region for the development of new products (local chestnut cake, etc.) and manufacturing direction. The company has also accepted a young person who worked at a major game development company as an intern and considered hiring him as a regular employee to increase online sales. Currently, it has only five employees who are from other prefectures, but has proactively worked on the discovery and recruitment of more personnel from other prefectures in order to strengthen fields and operations that are difficult to handle with only employees from the prefecture.

With the business expansion of “Shimanto Drama,” various spin-off companies have been established in Towa District, such as “Inaka Pipe” that offers internship programs and promotes settlement and employment, “Kirishima Farm” that produces chemical-free organic vegetables, “Kuri-no-Nariwai Laboratory” that cultivates and produces Shimanto chestnuts, and “Kappa Backpackers” that runs a backpacker guest house. These new local companies have been established by people who moved to and live in the region through meeting and developing a relationship with “Shimanto Drama.” It is expected that the rapid population decline and aging population, which are issues of Shimanto-cho, are curbed to a certain extent as young people have moved to Towa District through these companies.

Since its establishment, “Shimanto Drama” has to date focused on the development of local products and the development of sales channels for the products. However, it has not worked on full-scale contribution to community residents’ lives. As its main businesses, such as management of the roadside station and sales at shops outside the region, etc., have been stable, “Shimanto Drama” entered into a consignment contract with a local milk company to strengthen services for community residents, and started a project to have its employees deliver milk twice a week to 240 houses in Towa District. It is hoped that the employees will be able to help elderly people who have difficulty going shopping and check the safety of elderly persons living alone by visiting them on a regular basis. The project has become an opportunity to train young employees of “Shimanto Drama,” as they can learn about the region and find regional issues and ideas for solving the issues by visiting and having face-to-face communication with community residents. “Shimanto Drama” has supported the lives of community residents through its profit from sales of local products and at the same time trained young personnel through direct communication with the residents.

- **Network among regions and organizations to generate advanced know-how**

“Shimanto Drama” tries to generate advanced know-how by proactively collaborating with regions and organizations having know-how in various fields and learning the know-how from each other.



Source: Company overview of Shimanto Drama “Drama’s drama”

Collaboration among regions and organizations with excellent know-how will complement their weaknesses as well as make them realize various possibilities and produce better outcomes. In addition, existing know-how of a region or organization will be improved from a different perspective by learning other regions’ and organizations’ know-how. The following are activities for generating advanced know-how carried out in Shimanto Region.

#### **<Kamikatsu-cho, Tokushima + Towa District, Shimanto-cho, Kochi>**

“Shimanto Drama” has devised the “experience-type training system” by combining the “training know-how” of Irodori Co., Ltd. in Kamikatsu-cho, Tokushima and the “experience-type sightseeing know-how” of Shimanto-cho. The system considers training participants as “tourists,” and the participants learn about the region through a sightseeing tour. It has a short-term course, half-day course and two-day course.

#### **<Ena City, Gifu + Towa District, Shimanto-cho, Kochi>**

The company has also launched the “Local chestnut revival project” in the middle basin of Shimanto River by combining the “know-how for creating a brand of premium chestnuts” of Enakawakamiya in Ena City, Gifu, and the “product development know-how” of “Shimanto Drama,” Shimanto-cho, Kochi. The project has been

implemented in the middle basin of Shimanto River with the aim of preserving landscape through the regeneration of abandoned chestnut farms and increasing production of and adding value to chestnuts through the establishment of know-how on pruning technique and quality management.

In order to make these combinations more effective, the “Ashimoto Ippin Kaigi project” was launched in 2013 under the initiative of Mr. Azechi, the president of “Shimanto Drama,” with the aim of connecting regional producers and sellers. Producers, distributors and supporting companies that are active on the front lines meet in Tokyo once a month to try to develop collaborative products of the members of the “Ashimoto Ippin Kaigi project.” They have produced the “Kaori rice cracker” by combining the “know-how on rice cracker manufacturing” of Yamako Senbei Honpo (Soka City, Saitama) and “Kaori rice” of Shimanto-cho.

As described above, “Shimanto Drama” has realized a “know-how alliance” to generate advanced “know-how” by delivering “know-how” obtained from the region, community residents and their ideas, and by proactively introducing “know-how” of other regions.

- **Structure for strengthening collaboration among regional actors shown in the “Association for future Towa”**

In FY 2014, a new organization, the “Association for future Towa,” also called “Towa Summit,” was established for supporting regional actors that share the value of regional resources. Under the initiative of Mr. Kiyoharu Yamamoto, the president of Shimanto Shinichiji Sangyo Co., Ltd, Mr. Hisao Okamine, the representative of Hiroi Tea Production Association, and Mr. Risho Azechi, the president of Shimanto Drama, Towa Summit was launched for strengthening collaboration among regional entrepreneurs in Towa District. As an organization formed to think about the future of the region, Towa Summit is held once a month with the participation of employees of “Shimanto Drama,” “Towa Okamisan Ichi,” “Shimanto Shinichiji Sangyo,” “Hiroi Tea Production Association,” “Towa Morito,” “Inaka Pipe,” agricultural cooperatives, Kochi prefecture and Shimanto-cho. The members discuss industrial issues of Towa District and the future of the district while sharing their visions for the future.

In the first year, they discussed the current situation and issues of the entities and solutions for the issues, which clarified that their common challenges were to increase the sales of the primary industry and secure human resources to be engaged in and take over their businesses. Through discussions during the year, the following items were identified as the goals of the region and the “Association for future Towa”:

- ✓ Protect the environment and landscape maintained by the primary industry and residents’ lives; and
- ✓ To do so, create a structure to inherit the primary industry in the region.



In FY 2015, the “Association for future Towa” decided to create a structure to inherit regional industries by using a “community development volunteers” system looking three years into the future. Before recruiting members of the “community development volunteer” system, the purpose of the structure, the mission of the supporters, the vision three years into the future, the activity goal of the year based on the vision, and the career plan of the supporters three years into the future were determined. To realize the aforementioned points that were determined, participating entities of the association decided to create a corporation in the next three years through a collaboration among them. It is planned that people to be hired by the corporation are those who carried out activities as a member of the “community development volunteer” system for three years. Employees of the corporation are expected to become “rural business managers” to be engaged in the creation of the structure to inherit the primary industry, such as management improvement and support for start-ups, etc. Apart from their role as “rural business managers,” supporters will be engaged in the agricultural and forestry industries as a person engaged in the primary industry or involved in business development of a collaborative entity as its employee. A guidance system on their career plan has been examined.

As described above, regional entrepreneurs carrying out community-based activities, such as “Shimanto Drama” and “Towa Okamisan Ichi,” etc., have worked towards revitalization of the entire region. They have built a horizontal network called the “Association for future Towa” through collaboration with government and agricultural cooperatives and developed human resources, including those introduced from outside the region, for solving regional issues.




 Introduction of  
a key person

### “Realization of potential regional value” — Risho Azechi, Representative of Shimanto Drama, a model of the regeneration of agricultural, mountainous and fishing villages

Mr. Risho Azechi, the representative of “Shimanto Drama,” is a tough, polite person and was an ace pitcher in high school. In 1990, he met Mr. Makoto Umebara, a designer living in Towa-son at that time, at a community development meeting. Mr. Azechi was 26 years old and moved back to Towa-son, his hometown, to work at Tokawa Agricultural Cooperative. The current “Shimanto Drama” would not exist without Mr. Azechi’s meeting with Mr. Umebara. Mr. Azechi thought that Mr. Umebara had a different aura from other residents and visited Umebara Design Office located beside Shimanto River. He asked for advice from Mr. Umebara on how to revitalize the region and received a stern reply: “Community residents including you do not place importance on their region at all.” Through the conversation with Mr. Umebara, he realized that community residents had no understanding of the value of Shimanto River, mountains and other regional resources, although they most certainly should. Since their meeting, the basis of “Manufacturing without placing a burden on Shimanto River,” the identity of “Shimanto Drama,” was being established.

Mr. Umebara’s powerful personality inspired Mr. Azechi to take positive action. After resigning from a local tea leaf production association, Mr. Azechi applied for employment with “Shimanto Drama,” established in 1994 as a third sector company, and was hired as the only regular employee from among 40 applicants. After the amalgamation of Nishitosa-cho, which invested in “Shimanto Drama,” with Shimanto City in 2005, “Shimanto Drama” had residents repurchase its shares owned by the municipalities. Since then, it has stably and independently managed the company as a resident corporation.

“Shimanto Drama” has accepted various programs for the development of regional leaders, including internship programs and programs to promote settlement and employment by “Inaka Pipe” and the “Hometown producer development support program” by the Small and Medium Enterprise Agency, etc. The company is making efforts to develop future generations to play a central role in the regeneration of agricultural, mountainous and fishing villages. For example, it has developed regional leaders on a nationwide basis by using its know-how and introduced external young personnel for the future of Towa District through the “Association for future Towa.” These efforts will lead to the development of a next-generation “Risho Azechi.” It can be said that a “drama” featuring Mr. Azechi and created by “Shimanto Drama” is a model for the regeneration of agricultural, mountainous and fishing villages.

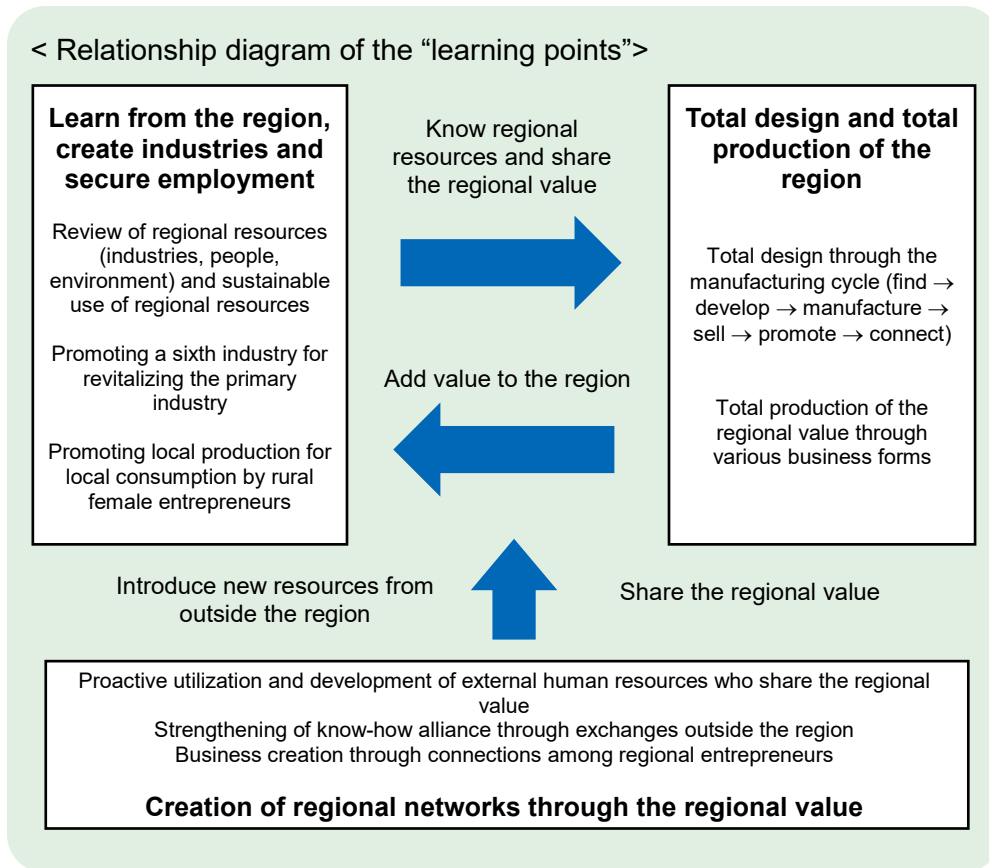
### **4-3. Learning points**

The basic theme of this case is total production of the regional value. The town reviewed its regional resources, delivered and shared the resources inside and outside the region, and combined business development using regional resources and activities for protecting the resources through collaboration and cooperation with community residents, regional designers, consumers inside and outside the region, and enterprises and organizations outside the region.

Efforts were made to realize a sixth industry while revitalizing the primary industry by discovering and using regional resources (industries, people and environment), and in addition to promote local production for local consumption through women's empowerment. It is very useful to learn these efforts.

By having the consistent business philosophy of "Manufacturing without placing a burden on Shimanto River," the town gave its products a story, pursued total design from the identification of raw materials, design, production, sales and packaging of products, and increased the regional value. It also embodied total production to create various business forms through collaboration and cooperation with persons and organizations inside and outside the region.

The town added value to regional resources through the proactive utilization of external human resources who can share the regional value. At the same time, it created new businesses combining know-how inside and outside the region by connecting regional entrepreneurs who agree with the regional value.



### (1) Learn from the region, create industries and secure employment

- **Review of regional resources (industries, people, environment) and sustainable use of regional resources**
- Since the establishment of “Shimanto Drama,” Mr. Azechi, the representative, has reviewed value through investigating regional resources and created industries using the value. He reviewed regional materials nurtured by Shimanto River (tea, Japanese black tea, local chestnuts and *hinoki* cypress, etc.); people who have played a central role in industries and lives that traditionally use the materials; and the environmental conservation concept of “Manufacturing without placing a burden on Shimanto River,” which may be common values inside and outside the region. His efforts led to ideas of hit products and sustainable use of regional resources. Developing countries could learn from the idea to review the value of regional resources by investigating, finding and using the resources for protecting the resources.

- **Promoting a sixth industry for revitalizing the primary industry**

- “Shimanto Drama” could change regional materials (Shimanto chestnuts) into a new product having higher economic value not by just shipping them, but by processing them locally. This method promoted the realization of a sixth industry, comprehensively looking at production, processing and sales. What is unique in this method is that the method gives first priority to production improvement and strengthening and is examined on the assumption of maintaining the management of people engaged in the primary industry. This idea is also useful for developing countries.

- **Promoting local production for local consumption by rural female entrepreneurs**

- In the case of “Towa Okamisan Ichi,” the members realized that their activities played a certain role in regional revitalization by being engaged in various projects through interactions with external persons and organizations and being recognized for their efforts toward local production for local consumption inside and outside the region. Their experience led to the introduction of local production for local consumption in school meals aimed at dietary education, and the management of “Towa Restaurant” established at “Towa” roadside station that uses local vegetables and products and applies its original rules. Through this process, women’s empowerment was strengthened. The members used to be supporting players in farm management, but have become central players in regional brand management in Towa District. Groups of community residents in developing countries could learn from the process of initiating activities and finding something through interactions with other actors that can share the common value.

## **(2) Total design and total production of the region**

- **Total design through the manufacturing cycle (find → develop → manufacture → sell → promote → connect)**

- The main feature of the case of “Shimanto Drama” is the creation of the entire image (total design) of the manufacturing process, including the identification of raw materials, development, production, packaging and sales of products, by maximizing the value of regional resources (materials, people and environment). In the past, producers did not know the retail prices of their products as the prices were determined by retailers and distributors. Accordingly, product sales declined when they faced competition from less expensive products and lost price competitiveness. “Shimanto Drama” is engaged in processing as much as it can, determines product prices and sells products by itself. Therefore, they can determine customer needs and improve products by satisfying those needs. It is useful for developing countries to think about comprehensive product development combining resources and value

unique to the region (entrance) and market needs (exit).

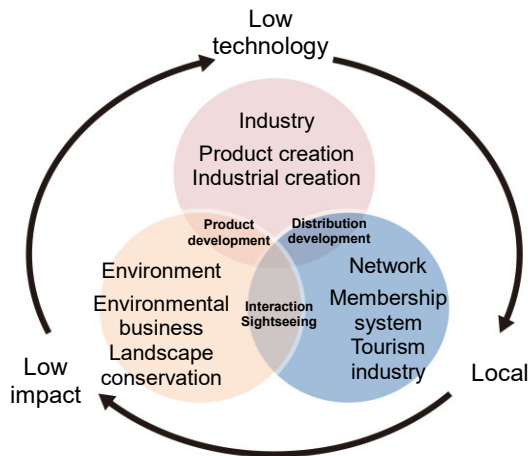
- **Total production of the regional value through various business forms**
- Under the philosophy of “Manufacturing without placing a burden on Shimanto River,” “Shimanto Drama” has developed its business by having the following three pillars relate to one another:

**Local:** Build a network to think about the region’s richness and ways of living, positioning Shimanto River as a shared asset.

**Low technology:** Focus on the primary industry and advancement of the primary industry by using engineers engaged in agricultural, forestry and fisheries industries and their knowledge.

**Low impact:** Create a structure to conserve and utilize landscape without placing a burden on Shimanto River.

By applying the three pillars above to a cycle of “industry ⇒ network ⇒ environment,” the company has created social business unique to the Shimanto Region through various business forms including: local industries using regional resources developed by the natural environment of Shimanto River basin (*hinoki* cypress, tea and local chestnuts), businesses created through collaboration and cooperation with persons and organizations inside and outside the region (Inaka Pipe and local chestnut revival project), and environmental conservation projects realized by sharing the value of regional resources with persons and organizations inside and outside the region (Shimanto newspaper bag and RIVER). These businesses have realized independent, sustainable regional revitalization of Towa District, Shimanto-cho.



Source: Company overview of Shimanto Drama "Drama's drama"

- As with "Shimanto Drama," "Towa Okamisan Ichi" has produced the region with the cycle of "Industry (vegetable production and processing, local production for local consumption, Towa Restaurant)" ⇒ "Network (Omotenashi Market, Omotenashi Tour)" ⇒ "Environment (acquisition of ISO 14001, environmentally friendly vegetable production)," under the concept of "Local, low technology and low impact."
- Developing countries have much to learn from the idea of comprehensively producing the region by achieving a balance between economic development and environmental conservation and deepening and promoting activities through the building of a network, based on the regional value common to the two cases above.

### (3) Creation of regional networks through the regional value

- **Proactive utilization and development of external human resources who share the regional value**
- Shimanto-cho has created various forms of businesses (experience-type training system and local chestnut revival project) that contribute to the resolution of regional issues by using internal and external human resources (industrial designers and female entrepreneurs, etc.) who can share regional values. Through the development of these businesses, the town clarified an image of the human resources necessary for the region in the future and goals of human resource development. Based on this, activities to connect external human resources (RIVER and Omotenashi Market) and develop external human resources (Inaka Pipe) have been carried out. Developing countries could learn from efforts to effectively use external human resources who can share the regional value and add value and to develop such human resources looking to the future of the region.

- **Business creation through connections among regional entrepreneurs**
  - In the efforts of the “Association for the future Towa,” regional entrepreneurs that carry out community-based activities, including “Shimanto Drama” and “Towa Okamisan Ichi,” have functioned as a horizontal network through collaboration with local governments and agricultural cooperatives. They found common issues in the region and developed and implemented action plans and implementation systems for the plans. This led to the creation of a new business. Building a network system across public and private sectors in the region and carrying out activities for solving regional issues are very useful for developing countries.
- **Strengthening of a know-how alliance through exchanges outside the region**
  - In the “Ashimoto Ippin Kaigi project” launched by “Shimanto Drama,” producers, distributors and supporting companies that share the value in maximizing regional resources gather to implement cooperative projects. They exchange products and business ideas to conduct transactions with each other. Some products have been actually developed through collaboration among them. The project led to the strengthening of a “know-how alliance” to build a win-win relationship between project members and the region using and protecting regional resources that cannot be found in urban areas while sharing value with one another. Developing countries could consider trying to build a horizontal network among regional actors sharing the same value, share experience and issues with one another, and sometimes implement joint projects and activities.

#### **4-4. Considerations in applying the case to developing countries**

##### **(1) Considerations in applying the case**

**Contact:** Shimanto Drama and Towa Okamisan Ichi

##### **[Example of application to training]**

Training theme	Expected training participants	Training contents
Strengthening of local industries using regional resources	Officials of ministries/agencies and local governments in relevant sectors, regional enterprises and representative residents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review of resources ⇒ Establishment of the product philosophy ⇒ Total design and development of products through delivery, sharing the philosophy and sales</li> <li>• Structure of regional cooperation for revitalizing the primary industry in agricultural, mountainous and fishing villages and advancement of the primary processing and strengthening sales by producers</li> </ul>
Strengthening of regional	Officials of ministries/agencies and	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Total production of the region through a cycle of “environment, industry and network” under the concept</li> </ul>

development management capacity for maximizing and sustaining regional resources	local governments in relevant sectors, regional enterprises and representative residents	of “Local, low technology and low impact” and the combination of various businesses <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Efforts to build a network among internal and external actors, share experience and issues, and implement joint projects and activities (e.g. “Association for future Towa” and “Ashimoto Ippin Kaigi”)</li> </ul>
Promoting local production for local consumption and life improvement by women’s groups in agricultural, mountainous and fishing villages and strengthening of women’s empowerment	Officials of ministries/agencies and local governments in relevant sectors and representatives of women’s groups in agricultural, mountainous and fishing villages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Basic approach to life improvement (improvement requiring money/no money and creating money), dietary education learned from domestic activities to introduce local production for local consumption in school meals, and efforts to develop residents’ pride in the region</li> <li>• Change in the consciousness of female residents so that they can realize their roles and value in the region, know-how toward female independence, and utilizing female workforce for regional revitalization (intended for officials of ministries/agencies and local governments in relevant sectors for learning environmental improvement and know-how for utilizing female workforce)</li> </ul>

### [Considerations in applying the case]

- “Shimanto Drama” accepted JICA training for the first time in November 2011, giving lectures at the youth leader training in JICA Shikoku (Rural development course for the Philippines: entrusted to OISCA Shikoku). Since then, the company has regularly accepted training programs of JICA Shikoku. Therefore, it is desirable to ask JICA Shikoku beforehand for the arrangement of and cooperation with training.
- “Shimanto Drama” owns its unique human resource development contents, such as the “experience-type training system,” etc., which introduces the hometown producer development support program of the Small and Medium Enterprise Agency and the training know-how of Irodori Co., Ltd. in Kamikatsu-cho, Tokushima. In planning human resource development training for developing countries, the use of these contents should be considered.
- “Towa Okamisan Ichi” has not accepted JICA projects but is interested in having a relationship with developing countries since it had an opportunity to share its experience in the Socialist Republic of Vietnam in 2017 through an international NGO. Therefore, it is desirable to visit the company and have a meeting to clarify which efforts will be applied to developing countries and to explain procedures/expenses for implementing a project.
- Before applying the case, it is desirable to contact “Shimanto Drama,” “Towa Okamisan Ichi,” and an international cooperation promoter of JICA Shikoku or Kochi prefecture to collect application results and share considerations in applying the case with them.



## (2) Examination of the possibility to build a win-win relationship

- Creating an opportunity to introduce general information about the participants' country as well as efforts for the regeneration of agricultural and mountainous villages made in the country under geographically disadvantaged conditions may allow an accepting organization to learn about the country and motivate it to learn diverse values.
- It is important for training participants from developing countries not to learn in a unilateral way but to ask themselves questions about benefits of the “review of regional resources (people, materials and environment),” “product development through total design,” “creation of various businesses through total production of the region,” “utilization and development of external human resources,” and “strengthening of a know-how alliance through interactions with external persons and organizations” as well as have an opportunity to give feedback to “Shimanto Drama” and “Towa Okamisan Ichi” about issues of the current efforts. This allows an accepting organization to re-evaluate its efforts and regional attractiveness from an external perspective, which may lead to increased motivation and rediscovery.
- “Shimanto Drama” and “Towa Okamisan Ichi” plan to proactively use the “community development volunteer” system. If persons who carried out activities in the past as Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers go to the region as members of the “community development volunteer” system and share their experience obtained in overseas countries, activities for solving regional issues may be launched. At the same time, persons to be dispatched as Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers may carry out activities as members of the “community development volunteer” system before dispatch and contribute to a developing country after dispatch. Like this, a win-win relationship can be built through human resources of JICA projects.
- Sending information overseas through training participants may become an opportunity to develop sales channels of regional products in developing countries in the future.

## 5. Hakusan City, Kanazawa City, Komatsu City, and Noto Region (Bussi-en), Ishikanwa

**Regional revitalization through the realization of “Gochamaze Shakai (mixed society)” by elderly persons, persons with disabilities and community residents**

“Bussi-en” has regarded facilities for persons with disabilities and elderly persons as social welfare facilities as well as the core of community revitalization. Residents, persons with disabilities and elderly persons in the region have worked together to create a new community business model. It has embodied “Gochamaze Shakai (mixed society)” where interactions with persons with disabilities and elderly persons promote community development.

### 5-1. Outline of the region

#### (1) Outline of the target area

##### “Bussi-en”

Social welfare corporation “Bussi-en” was established in Hakusan City, Ishikawa, in 1960 as residential facilities for children with intellectual disabilities. Before its establishment, the grandfather of Mr. Ryosei Oya (refer to p.142 “Introduction of a key person”), the current president of “Bussi-en,” was the chief priest of Gyozen-ji Temple of the Nichiren Sect and took in and raised war orphans while selling religious magazines. At first, he used offerings to the temple as funds for raising the children. However, as the number of children increased, there were limitations on the management of the facilities without authorization. Then, “Bussi-en” was authorized as a social welfare corporation and provided welfare services for children with intellectual disabilities.

#### (2) Background (a stage prior to the provision of social welfare services by “Bussi-en”)

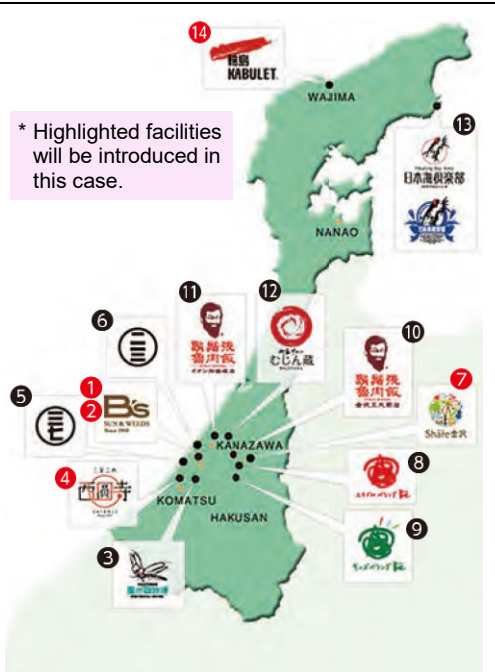
After its establishment, social welfare corporation “Bussi-en” provided support for children’s lives by using a part of the main building of Gyozen-ji Temple. In this environment, Mr. Oya lived and spent a lot of time with children with intellectual disabilities from birth to the age of around 10. He entered the School of Teacher Education, Kanazawa University to learn about the psychology of persons with disabilities. After graduating from the university and teaching for 18 months, he was dispatched to the Dominican Republic in the Caribbean Region, Central America, as a Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteer to become a teacher to train educational

instructors for persons with disabilities. During his time in the Dominican Republic, Mr. Oya saw many scenes where community residents naturally helped each other to support persons with disabilities. He realized that the involvement of residents in welfare for persons with disabilities would expand the framework of education for persons with disabilities. At the same time, although welfare facilities were established in the Dominican Republic, he felt that residents' issues could not be solved just by the establishment of the facilities, and keenly felt the need to change the structure of the entire society. The Dominican Republic does not have an adequate social security system but has the “regional power” to strongly connect residents. On the other hand, Japan has an adequate social security system but its “regional power” is insufficient. He thought that regional revitalization would be realized by combining the system of Japan and the power of the Dominican Republic. After coming back to Japan, he worked at a local newspaper publisher for six years to learn about the community structure and then undertook the business of “Bussi-en.”

Through his experience of living with children with disabilities when he was a child and in seeing scenes where community residents in the Dominican Republic naturally supported persons with disabilities, he came upon the basis of “Gochamaze Shakai (mixed society)” and launched social welfare services with a new framework that applied a community structure and a structure to establish social welfare facilities that he learned when he worked at the newspaper publisher.

<Social welfare facilities and services of “Bussi-en”>

District	Facilities
Headquarters (Hakusan City)	① B's
	② Sanso-nimoku Gyozen-ji Temple
Minamikaga District	③ Hoshigaoka Farm
	④ Sanso-nimoku Saien-ji Temple
Ishikawa Chuo District	⑤ Mikawa 37Work
	⑥ Matto 23Work
Kanazawa District	⑦ Share Kanazawa
	⑧ Able veranda Be
	⑨ Kids veranda Be
	⑩ Higecho Rurohan (in front of Kanazawa Institute of Technology)
	⑪ Higecho Rurohan (in AEON)
	⑫ Machiya Salon Mujinzo
Noto District	⑬ Nihonkai Club
	⑭ Wajima KABULET

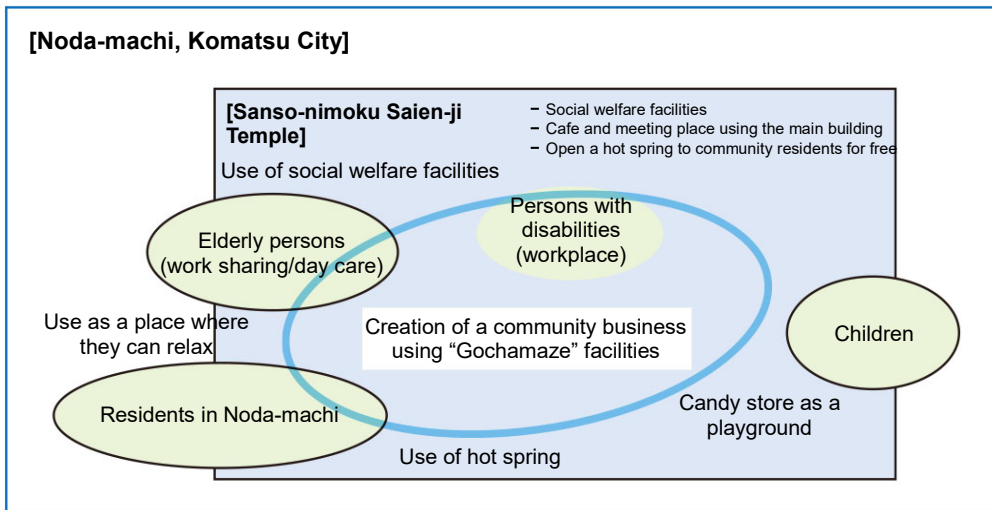


## 5-2. Efforts for regional management

Social welfare services of “Bussi-en” follow the classification of a Japanese-style CCRC (Continuing Care Retirement Community)<sup>15</sup>. There are three types of services: (1) Facility type (Single facility: Sanso-nimoku Saien-ji Temple), (2) Area type (District level: Share Kanazawa), and (3) Town type (Municipal level: B’s/Sanso-nimoku Gyozen-ji Temple, Wajima KABULET). All the types contribute to the integrated provision/use of services by residents of the facilities and residents in the surrounding area as well as regional revitalization through collaboration and cooperation among actors inside and outside the region. The services can be considered as efforts for “regional management.”

### (1) Efforts of “Sanso-nimoku Saien-ji Temple” (efforts for “facility-type” regional management)

“Sanso-nimoku Saien-ji Temple” have made efforts for “regional management” using its “facilities.” The efforts are a practical model for the creation of “Gochamaze” society supported by the entire community.



#### ● Establishment of social welfare facilities using a once-abolished temple with the needs of community residents

“Sanso-nimoku Saien-ji Temple,” located in Noda-machi, Komatsu City, is a

<sup>15</sup> The concept of a Japanese-style CCRC aims to “develop a community where elderly persons in the Tokyo metropolitan area can move to depending on their desires, have a healthy, active life, and continuously receive medical care when necessary.” The meanings of this concept are: (1) Realization of elderly persons’ desires, (2) Promotion of moving to rural areas, and (3) Response to the problem of aging population in the Tokyo metropolitan area. (Expert Committee on the concept of a Japanese-style CCRC) [http://www.kantei.go.jp/jp/singi/sousei/meeting/ccrc/ccrc\\_soan.pdf](http://www.kantei.go.jp/jp/singi/sousei/meeting/ccrc/ccrc_soan.pdf)

once-abolished temple that now houses social welfare facilities. The facilities were established based on a request of supporters of Saien-ji Temple to “Bussi-en” for the reuse of the historic temple after it had been abolished. In accepting the request, “Bussi-en” provided the following conditions to residents, and the residents kindly agreed to the conditions.

- ✓ The temple will become a community center that persons with disabilities and elderly persons can also use.
- ✓ As the temple has been protected by community residents, “Bussi-en” will not operate the temple but the residents will be continuously and voluntarily involved in the operation of the temple.

At the facility planning stage, “Bussi-en” spent a good deal of time getting to understand the needs of community residents by exchanging opinions and holding workshops. After 18 months of preparation, Saien-ji Temple was opened in 2008 as “Sanso-nimoku Saien-ji Temple.” Although it lost its function as a Buddhist temple, the main building was renovated without being destroyed. It would cost less to rebuild the building, but it was renovated at the request of residents. The building has been used as a cafe, meeting place and office. In addition, based on a request by residents, a hot spring was developed and opened for free. The facilities have become a place where elderly persons can relax, and to confirm the safety of elderly persons living alone.

### ● Community business using “Gochamaze” facilities

Many residents use the facilities every day as the facilities have a hot spring and cafe where they can relax and enjoy communication. Through the facilities, residents have more opportunities to interact with persons with disabilities who were employed and receive care services in the facilities. In the past, residents who frequently used the facilities brought and exchanged vegetables they grew, and the vegetables became popular among users. With the growing popularity of the vegetables, they started selling home-grown vegetables and processed products in the facilities, which caused female residents and persons with disabilities to work together to make pickled vegetables (plums and Chinese onions, etc.) and bean paste. In addition, based on the opinions of women who visited the hot spring that their skin condition improved without using toner after they visited the hot spring, female residents developed a toner called “Smooth water from Saru and Kame hot spring” through cooperation with a local



Source: Wave+ (2015), website of Okamura Corporation  
Interview with Ryosei Oya

sake brewery. It blends leftover rice malt used for brewing sake with hot spring water of Saien-ji Temple.

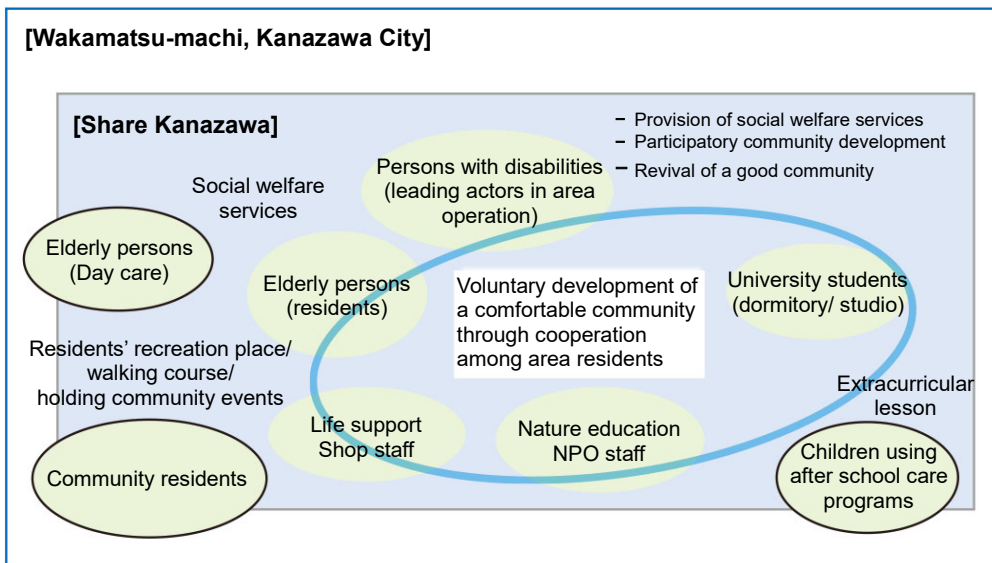
During the development process, female residents in their 50s conducted investigations until late at night. The toner has been sold in Saien-ji Temple as a new product. At the temple, community residents voluntarily have discussions as individual “community producers” to generate new community business. In Noda-machi are the board of management, women’s associations, elderly associations and children’s associations organized according to age group and sex, and each organization has its role and rules. Saien-ji Temple aims to create a “Gochamaze (mixed)” community group in which young residents who have not participated in any organization and residents outside the town can feel free to participate, by horizontally connecting and reorganizing the existing organizations.



“Smooth water from Saru and Kame hot spring”  
Source: Website of Saien-ji Temple

## (2) “Share Kanazawa” (efforts for “area-type” regional management)

As complex facilities open to the region, “Share Kanazawa” has implemented “area-type” regional management involving various actors in the facilities and community residents. It has contributed to intergenerational exchanges in communities, strengthening the regional power through collaboration and cooperation, taking care of elderly persons, and childcare support in the region.





● Base facilities for interactions throughout the communities

“Share Kanazawa” is a complex of social welfare facilities established in 2013. The facilities were built on the site of the former Wakamatsu National Hospital (sanatorium for patients with Hansen’s disease) located in Wakamatsu-machi, a suburb of Kanazawa City, with an area of 36,363 m<sup>2</sup>. The facilities are located in an inconvenient area where a prison was built 40 years ago on condition of the development of surrounding roads. The area did not have any adequate meeting place for residents or a bar and cafe.



Source: Map of Share Kanazawa by Bussi-en

As “Bussi-en” had not provided its services in Kanazawa City and due to the name “Bussi-en,” relevant persons in the region mistook it for a new religious group. So, before the construction of “Share Kanazawa,” Mr. Oya, the president of “Bussi-en” visited the relevant persons, including the chairperson of the neighborhood association, chairperson of the federation of neighborhood associations, community center director, elementary school principal, chairperson of the social welfare council, and municipal/prefectural council members, etc., as well as those who disagreed with the construction, including the president of a local spa and bath, etc., several times a week and explained the concept of “Share Kanazawa.” He spent one year and two months discussing with community residents through PCM workshops. During the discussions, various regional issues were found. For example, “The old hospital site should not be left as it is,” “There is no place for a neighborhood association meeting,” “Owners are old and cannot walk their dogs,” and “The bus stop does not have a roof to provide shelter against rain, wind and snow.” He tried to form a consensus by addressing these issues step by step.

Currently, “Share Kanazawa” has gradually solved regional issues together with residents and has been recognized by residents as base facilities in the community. It has various facilities that people want to visit, such as a natural hot spring, restaurant, all-weather ground, alpaca farm and dog park, etc. In addition, it has held various regional events in recent years, such as an autumn festival, New Year’s parade of fire brigades, summer radio gymnastic exercises, and Star Festival, etc. Through these events, “Share Kanazawa” has communicated and built relationships with its visitors.

“Share Kanazawa” has also been used by an elementary school in the region. In a class to “find treasures in our town” intended for 4th grade students, “Share Kanazawa” has become the subject. Students visit the facilities, interview facility users, and make presentations. In November, the school’s marathon race is held on the facility premises.

There is no doubt that the involvement of children with “Share Kanazawa” significantly changes their awareness of the region.

By the opening of a circular road in a suburb of Kanazawa City, residential areas have been developed in the surrounding area, and residents in their 30s having children have been increasing. In response to this, “Share Kanazawa” has offered “After school care programs” and accepted children using the programs. However, as it does not have adequate know-how and personnel for after school care programs, it has collaborated with “GAIA Nature School,” an environmental education NPO having its office in “Share Kanazawa,” to offer outdoor programs for children. There are various other NPOs and organizations with offices in “Share Kanazawa” that carry out activities for communities and residents.

“Share Kanazawa” also has six houses lent to students at neighborhood universities, such as Kanazawa University and Hokuriku University, etc., and two houses with a studio for students at Kanazawa College of Art where residents can dedicate themselves to creative activities. The studios are open to other community residents so that they can see artworks of future artists. Students can live in the houses with a lower rent on condition that they support activities of “Share Kanazawa” as volunteer members. “Share Kanazawa” plans to launch a collaboration program with Kanazawa University on community development through medical care and welfare. Students at Kanazawa University have also held poetry readings for elderly persons living alone in the region and outdoor movie screenings after radio gymnastic exercises.



Environmental education NPO GAIA Nature School



Residence with a studio for students

● **A community where elderly persons, persons with disabilities and children are energized through mutual interactions**

A Japanese-style CCRC (Continuing Care Retirement Community) is interpreted as a community to which elderly persons will move. However, “Share Kanazawa” has developed facilities where various people, including not only elderly persons but also students and persons with disabilities, can communicate with each other. Therefore, it has built the facilities so that community residents can also visit every day. The Japanese-style area-type CCRC developed by “Share Kanazawa” aims to create a



community where the existence of elderly persons, persons with disabilities and children itself has meaning and they are energized by having interactions with each other.

“Share Kanazawa” has also provided support to elderly persons and persons with disabilities in finding their capabilities applicable to society and special skills. For example, an elderly person with dementia who used day care services at “Share Kanazawa” was good at making plum juice. “Share Kanazawa” considers it as a job and has paid him a salary. It has formed an active community where elderly persons enjoy working as a producer of plum juice, a staff member of a natural hot spring and a restaurant, or a staff member of a shop to sell and display products. Children without disabilities can also gain useful experience by putting themselves in “Gochamaze Shakai (mixed society).” By having interactions with persons with disabilities and elderly persons and experience of caring about others, they will grow up to become people who care about their community. Through the model of the Japanese-style area-type CCRC developed by “Share Kanazawa,” an active community has been developed.



Source: Wave+ (2015), website of Okamura Corporation  
Interview with Ryosei Oya

#### ● “New business proposal project” system by “Share Kanazawa”

“Bussi-en” has a system called “New business proposal project.” The system collects business proposals from employees and allocates budget and personnel to an adopted proposal. One of the adopted proposals is raising alpacas in “Share Kanazawa.” The alpacas have an important role. Persons with severe disabilities and elderly persons are frequently instructed by others. When they are always in such an environment, they tend to fall into depression. In response to this, an employee of “Share Kanazawa” made a proposal. The proposal was to have persons with disabilities and elderly persons take care of an animal. The employee thought that they may come alive if they have a role, are appreciated by others, and realize that they contribute to society. The proposal was adopted based on the idea that people should remember that everyone has his or her own unique value, regardless of age or having a severe disability or disease. “Share Kanazawa” purchased two alpacas. As shown in these efforts, one of the characteristics of “Bussi-en” is to develop the autonomy of relevant persons in order to make the community active. In addition to employees of “Bussi-en,” NPOs, volunteer groups and residents are voluntarily involved in the operation of the facilities to develop a new community.

### ● Development of an expressive community

“Share Kanazawa” places importance on the layout of the facilities. For example, a parking area and other dangerous facilities where cars pass through are not placed in the center of the facilities but instead near the entrance. It does not aim to develop a stylish, systematic community, but instead aims to develop an expressive community having back streets where facilities are not placed methodically. In the facilities, the route to and from a nearby elementary school, a playground and residents’ walking course have been naturally developed to create a community with a moderately close relationship, distance and atmosphere.

There is a cooperative store in “Share Kanazawa.” A cooperative store is a store mainly established on remote islands in Okinawa for the development of the islands. The store is jointly invested in and managed by residents of the islands and sells Awamori (Okinawan distilled liquor), food products and magazines they select. The store also functions as a place for communication among the islands’ residents. In “Share Kanazawa,” various people, including those with/without disabilities and living inside/outside the facilities, spend time together regardless of age or sex without having a particularly close relationship with each other.

“Share Kanazawa” continues to transform into an expressive community as if by its own will and has been naturally developed.

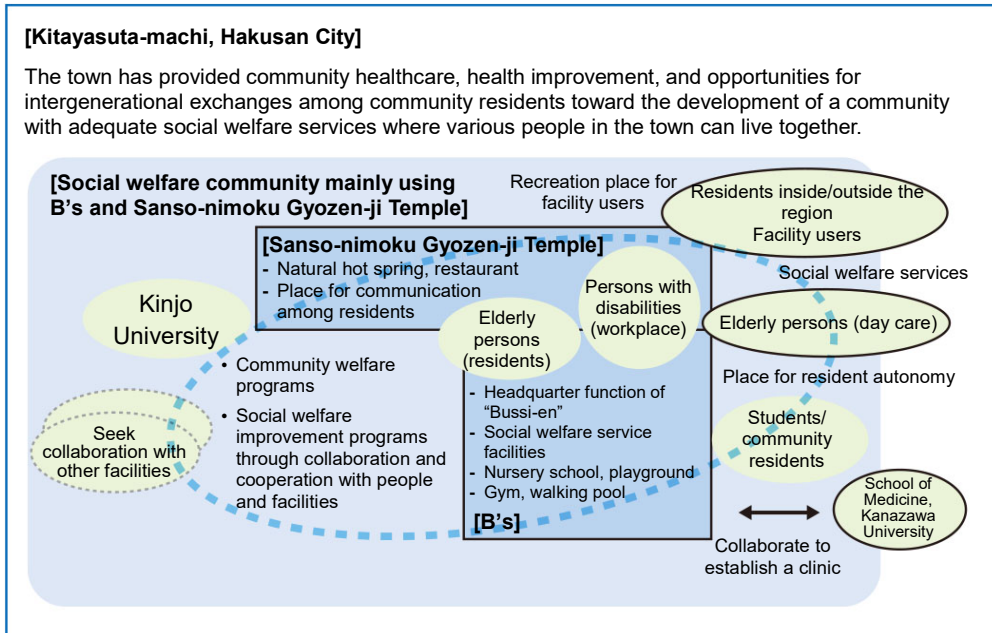
### (3) “B’s/Sanso-nimoku Gyozen-ji Temple” (efforts for “town-type” regional management)

“B’s” and “Sanso-nimoku Gyozen-ji Temple” have a clinic, nursery school, gym and cafe in their welfare facilities for persons with disabilities and elderly persons. They have implemented a resident autonomy model through collaboration with multifunctional community healthcare and welfare in Kitayasuta-machi, Hakusan City. It can be said that they have implemented “town-type” regional management.

### ● Efforts for “town-type” regional management

“B’s” and “Sanso-nimoku Gyozen-ji Temple” are social welfare facilities housed within the renovated Gyozen-ji Temple, Hakusan City, in which the headquarters of “Bussi-en” are located. In 2016, both facilities started a Japanese-style, town-type CCRC (Continuing Care Retirement Community) for promoting communication in communities. They have used know-how obtained through experience in Saien-ji Temple and “Share Kanazawa.” However, it was difficult to create large facilities like those in “Share Kanazawa” in terms of finance and securing the land, and there were legal limits to establishing various facilities in large facilities. So they have established various facilities for persons with disabilities, elderly persons and children in existing communities toward the development of a community where various people in the town

can live together.



“Sanso-nimoku Gyozen-ji Temple” partly opened in 2015, one year prior to its full-scale opening. It has been developed as community exchange facilities featuring a natural hot spring, restaurant and meeting place. “B’s” has facilities providing social welfare services for persons with intellectual disabilities, such as assistance, care, food delivery and home care, etc., as well as facilities requested by community residents, such as a nursery school, gym, walking pool and playground, etc. They have made efforts to create “Gochamaze Shakai (mixed society)” where various users interact with each other through the facilities.

“B’s” houses “Bussi-en”’s headquarters in its facilities. It plans to launch programs through collaboration with universities and medical institutes in the region. One of the programs is a community welfare program through collaboration with Kinjo University in Hakusan City. The program has been examined under the initiative of employees who were Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers. In addition, as efforts for community healthcare, a clinic was established in the facilities of “B’s” through collaboration with School of Medicine, Kanazawa University.

It is estimated that 22,000 people use “B’s” and “Sanso-nimoku Gyozen-ji Temple” per month. Of them, the number of users from the surrounding area and those using social welfare services is 12,000, and the number of users from outside the surrounding area is 10,000. The facilities do not use advertising tools. Users inside and outside the region mainly visit the facilities through word of mouth. The population of Kitayasuta-machi, Hakusan City where “B’s” is located increased from 573 people in 2015 to 633 people in

2016. Residents of the town can use the hot spring for free, which has become one of the attractions of the town and has helped to boost the number of people moving into the region. The concept of “Gochamaze Shakai (mixed society)” has spread outside the region as well.

● **“B’s” project with its concept of developing a community by all residents**

“Bussi-en” places importance on the concept of developing a community where various people naturally gather and residents are involved with each other to work on community development. As with “Saien-ji Temple” and “Share Kanazawa,” it exchanged opinions with residents of the surrounding area several times at the facility planning stage and conducted problem analysis and objective analysis using the PCM method. One of the important issues provided during the opinion exchange was that there were no community facilities in the area. There was a community center, but it was not suitable to be used on a daily basis in terms of facilities and equipment. In addition, the area had deserted shopping districts with few restaurants where residents could meet casually and privately. Therefore, “B’s” project considered the creation of places for communication among community residents as its most important concept. The project involved community residents in the creation of drawings. It also recruited facility staff members via a community notice and hired 30 members from among community residents. There is a community room in “B’s” where regional students and residents discuss the future of the town to proactively promote resident autonomy.

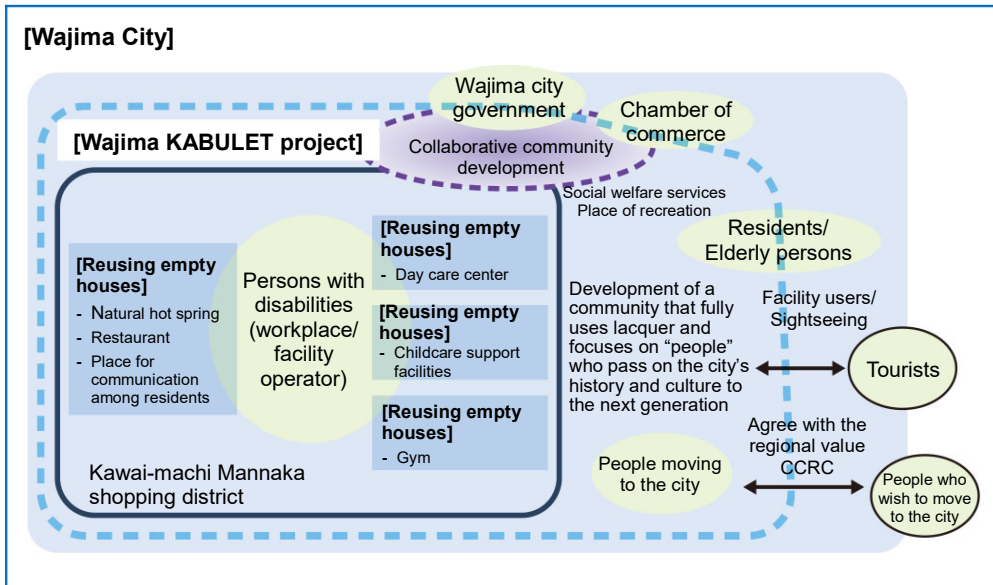


Poster of “Bussi-en B’s project”

“Share Kanazawa” has promoted resident autonomy geared toward a newly developed community, whereas the “B’s” project is geared toward Dejiro District, an existing district (21 towns, including Kitayasuta-machi, the location of “Bussi-en” headquarters, with 3,272 households (2014)). Through collaboration with Hakusan City and leading local companies, the project has redeveloped the district with all residents while promoting residents’ voluntary participation in their autonomy.

**(4) “Wajima KABULET” (efforts for “town-type” regional management)**

“Bussi-en” and Wajima City have collaborated to implement “town-type” regional management for establishing community facilities across the city using persons with disabilities and elderly persons. To realize a Japanese-style CCRC, they aim to achieve a high settlement rate and have promoted regional revitalization by reusing empty houses in the city.



● **Launch of the “Wajima KABULET” project**

In July 2016, the deputy mayor of Wajima City and the chamber of commerce president visited “Share Kanazawa.” The president had always said, “Wajima City will fall into ruin if we do nothing. We need to do something.” When he visited “Share Kanazawa,” he was stunned by the world developed by the facilities. Although efforts were made by local organizations in the city to “change empty houses into base facilities,” good results had not been achieved. The city decided to cooperate with “Bussi-en” in order to increase the settlement rate and non-resident population. Then the city obtained local allocation tax grants with the support of “Bussi-en,” and “Wajima KABULET” was launched as a regional revitalization project reusing empty houses in Wajima City. “Wajima KABULET” was named after the concept that people are poisoned (kabureru in Japanese) by lacquer (specialty of Wajima City). This means that a lively community will be developed through connections among people. The project aims to develop a community effectively using empty houses and “existing materials in the city” and a “Gochamaze” community using the know-how of “Share Kanazawa.” The project has gradually carried out various activities since 2016, such as the acquisition of empty houses, excavation of a natural hot spring, and food delivery services by persons with disabilities, etc.

● **Project implementation system across departments of Wajima city government**

In the “Wajima KABULET” project, the Planning Division, Exchange Policy

Department, Wajima City Government is in charge of planning and coordination of activities for regional revitalization and serves as a contact department in the city government. The Planning Division contacts relevant divisions and coordinates operations in the city government as necessary. As the project combines various business forms, it has matters that cannot be handled by one division alone. For example, social welfare services are handled by two divisions because matters relating to persons with disabilities are handled by the Welfare Division and matters relating to elderly persons are handled by the Health Promotion Division. In addition, it is necessary to involve the Regional Revitalization Promotion Office and the Urban Development Division depending on matters. To coordinate the divisions in the city government and confirm progress, a regular meeting has been held once a month with relevant persons of “Bussi-en.”

### ● Community development using the entire urban area of Wajima City

The target area of the project is “Mannaka shopping district” in Kawai-machi in the center of Wajima City. The project plans to make the entire shopping district into a community for social welfare and communication among residents by renovating empty houses around the district. In Kawai-machi, shops and restaurants are not located along a street but are scattered across a large district in the town. Individual empty houses in the district will be renovated to develop a natural hot spring, restaurants, a gym, day care facilities and childcare support facilities. Although acquiring empty houses has proven rather difficult, a minimum number of empty houses could be acquired in the district with the support of “Mannaka shopping district.” However, the development of facilities has not been completed yet, and main facilities, such as the natural hot spring and restaurants, etc., are scheduled to be completed in FY 2018. An urgent issue is how to start services and secure profits.

In addition, as a part of the new community development, a pilot project for the city’s transportation system has been implemented at the same time based on the idea of the chamber of commerce president. The project uses automatic traveling golf carts introduced with the support of Yamaha Motor Co., Ltd. The carts travel round major areas in the city. They are expected to be used as a means of transportation of elderly persons and tourists and will have a route to Kawai-machi after it is developed.

On the other hand, “Wajima KABULET” project aims to develop a community replete with lacquerware and focuses on “people” who pass on the city’s history and culture to the next generation. The project has examined methods to effectively use lacquer together with residents in Wajima City so that they can handle lacquer not only as craftwork but also in a casual manner. To develop such a community, the “Wajima KABULET” certification system was established to train many lacquer experts. With the experts, the project has promoted the development of a community having real value.

“Bussi-en” is mainly in charge of practical procedures and operations, such as meetings



with community residents and procedures for the acquisition of empty houses, etc. Wajima city government aims to operate the project while achieving its financial independence in five years when the subsidy project is completed.

- **International cooperation personnel to be active in the Wajima KABULET project**

With the aim of utilizing human resources who carried out activities in developing countries for regional revitalization, “Wajima KABULET” has 10 members who carried out activities as Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers. They have been dispatched by Japan Overseas Cooperative Association (JOCA) to “Bussi-en” as employees on temporary assignment. Employees dispatched by JOCA have worked with employees of “Bussi-en.” As their areas of expertise vary, they carry out community activities using their expertise. For example, an employee specializing in woodworking makes dyed goods using waste lacquer chips, and an employee specializing in agriculture works with persons with disabilities to cultivate seasonal vegetables on unused farmland. They have also carried out activities, as KABULET University, at schools in the city to introduce countries and areas where they were dispatched and activities of Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers.

**(5) Achievements and issues of social welfare facilities and services under the concept of “Gochamaze Shakai (mixed society)”**

- **Deducing how a community can attract people while establishing a practical model of “Gochamaze Shakai (mixed society)”**

Through the efforts of Saien-ji Temple, a practical model of “Gochamaze Shakai (mixed society)” has been established, and the know-how for establishing the model has been effectively applied to social welfare services of “Bussi-en.” It can be said that Saien-ji Temple’s efforts produced significant results. In addition, although the area around Saien-ji Temple had typical rural communities and the population had been declining, the number of households increased from 55 to 74 over eight years from 2008. It is thought that the number of households increased through the following process: (1) It was very comfortable for residents to live in the area because various people were involved in Saien-ji Temple and a moderate distance was maintained among residents => (2) Young residents in the area built houses near their parents’ houses and continue to live there => (3) Residents in other regions moved to the area as they thought that they may find something interesting in an area with many young residents. Although this is just a theory of the process that occurred, “Bussi-en” deduced that it could attract people by providing a place where they can comfortably have communication with each other. From the perspective of “regional management,” it can be said that the practical model of “Gochamaze Shakai (mixed society)” is “regional management,” as it is expected that the strengthening of regional management will increase the population.

● **A new model of social welfare facilities and services for the realization of social inclusion**

Based on the achievements of “Sanso-nimoku Saien-ji Temple” and “Share Kanazawa,” “Bussi-en” was certified as a model project of a Japanese-style CCRC promoted by the national government. However, the Japanese-style CCRC proposed by “Bussi-en” aims to develop a community where all residents including elderly persons, persons with disabilities and children are active. Community development through social inclusion that has been implemented by “Bussi-en” may become a model of regional revitalization that will generate regional vitality, curb the population decline, revitalize the region and restore pride in the region.

“Bussi-en” currently provides social welfare services mainly through “B’s/ Sanso-nimoku Gyozen-ji Temple,” which are Japanese-style, town-type CCRCs and has developed a new social welfare community through “Wajima KABULET” where everyone can feel comfortable, toward achieving social inclusion by the entire city. In the future, it is expected that related facilities will be independently operated in terms of finance and personnel, and that the generated regional vitality will spread across the city.

Introduction of  
a key person

**“Involvement with persons with disabilities is a part of my life”**

— **Ryosei Oya, President of Social welfare corporation Bussi-en, an organization that embodies “Gochamaze Shakai (mixed society)”**

Mr. Ryosei Oya has lived and spent a lot of time with persons with intellectual disabilities since he can remember. When he was a child, he had a closer relationship with them than with his family. He might have naturally decided to be engaged in the social business industry like a child of an Olympic athlete aims to become an Olympic athlete. He entered university to learn about the psychology of persons with disabilities. After 18 months of teaching, he was dispatched to the Dominican Republic as a Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteer. To be a Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteer, an applicant must have five years or more experience working in facilities for persons with disabilities. However, he wrote “24 years of experience” on the application form and submitted it to an interviewer. When he was asked by the interviewer, “Why did you write 24 years even though you worked at a school for special needs education for only 18 months?” He answered, “It was because I have been living with persons with disabilities for 24 years since I was born.” This answer shows that he had already decided to be engaged in the social business industry for his vocation. He then saw “Gochamaze Shakai (mixed society)” in the Dominican Republic and learned the structure of social welfare.

He strongly feels that being involved with persons with disabilities is a part of his life. Mr. Oya could make social welfare facilities have an open environment, generate new value through interactions with various people, and think about and realize a structure to revitalize the facilities because he embodies “Gochamaze Shakai (mixed society).”



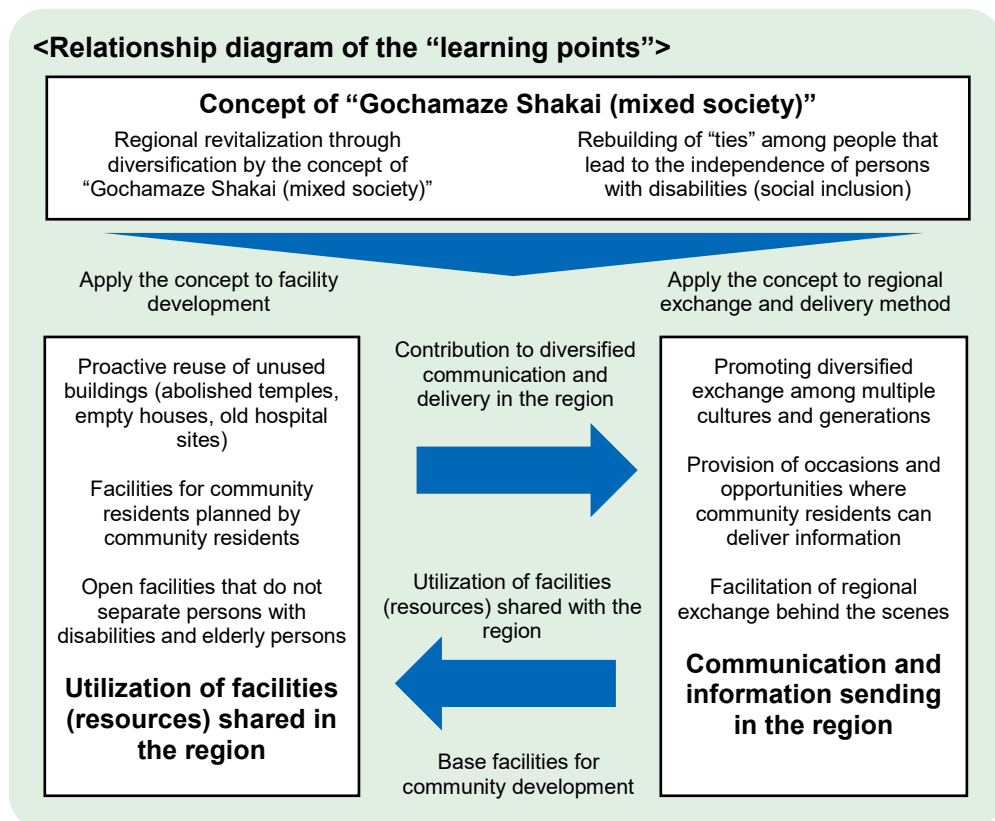
### 5-3. Learning points

Under the concept of “Gochamaze Shakai (mixed society),” a comfortable community has been developed by applying three types (facility-type, area-type and town-type) of Japanese-style CCRCs. “Bussi-en” and community residents have been closely involved in the development of the community. “Bussi-en” has also collaborated with Wajima City in “Wajima KABULET” to work on community development for the entire city.

In the concept of “Gochamaze Shakai (mixed society),” “diversity” and “social inclusion” are the keywords. “Diversity” strengthens regional ties and is expected to generate new values. “Social inclusion” promotes regional revitalization by reorganizing the social structure and reconstituting “ties” among people while utilizing human resources that have not been fully utilized.

Based on this concept, facilities that residents feel like visiting (a natural hot spring and a recreation place where residents can freely enjoy conversing) and those having an open environment without separating persons with disabilities and elderly persons have been provided by proactively reusing abolished temples, empty houses and an old hospital site.

These facilities have promoted diversified exchange among multiple cultures and generations. Exchanges of diversified values generate new values, create new



community businesses and facilitate information delivery on new values. On the other hand, “Bussi-en” has promoted residents’ independence behind the scenes.

An interrelationship of these learning points has promoted diversified interactions in social welfare services under the concept of “Gochamaze Shakai (mixed society).” At the same time, an independent, sustainable community where community residents feel comfortable has been developed by promoting residents’ independence.

### (1) Concept of “Gochamaze Shakai (mixed society)”

- **Regional revitalization through diversification by the concept of “Gochamaze Shakai (mixed society)”**
  - The concept of “Gochamaze Shakai (mixed society)” was generated based on Mr. Oya’s experience of living with persons with disabilities when he was a child and saw many scenes in the Dominican Republic where community residents including persons with disabilities, elderly persons and children regardless of age or sex helped each other to develop a sense of solidarity and community ties when he was a Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteer.
  - Although functioning as social welfare facilities, “Sanso-nimoku Saien-ji Temple” has naturally created interactions among community residents, persons with disabilities and elderly persons by establishing a natural hot spring and cafe in the facilities that can also be used by community residents, and by employing persons with disabilities and elderly persons at the facilities. This has eliminated barriers in positions and values between residents and persons with disabilities/elderly persons and increased momentum toward joint activities, such as community businesses, etc. All this contributed to regional revitalization.
  - On the other hand, in countries and regions of developing countries where residents are mutually excluded due to civil wars, etc., communities including the socially vulnerable have developed a sense of stagnation whether they have disabilities or not because there is an enormous gap in values and background.
  - It takes a long time to realize the “Gochamaze Shakai (mixed society)” that “Bussi-en” has striven for, where various people recognize each other’s different values through interactions. However, the realization of such a society will help to solve the above issue of developing countries and lead to regional revitalization.
- **Rebuilding of “ties” among people that lead to the independence of persons with disabilities (social inclusion)**
  - As shown in the word “Sanso-nimoku,” which means “plants grow differently, produce different flowers, and bear different fruits,” a key concept in the redevelopment project of Saien-ji Temple introduced earlier, “Bussi-en” has carried out activities so that “elderly persons and persons with disabilities can contribute to

their families, friends and communities.” From the perspective of community development, it can be said that “Bussi-en”’s activities promote rebuilding of “ties” among people towards the development of a friendly community (social inclusion).

- This idea is also important for community development in developing countries. Efforts must be made to increase community happiness by focusing on the socially vulnerable, including elderly persons and persons with disabilities, or human resources socially and culturally excluded, and having them voluntarily carry out social activities.

## (2) Utilization of facilities (resources) shared in the region

- **Proactive reuse of unused buildings (abolished temples, empty houses, old hospital sites)**
  - In this case, empty houses and temples are proactively reused to prevent the hollowing-out of communities as well as being effectively used as measures to further activate interactions among diversified residents, generating new values. An empty temple is a special place where memories of community residents and cultures and history of the region are stored. Such a place is cleaned up, renovated and managed by the residents to become a place to which they can develop attachment.
  - It is also expected that reviewing existing resources in developing countries and having community residents introduce a structure to effectively use them will increase their impact and sustainability.
- **Facilities for community residents planned by community residents**
  - Although “Bussi-en” functions as social welfare facilities, it features not only social welfare service facilities but also community exchange facilities that community residents want to visit, such as a natural hot spring, cafe and alpaca farm, etc. An important point of the facilities is that they have a structure that encourages visitors to feel comfortable and naturally want to visit the facilities again by providing them an atmosphere (opportunity) to communicate with persons with disabilities and elderly persons as well as with other visitors. In order to develop facilities that community residents want to visit, it is important to have the residents be proactively involved in the process to examine and decide facilities from the planning stage of facility development. To promote the use of the facilities by residents, the residents need to take the initiative in examining the usage of the facilities and the atmosphere (opportunities) to be provided.
  - In developing countries, it is also important to provide residents an opportunity to proactively examine the use of regional resources. This leads to an increase in the impact of the resources and their sustainability.

- **Open facilities that do not separate persons with disabilities and elderly persons**

- It is often the case that social welfare services for persons with disabilities and elderly persons are provided in school and facilities while temporarily separating them from their communities. However, this causes users to be further excluded from their communities as they are kept in the facilities and community residents have fewer opportunities to see the actual social welfare services.
- “Bussi-en” has realized regional revitalization by establishing social welfare facilities in a community and introducing facilities and services that proactively facilitate communication with community residents. Based on this idea, it is important to recognize that excluding persons with disabilities and elderly persons from communities is a loss to society, and a change of perspective is necessary so as to proactively use social welfare facilities.
- In developing countries, regional revitalization under the concept of “Gochamaze Shakai (mixed society)” may be realized by proactively creating opportunities for the socially vulnerable to be a part of their communities without keeping them in a closed environment.

### **(3) Communication and information sending in the region**

- **Promoting diversified exchange among multiple cultures and generations**

- In the case of “Sanso-nimoku Saien-ji Temple,” various people meet at social welfare facilities, exchange opinions, and recognize each other’s different values through the use of the facilities, which has generated new values and vitality. In the case of “Share Kanazawa,” the facilities introduce elderly persons, students and persons with disabilities as the residents to promote multicultural and multigenerational exchanges. In order to create an environment where other residents can feel free to visit, no fences are built around the facilities; this has facilitated communication among diversified residents. Through diversified communication, the facilities have striven for community development since their establishment, considering the needs of not only the facilities’ residents but also other community residents. This has strengthened collaboration and cooperation with residents inside and outside the facilities and contributed to the enhancement of regional capacity, measures for elderly persons and childcare support in the region.
- There are many cases where it is necessary to reflect multiethnic and multigenerational perspectives for regional development and solving regional issues in developing countries. In the process of development and solving issues, it is effective to share issues and create opportunities to cooperate to solve the issues by providing a place and environment where people from different ethnic groups or generations can communicate so that they understand each other’s different values.

- **Provision of occasions and opportunities where community residents can deliver information**
  - New community businesses were generated in “Sanso-nimoku Saien-ji Temple.” For example, regional female residents who used the hot spring of the facilities and persons with disabilities who worked at the facilities met and worked together to make pickled vegetables, and female residents in various age groups who talked at the cafe of the facilities about the moisturizing effect of Saien-ji Hot Spring developed a toner that blends leftover rice malt used for brewing sake with hot spring water. Through the new community businesses, community residents have promoted new products (value) inside and outside the region.
  - It is also useful for developing countries to provide opportunities to promote voluntary activities like those carried out in this case. For example, it is considered useful to provide opportunities where various residents can deepen exchanges through social welfare facilities and community facilities and share values with those using the facilities to deliver the values and create community businesses.
- **Facilitation of regional exchange behind the scenes**
  - Before launching social welfare services of “Sanso-nimoku Saien-ji Temple,” “Share Kanazawa,” “B’s/Gyozen-ji Temple,” and “Wajima KABULET,” “Bussi-en” spent a good deal of time developing the basic concept of the facilities while holding discussions with residents and confirming their opinions. It held workshops for the residents in order to understand regional needs and conducted participatory analyses, such as analysis on relevant persons, problem analysis and objective analysis, etc., using the PCM method. During regional events and projects, employees of “Bussi-en” have consistently played a role not as major actors but as facilitators of communication among residents so that they can participate in the events and projects with a sense of ownership. To establish “Saien-ji Temple,” “Bussi-en” asked residents to be voluntarily involved in the management of the facilities as one of the requirements for accepting their request and consistently supported the facilities’ management behind the scenes. In creating a community business, Mr. Oya reminds his employees to make sure “Bussi-en” does not impose on residents (to create community businesses). He tries not to have “Bussi-en” play a central role but rather to have it support community development behind the scenes. As individual residents play a central role in community development; a community’s self-sustaining development cannot be achieved if residents take a back seat.
  - In developing countries, the key to the successful development of an independent, sustainable community is a person who serves as a facilitator to promote residents’ independence behind the scenes.

## 5-4. Considerations in applying the case to developing countries

### (1) Considerations in applying the case

**Contact:** Bussi-en

#### [Example of application to training]

Training theme	Expected training participants	Training contents
Strengthening of capacity to support persons with disabilities through social inclusion	Officials of ministries/agencies and local governments in relevant sectors, NGO/NPO employees, representatives of (groups of) persons with disabilities, and representative residents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>As efforts for promoting social inclusion, introduce “Bussi-en”’s efforts to have persons with disabilities proactively participate in community business and community development as community members</li> </ul>
Community development under the concept of “Gochamaze Shakai (mixed society)”	Officials of ministries/agencies and local governments in relevant sectors, NGO/NPO employees, and representative residents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Introduce “Gochamaze Shakai (mixed society)” as a concept for solving regional issues and promoting community development. When people in various situations, such as persons with disabilities, elderly persons and other community residents, etc., jointly work on community development, a diversified, distinctive community may be developed.</li> <li>The role of employees of “Bussi-en” as facilitators for the realization of community development led by persons with disabilities, elderly persons and other community residents</li> </ul>

#### [Considerations in applying the case]

- Apart from the president of “Bussi-en,” some of the employees of “Bussi-en” and relevant persons of “Wajima KABULET” have also engaged in JICA projects. So it is thought that the region is used to accepting JICA projects. On the other hand, as the “Bussi-en” group has various businesses and facilities, it is necessary to examine beforehand which business and facilities to focus on, considering the needs of developing countries. It is desirable to ask JICA Hokuriku for the entire arrangement, including matters related to business and facilities to be focused on, as it has jurisdiction over collaborative projects with “Bussi-en.”

### (2) Examination of the possibility to build a win-win relationship

- It is important for training participants from developing countries and the counterpart of JICA Partnership Programs not to learn in a unilateral way, but to ask themselves questions about the benefits of “welfare services under the concept of ‘Gochamaze Shakai (mixed society)’” and “community development through multicultural and multigenerational exchanges,” as well as having an opportunity to give feedback to employees of accepting facilities and residents about issues of the current efforts. This allows an accepting organization to re-evaluate its efforts from an external

perspective, which may lead to increased motivation and rediscovery.

- The participation of trainees from developing countries and the counterpart of JICA Partnership Programs may contribute to “Gochamaze Shakai (mixed society)” that leads to a diversified community. Having an opportunity to communicate and carry out activities with personnel of “Bussi-en,” persons with disabilities and elderly persons who use the facilities, and community residents may lead to the promotion of new international understanding through people (trainees) and the development and spread of “Gochamaze Shakai (mixed society)” where people from diverse backgrounds can coexist.

## 6. Higashimatsushima City, Miyagi

### Earthquake disaster reconstruction led by community governance organizations and an intermediate support organization

Under a basic policy of civic cooperation set before the earthquake that has been continuously maintained, the city has carried out activities for post-earthquake recovery and promoted sustainable community development in a consistent manner through collaboration between the city government and community governance organizations/an intermediate support organization.

### 6-1. Outline of the region

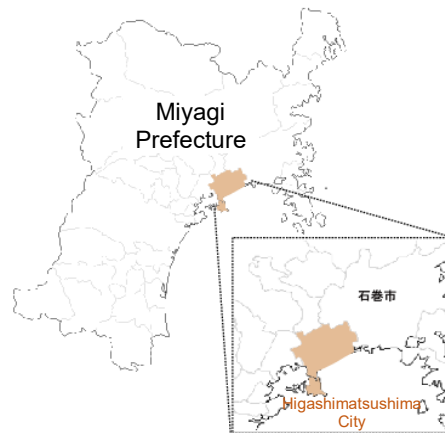
#### (1) Outline of the target area

Higashimatsushima City, Miyagi, was established in April 1, 2005 through the amalgamation of Yamoto-cho and Naruse-cho.

The city has an area of 101.86 km<sup>2</sup> and a population of 39,503 people (2015 census).

During the Great East Japan Earthquake that occurred on March 11, 2011, the city was heavily damaged by a huge tsunami due to its topographical characteristic of expansive coastal lowlands. The earthquake, with a seismic intensity of 6 upper, devastated the city's urban functions and industrial infrastructure essential for civic life. The death toll from the earthquake and tsunami was 1,110, and the number of missing was 24 (as of the end of February 2016).

The city was originally a node for human and material exchanges connecting Sendai City and Ishinomaki City and is an area of thriving agricultural and fisheries industries utilizing the diverse natural resources. Taking advantage of these conditions, the city's efforts to recover from the earthquake are progressing at a rapid rate.



#### (2) Background and issues

In this region, there were signs of population decline and social decline before the amalgamation (2005). After the amalgamation, the city reached a major turning point in terms of community development. Residents' lives were changed due to differences in methods and ideas of community development and histories, as well as social changes



due to financial difficulties caused by the aging population, economic downturn and changes in lifestyle. The city had developed an outline of administrative reform to reduce the number of city employees and promote business efficiency. However, in order to effectively use its limited financial resources without waste, there were limits to the services that could be managed by the city government alone and provided uniformly across the city. In addition, demand for public services further increased due to diversified needs of residents and communities. Therefore, the city decided to promote “community development through civic cooperation” as a measure to reduce the gap between the reduction in public services and residents’ needs.



Landscape of Higashimatsushima City  
(Source: “Eco-future city” concept)

To accept a wide variety of support from inside and outside Japan for the recovery from the Great East Japan Earthquake that occurred on March 11, 2011 and promote reconstruction community development in cooperation with communities and residents, the city needed a special organization focused on disaster reconstruction that included governmental, industrial, academic and private actors.

## 6-2. Efforts for regional management

### (1) Before the Great East Japan Earthquake

- Creation of a community development base by “regional autonomous councils”

Efforts for collaborative community development are based on the manifesto of Hideo Abe, the former mayor, who won the mayoral election at the time of the municipal amalgamation. The efforts were started in FY 2005 in a phased manner and implemented in earnest from FY 2009 after a three-year preparation period from FY 2006 to FY 2008. In October 2005, the “Community development committee” was established as a community development organization and in 2008, “Higashimatsushima City community development basic ordinance” was established to set up community governance organizations (regional autonomous councils).

There are 114 administrative districts in the city (residents’/neighborhood association level). After dividing the districts into eight, “regional

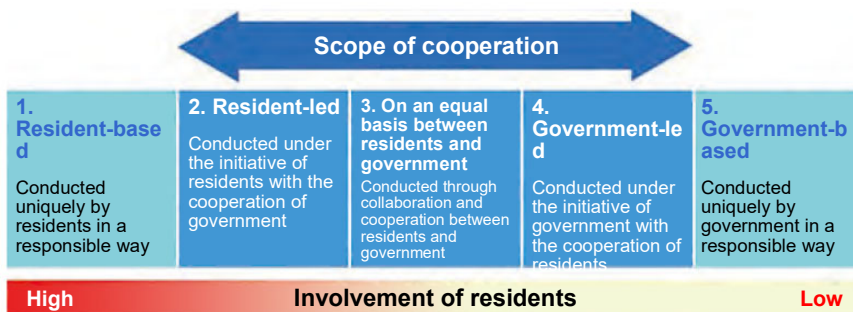


Districts of community governance councils  
(8 districts)  
(Source: “Higashimatsushima community development portal site”)

autonomous councils” were established in the eight districts as organizations for residents’ voluntary community development. There are 10 to 20 administrative districts in each district, and the area of each district is equivalent to that of an elementary school zone where residents’ relationships can be seen.

Each district had a community hall as facilities for community development and lifelong learning activities. Higashimatsushima City developmentally reorganized the community hall into a “civic center” as a comprehensive base having community development functions. The city then entrusted the operation of civic centers to “regional autonomous councils” through the designated management system. By using the civic centers as a base, community governance organizations plan and manage specific community- and region-based issues related to community development aimed at self-supporting, independent community development.

It is considered that “civic cooperation” has several types based on the degree of involvement of government and residents (refer to the figure below). In the process of shifting from “government-led” to “on an equal basis between residents and government,” and from “on an equal basis” to “resident-led,” residents’ sense of ownership over community governance needs to be developed.



Scope of civic cooperation (Source: Website of Higashimatsushima City)

Higashimatsushima City took three years from the planning stage to the establishment of a civic center so that it became an official base. During this period, the city held a total of 200 workshops and training sessions on operation procedures, which allowed the city to encourage the creation of a residents’ organization. At first, the function of a civic center was added to a community hall, which was a base for community development and lifelong learning activities. Then, a community hall was abolished to integrate the functions of both facilities. In addition, by assigning a “regional autonomous council” as an organization to be a designated manager entrusted by the city, the city withdrew its employees in charge of facility operation and applied a system to have the organization of the council operate the civic center.

● **Organizational operation of “regional autonomous councils”**

The organization of a “regional autonomous council” is composed of the general

assembly, board of directors, special committees and permanent management office. The head of an administrative district serves as the director and members of an administrative district serve as special committee members. A special committee is an organization to examine and implement projects according to regional issues. The theme of a committee varies depending on the autonomous council. For example, “Nobiru community development council” has established three committees on exchange/community, education/welfare and security/safety.

From the perspective of respecting regional autonomy and promoting independence activities, the city implemented the “Higashimatsushima City community development grant system” combining the designated management system so as to secure financial resources to be effectively used by autonomous councils at their own discretion. Since the implementation of the system, financial resources of an autonomous council have been composed of membership fees (from all households), lump-sum grants from the city (including designated management fees for a civic center) and project subsidies. The annual amount of the grant is about one million yen per council excluding designated management fees. Each council has about five members in its management office, and personnel expenses for the members are included in designated management fees.

After the introduction of the designated management system, the city established a “Civic Cooperation Division” to enhance the support system for full-scale activities of autonomous councils in the districts. The division has four employees in charge of community support. They have worked on community development with autonomous councils. The city has also arranged meetings for the heads of the eight civic centers to provide advice to them on issues of autonomous councils.

## (2) Emergency stage after the Great East Japan Earthquake

### ● Emergency response through self-help and mutual help by “regional autonomous councils”

Immediately after the Great East Japan Earthquake occurred on March 11, 2011, “regional autonomous councils” and other residents’ “mutual help” structures in disaster affected areas started to function. It can be said that checking for missing persons, preparing meals, and operating evacuation shelters are activities that depend on the power of residents developed through “civic cooperation.” Districts quickly assisted each other. For example, an agreement was concluded between governance organizations so that residents in an inland area of the city with relatively little damage could provide assistance to disaster victims in a coastal area.

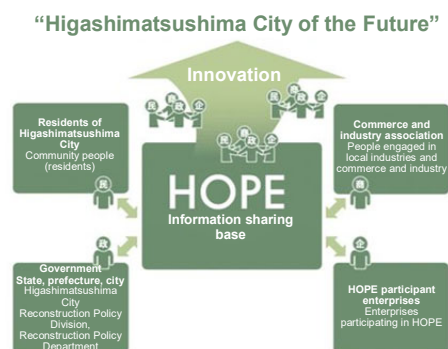
In the case of Oshio autonomous council that has Oshio civic center as its activity base, the council proactively accepted disaster victims as the district was located on a hill and was not hit by tsunami although it suffered earthquake damage. On the day of the earthquake, the civic center accepted 700 to 800 victims. It used a private power

generator to provide electricity, and individual residents brought a small amount of gasoline for the power generator and heating oil. Emergency food stored in the civic center was cooked using hot water boiled in a large kettle and provided to the victims for dinner. Council members talked about meals for the next day and decided to make rice balls using rice provided by residents. They made rice balls with the cooperation of several female residents per district. Employees of the civic center, members of the voluntary disaster management liaison council, and several fire corps volunteers in the district who provided assistance stayed awake all night on the first day. In the district, as the municipal gymnasium next to the civic center was also subject to the designated management system, the gymnasium was used as an evacuation shelter from the following morning. In order to avoid confusion, district volunteers provided guidance, accepted victims and checked for evacuees. From March 13, two days after the earthquake, evacuees organized nine teams to clean toilets/rooms and prepare meals in rotation. In Oshio civic center, the evacuation shelter was operated for 173 days until the end of August in the manner described above (Source: Materials of Oshio District voluntary disaster management liaison council and Oshio civic center).

### ● Establishment of an intermediate support organization

In the “Higashimatsushima City reconstruction community development plan” (developed in December 2011) examined since May 2011 shortly after the earthquake disaster, Higashimatsushima City specified leading projects towards the realization of the city’s future vision. The projects were “safe, attractive life project,” “community reconstruction project,” “local industry continuation and regeneration project,” and “project towards a city producing distributed, independence regional energy.” The city also specified the need for an intermediate support organization for specialized and comprehensive projects using the vitality of the private sector inside and outside the region, in order to implement the leading projects.

At the same time, in December 2011, Higashimatsushima City was selected as an “eco-future city” by the Cabinet Office. The “eco-future city” is one of the national strategy projects to create a worldwide model city by selecting cities that address environmental problems and super-aging society and make efforts to build a sustainable society using renewable energy and develop a community where everyone can live comfortably. Higashimatsushima City considered that aiming to become an “eco-future city” had the same meaning as the realization of the leading projects. In October 2012, an intermediate support organization, which was specified in the reconstruction



Mechanism of HOPE  
(Source: Website of “HOPE”)

community development plan, was established by the city, the commerce and industry association and the social welfare council and named “Higashimatsushima Organization for Progress and Economy, Education, Energy (HOPE).”

As the city actually received various offers for reconstruction support from inside and outside Japan that could not be handled by the city government alone, there was an urgent need to accept the offers and carry out reconstruction community development in cooperation with communities and residents. Therefore, the city had recognized that a cross-sectoral organization that was different from existing organizations needed to be established at an early date. Then “HOPE” was established as an intermediate support organization for government (state, prefecture, city), communities, local industries and private enterprises as well as a contact organization for universities, research institutes, NPOs and other regions.

“HOPE” specifies “energy,” “community and health,” “life,” and “industry” as priority areas of reconstruction projects. It has established committees for the four areas to discuss project planning and implementation and accepted assistance in consultation with external member organizations.

### (3) Recovery stage from the earthquake

- **Recovery from the earthquake disaster under the initiative of a “regional autonomous council”**

In Nobiru District, located in a coastal area in Higashimatsushima City that was significantly damaged by tsunami, there is “Nobiru community development council,” with Nobiru civic center as its activity base. Having a population of about 4,600 people, about 1,600 households, Nobiru District is located in the southwest area of the city and within commuting distance of Sendai City and Ishinomaki City. The district has many persons engaged in the secondary and tertiary industries, but there are rice and vegetable farmers in the inland area and oyster fishermen in the coastal area.

The district was hit by tsunami and 90% of its area was damaged. Many residents in the district had to evacuate. Before reopening the civic center, members of “Nobiru community development council” visited evacuation shelters to confirm the safety of residents and ask their requests for reconstruction. In May 2011, based on the requests, “Nobiru community development council” prepared a “request for the relocation of residences to a hill” and submitted it to the city government. In June 2011, the city developed “Higashimatsushima City reconstruction basic policy” based on the request. It was determined that the reconstruction of Nobiru District would be carried out based on collective relocation of residences to a hill in terms of disaster risk reduction. According to the policy, the city conducted questionnaire surveys to residents in July and November 2011 and held a meeting to explain the collective relocation in November. During this period, an expert committee was held to develop the “Higashimatsushima

City reconstruction community development plan” on a city-wide basis in December 2011. Until around this time, the reconstruction plan of Nobiru District was implemented under the initiative of the city.

However, there was an issue that the “relocation request” submitted to the city government did not reflect opinions of residents staying in their houses, but mainly reflected opinions of residents staying in evacuation shelters. In October 2011 after reopening Nobiru civic center, the council created a list of residents. When their whereabouts were identified, it was found that many residents requested the collective relocation as well as those who requested the reconstruction of residences in the place where they were originally located (a place hit by tsunami).



Nobiru civic center newly opened on a hill after relocation (Materials of Higashimatsushima City)

Therefore, there was a growing recognition that local matters should be discussed among residents and a collective opinion of the district should be provided. Since January 2012, discussions on the reconstruction of the district had been held by residents. During the discussions, residents developed a sense that residents’ opinions should be reflected in reconstruction community development. In order to set up a place where residents could hold discussions with the city government on an equal footing, residents asked “Nobiru community development council” for support as an organizer, and the “Reconstruction committee of Nobiru community development council” was established in July 2012.

It can be said that “Nobiru community development council” played a major role at the stage of disaster emergency response and in the initial stage of reconstruction in collecting residents’ opinions and as an organization accepting assistance from external persons and organizations and reconstruction policy and plans from the city government. After the reopening of Nobiru civic center, residents had begun to want to handle matters themselves regarding the reconstruction of the district, rather than rely on the city government. This resulted in a change in the degree of civic cooperation of “Nobiru community development council” from “government-led” to “on an equal basis between residents and government.”

### ● Reconstruction community development assistance by JICA community reconstruction facilitators

In August 2011, Nobiru District introduced JICA community reconstruction facilitators who carried out activities as Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers. They greatly contributed to reconstruction community development at the stage of disaster emergency response and at the stage of reconstruction while supporting activities of “Nobiru



community development council.”

At the stage of disaster emergency response, the promoters made efforts to restore communities broken up after the earthquake and reopen Nobiru civic center. After reopening the civic center, they collaborated with “Nobiru community development council” to support their activities as a member of the management office during discussions with residents. They supported activities to collect residents’ opinions and hold various events for residents. At the stage of reconstruction, the promoters were requested to support the management office for the establishment of the reconstruction committee that was established as a special committee of “Nobiru community development council” later on. They were engaged in the creation of a “recommendation” while formulating residents’ opinions towards reconstruction and participating in discussions to collect residents’ opinions.

In November 2012, “Nobiru reconstruction council” was established for promoting resident-based reconstruction at the original place or a relocated place. The management office of the council was established in the city government, as a large-scale project was involved in its establishment. The promoters cooperated to establish the management office. In June 2014, the council was dissolved to become “North Nobiru hilly area development council.” The promoters consistently provided support for the operation of the council to play a part of the function of the management office in creating meeting minutes, sending information and holding/operating events for residents in the district.

Using their position as “external actors” separate from internal stakeholders, JICA community reconstruction facilitators worked as members of the management office of the resident organization to coordinate and make contact with the city government and facilitate discussions among residents.

In July 2015, a “document for strategic consensus on regional revitalization and reconstruction through international cooperation” was entered into between Higashimatsushima City and JICA. The document specified the realization of revitalization and internationalization of disaster affected areas through the dispatch of persons who carried out activities as Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers to the areas. Currently, third-generation promoters are carrying out activities.

- **Recovery from the earthquake disaster under the initiative of the intermediate support organization**

“HOPE” aims to play a role in matching resources of enterprises that desire to contribute to reconstruction with needs of government and residents. As a project promoter, “HOPE” has four committees based on the reconstruction community development plan. At the time of establishment, approx. 90 member companies belonged to any of the committees. The management office of “HOPE” hired external human resources to carry out activities using external networks.

At first, the city created a framework by using the four committees (“energy,” “community and health,” “life,” and “industry”) to establish a structure where member companies implement projects by using their resources. Under close cooperation with the city, “HOPE” developed personnel and operational structures and formulated project groups according to the project theme in a unit smaller than a committee. “HOPE” has expanded its projects through trial and error. Examples of projects implemented in FY 2015 were “Higashimatsushima Stitch Girls,”<sup>16</sup> hometown tax payment service, settlement promotion (marriage hunting), JICA grass-roots projects, local energy production for local consumption, “HOPE barley project,” and a fishing condition confirmation system, etc. In FY 2016, it started a project to supply new local electricity as a pillar of profitable projects.

There are four methods to embody projects: (1) Member companies become a player at the proposal of a project group, (2) A project group submits a project idea to the city, and the city examines the idea, plans the project, prepares a budget, recruits project operators from the public, and implements the project (e.g. promotion of LED lighting, interschool energy management, etc.), (3) “HOPE” management office implements a project as an appropriate project operator entrusted by the city, and (4) The management office takes the lead in planning a project (e.g. Higashimatsushima Stitch Girls, JICA projects, electricity supply, etc.).

The “HOPE barley project” is an example of method (1). The project aims to develop local industries by using a method whereby “HOPE” finds areas affected by tsunami and abandoned cultivated land and an external brewery that provided assistance through the Reconstruction Agency provides know-how on the cultivation of barley. Like this project, efforts to introduce and utilize external human/financial resources and technology have been made through “HOPE.”



Barley seeding in a disaster affected area  
(Source: Website of “Asahi Group Holdings, Ltd.”)

Hometown tax payment service is an example of method (3). Although it is an entrusted project, “HOPE” implements the project on behalf of the city under an agreement between the city and “HOPE.” “HOPE” plays a role in connecting the city government with producers in the city to discover specialty products and send information on the products.

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<sup>16</sup> “Higashimatsushima Stitch Girls” is a project to produce and sell handmade embroidery products that was launched by Miri Okada, an artist and embroidery teacher, and women were invited by Ms. Okada to help stimulate the creation of new industries in the city and an increase in residents’ motivation.



The energy project (electricity supply) is an example of method (4). The project aims to improve the economic cycle by securing profits and reinvesting them in community development. The project plans to supply energy not only to public/business facilities but also residents, which leads to enhancement of the relationship between “HOPE” and residents.

- **Reconstruction community development using international cooperation projects**

To create diversified relationships with external persons and organizations, delivering experience of disaster affected local governments, and realizing “mutual reconstruction,” international cooperation projects have been implemented through accepting study tours in JICA Partnership Programs and group and region focus training (training in Japan).

Examples of implemented JICA Partnership Programs are a mutual reconstruction project with Banda Aceh, Republic of Indonesia that was affected by tsunami during the earthquake off the coast of Sumatra, and a project for the recovery of the fisheries industry in a fishing village with Leyte, Republic of the Philippines that was affected by a typhoon. In the former project, Higashimatsushima City was a proposer and “HOPE” was the project implementation organization. The projects carried out activities to encourage a sense of ownership in residents of both regions over four major challenges (sustainable community development, regional disaster management, community business, and creation of a functional local government organization). The projects have developed a cooperative and friendly relationship between training participants from two regions and residents of Higashimatsushima City through local events (active community development) inviting the participants, and the introduction of local products and craftsmanship of Higashimatsushima City.

As Japan places importance on enhancement of disaster risk reduction capacity by boosting the capacity of communities, the projects focused on support for strengthening human relationships in the countries. In the second phase, interactions between residents in Higashimatsushima City and those in the partner country were the project theme.

One example of what residents of Higashimatsushima City gained through the interactions was the eagerness to learn of training participants. They fully used their bodies to learn fishing techniques, which was useful to train local young fishermen in the city. Residents of Higashimatsushima City were also impressed that



A training participant from Aceh, Indonesia, receiving fishery training from fishermen in Higashimatsushima City  
(Source: Website of JICA)

training participants promptly put what they learned into practice (waste sorting and collection, refuse compost, selling refuse as compost, etc.). In addition, through presentations of and opinion exchange with training participants, they realized things they had not realized before. As described above, residents of the region that accepted training increased their motivation for their local activities after seeing the eagerness of training participants from Banda Aceh to apply what they learned from the experience of Higashimatsushima City to community development in their country.

Study tours to widely share experiences of reconstruction community development and disaster risk reduction try to increase visitors and tourists they accept by effectively collaborating with personnel of the city government to which “HOPE” submits tour acceptance requests, volunteer “storytellers,” and “regional autonomous councils.” “Nobiru community development council” has also cooperated with arranging the tours to share residents’ experience with training participants and exchange opinions with them. Based on these experiences, training in Japan (youth training/group and region focus training) is planned to be conducted under the initiative of “HOPE.”

Study tours were launched as international cooperation projects, but through arrangements like those above, consideration has also been given to sharing experiences of the earthquake disaster and reconstruction activities across Japan as well.

#### **(4) Achievements of efforts and future issues**

By promoting “community development through civic cooperation” and reorganizing community governance organizations, the city government facilitated autonomous efforts leading to the resolution of regional issues. This generated self-help and mutual help efforts at the time of the huge earthquake. In addition, community governance organizations fulfilled their original function at the stage of reconstruction community development. However, although community governance organizations have been established, there are some districts that have continuously carried out traditional, government-led regional autonomous activities because the concept of the organization has not been fully disseminated. It is desirable to promote reconstruction community development by residents and government on an equal footing, and in the future, it is desirable to carry out resident-led community development with the support of government towards a community desired by residents.

An intermediate support organization, “HOPE,” which was established for reconstruction community development through civic cooperation, has proactively accepted external industrial and academic resources to create original projects. However, it can be said that the organization is currently at the stage where it is implementing projects that strongly reflect opinions of member companies. It has not necessarily reached the stage where it creates independent, sustainable reconstruction projects by proactively developing the coordination capacity of local companies. One of the challenges is to make its management self-sustaining by achieving a balance between

securing profits and sharing the profits with the region in a manner different from general private enterprises. It is expected to enhance the development of local human resources and community businesses that are still in the trial stage.

#### Column

#### Sell products of different producers focusing on the characteristics of the products and the “region” they are from — Reconstruction community development through collaboration with private enterprises —

“Higashimatsushima antenna shop Machindo” (Operating body: Group Flora in Yamoto, Higashimatsushima City) has promoted the production of new local specialties through reviewing regional resources of Higashimatsushima City, focusing on the diversity and richness of the natural environment of the city. For example, tastes and flavors of products (oysters and seaweed, etc.) vary depending on producers. The shop requests producers in the city to highlight their uniqueness and produce “attractive products.” “Machindo” sells local specialties made in Higashimatsushima City to tourists and visitors through its antenna shops in the city (Omagari District and Yamoto District) and events in Tokyo and other large cities. If producers produce and sell high-value added, unique products focusing on “Higashimatsushima City,” which is the city they are from, it is expected to increase the name recognition of the city, create regional brands and add value to the products. In order to create this virtuous cycle, “Machindo” has held discussions with many producers and tries various activities to promote the city, producers and local specialties during tours to visit production sites.

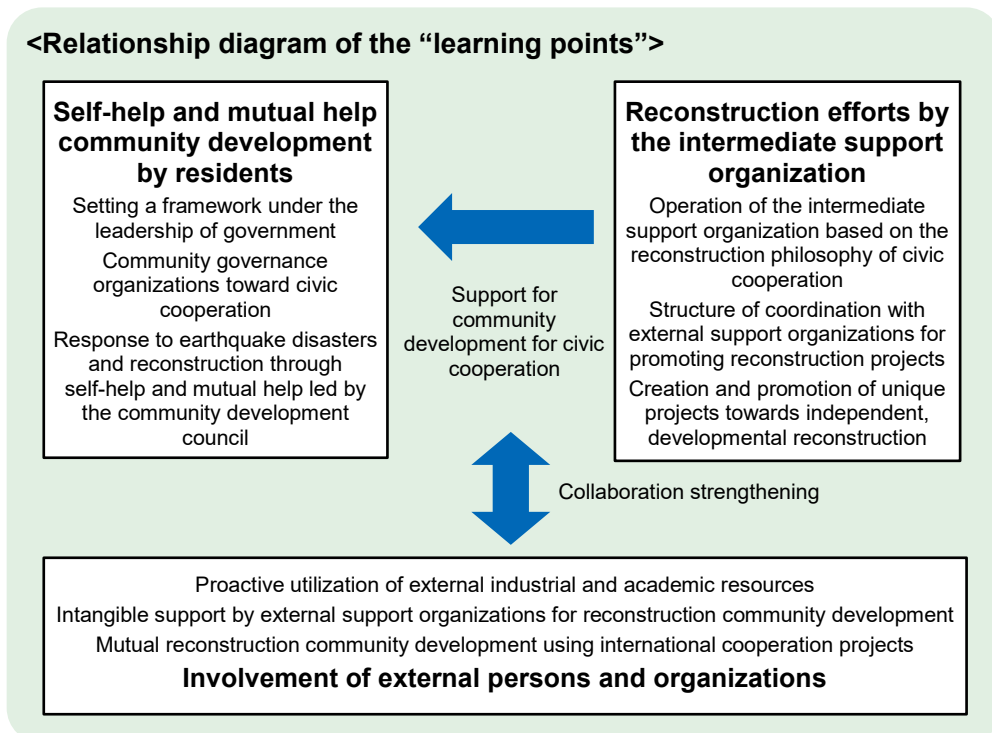
With shops and companies like those above selling salable products that place importance on profitability must be of secondary importance. In order to develop attractive specialties and sales channels of the region, it is useful to effectively collaborate with organizations in the city having similar functions, such as Okumatsushima Public Corp. (third sector company) and Higashimatsushima City Tourist and Product Association (voluntary organization), etc. “HOPE” is expected to play a role in connecting these actors and producers in the primary industry to create businesses.

### 6-3. Learning points

The basic theme of this case is that community governance organizations and an intermediate support organization established based on the philosophy of “community development through civic cooperation” play a major role in community development toward the recovery from the earthquake.

The city government proactively set a framework of “community development through civic cooperation,” that is, community development carried out between the government and residents and among residents. In addition, community governance organizations were reorganized into organizations for solving regional issues towards the

independence of the region. These comprise the first learning point. In the process of the reorganization, the huge earthquake occurred. After the earthquake, “mutual help” efforts were voluntarily made by residents on behalf of the city government. In addition, there was an organization that played a role in collecting opinions and coordinating/negotiating with the city government when a community broke up during the reconstruction process, which developed efforts for community development. These comprise the second learning point. At the same time, an intermediate support organization was established for promoting reconstruction projects more proactively. The organization played a role in matching acceptance of assistance from private enterprises and other external organizations with needs for reconstruction activities on behalf of the city government. The organization is launching a voluntary project for supporting community development through civic cooperation. These are also learning points. One more learning point is that collaboration projects and international cooperation projects with external organizations were proactively implemented during the reconstruction process, and the projects contributed to the strengthening of efforts for collaborative community development made by the community governance organizations and intermediate support organization.



## (1) Self-help and mutual help community development by residents

- **Setting a framework under the leadership of government**
  - At the same time as the municipal amalgamation, the city government announced the idea of community development through civic cooperation for facilitating the introduction of a new structure. Specifically, in order to have “regional autonomous councils,” new autonomous organizations, operate communities on behalf of existing residents’ associations and administrative districts, the government added functions of base facilities to existing facilities (community hall). The government also created a new framework whereby it delegates authority and financial resources to the new autonomous organizations through the existing system for designated management of public facilities. It is useful for developing countries to learn efforts to create a structure whereby residents’ organizations play a part of the role of government under conditions where the government cannot provide adequate public services reflecting residents’ needs of each district.
  
- **Community governance organizations towards civic cooperation**
  - A “regional autonomous council,” an autonomous organization whose formation was promoted by Higashimatsushima City, aims to solve regional issues by all residents in a district. The council is characterized as a community-based organization established in each residents’ association and administrative district and at the same time has become a purpose-based organization that has a permanent management office, which a residents’ association does not have, and is operated by the general assembly, board of directors and special committees. However, as residents’ sense of voluntary participation is necessary to promote resident-led projects, the city government took time to repeatedly hold workshops and training to gain residents’ understanding and make the shift to the new organization. There is a learning point in the process of creating a new organization and forming consensus toward the establishment of the organization.
  
- **Response to earthquake disasters and reconstruction through self-help and mutual help led by the “regional autonomous council”**
  - At the time of an emergency situation after the occurrence of the huge earthquake, a civic center in a district with relatively little damage established and operated an evacuation shelter to accept victims from other districts. This allowed the city government to be engaged in emergency response which it should prioritize as a local government. It can be considered as a learning point that residents’ spirit of self-help and mutual help and their autonomous capability developed through a community governance organization were demonstrated.
  - In the disaster reconstruction stage when a community was broken up, the council played a role in adjusting residents’ opinions and coordinating and making contact

with the city government, which enabled the maintenance of the community. In addition, residents' involvement and coordination capability were displayed by the unavoidable need to respond to the emergency situation. It is also a learning point that residents' voluntary involvement in community development was facilitated as they developed a feeling of closeness to their regional issues more than ever.

## **(2) Reconstruction efforts by the intermediate support organization**

- **Operation of the intermediate support organization based on the reconstruction philosophy of civic cooperation**
  - Higashimatsushima City developed the Higashimatsushima City reconstruction plan based on the philosophy of civic cooperation and the “eco-future city concept” based on the plan. This resulted in the establishment of “HOPE,” an intermediate support organization for proactively utilizing external resources. Although the organization was established for disaster response, activities that cannot be carried out by the city government alone can be carried out through an organization with a stable philosophy. This becomes a learning point.
- **Structure of coordination with external support organizations for promoting reconstruction projects**
  - Under the board of administration composed of the city, the commerce and industry association, and the social welfare council, an organizational structure was established to allocate participating enterprises to four special committees, as committee members, according to the reconstruction plan. Each committee discussed project plans and implemented the plans after obtaining the approval of the city government. It can be considered that these structures were effective and efficient to promote a major project for the recovery from the earthquake and accept diversified assistance. A structure to accept external resources through an intermediate support organization becomes a learning point.
- **Creation and promotion of unique projects toward independent, developmental reconstruction projects**
  - The intermediate support organization tried to match external resources with internal needs and created various projects using the characteristics of the resources, which led to securing employment of residents and an increase in economic circulation in the region. This also becomes a learning point.

## **(3) Involvement of external persons and organizations**

- **Proactive utilization of external industrial and academic resources**
  - With the common concept of “reconstruction community development through civic

cooperation,” external human/financial resources and technology were used by the entire region, which becomes a learning point. For example, “HOPE barley project” reused areas affected by tsunami and developed new local industries by using resources of external enterprises that wished to provide assistance.

- **Intangible support by external support organizations for reconstruction community development**

- Reconstruction activities were effectively carried out by involving JICA community reconstruction facilitators in the activities. As members of the management office of the community development council, the promoters fulfilled a facilitation function from the standpoint of a third party. Developing countries can learn much from this process.
- JICA community reconstruction facilitators have a system to systematically be involved in reconstruction activities over a long period, not for several days or several weeks. During assistance for the recovery from the earthquake disaster, the system enabled the building of a trust relationship with community residents, regional autonomous councils and the city government. After the tenure of individual promoters, their roles could be continuously fulfilled by dispatching their successors. This becomes a learning point.

- **Mutual reconstruction community development using international cooperation projects**

- As one of the methods to use external resources for the recovery from the earthquake disaster, Higashimatsushima City has implemented JICA Partnership Programs for sustainable community development, regional disaster risk reduction, and community business development. The projects have produced effects. For example, residents realized the value of regional resources through the eagerness to learn of training participants from developing countries and were impressed by their sincere attitudes about regional development. A win-win relationship that allows a developing country and Japan to share and mutually learn issues related to reconstruction community development may be built through international cooperation projects like those above.

## **6-4. Considerations in applying the case to developing countries**

### **(1) Considerations in applying the case**

**Contact:** Reconstruction Policy Division, Higashimatsushima City Government and “HOPE” (Higashimatsushima Organization for Progress and Economy, Education, Energy)

\*Desirable to have a contact through JICA Tohoku



**[Example of application to training]**

Training theme	Expected training participants	Training contents
Reconstruction community development through civic cooperation	Local government officials, local NGOs/NPOs, and representative residents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Higashimatsushima City reconstruction community development plan</li> <li>• Roles of government and residents (including opinion exchange with residents) in the efforts of a “regional autonomous council”</li> <li>• Role sharing among government, residents and private sector in projects of “HOPE”</li> </ul>
Promoting industry-government-academia collaboration by using an intermediate support organization	Officials of ministries/agencies related to reconstruction support, local government officials (industrial development), university-related persons, local enterprises	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creation and operation of the organization “HOPE”</li> <li>• Roles and support measures of government</li> <li>• Utilization of external human resources and networks in reconstruction projects</li> <li>• Specific projects of “HOPE” and relationships with relevant actors</li> </ul>

**[Considerations in applying the case]**

- Since the launch of earthquake disaster reconstruction activities, Higashimatsushima City has had increased opportunities to be involved in JICA projects, such as the acceptance of JICA community reconstruction facilitators, JICA Partnership Programs, and training in Japan. On the other hand, the city still has many matters that need coordination in reconstruction projects. Therefore, it is desirable to clarify which efforts will be applied to developing countries and to first of all ask JICA Tohoku for cooperation with training.
- In taking up efforts of “regional autonomous councils” as case studies, training participants will visit residents’ living spaces. It is necessary to understand local rules in advance and give due consideration in order not to cause trouble.

**(2) Examining the possibility of building a win-win relationship**

- It is useful to learn that residents of the accepting region realized the value of regional resources and their motivation for reconstruction community development was strengthened through the provision of technical support to Banda Aceh and Leyte, acceptance of training participants from the regions, and conducting site visits to grass-roots projects. In the future, it is expected that regional issues of Higashimatsushima City, Banda Aceh and Leyte will be solved, and new local industries will be created in the regions by strengthening collaboration and promoting interactions between Higashimatsushima City and Banda Aceh/Leyte.
- A win-win relationship may be built by using persons with experience in international cooperation such as JICA community reconstruction facilitators



allocated to Nobiru District. Having experience of facilitating activities in communities in developing countries is likely to be used and contribute to efforts for community development through civic cooperation and for community strengthening in Nobiru District as well as other regions. As it is anticipated that their experiences and know-how learned in developing countries will be utilized for community development, human resources including “Glocal (global and local) volunteers” are expected to be continuously introduced.

## 7. Aso Region, Kumamoto

### Regional revitalization efforts using grassland through wide-area collaboration

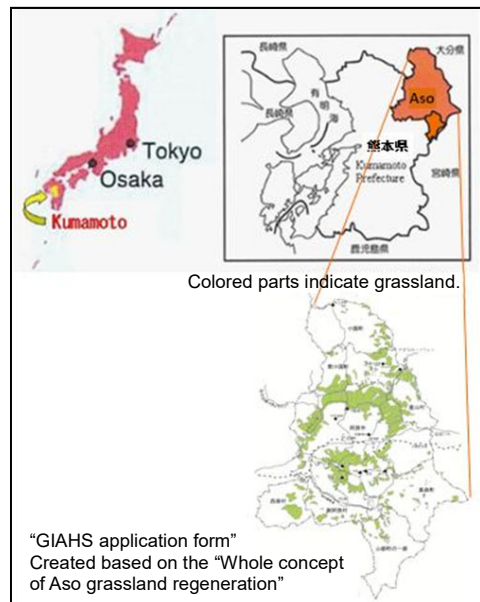
To deal with a crisis situation concerning grasslands that have supported regional industries and lives as well as yielding many natural blessings, the region coordinated the interests of various stakeholders and established the “Aso grassland regeneration council” for passing down the grasslands to the next generation. To achieve a simultaneous realization of grassland conservation, development of agricultural and livestock industries, and rebuilding of regional communities, the council has realized the participation of and collaboration with a wide range of actors both inside and outside the region.

### 7-1. Outline of the region

#### (1) Outline of the target area

The target area includes seven municipalities in Aso-gun (Aso City, Minamioguni-machi, Oguni-machi, Ubuyama-mura, Takamori-machi, Nishihara-mura, Minamiaso-mura) and a part of Yamato-cho (former Soyo-machi), Kumamoto. The target area has an area of approx. 1,079 km<sup>2</sup> and a population of 64,393 people (2015 census).

The area has mountains, including the five Aso mountains, and Japan’s largest grasslands spreading over 22,000 ha located on the world’s largest caldera surrounded by the rim of the crater stretching 18 km from east to west, 25 km from north to south and 128 km around. In 1934, the area was designated as a national park for the first time in Japan. Most of the grasslands in the area were jointly used for grazing and collecting grass by farmers with the right of common as a community-based “common land (pasture)” and have been managed by common groups (“pasture associations”).



## (2) Background and issues

The Aso grasslands were created through regional activities over 1,000 years and have continued today. The grasslands have been used for agricultural purposes and residents' lives as a place for obtaining compost and thatch, grazing cattle and horses, and collecting grass. The grassland environment has been maintained through events held by community members, such as open burning to prevent grasslands from being abandoned and becoming forests, etc.



Landscape of the "Aso grasslands"

The grasslands have a magnificent landscape that changes according to the season. A landscape where "Japanese brown cattle," a traditional breed in the Aso Region, graze on the grass is one of the precious tourism resources representing the region.

However, after 1955, agricultural cattle and horses became unnecessary due to the popularization of chemical fertilizers and agricultural mechanization, and the demand for the grasslands as a place for grazing and collecting grass declined. The demand for thatch also declined due to the popularization of tiled roof, which changed people's lifestyle and decreased their involvement with the grasslands. Instead of agricultural cattle and horses, the production of beef cattle started after 1955 by using the grasslands as grazing lands. In 1975, the peak year, a total of over 18,000 head of fattening and breeding cattle were raised, but due to the liberalization of beef imports in 1991, beef prices became stagnant and the number of beef cattle caretakers, head of beef cattle, and incomes from beef cattle production significantly declined. This caused a decline in grazing and grass collection carried out by members of pasture associations once again and a decline in the necessity and their awareness of grassland management.

In addition, a shortage of personnel for grassland maintenance and management was a serious problem in the Aso Region due to population outflow after the peak year (1955) and a decline in and aging of persons engaged in agricultural and livestock industries. In 1994, Hokusui-mura (current Minamiaso-mura) suspended open burning. Although the village resumed open burning in the following year by using the village's subsidies, pastures that suspended open burning increased due to the danger involved and labor burden.

As described above, major local industries became stagnant, the number of livestock farmers leading the industries declined (approx. 8,000 in 1970 -> approx. 900 in 2011), and grasslands declined and transformed. In association with these circumstances, the deterioration of the landscape as a national park was considered a problem.

## **7-2. Efforts for regional management**

### **(1) Efforts at the preliminary stage (before the establishment of the council)**

#### **● Advent of a crisis situation concerning grasslands and actions for grassland conservation**

With the decline in the area of native grasslands and the transformation of grasslands due to changes in agricultural form and lifestyle, transformation and stagnation of the livestock industry, and decline in and aging of persons engaged in agricultural and livestock industries, some pasture associations suspended open burning in the early 1990s, which caused a crisis situation in the maintenance and management of grasslands. However, since around this time, public functions of grasslands have attracted attention in terms of conservation of the natural environment and landscape, national land conservation, and water source cultivation. Local governments provided assistance to the maintenance and management of grasslands (open burning and grass cutting) and community groups carried out activities for the utilization and conservation of grasslands.

To achieve a balance between regional development and conservation of the natural environment, the Environmental Agency (at that time) having jurisdiction over national parks continuously held forums and meetings with various actors to examine the framework of grassland conservation. In 1995, “Aso Green Stock” (currently a public interest incorporated foundation) was established to launch activities for passing down greenery areas of the Aso Region (grasslands, forests and agricultural lands) to the next generation through collaboration with urban/rural areas, government and enterprises. The activities developed into the “open burning support volunteers” later.

#### **● Sharing the recognition of grassland conservation and building a trust relationship**

The grassland environment of the Aso Region is so-called secondary nature that has been formed and maintained by activities of community residents. The continuous utilization, maintenance and management of the Aso grasslands were basic challenges for grassland conservation. However, most persons engaged in agricultural and livestock industries used the grasslands just for their business and did not feel the necessity for grassland conservation or understand that the use of the grasslands led to landscape and environmental conservation. Against this background, there were some persons engaged in local agricultural and livestock industries who conflicted with or felt a distrust for the Environmental Agency that was a “conservation” promoter.

Introduction of  
a key person

**“A grassland of 75 m<sup>2</sup> can be conserved by  
consuming 1 kg of beef”**

— **The late Norio Otaki devoted himself to the  
conservation of the Aso grasslands**

Mr. Norio Otaki served as the director of Advanced Livestock Training Institute of Kumamoto Prefectural Agricultural University and the director of Kumamoto Prefectural Livestock Experiment Station Aso Branch. He was highly trusted by local farmers for his research and technical instruction in grassland farming that he was engaged in for many years. As he loved the Aso grasslands, he repeatedly stressed the necessity of grassland conservation and development of the livestock industry, and collected opinions of community residents while conducting a status survey on open burning over 25 years.

Mr. Otaki left many famous sayings. For example, “The grassland condition significantly changes if open burning is suspended for five years. A follow-up field survey found that the height of Japanese silver grass and the amount of dried grass significantly increase for five years and a big fire occurs if a burning cigarette is thrown into grassland,” “Tractors can only be used on 30% of the area of the Aso grasslands. Only cattle can access the remaining area. I want to give the name of ‘Grassland landscape conservation gardener’ to cattle that graze on the grass in a grazing period and protect grasslands with an inclination of 35 degrees,” and “In order to protect the Aso Region, which is the origin of the highest quality food and beef production, considering the history of food, life and water, it is necessary to explain the necessity of grassland conservation by using a simple example, like ‘A grassland of 75 m<sup>2</sup> can be conserved by consuming 1 kg of beef.’”

One of his representative books is “History of Ichinomiya-machi, Aso: Activities of grasslands and residents – For achieving a balance with nature”.

He collected data to have farmers be focused on grasslands and built a foundation for the current grassland conservation and regeneration from a civilian perspective. However, he became ill before the establishment of the “Aso grassland regeneration council” and could not carry out activities in the council. His spirit to devote himself to the grasslands has been taken over by Mr. Yoshitaka Takahashi (expert at Western Region Agricultural Research Center, National Agriculture and Food Research Organization), the current chairperson of the council.

Based on this situation, the Environmental Agency conducted surveys and projects to clarify actual conditions of the grasslands spreading over a wide area and persons using and managing the grasslands, and made efforts to have community residents realize the attractiveness and importance of the grasslands. The agency claimed that the grasslands were rational as resources for agricultural production and enabled safe, secure food production; as well as emphasizing the importance of the grasslands from the perspective of the local tourism industry. It also evoked the unique attractiveness of the

grasslands that has been established as local culture, focusing on a traditional custom called “Bonbana-tori”, whereby people pick colorful flowers in a grassland in the morning and offer the flowers on the altar. Furthermore, it explained that the Aso grasslands contributed to the public interest as they played a role in preventing disasters in the region and in the downstream basin. The agency took time to gain understanding on the utilization, maintenance and management of the grasslands and build a trust relationship. Through these efforts, there was a growing recognition among community residents that the Aso grasslands were the basis for the maintenance of local economy, industries and cultures.

Activities of the “open burning support volunteers” were not smoothly accepted at first, but now they are essential for many pasture associations. They lead to the establishment of a trust relationship between residents in urban and rural areas.

## (2) Efforts at the design stage (establishment of the council)

### ● Creating an opportunity for information sharing and activity coordination among various stakeholders

The biggest issue over the Aso grasslands was that a relationship between regional specific resources and regional society/economy had not been maintained in a sustainable manner due to a decline in people managing and using the grasslands. As this issue could not be separated from efforts for regional revitalization, was related to various fields, and had many challenges to be examined, there was a growing recognition that the participation of various stakeholders was necessary for solving the issue.

After the establishment of the Law for the Promotion of Nature Restoration in 2003, efforts for the conservation of the Aso grasslands were positioned in the framework of secondary nature regeneration. Based on the framework, the “Aso grassland regeneration council” was established in 2005 by various organizations and individuals involved in the Aso grasslands, with the basic idea of “creating a structure for the sustainable use of the blessings of grasslands in line with modern times and passing down the precious Aso grasslands to future generations.”

The council is a wide-area organization composed of a wide range of members. The area of the council is beyond municipalities, and various fields are related to the council, such as the natural environment, tourism, regional culture, agricultural and livestock industries, water source cultivation, and national land conservation. In addition, various



Meeting of the Aso grassland regeneration council

actors are involved in the council, such as government (relevant agencies and ministries (national government), relevant departments of the prefecture, and municipalities), residents, NGOs and experts.

At the time of the establishment, the number of council members was 102 (organizations, corporations, and individuals), but it increased to 252 as of November 2016. The breakdown of the members is as follows.

- \* 179 organizations and corporations: 112 administrative districts and pasture associations, 23 local NPOs/NGOs, 16 organizations of local/national governments, 14 relevant organizations, and 14 other organizations
- \* 73 individuals: 32 people engaged in local agricultural and livestock industries, 11 local experts, 5 volunteers, and 25 academic experts and researchers

### ● Setting moderate participation conditions and inviting a wide range of people

As the Aso grassland regeneration council is a legal counsel, the Ministry of the Environment served as an organizer for the preparation of the establishment of the council and promoted participation in the council in the preparatory stage. In addition to the Ministry of the Environment, the Nature Conservation Division, Department of Environment and Residential Life, Kumamoto Prefecture, Aso municipal association, and “Aso Green Stock” served as promoters for the establishment of the council to recruit council members from local relevant persons, particularly from persons related to local pasture associations that mainly maintained and managed the grasslands.

The council set moderate conditions for recruiting its members, based on the idea of voluntary participation of organizations and individuals that carry out activities related to the council. An applicant must be an individual, organization or corporation that agrees with the council’s prospectus and can continuously participate in activities for the conservation, regeneration, maintenance and management of the Aso grasslands.

At this stage, the council was not regarded as an organization for implementing its unique projects, but as an opportunity for discussions, communication and coordination for promoting projects and activities of the council members.

### ● Setting acceptable targets and policies

At the time of the establishment of the council, efforts for the regeneration of the Aso grasslands were basically made by various actors in various fields on their own responsibility. Therefore, in March 2007, the council developed the “Whole concept of Aso grassland regeneration” after a year of discussion so that the actors could have a common recognition and collaborate with each other. The concept was revised in March 2014 based on changes in the situation surrounding the grasslands and is regarded as the



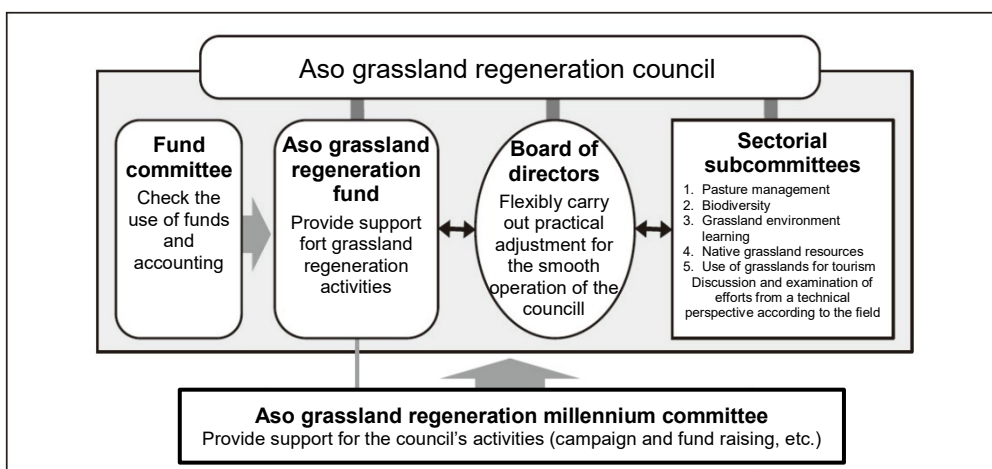
second-generation whole concept.

As long-term policies to be shared by a wide range of people, the concept has set targets for relevant fields: the natural environment (regeneration of beautiful, rich grasslands), industry (regeneration of agricultural and livestock industries enriched by native grassland resources), and community (regeneration of a community surrounded by grasslands where people live actively). It has also specified the following major efforts:

- (1) Promoting the use, maintenance and management of pastures in varied ways;
- (2) Conservation and regeneration of the grassland environment in which various animals and plants can live;
- (3) Promoting grassland environment learning to increase people who understand and are attached to grasslands;
- (4) Review of the value of grassland resources and promoting cyclic usage;
- (5) Promoting the use of tourism resources that contribute to the conservation and regeneration of grassland environment; and
- (6) Land utilization in consideration of native grassland conservation.

### ● Organizational structure for producing driving power

The council, composed of over 100 organizations and individuals, established the “Council (general meeting),” a decision-making body held twice a year, “Sectoral subcommittees,” composed of experts and actors for examining and evaluating efforts of members according to the theme, and the “Board of directors,” composed of subcommittees, regional representatives and relevant administrative organizations, serving as a coordinating organization held about six times a year. As an auditing organization of the “Aso grassland regeneration fund,” the “Fund committee” was added



Source: “Aso grassland regeneration report”



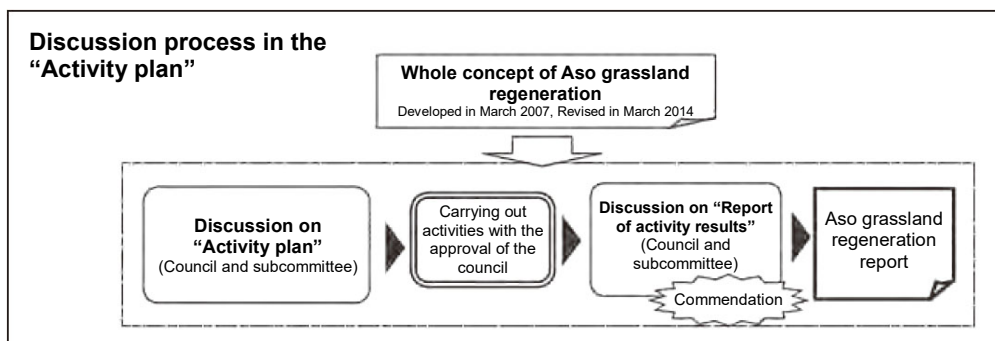
later (refer to the figure below).

The “Board of directors” is an organization that actually controls the council organization. At first, persons who wished to participate in the board of directors served as board members. However, with the expansion of activities of the council, the board of directors became an organization that is composed of representatives of organizations and communities. Currently, it has about 30 members composed of administrative districts, pasture associations, local NPOs/NGOs, organizations of local/national governments, local experts, volunteers, academic experts and researchers. The board of directors has become an opportunity for effective discussions as it involves relevant national/local government organizations.

Ministry of the Environment Kyushu Regional Environment Office serves as the management office of the council. As a wide-area administrative organization, the regional environment office has displayed its coordination function by promoting participation in the council and bearing expenses for the operation of the council. Organizations having expertise, such as the Ministry of the Environment, Aso Green Stock and Aso Design Center, etc. serve as the management offices of sectorial subcommittees.

- **Sharing information, examination and evaluation of efforts**

Based on the whole concept, individual council members create an “activity plan” every year that specifies details of efforts (projects and activities) for grassland regeneration. (Submission of the plan is not mandatory.) Before carrying out the projects and activities, they discuss their details at the subcommittees and the council. A submitted “activity plan” is approved as activities of the council, and evaluation is conducted in the subcommittees after completion of the activities. Evaluation results are shared with council members. Examination and evaluation are conducted based on the targets of the whole concept and the pillar of a project. The “activity report” is compiled by the management office and issued as the “Aso grassland regeneration report” once a year



Source: “Aso grassland regeneration report”

(refer to the figure above).

The “activity plan” and “activity report” are designed so that individual members can participate in activities and share information without difficulty. In the “Aso grassland regeneration report” all kinds of information related to the grasslands is summarized and achievements of activities are visible. Information on activities of individual members is communicated inside and outside the region by distributing the report to relevant persons and supporters inside and outside the region.

### (3) Efforts at the growth stage (implementation of unique projects by the council)

#### ● Establishment of the “Aso grassland regeneration fund”

In 2010, five years after the establishment of the council, council members argued that the council needed to have its own budget and implement its various, unique projects in order to continue and expand the council, and determined to establish the “Aso grassland regeneration fund” to be the fund for the council. The fund raises activity funds of the council while promoting grassland regeneration efforts to residents and enterprises and widely attracting their attention. The basic idea of the fund is to ask unspecified people receiving the blessings of the Aso grasslands for “wide,” “shallow” and “continuous” cooperation, and to gain a great deal of cooperation of enterprises and organizations.

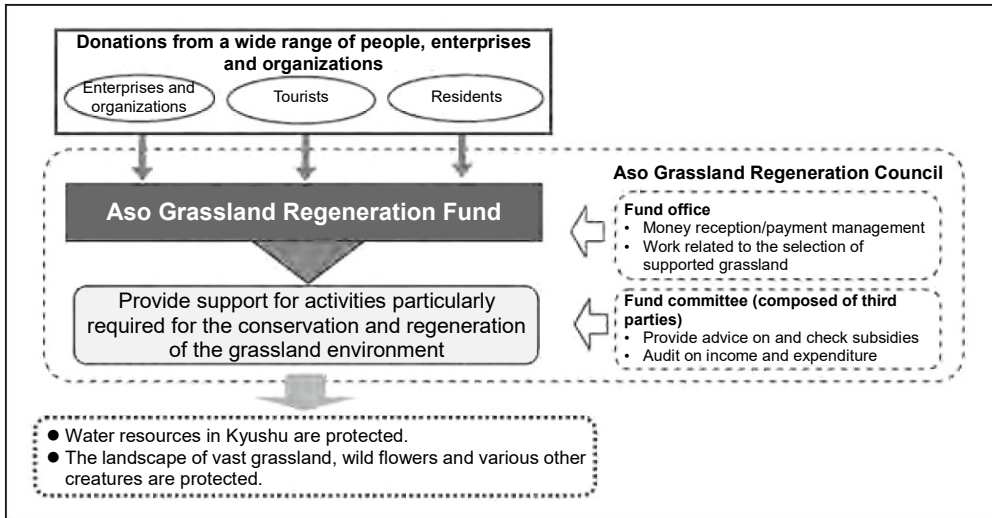


A scene from the fund-raising campaign

The fund launched a fund-raising campaign inside and outside the region after setting a donation box in about 150 locations in the Aso Region and other areas inside/outside the prefecture, such as local governments, tourism facilities, restaurants and exhibition facilities, etc. In addition, it developed campaign-related products, such as a card/fixed deposit with a donation and a vending machine selling beverages of a supporting company.

Raised funds are used to promote and develop activities for grassland regeneration carried out by council members. Specifically, they are basically used for activities outside the scope of measures and projects of administrative organizations.

In addition to the council and the board of directors, the “Fund committee,” whose members are selected from the public, and the “Fund office” were established as organizations for fund operation, which allowed the fund to have a transparent structure (refer to the figure below).



Source: "Aso grassland regeneration report"

### ● Establishment of a third-party organization to support the fund-raising campaign

In October 2010, along with the fund-raising campaign, the "Aso grassland regeneration millennium committee" was established as an organization to support the council, based on the idea that "The Aso grasslands should be supported by residents of the prefecture and state who receive the blessings of the grasslands." The committee is composed of the governor of Kumamoto prefecture, national/local government officials, academic experts, and representatives of local business communities, news media and citizen groups, and has played a major role in shaping public opinion. The committee serves as a third-party organization for giving direction to the fund-raising campaign, which leads to securing the transparency of raised funds.

In response to an unstable situation of the council that relied on raised funds and other extraordinary revenues, the prefecture established the "Aso grassland conservation support system" in 2015 with advice from the "Aso grassland regeneration millennium committee." The system is expected to be one of the methods to secure permanent financial resources as the prefecture and municipalities of Aso Region plan to develop a safety-net structure and secure funds for maintaining an area for open burning for the next ten years.

### ● Development of unique projects using donations

The purpose of the fund-raising campaign is to continue and expand activities for grassland regeneration carried out by individual members. By having its own funds as an organization, the council can develop various efforts into its own unique projects. In

particular, the funds enable the council to offer benefits to local farmers and pasture association members who are directly involved in grassland regeneration and to implement projects for increasing its participants.

Specifically, the funds are used as funds for farmers to purchase Japanese brown cattle for breeding, expenses to resume open burning in abandoned lands, supporting the operation of the open burning support volunteers, grassland environment learning, promoting agricultural products using native grass, and other activities of council members. The total amount of donations collected for six years since the launch of the fund-raising campaign is over 100 million yen.

### <Activities subsidized by the fund-raising campaign>

\*total amounts between September 2011 and March 2016

Activities	Amount subsidized (yen)
Purchase of Japanese brown cattle for breeding	20,640,000
Regeneration of abandoned lands (managed) for open burning	5,550,000
Operation and management of the open burning support volunteers	20,120,000
Continuation of grassland maintenance and management	3,155,675
Regeneration of grassland environment in which various animals and plants live	2,010,790
Development of persons for grassland conservation (promoting grassland environment learning)	6,679,625
Total	58,156,090

Note: Created based on materials of the Aso grassland regeneration council

## (4) Efforts at the development stage

### ● Increase in council members mainly from pasture associations

The council has placed importance on the participation of local farmers and pasture association members who are directly involved in grassland regeneration. The council has developed a structure to directly grasp their opinions and needs by having them participate in the board of directors of the council as representatives of the region and creating an opportunity for opinion and information exchange among pasture association members. It has also supported an increase in Japanese brown cattle for breeding purchased by pasture association members through raised funds. These efforts became advantages for the pasture association members and resulted in increases in the number of pasture associations and their members participating in the council, and the proportion of the associations and their members among the council members (44% of 252 organizations and individuals as of November 2016).

A sense of ownership of pasture association members participating in the council is increasing through communication with community residents during the fund-raising

campaign and promoting the value of the Aso grasslands and efforts for grassland regeneration.

As a pasture association was originally a group established in each community, it had strong regional ties, varied by community, and had less horizontal connection. However, by having increased opportunities to have communication among pasture associations through the council, such as sharing information on issues and technical know-how and mutual learning of their activities, etc., the associations have increased their motivations.

- **Expansion of efforts through cross-industrial collaboration**

There are increasing cases where a discussion in the council becomes an opportunity to use the grasslands for multiple purposes. For example, persons engaged in agricultural and livestock industries who manage the grasslands and a tourist agent consider pastures (grasslands) as tourism resources and collaborate to provide tour programs featuring visits to the grasslands conducted by a local guide group. Through the interpreter training program and the geo guide course, these programs lead to the development of guides having in-depth knowledge on grasslands. In addition, groups of restaurants and accommodation facilities in the Aso Region launched activities to donate a part of meal and accommodation charges to farmers. They encourage tourists to “eat meals using Japanese brown cattle to conserve the grasslands.” The creation of new regional attractiveness and the formation of regional networks like those above that use the grasslands through cross-industrial collaboration lead to the creation of brands focusing on grassland conservation as added value.

- **Strengthening grassland regeneration efforts through collaboration among government-related persons**

In response to the establishment of “Aso grassland regeneration council” and the development of various activities, grassland regeneration efforts have been strengthened and expanded by administrative organizations.

In 2012, the governor of Kumamoto prefecture announced the “Kabashima initiative” that positions the Aso Region and its grasslands representing the region as the “eternal treasure of Kumamoto.” In the following year, the governor announced the “Aso grassland regeneration vision” and the “Kabashima initiative next” from the perspective of using the grasslands for regional revitalization. These efforts promote pioneering efforts that lead to the creation of new structures for passing down the grasslands to the next generation through public-private collaboration, such as the “Aso grassland conservation support system” introduced earlier. In association with these efforts, municipalities in the Aso Region developed the “Comprehensive strategy for regeneration of the Aso Region using its grasslands with 1,000 years of history,” and the state certified the region as a “Comprehensive special zone for the inheritance and

creative utilization of the grasslands with 1,000 years of history (special grassland zone)” based on the strategy. These efforts have the same targets as the whole concept of the council and are positioned as action plans of the whole concept.

Through the collaboration among five organizations using the Aso grasslands as their activity base, a liaison committee was established in 2015 by the “Aso grassland regeneration council” and management offices of world cultural heritages, UNESCO global geoparks, and Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems (GIAHS), with support from the “Aso grassland regeneration millennium committee.” The committee effectively cooperates to addresses common themes of the organizations.

- **Promoting grassland environment learning to pass down the value of grasslands to the next generation**

The “Grassland environment learning subcommittee” in the council launched a project to promote environmental learning activities intended for children living in the Aso Region through cooperation among interested subcommittee members including administrative organizations, NGOs, educational institutes, and pasture associations. The “Aso grassland kids project” launched in 2009 has carried out



A scene from the “Aso grassland kids project”

various activities with the aim of having children gain a deeper understanding of the Aso grasslands conserved and inherited in the region. Examples of the activities carried out included basic programs for disseminating environmental learning, such as delivery classes by experts, and hands-on learning under the guidance of pasture association members at elementary and junior high schools, etc. The project also created supplementary learning materials and case examples and trained instructors who provide grassland environment learning at schools and other facilities in the region. These activities are carried out based on voluntary activities of subcommittee members and by using the council’s own budget.

In addition, as a base to learn about the Aso grasslands and to carry out various activities related to the grasslands, the “Aso grassland conservation activity center” was established jointly by the Ministry of the Environment and Aso City. Based on the desire of young farmers to learn about native grass in pastures, the center is expected to be used as a place to allow farmers to relearn the value of the grasslands.

### ● Efforts for the recovery from the earthquake

In April 2016, a huge earthquake with the maximum seismic intensity of 7 occurred in the Aso Region. Earthquakes with a seismic intensity of 5 lower or greater occurred 18 times for three days from April 14 to 16. Aftershocks also occurred many times in the Kumamoto Region, Aso Region and central Oita prefecture. In 2012, heavy rain caused damage to the northern part of Kyushu. In a situation where the damage was still a fresh memory, residents' lives, the agricultural and livestock industries, and tourism industry were significantly affected by the earthquake. In addition, the heavy rain and typhoon that occurred after the earthquake expanded the damage. The grasslands were also significantly damaged, with cracks, faults, landslides occurring, as well as damaged pasture roads, etc., which affected the utilization, maintenance and management of pastures. The earthquake left deep scars on the magnificent scenery of the caldera.

By using its own funds, the council provided emergency assistance to projects related to the restoration of the grasslands and the continuation of open burning implemented by council members. The council also emphasized the necessity of public assistance based on opinion surveys of pasture associations concerning the damage situation and recovery/reconstruction of pastures. These efforts resulted in relief measures being taken by the agricultural sector for the maintenance and management of the pastures.

### (5) Outputs of efforts and future issues

Through the efforts of the “Aso grassland regeneration council” and other relevant organizations, stakeholders have shared the value of the grasslands and promoted a consensus on the inheritance of the grasslands, which are the largest resources of the region, through collaboration and cooperation. The efforts have also enabled a wide range of people inside and outside the region to share the value. Since the region, which spreads over a wide area and has grasslands, confirmed a general outline of community development, the value of native grass has been reviewed as resources and efforts for grassland regeneration have been expanded. In addition, the brand value of the grasslands has been increased as shown in efforts for the production and sale of agricultural products using native grass compost, use of herbaceous biomass resources, and stable thatch production. These efforts promoted the participation of persons who use, maintain and manage the grasslands in the council and enhanced the position of the council in regional communities.

On the other hand, “creating a structure for the sustainable use of the blessings of grasslands in line with modern times,” which is the goal of the council specified in the whole concept, has not yet been achieved. Although there are signs of the development of persons who use, maintain and manage grasslands through the participation of young farmers, strengthening of collaboration among administrative organizations, and promoting environmental learning, these efforts are mainly made only by motivated persons. It is necessary to spread the efforts to other people. In the future, it is hoped that



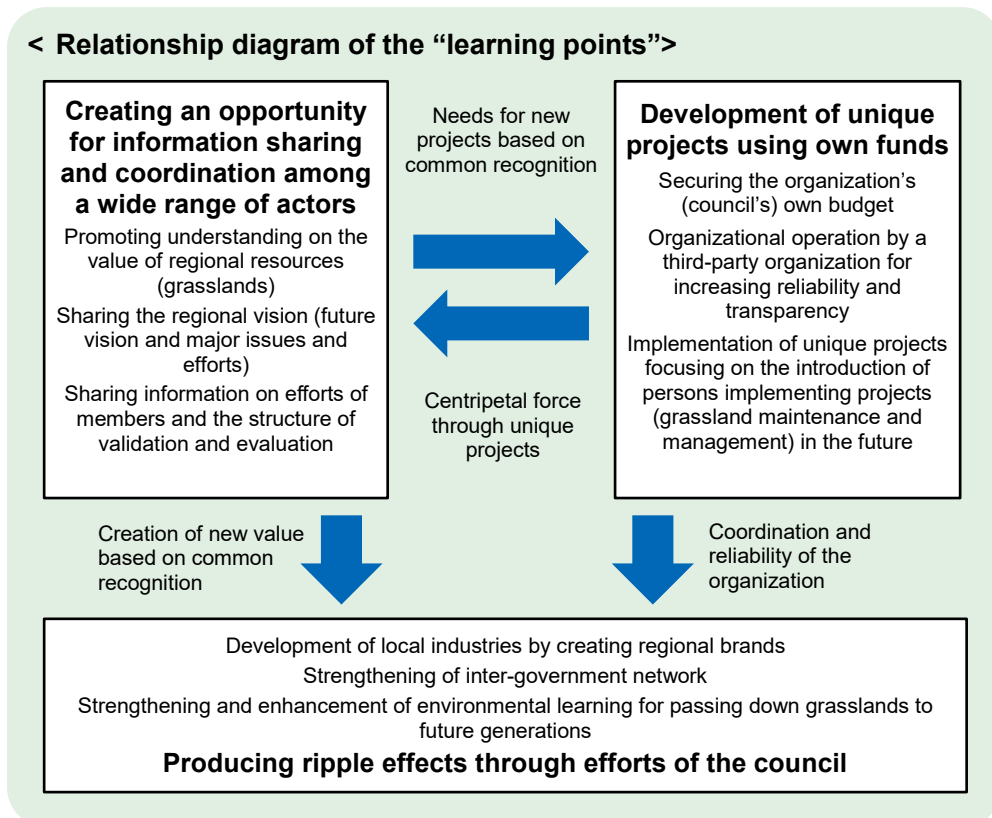
human and financial resources will be secured to continue and expand the efforts as well as to promote efforts for grassland regeneration by the entire region.

### 7-3. Learning points

The basic theme of this case is community development through wide-area collaboration. One of the characteristics of this case is the involvement of various stakeholders by the nature of related regional resources.

The “Aso grassland regeneration council,” an organization for information sharing and coordination, was established by reviewing the value of regional resources and sharing future visions among a wide range of actors. The council led to the promotion of activities of individual actors having different positions and ideas by applying a structure to coordinate the actors and examine and evaluate their efforts. These make up the first learning point.

The creation of opportunities for sharing and coordinating ideas clarified the needs for necessary projects. In addition, the council secured its own funds, launched its own unique projects, and increased its organizational value by securing reliability and transparency through a third-party’s perspective in order to cover the funds by donations. Furthermore, the council implemented its own unique projects focusing on supporting the actors and introducing the actors into the council. These efforts led to the enhancement of the position and centripetal force of the organizations of the council in





regional communities. These constitute the second learning point.

The establishment of the council and enabling the council to implement unique organizational projects led to the development of activities of individual council members, the development of a sense of ownership among regional actors, industrial development through cross-industrial collaboration, and the strengthening of collaboration among administrative organizations. This realized the creation of new value and ripple effects, such as the establishment of Aso brands (regional brands), disseminating the attractiveness of the brands to the world, and the improvement of sustainability by strengthening efforts for the development of future leaders.

### **(1) Creating an opportunity for information sharing and coordination among a wide range of actors**

- **Promoting understanding on the value of regional resources (grasslands)**
  - Developing countries can learn a great deal from efforts to encourage persons who maintain and manage regional resources (Aso grasslands) to realize the significance of their activities by promoting the value of the resources through various opportunities.
  - Before the establishment of the council, meetings were held with the participation of external experts and surveys were conducted on the actual conditions of grasslands. It is useful to learn that the efforts raised the awareness of the economic value, public function and other new value of the resources as far as common recognition and introduced various actors inside and outside the region into the council.
- **Sharing the regional vision (future vision and major issues and efforts)**
  - The council summarized the regional vision (“Whole concept of Aso grassland regeneration”) shared among its members having different positions and ideas, and clarified the future vision and major issues and efforts of the region. This becomes an important point for developing countries as well. The development of the concept led to specific action plans of relevant administrative organizations.
  - The whole concept specified the “restoration of a balance among the environment, economy and society” as its goal. It is an important point that the goal enabled various actors to share the vision and to continuously participate in the efforts.
- **Sharing information on efforts of members, and the structure of validation and evaluation**
  - To promote wide-area collaboration, the council facilitated the participation of various actors by regarding its individual members carrying out activities as central players and promoting information sharing and activity coordination. This process is

effective for developing countries as well.

- As the council has many members, it established theme-based expert “subcommittees” and a “board of directors” composed of representatives of various actors as an organization for the liaison and coordination of the actors and their activities. These organizations became an essential structure for effectively and efficiently implementing a wide range of related projects.
- A structure to examine and evaluate annual efforts of individual council members according to the whole concept became a means for mutual learning and activity management as well as encouraging the members in their activities. The structure is useful in terms of helping to strengthen overall efforts.

## **(2) Development of unique projects using own funds**

- **Securing the organization's (council's) own budget**
  - By securing its own funds, the council secured its independence as an organization, which enabled the development of a wide range of projects meeting the needs of the region and was useful for strengthening solidarity within the council.
  - The council established the “fund” as a means to secure its own budget for creating a structure that allows a wide range of supporters inside and outside the region to participate in the council.
- **Organizational operation by a third-party organization to increase reliability and transparency**
  - The council established third-party organizations for the operation of the fund-raising campaign. The organizations are the Fund committee established within the council and the “Aso grassland regeneration millennium committee” (external supporters) established outside the council. The council has secured its fairness, transparency and centripetal force. This serves as an important point for implementing projects in developing countries.
- **Implementation of unique projects focusing on the introduction of persons implementing projects (grassland maintenance and management) in the future**
  - The council used raised funds for activities matching the interests of local farmers and pasture association members, and introduced persons engaged in pasture associations and agricultural/livestock industries who maintain and manage grasslands into the council, which led to the maintenance and expansion of effective activities. This serves as an important point for involving various actors.

### (3) Producing ripple effects through efforts of the council

- **Development of local industries by creating regional brands**
  - A discussion in the council became an opportunity to carry out various activities, such as the provision of hands-on programs using grassland environment and the development of products focusing on grassland conservation as added value, etc. These activities developed into a collaboration among different fields, such as the development of agricultural/livestock industries, tourism development, and environmental conservation, etc., and led to the creation of regional attractiveness and the revitalization of local industries through network formation among actors. This process serves as a learning point.
- **Strengthening of inter-government network**
  - Through the council, efforts for grassland regeneration were activated. The efforts led to securing regional solidarity and raising its name recognition as a wide-area region. For example, the regional government (prefecture) positioned these regional resources as “regional treasures” and has demonstrated its leadership and coordination functions. In addition, the expansion of efforts of and collaboration between relevant administrative organizations contributed to the registrations with UNESCO global geoparks and GIAHS and the certification of a comprehensive special zone for regional revitalization. These efforts are considered useful.
- **Strengthening and enhancement of environmental learning for passing down grasslands to future generations**
  - The council created programs and materials for “grassland environment learning” inviting various actors inside the region for developing next-generation leaders. It formed a consensus on the utilization of regional resources for the future and made efforts for developing future leaders. These are important in terms of securing the sustainability of a community.

## **7-4. Considerations in applying the case to developing countries**

### **(1) Considerations in applying the case**

#### **Contact:**

- \* Ministry of the Environment Kyushu Regional Environment Office and Aso-Kuju National Park Administrative Office (management office of the Aso grassland regeneration council)
  - ⇒ Roles: Provision of discussion opportunities, operation of the council, financial and technical assistance, promotion and dissemination of the council

\* Regional Development Division, Department of Planning and Development, Kumamoto Prefecture

⇒ Roles: Development of regional visions and initiatives, examination on securing financial resources, collaboration with relevant municipalities

**[Example of application to training]**

Training theme	Expected training participants	Training contents
Establishment and operation of a wide-area collaboration organization for community development	Local government officials (top leaders) and officials of ministries and agencies responsible for strengthening local government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consensus formation and organizational operation towards wide-area collaboration</li> <li>• Development of future visions focusing on sustainable use of regional resources</li> <li>• Significance of and methods for securing one's own funds</li> </ul>
Natural environment conservation and community development	Local government officials (mid-level officials) and representatives of NGOs/NPOs and resident groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identification of regional resources and development of residents' self-awareness of the value of regional resources</li> <li>• Creation of brands using regional resources through collaboration among different fields</li> <li>• Development of next-generation leaders through environmental learning using regional resources</li> </ul>

**[Considerations in applying the case]**

- The region has little experience of accepting JICA projects. It is essential to contact the Ministry of the Environment serving as the management office of the council and the prefecture leading efforts of the region. As the efforts of the region involve various actors, it is necessary to clarify relevant organizations according to the efforts to be learnt, considering the needs of developing countries. Therefore, it is desirable to visit the region before implementing a project and have a meeting on project procedures while involving JICA Kyushu as necessary.
- Most of the grasslands of the Aso Region are used for industrial activities, and persons having the right of common can only use and enter the grasslands. In addition, persons engaged in the livestock industry are very sensitive to foot-and-mouth disease. So, before visiting the region, regional rules must be checked and confirmed, and due consideration must be given so as to follow the rules.
- Based on the need to collect utilization examples and considerations in conducting training, it is desirable to share information with JICA Kyushu when making a training request.

**(2) Examination of the possibility to build a win-win relationship**

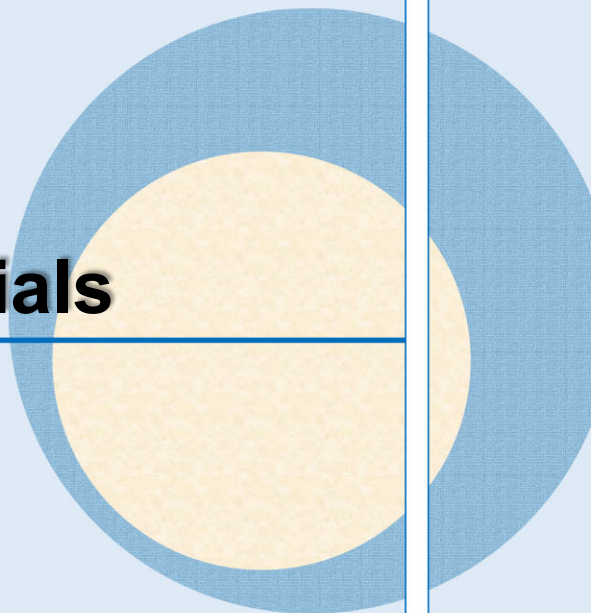
- Creating an opportunity to introduce general information about the participants'

country as well as the situation and use of the secondary natural environment and community efforts and involvement may allow an accepting region to learn about the country and motivate it to learn diverse values.

- It is important for training participants from developing countries not to learn in a unilateral way but to ask themselves questions about the benefits of efforts of the “Aso grassland regeneration council” and other relevant organizations, and have an opportunity to give feedback to the accepting region about issues of the current efforts. This allows the accepting government and region to re-evaluate their efforts and regional attractiveness from an external perspective, which may lead to increased motivation and rediscovery.
- Creating a connection between regions through training enables delivery of the value of resources of the Aso Region (farming, food, landscape, culture and nature, etc.) and increases the name recognition and awareness of the region. Since the resources have been highly appreciated around the world, they may be used for educational activities and regional development of developing countries.

# Reference materials

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## List of domestic cases related to regional development through cooperation and collaboration (a total of 47 cases)

When selecting the seven cases introduced in Section 2, domestic cases of regional development through cooperation and collaboration are listed below, focusing on their structures and clarity of achievements. It should be noted that the list is created based on limited information from references and does not cover the full details of the cases.

Location	Theme/Field	Case name	Outline
Furano City, Hokkaido	SME development	Community development through a public-private partnership based on the “Ruban (rural and urban) Furano concept”	Through a public-private partnership, the city promotes the “Ruban Furano concept (creation of a compact town).” By strengthening “Furano Machizukuri Co., Ltd.,” established as an organization for community development management, and facility operation using ideas and methods unique to the private sector, the city is making efforts for reactivating the city and rebuilding the city center with improved functionality and convenience.
Tobetsu-cho, Hokkaido	Community development through welfare services	Development of a new community focusing on “coexistence community welfare terminal”	By using community welfare facilities (“coexistence community welfare terminal”) managed by “Social welfare corporation Yuyu” and involving persons engaged in welfare, commerce and industry, the town promotes “coexistence community development regardless of age and with or without disabilities (Gochamaze Shakai (mixed society)).” The town has realized a mutual support relationship among residents by unifying information on volunteer activities and welfare services and promoting “interactions among residents” regardless of age and with or without disabilities.
Niseko-cho, Hokkaido	Environment-conscious community development/Tourism community development	Development of an international environment resort town as an environmental model city	Under the initiative of “Niseko Resort Tourist Association Co., Ltd.,” the town aims at the integration of environmental policies with economic activities and the development of an international environment resort town as an environmental model city. In order to build a system to manage the entire town, the town established the “Niseko environmental model city promotion council.” Through collaboration with various actors inside and outside the town, it promotes sustainable tourism and cross-sectoral efforts between tourism and environment.

Reference materials

Location	Theme/Field	Case name	Outline
Shimokawa-cho, Hokkaido	Environment-conscious community development	Sustainable, recycling forest management and community development using forest resources	Under the initiative of administrative organizations, the town involves residents and private enterprises to carry out various activities for the comprehensive utilization of forestry biomass. For example, based on recycling forest management, it obtained FSC forest certification for the first time in Hokkaido and introduced woody biomass boilers at public facilities. These activities lead to a reduction in fuel costs by using regional resources, employment creation, high value-added forests, and human resource development. (Relevant department: General Forest Industry Promotion Division, Shimokawa-cho)
Tanohata-mura, Iwate	Tourism community development/ Earthquake recovery and disaster risk reduction	Reconstruction of disaster-affected areas through the regeneration of “Banya ecotourism”	The village has been developing “Banya ecotourism” through “Experience Village Tanohata Network,” a non-profit organization, since before the earthquake. “Banya ecotourism” is an initiative to provide staying- and experience-type programs for tourists. After the earthquake, the village established an executive committee towards the early recovery of fisheries and tourism industries and carried out activities for the regeneration of “Tsukuehama Banya group” symbolizing reconstruction with the assistance and cooperation of supporters across Japan.
Sanriku-cho, Ofunato City, Iwate	Capacity improvement of communities through industrial development/ Earthquake recovery and disaster risk reduction	Fishery development and reconstruction with the concept of “the entire Sanriku Region” and “Fresh”	“Sanriku Toretate Ichiba Co., Ltd.,” a company established by a person who moved to the town, has developed projects connecting fishermen and consumers. After the earthquake, the company launched the “project for the regeneration of a traditional fishing village” for passing down the fisheries culture of Sanriku Region. Through strengthened collaboration with fishermen, the company aims to establish a fisheries business model for conducting a series of processes including production, processing, distribution, wholesale and sales.
Rikuzentakata City, Iwate	Earthquake recovery and disaster risk reduction	Reconstruction community development by “Nagahora Genki-mura” using community ties	Soon after the earthquake, community residents persuaded landowners and officials of city and prefectural governments in order to maintain their cohesive communities. They established “Nagahora Genki-mura,” a temporary housing community in which disaster-affected families can live together. The community led to community-based reconstruction activities jointly carried out by disaster victims regardless of the degree of damage and village development through interactions with people outside the village.



Location	Theme/Field	Case name	Outline
Shiwa-cho, Iwate	SME development/ Infrastructure development	Regional revitalization by the “Ogal project” through PPP (public-private partnership) without depending on subsidies	Through PPP (public-private partnership) unique to Shiwa-cho that uses community residents, materials, culture and funds, the town has carried out activities for fund procurement, facility construction and project operation by making the best use of funds and knowledge of the private sector such as “Ogal Plaza Co., Ltd.” These activities have led to the creation of an active city center, securing employment, and increases in permanent and non-resident populations. By developing “design guidelines,” the goal of urban design is shared by the entire town.
Tono City, Iwate	Education of the next generation and cultural development/ Earthquake recovery and disaster risk reduction	Community development and reconstruction support by the “1,000 storytellers project” focusing on regional culture	Under the initiative of government officials who know the actual situation of the region, the city cooperates to make efforts to develop a tourism community using its history and culture. The city has implemented the “1,000 storytellers project” to develop civic storytellers. They disseminate regional culture, such as “old tales,” “food,” “local entertainment,” “history,” and “vocation,” etc., towards community development. After the earthquake, the city became a logistic support base to expand external collaboration and work on earthquake recovery focusing on the dissemination of culture.  (Relevant department: Collaboration and Exchange Division, Tono City)
Minamisanriku-cho, Miyagi	Tourism community development/ SME development/ Earthquake recovery and disaster risk reduction	Promoting reconstruction tourism using disaster storytellers and “Minamisanriku Sansan shopping district”	As a part of Sendai Miyagi Destination Campaign, the town established a council composed of administrative organizations and private enterprises/organizations to promote “reconstruction tourism” on a prefectural basis. Through the development of storytellers who pass down stories about the earthquake disaster to future generations and efforts of a temporary shopping district (“Minamisanriku Sansan shopping district”) through collaboration with shop owners, the town is striving to increase its number of tourists towards recovering from the earthquake.  (Relevant department: Industrial Development Division, Minamisanriku-cho)
Marumori-machi, Miyagi	Capacity improvement of communities through industrial development	Community development through international technical exchange by “Koya development association,” a community governance organization	A person who was a former Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteer and moved to the town became an opportunity for the town to start international exchange with Zambia, which was developed into community development carried out by the entire town under the initiative of “Koya development association,” a community governance organization. The residents of the town effectively use limited regional resources to make their living in their own way. The international technical exchange with Zambia has inspired the residents’ confidence, energy and motivation.

Reference materials

Location	Theme/Field	Case name	Outline
Nihonmatsu City (former Towa-machi), Fukushima	Comprehensive development of farming, mountain and fishing villages/ Environment-conscious community development/ Earthquake recovery and disaster risk reduction	Industrial development and Satoyama regeneration focusing on organic farming	“Yukinosato Furusato council,” a non-profit organization, has worked on community development through product development using organic agricultural products and mulberry leaves, which are traditional materials of the region, compost production, and support for roadside stations and new farmers. Since the earthquake in the Tohoku Region, the organization has produced safer agricultural products and developed farm stay programs, green tourism activities, and dietary education workshops to create a trust relationship with people outside the region.
Kanra-machi, Gunma	Capacity improvement of communities through industrial development	Revitalization of farming and mountain villages in Japan and the world led by “Shizenjuku Terakoya”	“Shizenjuku Terakoya,” a non-profit organization, cooperates with the town and residents to carry out activities for connecting the town with the world. The organization has developed various projects for regional/agricultural revitalization through cooperation with local farmers, women’s groups, administrative organizations, and newspaper publishers. Examples of the projects are international exchange using local farming villages and people as a walking textbook (acceptance of rural development training and agricultural training) and the development of regional brands, etc.
Minamiboso City, Chiba	Comprehensive development of farming, mountain and fishing villages	Regional development through a “collective order/acceptance system” of local specialty products mainly for roadside stations	Public and private sectors cooperate to manage roadside stations to be the basis for the development of local industries/culture and information sending. Their efforts have a direct effect on the local economy. “Chiba Minamiboso Co., Ltd.,” a third sector company, serves as a contact organization of the region to develop local specialty products and provide related services with the participation of residents. By using a “collective order/acceptance system” for collectively selling regional small resources, the company promotes industrial development and employment creation.
Murakami City, Niigata	Capacity improvement of communities through industrial development	Wide-area community development through a community-based, coordination-type intermediate support organization	Through the intermediation of “Tsukisara Partners Center,” a non-profit organization, the city promotes wide-area (one city, two villages) community development combining specialty fields of various actors of the city and villages. The efforts have led to the creation of unique businesses using regional resources and the development of residents’ and private enterprises/organizations that take the lead in community development, which promotes a shift from government-led community development.

Location	Theme/Field	Case name	Outline
Sado City, Niigata	Environment-conscious community development	Establishment of regional brands with the concept of “developing an island where people and ibis live together”	With the concept of “coexistence with ibis,” the city collaborates with local farmers, citizen groups, research institutes, enterprises, and agricultural cooperatives to achieve a balance between the regional environment and economy. The city has developed high-value added industries and distribution networks using rich natural blessings of the region. These efforts expand understanding of and cooperation with environment-conscious agriculture and lead to changes in the consciousness and actions of residents as those living on an environment-friendly island. (Relevant department: Policy Division, Sado City)
Nagaoka City, Niigata	Education of the next generation and cultural development	Promoting human resource development, manufacturing and community development led by “Machinaka Campus Nagaoka”	The city developed communication facilities called “Machinaka Campus Nagaoka” in the city center with the concept of “learning” and “interaction.” Against a backdrop of the city having a local “learning” tradition since the domain school era in the Edo period and the rallying axis of earthquake recovery, the city, its residents and enterprises cooperate to respond to diversified, advanced educational needs and develop structures and organizations for promoting the participation of various actors.
Noto-cho, Ishikawa	Environment-conscious community development	Rural revitalization efforts at “Shunran-no-sato,” a group of farmer’s guest houses	People engaged in different industries established the “Shunran-no-sato executive committee” to build a system to promote community development. The executive committee plays a central role in operating “Shunran-no-sato,” a base for rural tourism, with the support from government and through collaboration with NPOs and private organizations. It has worked on rural and agricultural regeneration by developing various projects while making the best use of regional resources.
Noto Region, Ishikawa	Environment-conscious community development	“Ishikawa Satoyama development fund,” a public-private partner platform	In order to provide financial support for the conservation and use of Satoyama, the prefecture established a special department in the prefectural government under the leadership of the governor, and the prefecture and local financial institutions established the “Satoyama development fund” at a cost of five billion yen. By using profits from the fund, the prefecture has provided financial support for conservation activities of NPOs and other private enterprises/organizations, measures for the development of Satoyama and Satoumi, and businesses using regional resources. (Relevant department: Satoyama Development Office, Agricultural, Forestry, and Fisheries Department, Ishikawa Prefecture)

Reference materials

Location	Theme/Field	Case name	Outline
Toyama City, Toyama	Infrastructure development	Development of a compact city involving residents, focusing on public transportation	Through efforts made by the entire city in cooperation with residents, enterprises and administrative organizations, the city has implemented a project for the development of a compact city. Since the project planning stage, the city has cooperated with residents to introduce ideas of civic participation and “provision of public facilities for private management” and collect donations from residents and enterprises. These efforts enhance residents’ sense of autonomy. (Relevant department: Financial Division, Toyama City “Project for the development of a compact city”)
Obama City, Fukui	Capacity improvement of communities through industrial development/Education of the next generation and cultural development	Promoting the development of a food community placing importance on civic participation	With the voluntary participation of residents and enterprises, the city cooperates to develop a food community, which has led to an increase in the non-resident population. The city developed a “food community development ordinance” for the first time in Japan. Setting “food” as its theme, the city has developed policies of various fields (such as industry, tourism, environment, and education) in an integrated manner and made efforts for human resource development through “life-long dietary education.” (Relevant department: Food Community Division, Obama City)
Iida City, Nagano	Comprehensive development of farming, mountain and fishing villages/Education of the next generation and cultural development	Participatory local governance supported by community center activities	The city aims to revitalize the region in cooperation with communities through community center activities. Community centers have been established for each former city/village, and a full-time manager (city employee) assigned to each center serves as a mediator between the city government and community center activities carried out by residents. Through community-based community centers, residents develop their independence in community development, which has led to the implementation of resident-led projects.
Asuke-cho, Toyota City, Aichi	Tourism community development/ Environment-conscious community development	Development of tourism strategies in a “city considering conservation as development”	Based on residents’ activities carried out for many years, residents established the “Asuke community development promotion council.” The city and residents cooperate to work on community development based on the idea that “it is important for residents to continuously protect what they can be proud of.” As a result of the pursuit of a unique tourism style using regional resources, traditional culture and techniques towards the integration of tourism and living, regional attractiveness has been increased and its value as tourism resources has been enhanced.

Location	Theme/Field	Case name	Outline
Nagahama City, Shiga	Tourism community development	Development of a community having “black lacquered walls” under the initiative of community development companies	By sharing roles and collaborating with community development companies, the city has implemented a community development project placing importance on historic and cultural scenery. “Nagahama City Planning Co., Ltd.,” established as a general producer in the city center, collaborates with and coordinates administrative organizations, community development organizations, and community residents. Community development activities have also been carried out under the initiative of residents' associations.
Tanabe City, Wakayama	Tourism community development	Development of a sustainable tourist site open to the world, through the establishment of a Japanese version of DMO	After the municipal amalgamation, the city established “Tanabe City Kumano Tourism Bureau (Tanabe Kumano TB)” as an organization for regional tourism development, looking at the entire city. The Tanabe Kumano TB is a voluntary organization having five tourist associations of the former municipalities as its members. It has carried out public relations activities on a city-wide basis and attracted/accepted foreign tourists. Tourist associations of the former municipalities have also carried out community-based activities.
Kobe City, Hyogo	Community development through welfare services/Earthquake recovery and disaster risk reduction	Efforts by a residents' disaster management organization (Disaster management community)	After the Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake, residents established a “disaster management welfare community (Disaster management community)” to promote disaster risk reduction in their communities. There are 191 disaster management communities in the city that have been established almost for each elementary school zone. Based on a strong belief that “the safety of communities should be maintained by residents,” residents have carried out disaster prevention activities and welfare activities and provided support for disaster prevention education at elementary schools. The city has supported these activities.
Toyooka City, Hyogo	Tourism community development	Spontaneous community development using the characteristics of the former communities before the amalgamation	The city has continued to promote the development of tourist sites since the municipal amalgamation based on resident autonomy, placing importance on the characteristics and regionality of the former communities before the amalgamation. Community residents have realized the characteristics of the traditional region and been voluntarily involved in community development including cost burden. The independence of districts of the city has led to securing the diversity of the entire city and enhances the attractiveness of the city in terms of residents' lives and tourism. (Relevant actor: Tajimanokuni Izushi Tourist Association, etc.)

Reference materials

Location	Theme/Field	Case name	Outline
Chizu-cho, Tottori	Capacity improvement of communities through industrial development/ Community development through welfare services	Community development based on resident autonomy began with the “movement to take a step towards village development”	By using a system whereby the municipal government provides subsidies to motivated communities for ten years, communities launched a movement to voluntarily work on community autonomy, regional management, interactions and information sending. Towards the continuation and development of a resident autonomy system developed through the movement, they established an organization in each district and the “100-person Committee” for directly giving opinions on regional issues to the city government. Through its efforts, the committee established “Forest Kindergarten” using regional forests.
Nishiawakura-mura, Okayama	Capacity improvement of communities through industrial development/ Environment-conscious community development	Village development using forests through the development of the “100-year forest initiative”	Based on the “100-year forest initiative” with the concept of growing a forest created about 50 years ago in the next 50 years, private and public sectors cooperate to develop the forest using regional resources. “Nishiawakura Mori-no-Gakko Co., Ltd.” plays a central role in the conservation, management and creation of the forest, the commercialization and promotion of thinned wood, and increase in fans of Nishiawakura-son. The project has been developed by connecting all persons involved in the village with each other.
Maniwa City, Okayama	Environment-conscious community development	Development of a “biomass industrial city” through collaboration with and promotion of various projects	The lumber industry, the major industry of the region, has worked on the utilization of biomass. After study sessions held by interested residents, “Maniwajuku of the 21st Century,” a non-profit organization, was established to develop various biomass projects. Forest offcuts and thinned wood were provided by residents and forest cooperatives by using a system to purchase unused resources, which led to the establishment of a power generation company through collaboration among regional stakeholders. The city has provided support for interindustry collaboration and securing funds for capital investment.
Onan-cho, Shimane	Capacity improvement of communities through industrial development/ Community development through welfare services	Settlement promotion project using defensive and aggressive strategies towards the development of “the best childcare-friendly village in Japan”	By using defensive strategies (“the best childcare-friendly village in Japan” and “generous support to persons moving to the town”) and aggressive strategies (“town with A-grade local food”), a settlement project has been implemented by the entire town. The town has taken measures placing importance on women and children, developed a system to accept persons moving to the town, and enhanced support of residents and organizations. The town uses “A-grade food (local food and experience)” to create regional brands and revitalize related industries.

Location	Theme/Field	Case name	Outline
Sera-cho, Hiroshima	Capacity improvement of communities through industrial development	Regional revitalization on a town-wide basis by making a shift to the sixth industry	The town and communities work together to make a shift to the sixth industry of agriculture using regional characteristics. They promote wide-area collaboration through the “Sixth industry promotion council” (vertical axis) and connection between producers through the “Sera plateau sixth industry network” (horizontal axis) so that producers can enhance a synergy effect of the sixth industry while using their characteristics and connecting activities of the network with their business.
Shobara City, Hiroshima	Environment-conscious community development/Community development through welfare services	Development of a rich community under the slogan of “making use of Satoyama”	“Sakatejuku (former “Association of turning depopulation into advantage”),” a local group, and “Yuuki Fukushi Kai,” a social welfare corporation, promote and carry out activities for community development using Satoyama. Based on the idea of turning depopulation into advantage, a collaboration system among residents, welfare facilities, and restaurants was established by effectively using excess agricultural products provided by elderly residents and the community currency. The system has led to a regional recycling economy and a reduction in neglected communities.
Hagi City, Yamaguchi	Tourism community development/Education of the next generation and cultural development	Hagi museum initiative (community development with residents)	Considering stories contained within the region’s history, culture and nature to be “treasures,” the city has carried out activities for reviewing and protecting the city and passing down its history, culture and nature to the next generation. The city has taken strategic measures for securing a balance between a peaceful environment and active tourism. The activities have gradually changed residents’ consciousness, which has increased the number of organizations setting specific goals for their activities.  (Relevant department: Hagi Museum Initiative Promotion Division, Historic Community Development Department, Hagi City)
Niho District, Yamaguchi City, Yamaguchi	Capacity improvement of communities through industrial development	Development of a mountain village planned and determined by the entire region and carried out by the regional development council	A local residents’ association, agricultural cooperative, women’s association, land improvement district, and other organizations in the district jointly established the “Niho regional development council.” The council has realized one-stop life support functions at a roadside station, managed and operated by the council, and other facilities, and developed products using regional resources. It also established the “Murazukurijuku” with the participation of young groups in the region for developing human resources to be engaged in community development in the future.

Reference materials

Location	Theme/Field	Case name	Outline
Kamikatsu-cho, Tokushima	Capacity improvement of communities through industrial development	Development of a community where residents are active for their entire lifetime through “Leaf business”	Under the initiative of “Irodori Co., Ltd.,” the town has developed a business model using regional materials. Through “garnish” business developed by a farming instructor, the town has created a workplace where elderly persons who mainly produce agricultural products can work comfortably. By establishing a unique shipping system and meeting market needs, the town has established a brand trusted across Japan. The business has become the town’s major industry and contributed to the independence of residents and an increase in their motivation.
Sanagochi-mura, Tokushima	Environment-conscious community development	Resident autonomy using regional capacity developed by traditional ties	The village promotes community development using “Koju,” a mutual assistance organization, and “Jokai” and “Myochu,” community governance organizations, as the basis of resident autonomy. Through collaboration with the municipal government, residents take the lead in carrying out activities for waste separation. By developing a community with new “village residents” beyond municipalities, the village has enhanced its regional capacity while maintaining relationships inside and outside the region. (Relevant department: General Affairs and Planning Division, Sanagochi-son)
Kamiyama-cho, Tokushima	Infrastructure development/Education of the next generation and cultural development/Capacity improvement of communities through industrial development	Acquisition of persons moving to the town by using the town’s IT infrastructure and attractiveness	“Green Valley,” a non-profit organization, has invited artists from inside and outside Japan by using the solid local IT infrastructure, landscape and people. It then launched the “work in residence” project to promote moving to the town targeting people with specific skills. Promoting interactions among people who moved to the town has facilitated human resource development and support for entrepreneurs, which has resulted in the revitalization of the entire community.
Yusuhara-cho, Kochi	Environment-conscious community development	Efforts for comprehensive use of mountain forests and resource recycling	Through a public-private partnership, the town has made efforts to develop a recycling society living in coexistence with the environment by effectively using forest resources. The town established the “Yusuhara basic ordinance on forest development” for the first time in Japan. The town’s forest cooperative is the first organization in Japan that obtained the FSC forest certification. Through the integration of administrative policies mainly for the forestry industry, the town has realized expansion of lumber production/sales, conservation and improvement of the forest environment, an increase in the non-resident population, and improvement in the energy self-sufficiency rate.



Location	Theme/Field	Case name	Outline
Imabari City, Ehime	Capacity improvement of communities through industrial development	Circulation of local food and agriculture and agricultural development worked on by "Saisaikiteya"	"Saisaikiteya," a farmer's market operated by JA Ochiimabari, has widely developed a complex project for direct sales of agricultural products. In addition to the farmer's market, cafe, restaurant, shop, and processing facilities, it has managed a demonstration farm and an experience-based farm. Through community-based marketing, it centralizes local products to realize increased sales, management stabilization, and promoting local production for local consumption, and has led to agriculture-commerce-industry collaboration. It has also strengthened relationships with community residents and administrative organizations by promoting dietary education.
Imabari City, Ehime	Tourism community development	Participatory regional development through "Cyclo-tourism" for enjoying the entire region	The city, "CycloTourism Shimanami," a non-profit organization, and community residents cooperated to establish "Cyclo-tourism (bicycle trip)," an idea to accept people who make a bicycle trip. With support from the city and the operation system led by the non-profit organization, a cycle oasis (resting place) and other services have been provided by residents and private organizations. These efforts enhance the "Shimanami" brand as a brand of bicycle trip.
Minamata City, Kumamoto	Environment-conscious community development/ Comprehensive development of farming, mountain and fishing villages/Education of the next generation and cultural development	Environmental community development through civic cooperation	Based on its experience with Minamata disease, the city was declared an "Environmental model city" and promotes waste recycling through residents' activities to separate waste materials into 22 categories. In order to rebuild relationships among community residents that were once broken by Minamata disease, the city established "regional learning" to review regional resources. In the regional learning, residents serve as "life curators" to promote community development.
Oyama-machi, Hita City, Oita	Capacity improvement of communities through industrial development	Resident-led community development to be the origin of the "One village one product movement"	Under the initiative of a charismatic community leader, the town developed the NPC movement (community development policy of Oyama-machi) to raise residents' awareness. The movement is the origin of the "One village one product movement" advocated by the prefecture. and has facilitated regional revitalization by introducing a managerial perspective into agricultural development measures. The town also conducted overseas agricultural training intended for town residents to develop human resources at an early stage. These efforts led to the establishment of "Oita Oyama Agricultural Cooperative Konohana Garten," a farmer's bazaar.

Reference materials

Location	Theme/Field	Case name	Outline
Beppu City, Oita	Tourism community development	Onpaku-type sustainable community development by various actors in the region	“Beppu Hatto Onsen Hakurankai (Onpaku)” developed a method that enables all community residents to play a central role in community development in a sustained manner by combining regional culture and nature with wellness. It has identified regional resources and developed human resources through cooperation with various stakeholders in the region. Coordination and support by the management office of Onpaku facilitate the voluntary participation of relevant persons and continuation of collaboration.
Nobeoka City, Miyazaki	SME development	Overseas development through business exchange (efforts for “Nobeoka model”)	The chamber of commerce and industry, commerce and industry association, and financial institutions in the city have jointly supported entrepreneurs. At the same time, the entire city proactively promotes international exchange. The city and “Nobeoka Myanmar friendship association” work together to develop sales channels of SMEs in the city and promote a friendly relationship with Myanmar through human exchange. A direct connection between a developing country and a local city in Japan (Myanmar and Nobeoka City) has activated business startups, industrial cluster, and economic exchange.
Kanoya City, Kagoshima	Capacity improvement of communities through industrial development/ Community development through welfare services	Community development by “Yanedan” through the circulation of “independence” and “impression”	Community centers of Yanagidani community, commonly called “Yanedan,” promote community development without depending on state subsidies and administrative organizations. Community residents think about their roles and voluntarily play the roles. Their efforts have been highly recognized, and residents have changed their consciousness, which strengthens regional ties and increases residents’ feeling of happiness. They have realized community development through the circulation of “independence” and “impression.”
Amami Islands, Kagoshima	Environment-conscious community development	Wide area tourism development toward registration as a world natural heritage site	Through wide-area collaboration, the islands promote characteristic community development toward registration as a world natural heritage site. The islands set up “world natural heritage” as their superordinate concept to promote cooperation among the public sector (state, prefecture, islands, municipalities, and Amami Islands regional administrative association), the private sector (tourist agents and food processors, etc.), and residents (including persons engaged in agricultural and fisheries industries). The cooperative relationship has led to efforts for creating a synergy effect by harmonizing the characteristics of the entire archipelago (world natural heritage Amami trail that connects the islands) with those of individual islands.

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**Handbook for Utilization of Regional Revitalization Resources**  
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Published on October 2017

Edited by Industrial Development and Public Policy Department,  
Japan International Cooperation Agency

URL: <https://www.jica.go.jp/>

Supported by Governance Knowledge Management Network

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