

57) Intermediary support organizations and networks [emergency response phase, recovery phase, early and late reconstruction phases]

[Issues] (1) How to intermediate support organizations coordinate the activities of NPOs, etc.
(2) How to intermediate support organizations support the activities of NPOs, etc.

[Situation and issues created by the Great East Japan Earthquake]

Due to the catastrophic damage caused in the Great East Japan Earthquake, a broad range of entities including NPOs, businesses, and other organizations from outside the affected areas engaged in activities in these areas. There were limitations to what councils of social welfare could do on their own with respect to taking in and coordinating this diverse range of entities. As such, the role of intermediary support organizations that provided support mediation, networking, and coordination for NPOs, etc., became critical.

[Initiatives in the aftermath of the Great East Japan Earthquake]

- Establishing intermediate support organizations at the prefectural (geographic) level (Issue 1)

In three affected prefectures, the Iwate Fukko Collaboration Center, Miyagi Cooperative Reconstruction Center, and Fukushima Cooperative Reconstruction Center were established as intermediary support organizations at the prefectural (geographic) level to consolidate and share information related to disaster victim support, and coordinate activities thereof between NPOs and government agencies. For example, the Iwate Fukko Collaboration Center worked to create opportunities for collaboration within and outside of the prefecture, and held meetings of cooperative reconstruction centers from the three prefectures to share information between these prefectures. In particular, at the Iwate Prefecture Coordination and Reconstruction Meetings which were held almost every week since immediately after the earthquake, the center and Iwate Prefecture shared information with each other regarding the details of the disaster victim support system and the center's consultations with disaster victims, and also held discussions on how to proceed with disaster victim support (Case study 57-1).

- Networking NPOs, etc. and government agencies (Issue 2)

At the end of March 2011, the Japan Civil Network for Disaster Relief in East Japan (JCN) was established by organizations engaged in disaster relief activities. The organization built a website to consolidate information on the intake of donations, supplies, and other support for disaster victims, and also created activity guidelines for supporters. From the month after its establishment, it held regular liaison meetings with NPOs, etc., as well as with government ministries and agencies to share information and collaborate with government agencies across sectors.⁽¹⁾

During the emergency response phase in Miyagi Prefecture, 3.11 Mirai Support, a public interest incorporated association (formerly the Ishinomaki Disaster Recovery Support Council), regularly held various meetings to facilitate the activities of NPOs engaged in disaster victim support, and provided support for coordination and collaboration as a way of networking NPOs in the prefecture's

geographic area (Case study 57-2).

- City development through collaboration among diverse civic groups (Issue 2)

Sendai City had set up its Citizen Activity Support Center in the wake of the Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake (of 1995). The center was the first government-run NPO support center in the country, and at the time of the Great East Japan Earthquake, it collected information on civic activities and volunteer groups in the affected areas, disseminated information with flyers, posters, newsletters, etc., and provided financial assistance to NPOs, etc. It has now become a specialized organization for civic activities.⁽²⁾

- Support for organizational management and establishing a financial foundation (Issue 2)

On March 15, days after the disaster, the Central Community Chest of Japan established the Disaster Volunteer/NPO Activity Support Fund and provided a total of 4.2 billion yen in grants during the reconstruction phase for the operation of disaster relief volunteer centers and collaborative projects by NPOs, etc.⁽³⁾

The Japan NPO Center established the Great East Japan Earthquake Local NPO Support Fund for local NPOs in three affected prefectures who were assisting disaster victims rebuild their lives. Since March 2011, it has been providing grants for training NPOs and other staff, building a mechanism to increase the number of supporters, and building an information network.⁽⁴⁾

Japan Platform (JPF) established the Living Together Fund in April 2011 for the purpose of expeditious and effective implementation of support activities for the Great East Japan Earthquake, and provided not only financial grants but also advice on how to prepare activity plans and carry out project operation management.⁽⁵⁾

→ *Related item: 54) Securing human resources such as volunteers and NPO staff, and collaborating with them from normal times*

[Lessons learned and know-how gained]

- (1) Create opportunities for information sharing between NPOs, government agencies and supporting organizations.
 - Establish intermediary support organizations at the prefectural (geographic) level to share information among various NPOs and support organizations in the prefecture.
- (2) Build a network of NPOs, etc., and a cooperative system with government agencies to provide support for disaster victims effectively.
 - Support the formation of networks where intermediary support organizations act as coordinators to link NPOs, etc.
 - Create a mechanism for cross-sectoral information sharing and collaboration between NPOs, etc., and government agencies.
 - Support activities carried out, through self-reliance and collaboration, by a diverse range of civic groups including NPOs that continue to address regional reconstruction issues.
- (3) Support NPOs, etc., to strengthen their infrastructures and improve their sustainability.
 - To NPOs with inadequate organizational infrastructures, provide financial grants, and know-how on human resource development and organizational management.

Refernces

- (1) 東日本大震災支援全国ネットワーク (JCN) 「2011 年度年次報告書」 2012 年 6 月
https://www.jpn-civil.net/2014/about_us/docfiles/JCN_2011_Annual.pdf
- (2) 仙台市市民活動サポートセンター <https://sapo-sen.jp/about/details/>
- (3) 社会福祉法人中央共同募金会 「災害ボランティア・NPO 活動サポート募金」
<http://www.kisoh.org/bokin.volasapo.html>
- (4) 東日本大震災現地 NPO 応援基金 <https://www.jnpoc.ne.jp/?tag=311jisin-fund>
- (5) JPF 「共に生きる」 ファンド <http://tohoku.japanplatform.org/tomonikirufund/>