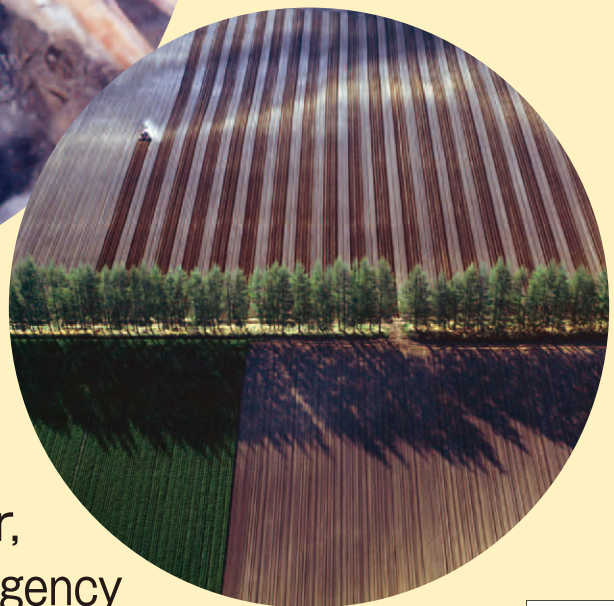


Regional and Industrial Promotion Study in Hokkaido Study Report



October 2015
Hokkaido International Center,
Japan International Cooperation Agency

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Introduction

Japan is facing depopulation, particularly in rural areas, an aging society, and a concentration of people, goods, and capital in large cities. In response to these issues, the Japanese government established the Comprehensive Strategy for Overcoming Population Decline and Revitalizing Local Economies in December 2014. Specific regional promotion and revitalization plans are now under development.

The population in Hokkaido is on the decrease after peaking in 1997 with approximately 5.69 million people. According to the National Institute of Population and Social Security Research (IPSS), the population here will decrease to approximately 4.19 million by 2040 due to natural and societal causes (population in 2010: approximately 5.5 million). To maintain a stable population, the Hokkaido government established strategic plans. These include development of businesses that leverage Hokkaido's strengths, creation of employment opportunities, preparation of livable environments, and inviting people to Hokkaido to live. These plans are under implementation in each area of Hokkaido. Depopulation and an aging society are already apparent issues in more developed countries. The same issues will rise in developing countries. Therefore, it is necessary to understand how Japan approaches these issues and then apply the same approaches to assist developing countries.

The Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) has 15 branch offices in locations throughout Japan and implements projects that utilize the characteristics and features of each region. Municipalities, universities, research institutions, private companies, and citizens' organization groups such as NGOs cooperate in these projects. JICA Hokkaido International Center established in 1996, too, implements a wide variety of projects. They include the following: hosting of participants for training programs highlighting the features of Hokkaido such as agriculture, forestry, fisheries, environment, and tourism; working with local governments to provide grass-roots level technical assistance; dispatching JICA volunteers; supporting development education; and providing assistance to small and medium-sized enterprises. In February 2015, the Japanese Cabinet approved the Development Cooperation Charter. As this explicitly requires strengthening of public-private sector partnership as well as collaboration with local governments, JICA is required to further contribute to regional revitalization in Japan.

In July 2003, the JICA Research Institute published the study report "International Application of Regional Revitalization Experience in Japan" to describe how domestically acquired knowledge and experience can assist developing countries. In Hokkaido, JICA conducted the "Hokkaido Regional Promotion Case Example Survey" (March 2001) and the "Examination of Effective Use of Hokkaido's Regional Features in International Cooperation" (September 2007) for the same purpose. However, few case studies describe how the experience and knowledge accumulated in developing country assistance can contribute to strengthening of the local economy and realization of regional revitalization in Japan including Hokkaido. Against this background, we conducted this study to fully understand the regional promotions and associated issues in Hokkaido.

The study first introduces some case examples of Hokkaido regions whose revitalization activities effectively leverage their capabilities. It then discusses how JICA can apply its knowledge and experience to these regional activities. JICA visited the subject regions to grasp the background, objective, and issues concerning the activities and so this study makes arguments based on the fieldwork result. Finally, it describes the assistance that JICA can provide within the current framework and also proposes new approaches. We hope this study report will be of use to the JICA offices in Japan, municipalities, universities, research institutions, citizens' organizations, and companies.

During the course of study, we received valuable opinions and advice from the Advisory Committee consisting of experts on various aspects of Hokkaido. We were also able to collect region-focused opinions and requests in the places we visited. I would like to take this opportunity to express my gratitude for all the support we received from those who took part in the study.

October 2015

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This report contains the views of the "Regional and Industrial Promotion Study in Hokkaido" Advisory Committee established by JICA Hokkaido International Center. Therefore, it is not necessarily the official view of JICA.

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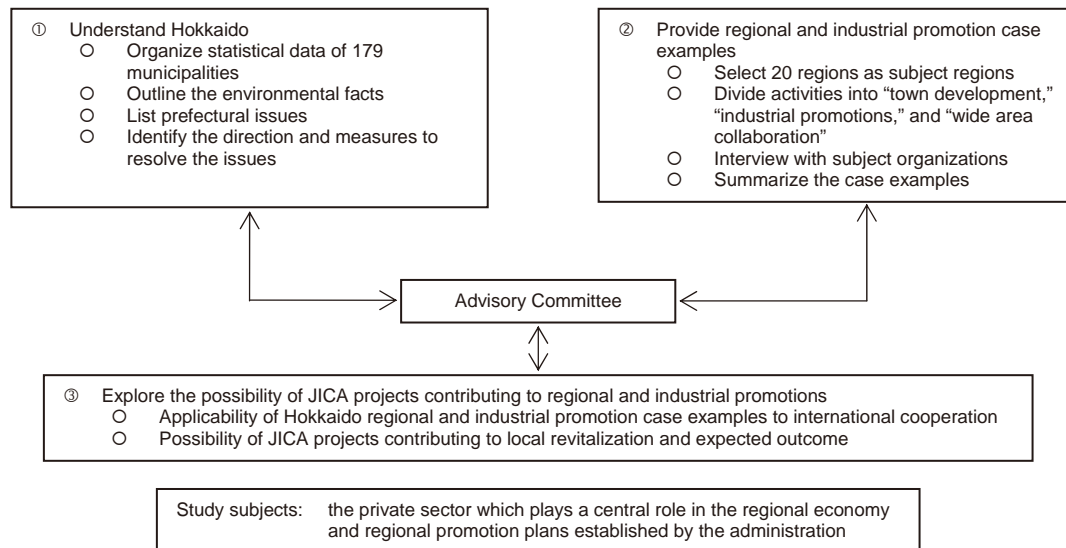
Summary

Regional and Industrial Promotion Study in Hokkaido

Summary

1. Background and Objective of the Study

- (1) The objective of this study is to further improve the quality of JICA projects by addressing to the diversified needs of developing countries appropriately. For the purpose of the study, we collected and analyzed the economic and social state of Hokkaido and case examples of regional promotions implemented by individual municipalities.
- (2) We also explored the potential direction of international cooperation which would promote development of developing countries and revitalization and globalization of Hokkaido. This exploration was based on our understanding that the relationship between Japan and developing countries has been dramatically changing. The example of the changes includes increased visitors to Japan from developing countries, increased international exchanges, and maturation of developing countries as export markets.
- (3) The study consists of three steps: ① understand Hokkaido, ② provide regional and industrial promotion case examples, and ③ explore the possibility of JICA projects contributing to regional and industrial promotions. The Advisory Committee, consisting of business, administration, academic, financial, and news media experts in Hokkaido, was established for this study. We conducted the study while taking into consideration their advice and put together information on the applicability of Hokkaido regional and industrial promotions to international cooperation and possible contribution of JICA projects in regional revitalization in Japan.



2. Current State and Issues of Hokkaido

- (1) Hokkaido is characterized by a large area with widely distributed municipalities; its area occupies 22.1% of the entire land area of Japan, and its population accounts for 4.3% of the entire population. Low temperatures and heavy snow during the winter are another characteristic of the area. The economy of Hokkaido is so-called the "4% economy" because its

FY2012 gross product of 18.1241 trillion yen (nominal) accounted for 3.8% of the FY2012 GDP of 474.4749 trillion yen (nominal).

- (2) The breakdown of Hokkaido industry shows higher percentages of primary and tertiary industries, but a low percentage of secondary industry. Secondary industry accounts for only 2.1% of the nationwide total.
- (3) One of the issues of Hokkaido is late development. Development of Hokkaido started later than Honshu, resulting in slower development of social infrastructures. Also, development and maintenance of social infrastructure is often costly because of the two characteristics of Hokkaido: a large area with widely distributed municipalities, and low temperature and heavy snow in winter.
- (4) The 1995 and 2000 census data indicates that the population of Hokkaido decreased by 0.2% during this period while the national population increased by 1.1%. The percentage of elderly people (65 years old and older) is 14.8% in Hokkaido compared to the national average of 14.5%. Hokkaido therefore needs to take the initiative in addressing the depopulation and aging society issues.
- (5) As described above, Hokkaido is facing a shrinking economy and rapid decrease in population particularly in rural areas. The Hokkaido government addresses these issues by implementing regional and industrial promotions that make full use of regional resources. Features of such promotions include "safe and reliable food" and "tourism." These features are considered to have comparative advantage in creating independent and sustainable regional communities.

3. Case Examples of Regional Promotions

In this study, regional revitalization is divided into town development, industrial promotion, and inter-municipality collaboration depending on the types of activity.

	Characteristics
Town development	Building of society such as a new health-promoting and eco-friendly society
Industrial promotion	Regional economic revitalization and employment creation in the fields of business that take advantage of resources of the region
Inter-municipality collaboration	Adjustment of interests and creation of high added value resulting from wide-area promotion involving multiple municipalities

- (1) Case examples of past regional revitalization highlight the importance of the key person of the subject region. In this study, analysis of the obtained data suggested that each region had developed a unique revitalization method, mechanism, and system. Strong leadership, strategy and tactics considering environmental changes and strengths of the region, approaches and system development for regional revitalization, including team building and partnership building, are some of the examples. In each region, the government and private sector work together to fully analyze the characteristics, history, and human and natural resources of the region to implement the most suitable revitalization measures.
- (2) Style of regional revitalization varies with region. Revitalization support therefore needs to be tailored for individual regions because it is unrealistic to analyze a limited number of success factors, select model examples, and apply them to multiple regions.

The table below shows the characteristics of the activities implemented in the 20 subject regions.

	Municipality	Interviewee	Theme
Town development	Yubari City	Yubari city government	Regional revitalization through compact city creation and effective use of locally-produced energy
	Shimokawa Town	Shimokawa town government	Building of a sustainable community with energy independence
	Shikaoi Town	Hokkaido Tourism Association (NPO)	Regional revitalization by creating new tourism
	Iwanai Town	Iwanai Art Association (NPO)	Regional revitalization through cultural promotion and art education
	Bibai City	Arte Piazza Bibai (government-certified NPO)	Regional revitalization featuring industrial heritage
	Tobetsu Town	Social welfare corporation Yu Yu	Regional revitalization by creating an inclusive society
	Esashi Town	Esashi Historical Resource Study Group	Shopping street revitalization using historical resources
	Niseko Town	Niseko town government	Taking part in the Eco-Model City Project through town development with resident participation
	Kushiro City	Social Business Create Conference (general incorporated foundation)	Regional revitalization by supporting vocational rehabilitation of impoverished individuals
Industrial promotion	Oumu Town	Okhotsk Oumu's Treasure Rediscovery Council	Regional revitalization by using a natural resource named after the town
	Higashikawa Town	Higashikawa town government	Regional revitalization through a locally-produced rice brand
	Eniwa City	Eniwa Agricultural and Livestock Product Market Council	Regional revitalization through resident-farmer collaboration
	Muroran City	Muroran city government	Regional economic revitalization through industry-university-government collaboration
	Date City	Japan Nordic Walking School (NPO)	Regional revitalization by featuring regional resources: exercise and food
	Sunagawa City	Sunagawa city government	Regional revitalization by collaborating with the local shopping street
	Furano City	Furano Machizukuri Corporation	Regional promotion by revitalizing the city center
	Haboro Town (Teuri Island)	Revitalization Conference for Our Teuri Island (general incorporated foundation)	Regional revitalization by creating a new business on the island

Inter-municipality collaboration	Tokachi area	Obihiro city government Tokachizaidan	Regional revitalization by creating industrial clusters through inter-municipality collaboration
	Abashiri River basin	Abashiri River Basin Agriculture-Fishery Liaison Council	Regional revitalization through agriculture-fishery liaison in the Abashiri River basin
	Okhotsk area	Okhotsk Terroir (general incorporated foundation)	Rural development using the “terroir” approach

4. Overview of the State and Needs of Developing Countries and Regional Promotions in Hokkaido

- 1) Hokkaido is facing rapid depopulation and concentration of people, goods, and capital in large cities. Developing countries are either facing these problems already or likely to face them in the future.
- 2) This study examined success factors, bottlenecks, and applicability to future international cooperation of 20 regional promotions in Hokkaido from the viewpoints of town development, industrial promotion, and inter-municipality collaboration while their progress and issues were explained.

(1) Town development

An aging society and depopulation have caused the issues of maintenance and improvement of the volume and quality of social services in both Japan and some developing countries. These issues cannot be resolved quickly due to a lack of sufficient expertise and/or financial resources for maintaining the level of these social services. This has raised the necessity of town development including provision of efficient social services. The following are case examples collected during the course of the study which may provide references for addressing this issue:

- ① Building of a compact city to provide efficient public support while keeping in mind the depopulation problem and future regional restructuring (Yubari City)
- ② Building of a mutual support system instead of dividing residents into providers and recipients of social support services (Tobetsu Town)
- ③ Building of a system to use almost 100% of regional forest resources including use of previously unused forest biomass and providing forest environment education (Shimokawa Town)

(2) Industrial promotion

Regional discrepancies are expanding in developing countries. Regions with fortunate geographical conditions enjoy rapid economic growth due to direct overseas investments. Other areas are left behind. In general, rural areas are unable to invite direct investments from outside and therefore are forced into creating industrial promotional measures that take advantage of their regional resources and characteristics. The following are case examples collected during the course of the study which may provide references for addressing this issue:

- ① Creation of the new tourism-and-social support business featuring “health” as an added value as well as local mountains and forest resources (Date City)
- ② Acquisition of an increased number of new customers by creating a network of currently existing dessert shops and turning the network into a regional brand called "Sweet Road" (Sunagawa City)
- ③ Creation of locally-produced product stores and a direct distribution system from farmers that both target tourists and residents of surrounding cities who used to be uninterested in their local shopping streets (Furano City and Eniwa City)

(3) Inter-municipality collaboration

Similar to Japan, developing countries often require inter-municipality collaboration in order to effectively use limited manpower and financial resources and implement regional promotions. The following are case examples collected during the course of the study which may provide references for addressing this issue:

- ① Realization of agricultural inter-municipality collaboration to create high added value and engage in food processing to expand business and generate large profits (Tokachi Area)
- ② Successful overall basin management in which the interests are adjusted between farmers working upstream and fishermen working on the river (Abashiri River basin)

5. Possibility of JICA Projects Contributing to Regional Revitalization

One of the objectives of this study is to examine how JICA international cooperation activities carried out in Japan can contribute to regional promotions and revitalization in Hokkaido in line with the "regional revitalization" goal proposed by the government (Task Force for Overcoming Population Decline and Revitalizing Local Economies). Section 4 above explored the possibility of applying measures implemented in Hokkaido to international cooperation projects carried out in developing countries to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of JICA projects. This section examines how JICA's human networks and knowledge and experience accumulated in international cooperation can contribute to regional promotions in Hokkaido which will be further strengthened in the future.

The section discusses the feasibility of JICA's contributions based on: comments and requests provided by the Advisory Committee members; implementation status of observed regional promotions in the subject 20 regions; and needs and expectations for JICA from the organizations visited during the course of the study.

(1) Possible contributions feasible within the existing framework (draft)

- ① Improvement of the regional brand visibility (domestic and international advertising and rediscovery of attractive features)
 - (a) Increase of opportunities for exchanges between the personnel in individual regions in Hokkaido and JICA training participants (increase of observation opportunities in JICA training programs)

Hokkaido hosts approximately 130 training programs in total per year in Sapporo and Obihiro. From FY2012 to FY2014, 900 to 1,000 participants stayed in these areas per year (570 to 650 participants in Sapporo and 310 to 350 participants in Obihiro).

Short-term training programs last a few weeks to a year, while long-term training programs last longer than a year. Participants stay in Hokkaido on average for 45 days or 1.5 months. The breakdown of participants' area of origin after FY2000 is as follows: ① Asia (49%), ② Africa (24%), ③ Latin America (14%), ④ Europe (6%), ⑤ Middle East (5%), and ⑥ Oceania (2%). The respective fields of training are as follows: ① agriculture, forestry, and fisheries (33%), ② environment and water resources (11%), ③ education (11%), ④ healthcare (10%), and ⑤ infrastructures and urban development (10%).

During the visits of subject regions in the study, the personnel in each subject region requested JICA's assistance because exposure of regional promotions to third persons (foreigners) would allow them to discover new sales points of the region and also to create a checklist for inviting foreign tourists. JICA will therefore add places to visit for observation to the current training programs and also include observation of requested places in new training programs which will be available in the future.

Many JICA participants staying in Hokkaido use social network services (SNS) to exchange information frequently with their family or individuals related to their country of origin. It is expected that information on regional specialties or visitor attractions be also shared through SNS.

- (b) Invitation of key stakeholders to foster their understanding of Japanese technologies and build relationships with them

In addition to training programs, JICA invites key stakeholders of developing countries for the following reasons: to foster, through interactions and communication, key persons' understanding of Japanese techniques, experiences, and approaches to developmental issues; and to encourage the building of relationships with the Japanese parties. Active distribution of Hokkaido's technical and experience information as well as collecting information and exchanging opinions about needs of developing countries will enhance key persons' understanding of Japan and lead to building of good relationships. This will in turn improve the visibility of Hokkaido regional brands. Therefore, apart from making efforts in increasing opportunities for exchanges between Hokkaido and developing countries via training programs, key persons will be strategically invited to engage in important activities of Hokkaido companies, municipalities, and universities.

- (c) JICA Partnership Program for overseas expansion of regional brands and companies

The JICA Partnership Program hosts collaborative projects between JICA and Japanese NGOs, universities, municipalities, and nonprofit organizations. JICA Hokkaido International Center is implementing 20 projects, and 9 of them are in Mongolia. Both Hokkaido and Mongolia seem to have a strong desire for increased implementation of the JICA Partnership Program for two reasons. First, these projects seem to fully demonstrate techniques and knowledge suitable for cold places in Hokkaido and also agricultural and stock-farming techniques and knowledge. Second, the Hokkaido government has signed a memorandum with the Mongolian Ministry of Energy and Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Light Industry to promote economic and technical exchanges.

Recent development shows examples of collaborative projects with local companies in anticipation of regional revitalization (strengthening of the local economy). These projects are carried out in Mongolia, Thailand, Malaysia, and Vietnam. Local

municipalities, companies, and relevant organizations involve their whole community in these projects. Further enhancement of the project quality is desired in order to strengthen the relationships with these countries.

② Tapping international demands and creating opportunities for Hokkaido companies to enter overseas markets

(a) Promotion of JICA's partnership with the private sector; Support for Japanese SMEs Overseas Business Development

JICA supports companies that wish to expand their business to overseas. In this program, companies provide technical support in developing countries and use this experience to enter overseas markets. The reality however is that not so many companies use this program. Interviews with financial institutes and industry groups in Hokkaido suggested that many companies whose headquarters are in Hokkaido do not have sufficient time and capacity to consider or start overseas business expansion. The abovementioned JICA Partnership Program may motivate companies in Hokkaido to join this support program.

(b) Provision of former JICA training program participants' information to companies

JICA accepts approximately 10,000 participants per year at 15 branch offices in Japan, and they have a participant database. Some participants hold important positions in various fields after returning to their own countries. Therefore, the database offers valuable information on human resources that could help companies in Hokkaido expand their business overseas. In particular, the JICA Alumni Association is a valuable human network and will be useful in consultations with companies that wish to trade internationally.

JICA is planning to send out JICA Friendship Mail (tentative name) to all participants. It will facilitate sending/collecting of information to/from former JICA participants who have returned to their homeland and can be used as a new way to provide information to companies.

(c) Assessment of Hokkaido resources by JICA participants

Since its foundation in 1996, the JICA Hokkaido International Center has taken in approximately 13,000 participants cumulatively. Participants from Asian countries account for the largest group. There are also many participants from Islamic countries such as Indonesia, Malaysia, and Bangladesh. Both the government and private sector of Hokkaido are working to attract inbound tourists, and information on Islamic nations may be beneficial for them. JICA has so far conducted surveys of participants coming to Japan about training program contents and places to visit for observation. It has not however collected data from visitors' perspectives such as the impression of Hokkaido and infrastructure at tourist attractions. JICA needs to put together data which can contribute to attracting tourists to Hokkaido.

③ Human resource development

(a) Contribution to development of human resources with global competence (further improvement of the quality of developmental education support)

JICA has a program to provide an overview and describe the necessity of international cooperation to students (from elementary school children to undergraduates) and the general public. JICA can send speakers to schools or students

can visit the JICA center. Each year, approximately 8,300 people participate in the program at schools, and approximately 1,500 people visit the JICA center.

Increasing overseas expansion of business through government-private sector partnership is required, and training of personnel with a global perspective is an urgent task. JICA should provide intensive support for developmental education targeting younger generations. Increased lectures both at schools and the center and offering of catchy program content that gets more people interested in international cooperation are essential. To achieve this, JICA must promptly build relationships with educators (board of education and universities) in Hokkaido to create a system for training personnel with global competence.

(b) Contribution to human resource development of companies expanding to overseas

Lack of competent personnel is one of the problems that companies in Hokkaido face when they attempt business expansion overseas. The Ministry of Economy, Trade, and Industry (METI) and the Small and Medium Enterprise Agency are implementing measures to support personnel training. JICA has been providing financial and technical cooperation in developing countries. The technical cooperation includes human resource development and JICA has accumulated personnel training know-how and skills. It should therefore develop a plan to use such know-how and skills to help companies expand their business overseas.

(i) Promotion and dissemination of information about the Overseas Volunteering Program with Private Sector

As companies become globalized JICA is receiving an increased number of inquiries about its volunteer programs, such as Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers (JOCVs) and Senior Volunteers (SVs), from companies that wish to train their young employees or management-level employees. JICA established a program called the Overseas Volunteering Program with Private Sector three years ago to support these companies. An overview of the program is as follows:

- Year round application acceptance: companies select candidates and recommend them to JICA, and JICA screens and interviews them
- Host countries: host country, job description, and activity details are determined based on the company needs
- Volunteer period: In principle, long-term (one to two years) is desirable, but short-term (shorter than a year) can be considered
- Volunteers participate in the currently implemented pre-dispatch training
- Labor cost reimbursement is available (for small to medium sized companies that meet specified criteria)

Companies wishing to prepare competent employees for overseas market entry use the Overseas Volunteering Program with Private Sector, and since its launch, 49 individuals from 33 companies (93 companies have signed the agreement) across Japan have already participated in it. This program allows companies to send their employees to target business territories to train their language, communication, and cultural adaptability skills while making contributions to developing countries. In consideration of its effectiveness, JICA should further advertise this program to companies in Hokkaido.

- (ii) Promotion of use of JICA volunteers' experience at companies expanding overseas

The number of JOCVs and SVs exceeds 48,000 cumulatively (including Youth and Senior Volunteers for *Nikkei* Communities). Former volunteers play important roles across Japan including making contributions to society. In Hokkaido, over 1,000 former JICA volunteers engage in activities that help regional promotions and town revitalization. JICA should recommend companies in Hokkaido to take advantage of JICA volunteers' experience.

(2) Possible new approaches

- ① Collaboration with the Community-Reactivating Cooperator Squad formed by the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications

The Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications (MIC) formed the Community-Reactivating Cooperator Squad in 2009. It is growing in size steadily as activities aiming to strengthen local economies are increasing. As of the end of March 2015, a total of 1,511 individuals from 444 areas across Japan (7 prefectures and 437 municipalities) engage in community revitalization activities. Among them, a total of 225 individuals from 75 municipalities are in Hokkaido.

Interviews with municipal personnel during the course of observation for this study revealed that all these municipalities were facing difficulty recruiting competent members for the Community-Reactivating Cooperator Squad. JICA received many requests from them to help securing competent human resources.

Forty former JOCVs across Japan (five in Hokkaido) became the members of the Community-Reactivating Cooperator Squad after returning to Japan. JICA believes experiences of former JICA volunteers will contribute to regional promotions across Hokkaido to overcome depopulation, especially in rural areas.

- * JICA signed a partnership agreement with the Reconstruction Agency and the Japan Overseas Cooperative Association (JOCA) and has recommended former JICA volunteers to the Reconstruction Agency as reconstruction workers for the areas affected by the Great East Japan Earthquake. Approximately 150 of them have been hired.

(3) Points to keep in mind in implementation of support activities

- ① Promote JICA projects in Hokkaido more

The Advisory Committee consists of experts from the business, academic, administrative, financial, and news media fields. In assessment of future contributions of JICA in regional promotions, the committee pointed out that municipalities, universities, and companies in Hokkaido did not necessarily understand the content or programs of JICA projects and that JICA should further promote its projects. The municipalities JICA visited in this study knew well about the JOCV program but not JICA itself. JICA therefore must place further importance on promotion of its projects.

- ② Select recipients of support

Many of the municipalities that JICA visited for this study have overseas sister-cities. Due to the budget situation, however, their relationships are not always active, and only a few

municipalities have an emphasis on international cooperation during their regional promotions. When implementing regional promotion assistance measures, JICA must first closely examine the direction and details of regional promotion strategies and plans that municipalities intend to develop, and give priority to municipalities interested in international cooperation.

③ Discover new partners

The “Development Cooperation Charter” approved by the Japanese Cabinet in February 2015 aims for international cooperation while fostering Japanese people's wide understanding of its importance. Achievement of this objective requires further strengthening of government-private sector collaboration as well as collaborative relationships with new partners in various fields of business.

JICA projects carried out in Hokkaido, such as acceptance of training program participants and providing grass-roots level technical assistance, are supported by relevant organizations in corresponding fields in Hokkaido. Needless to say, it is important to strengthen the relationship with current partners, but it is also essential to build new partnerships. Increased marketing activities through project PR are therefore necessary. When working with these partners, it is important to understand the regional needs and provide thorough consultation.

④ Increase support for JICA volunteers who returned to Japan

Job postings targeting JICA volunteers who are back in Japan are increasing steadily; therefore, sufficient support is provided to them. However, only a few municipalities have a preferential system for hiring former volunteers as school teachers or municipal officers. JICA should make a stronger request to municipalities to implement such a system. Since FY2015, the Tokyo government has entitled individuals who spent two years or longer as volunteers such as JOCVs to a special screening program for selecting prospective public school teachers. JICA should encourage municipalities and educational organizations in Hokkaido to consider implementing a similar system.

⑤ Cooperate with the JOCV alumni groups and The Supporting Organization of JOCV

Started in 1965, the JOCV program celebrates its 50th anniversary in 2015. Approximately 41,000 volunteers were sent to 88 countries, and about 2,400 of them cumulatively were from Hokkaido. According to the alumni groups in Hokkaido, about 1,000 former volunteers work at governments and companies. These alumni groups are quite active; at six different locations in Hokkaido, they host sports and other events to socialize with community residents and current JICA participants. It is necessary to strengthen the collaborative relationship with them as well as with The Supporting Organization of JOCV.

⑥ Strengthen collaboration with administrative organization in Hokkaido

When implementing projects, JICA must take into consideration the development plans and strategies of the Hokkaido government as well as future regional promotion strategies and plans of municipalities, such as the cities of Sapporo and Obihiro, and meet their various needs. Before implementing regional promotion support measures, JICA must build close partnerships with relevant organizations (national administration, municipalities, universities, research institutions, companies, NGOs, and NPOs) because regional promotion and town revitalization require comprehensive approaches based on factors such as increased economic activities, education, and social security. For business

support, JICA already meets with METI, JETRO, the Organization for Small & Medium Enterprises and Regional Innovation, and the Chamber of Commerce regularly but needs to build a new mechanism to strengthen partnerships with educational and healthcare organizations. It is therefore important to consider creation of a cross-sectional collaboration framework.

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Full Report

1. Background and Objective of the Study

1-1 Background and Objective of the Study

The Japanese government set up the Development Commission and started to develop Hokkaido in 1869. For 140 years since then Hokkaido has shown remarkable growth. However, its society is aging and the population is decreasing rapidly just like other rural areas in Japan. The Japanese Cabinet approved the Comprehensive Strategy for Overcoming Population Decline and Revitalizing Local Economies in order to address these domestic issues. On top of it, the government will create a comprehensive strategy for individual local municipalities.

In Hokkaido, depopulation is occurring faster than in many prefectures and centralization of the population to Sapporo is gaining momentum. For this reason, the municipalities in Hokkaido are developing a revitalization strategy that features the characteristics and competitiveness of each region. Hokkaido as a whole is inviting international investment and supporting local companies to expand their business overseas while advertising safe and reliable foods, rich natural resources, and tourist attractions. It is also working to strengthen the business-university-government collaborative relationship.

Shifting the focus to developing countries, even Asian regions growing at a relatively good pace have a regional gap issue; the economies of urban areas and production bases grow rapidly while rural areas experience slower growth. Filling the gap is their important policy issue. This situation has created strong needs for training services with the objective of implementing regional development and promotion activities featuring regional resources and uniqueness. These needs are now growing in complexity and diversity. Among developing countries, East and Southeast Asian countries have negative population growth. These countries are expected to become aging societies within 30 years. These countries will have stronger needs for exploring the possibility of implementing public social programs and improving their current programs. In addition, social support services for the elderly developed by organizations including those in the private sector will attract more attention, and needs for supporting these services will increase.

The ultimate goal of this study is to sufficiently meet developing countries' needs that are growing in complexity and diversity and to improve project quality. To achieve this, JICA must first gain insight into Hokkaido's economic and social state, then collect and analyze information on activities in local areas. Based on the fact that the number of tourists from developing countries are increasing, international exchanges are becoming active, developing countries are maturing as export markets, and the relationship between Japan and these countries is changing dramatically, the objective of this study is to examine the direction and mid-term strategy for international cooperation which can help developing countries develop and Hokkaido become revitalized and globalized.

1-2 Method and Description of the Study

(1) An overview of Hokkaido

In order to gain insight into the current state and overall picture of Hokkaido, statistical data from 179 municipalities was sorted and analyzed. Also, information on business environments, issues, and problem-solving strategies and measures was organized and listed (provided at the end of the document).

(2) Regional and industrial promotion case examples

Field surveys were conducted to study regional and industrial promotions in 20 different locations in Hokkaido. 20 case examples which may provide references for meeting the diversified needs of developing countries were put together based on the existing data and information obtained in the interviews with relevant personnel (See Section 3).

As clearly indicated by successful regional promotions across Japan, "community competence" determines the promotion results. The following are the two most important factors of community competence: administrative competence including that of the head of the municipality; and business competence of the private sector including planning and execution. Therefore, revitalization of the private sector which plays the central role in the local economy is the key to regional revitalization. For this reason, the majority of case examples introduced in this document are private sector activities. Note, however, this document also includes examples of regional promotion measures and approaches that are led by the government or that highlight the strengths of the government.

Some regional revitalization activities include tourism promotions that require wide area activities that a single municipality alone cannot implement. This study therefore covers both individual municipality activities and inter-municipality activities.

Since regional revitalization covers diversified activities, in this document they are categorized into town development, industrial promotion, and inter-municipality collaboration.

(3) Possibility of JICA projects contributing to regional and industrial promotions

Applicability of JICA projects in Hokkaido to regional and industrial promotions was studied. The Advisory Committee consisting of business, administration, academic, financial, and news media experts in Hokkaido was established and convened. The study was conducted while taking into consideration advice from these experts. Based on the case examples reviewed, the study discusses the possibility of JICA projects being applicable to international cooperation as well as being able to contribute to regional revitalization in Japan.

Table 1-1 "Regional and industrial promotion study in Hokkaido"
Advisory Committee members

Name	Title
Taketo Emoto	Director, International Affairs Division, Office of the Governor, Hokkaido Government
Shuji Koiso	Specially appointed professor, Hokkaido University Public Policy School
Chikara Kobayashi	Director, International Affairs Division, Hokkaido Regional Development Bureau ^{*1}
Noriaki Sato	Director, International Affairs Division, Hokkaido Bureau of Economy, Trade, and Industry ^{*2}
Yuichi Sato	Director, Planning and Coordination Office, Hokkaido District Agriculture Office ^{*3}
Minoru Hamada	Deputy Managing Director, The Hokkaido Shimbun Press
Shoji Masuda	President, Obihiro Shinkin Bank
Yukari Mitsumoto	Executive Director, Office of International Business, Department of Economic Affairs, Hokkaido Government ^{*4}
Masaki Miyaji	Mayor, Tobetsu Town

Note: Members marked with the asterisk (*) have joined during the study period. See Table 1-2 below for their predecessors.

Table 1-2 Former "Regional and industrial promotion study in Hokkaido"
Advisory Committee members

Name	Title
Tetsushi Shibata	Director, International Affairs Division, Hokkaido Regional Development Bureau
Kazuhiko Sugawara	Director, International Affairs Division, Hokkaido Bureau of Economy, Trade, and Industry
Akihiro Ishibashi	Director, Planning and Coordination Office, Hokkaido District Agriculture Office
Toshihiro Kodama	Executive Director, Office of International Business, Department of Economic Affairs, Hokkaido Government

1st Advisory Committee meeting: 1:30 to 3:00 pm, Monday, March 30, 2015

2nd Advisory Committee meeting: 2:00 to 3:45 pm, Thursday, June 4, 2015

3rd Advisory Committee meeting: 3:00 to 4:45 pm, Thursday, August 6, 2015

The study followed the schedule below taking into consideration the opinions from the Advisory Committee.

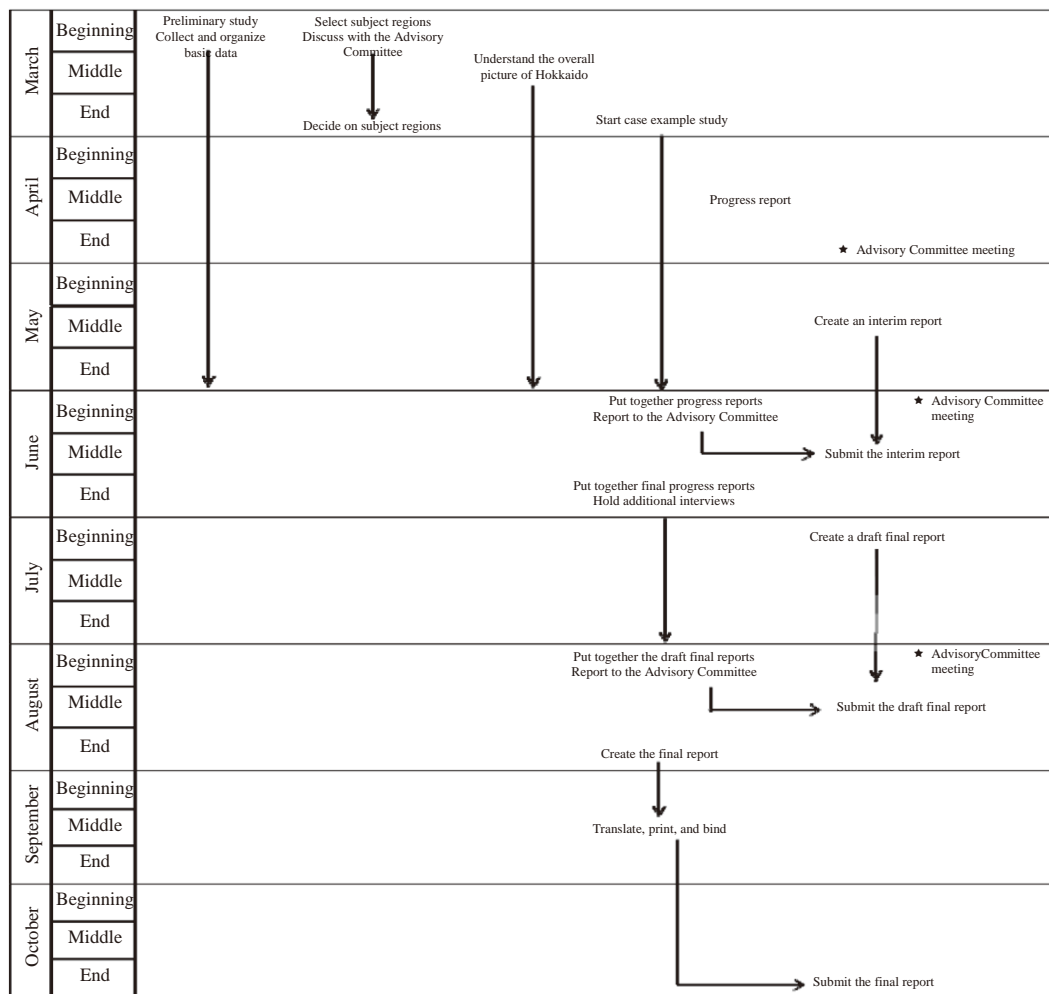


Figure 1 Process Chart

2. Current State and Issues of Hokkaido

2-1 Overview

(1) Geography, population, and climate

Hokkaido is the northernmost island of Japan (from latitude 41 degrees 21 minutes to 45 degrees 33 minutes). It is the largest prefecture in Japan with an area of 83,424 km² (source: Geospatial Information Authority of Japan, 2014), which is as large as Australia, accounting for 22.1% of the entire area of Japan. The population is 5,506,419 (source: Census, 2010) and Hokkaido is the 8th most populated prefecture of the 47 in total (accounting for 4.3% of Japan's population). The population is almost the same as that of Denmark (5.59 million). The population density is 70.2 people per 1 km² (source: Census, 2010), which is the lowest in Japan. Hokkaido accounts for 22.1% of the nation's land while its population accounts only for 4.3% of the entire population, resulting in the lowest population density. Hokkaido is therefore characterized by a large area with widely distributed municipalities.

The climate of Hokkaido features low temperatures and heavy snow during winter. According to the Sapporo Regional Headquarters of the Japan Meteorological Agency, the Japan Sea side of Hokkaido has many snowy days, and drift ice covering the Okhotsk Sea makes Hokkaido very cold. Hokkaido hosted winter the Olympic Games in 1972 and has an annual snow festival; therefore, many people associate Hokkaido with winter.

(2) Economic and industrial characteristics

According to the latest (FY2012) national accounting, the gross product of Hokkaido was 18.1241 trillion yen (nominal) accounting for 3.8% of GDP which was 474.4749 trillion yen (nominal). The real economic growth rate was negative between FY2002 and FY2012 (11 years) except for FY2004, FY2010, and FY2011.

As for economic activities, primary industry accounts for 3.8% of the Hokkaido gross product (national average: 1.2%), secondary industry 15.7% (24.5%), and tertiary industry 80.2% (74.3%). Hokkaido's industrial structure therefore features lower percentages of the primary and tertiary industries and a higher percentage of secondary industry than the respective national averages (source: national accounting for the calendar year of 2012 and FY2012 Hokkaido accounting). The following paragraphs describe the characteristics of each industry.

Primary industry. According to the 2013 Statistics of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries published by the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF), agricultural production of Hokkaido was 1.705 trillion yen accounting for 12.4% of the national figure, and marine fisheries and fish farming production was 298.4 billion yen accounting for 22.0%. Hokkaido occupied the largest share in both agriculture and marine fisheries and fish farming production, establishing itself as the dominant food supplier in Japan. Forestry production was 46 billion yen. This was the second highest after Nagano prefecture and accounted for 10.9% of the national figure.

Secondary industry. According to the 2013 industrial statistics by METI, Hokkaido's product shipments amounted to 6.3851 trillion yen, accounting for 2.1% of the national total and ranked 18th of 47 prefectures. Among the product shipments, food shipments were 1.9287 trillion yen. This was the highest of all prefectures and accounted for 7.7% of the national total.

Tertiary industry. In FY2012, producers of government services accounted for 13.9% (national average: 9.2%) of the gross product of Hokkaido, and transportation 6.8% (5.0%). These businesses therefore occupy a higher share of the gross product in Hokkaido than the national average.

Tourism is a business that extensively covers business activity categories mentioned above. Having tourism resources such as bountiful nature featuring the beauty of four seasons, foods, and hot springs, Hokkaido attracts both domestic and international tourists. The Accommodation Travel Statistical Survey by the Japan Tourism Agency indicated that, in 2014, a total of 30,979,070 people stayed in Hokkaido. This is second largest of 47 prefectures trailing only Tokyo. Tourism is expected to further grow as the key industry of Hokkaido.

2-2 Issues for Hokkaido

(1) History of development of Hokkaido and changes in the economic climate

Development of Hokkaido started in 1869 when the Japanese government set up the Development Commission. The objective of development was to defend the northern boundary and strengthen the country by using Hokkaido's rich resources and vast land. First the Home Ministry and then the Hokkaido Development Agency were responsible for the development. Led by the Director of the Development Commission, later the Director General of the Hokkaido government, and finally the Minister of State who was also Director General of the Hokkaido Development Agency, the development was carried out systematically in accordance with the special development measures. Within just 140 years, Hokkaido underwent remarkable development while playing an important role for Japan at different times. Hokkaido is now attracting global attention as it has set a successful development example.

In 1871, the first vice-Hokkaido Development Commissioner Kiyotaka Kuroda (later the third Commissioner) sought a development model in the US to apply to Hokkaido. He invited Horace Capron who was the United States Commissioner of Agriculture to be an advisor. Capron's tasks were to create a Hokkaido development plan and lead the development project. For these tasks, Capron suggested establishment of a higher educational institute to support agricultural development. The school which later became Sapporo Agricultural College opened and became a source of human resources for the Hokkaido development project and also research and development activities. A rumor has it that Capron recommended appointing Sapporo as the capital city.

The plan called the "Capron Report" proposed: development of strong, American style agriculture focusing on wheat farming in Hokkaido which had been deemed unsuitable for rice farming; and coal mine and business development to take advantage of regional resources. The Commission thoroughly executed Capron's plan; coal mines such as Horonai coal mine were developed as national projects, Sapporo Breweries which later become Sapporo Beer was established, Japan's first canning factory called Ishikari Canning Factory opened, and national miso and soy sauce factories were created. Today, the achievements of Capron's proposal and report are playing a role as the industrial foundation of Hokkaido.

As a result of development, Hokkaido supported the foundation of the modern Japanese economy. It provided lumber for reconstruction efforts after the Great Kanto Earthquake, took in returning soldiers immediately after World War II ended, and produced coal so-called "black diamond" during the rapid economic growth period. These key businesses however caused decline in various parts of Hokkaido as a result of loss of price competitiveness due to deregulation of international trade and decreased demand due to the changes in the energy policy.

Development of Hokkaido gained momentum in the Meiji period. Its history is therefore short and the level of social infrastructure is thus lower than that of Honshu. Since Hokkaido has a large area

with widely distributed municipalities, low temperatures, and heavy snow, development and maintenance of social infrastructure is costly, putting Hokkaido at a serious disadvantage.

(2) Current economic issues of Hokkaido

The gross product of Hokkaido (nominal) accounts only for 3.8% of GDP, giving the Hokkaido economy the nickname the "4% economy." Income per Hokkaido resident was ranked 11th out of 47 prefectures in FY1975 but has dropped to 34th before FY2012. This indicates how difficult the Hokkaido economic situation is.

The economy of Hokkaido heavily relies on public demand. On the national scale, FY2012 public demand accounted for 25% and private demand accounted for 77.2% of national demand, which was 484.813 trillion yen. Meanwhile, in Hokkaido, public demand accounted for 31.1% and private demand accounted for 68.9% of Hokkaido demand. The percentage of the Hokkaido public demand was therefore six points higher than its counterpart (source: FY2012 latest national accounting and FY2012 Hokkaido accounting).

Moreover, the so-called interregional payment balance has been negative. In FY2012, the value of products shipped out from Hokkaido was 6.2911 trillion yen (2.1% increase from the previous year) while the value of products coming into Hokkaido was 8.29 trillion yen (2.1% increase from the previous year). This results in a 1.738 trillion yen difference, or a 114.7 billion yen increase from FY2012 which was 1.6233 trillion yen.

According to the 2013 industrial statistics, the number of manufacturing companies in Hokkaido was 5,596, accounting only for 2.6% of the national total of 208,029. The 2013 gross value added ratio, obtained by dividing the gross value added from the industrial statistics by the product shipment value, was 33.5% for the country but 29.1% for Hokkaido. Hokkaido was ranked 43rd of the total of 47. Even in the food manufacturing business field for which Hokkaido has high product shipments, the gross value added ratio was 29.1% while the national figure was 36.8%. For this, Hokkaido was ranked 44th.

The economy of Hokkaido relies heavily on public demand because of its development history as a material supplier. Insufficient manufacturing business with high value added is the current weakness of Hokkaido's industrial structure, and building economic independence is the task for Hokkaido.

(3) Depopulation and aging society

Hokkaido is depopulating and aging faster than other areas of Japan. According to the 1995 census data the percentage of elderly people (65 years old and older) was 14.5% for the whole country but it was 14.8% for Hokkaido. The 1995 and 2000 census data indicated that the population of Hokkaido decreased by 0.2% during this period while the national population increased by 1.1%. Insufficient labor power due to the decrease in working-age population is predicted to cause more regional economic development issues.

Concentration of population in major cities is more prominent in Hokkaido than many other prefectures. This tendency has been stronger in recent years, and 35.6% of the entire Hokkaido population is now in Sapporo City (1,926,287). The population discrepancies between Sapporo City and other municipalities are large. The population of Asahikawa City, which is the second largest city of Hokkaido, is only approximately 18.0% of Sapporo City (347,207).

Hokkaido has 179 municipalities. According to the IPSS estimate, the number of smaller municipalities with a population less than 5,000 will increase from 66 (2010) to 109 by 2040. Weakening of community functions are issues of concern in many municipalities.

(4) Financial difficulties

These issues have put local Hokkaido finance into difficulties. The financial collapse of Yubari City in FY2006 is a famous example (city was registered as a municipality under rehabilitation in March 2007). According to MIC, while the national average for the FY2013 municipality financial capability index was 0.49, it was 0.25 in Hokkaido. The value 0.25 was the third lowest of 47 prefectures, proving the financial difficulties of municipalities in Hokkaido. The public debt expense ratio of the Hokkaido government was 21.3% in FY2013, which was the poorest status among all prefectures.

According to the Hokkaido accounting data, public demand has decreased from 7.3619 trillion yen in FY2001 to 6.1605 trillion yen in FY2012. Taking into consideration the national economic state on top of the troubled finances of Hokkaido municipalities, public demand is likely to continue to decrease.

2-3 Focuses of Problem Resolution and Future Measures

With concern over the sustainability of communities, organizations and institutions inside and outside Hokkaido including the Hokkaido government proposed that: Hokkaido residents must take the initiative in forming sustainable communities; and the government and the private sector must work together spontaneously and voluntarily to achieve sustainable development of local industries and economies and change the industrial structure such that the private sector empowers the economy. These proposals are based on the principles of subsidiarity and proximity which encourage resolving community issues using accessible resources through cooperation with the central government.

In July 2008, the Cabinet approved the "Comprehensive Hokkaido Development Plan to Lead the Era of Environmental Preservation (7th Term of the Comprehensive Development Plan of Hokkaido)." This plan has three strategic goals. First is to build food- and tourism-intensive industry clusters to achieve a globally competitive, independent, and stable economy. Second is to form communities with a good balance of the environment and economy for the purpose of realizing a beautiful and sustainable Hokkaido. Third is to create the foundation for regional development to attain the first strategic goal. More specifically, the third goal is to maintain functionality, increase exchanges and strengthen collaboration, and build a community model that accommodates depopulation and the aging society.

As exemplified by the 7th Term of the Comprehensive Development Plan of Hokkaido, Hokkaido is creating independent and sustainable communities through government-private sector collaboration while taking advantage of unique regional resources in the food and tourism industries. As described in Reference Information, these community building activities across Hokkaido are supported by grants and the assistance of research institutions in Hokkaido, municipalities, and the central government.

In March 2014, the Hokkaido Regional Development Bureau of the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism (MLIT) published the monitoring report on the 7th Term of the Comprehensive Development Plan of Hokkaido. In this report, the questionnaire items "Is the sixth industry growing?" (sixth industry: primary industry expanding into food processing and

distribution) and "Are tourists to Hokkaido from inside and outside Japan increasing?" were rated with "I strongly agree." With this result, it is clear that the outcome of the regional revitalization focusing on food and tourism across Hokkaido is being recognized.

In March 2014, the Hokkaido Industrial Competitiveness Strategy was formulated at the Hokkaido Industrial Competitiveness Council meeting hosted jointly by the Hokkaido Bureau of Economy, Trade and Industry of METI and the Hokkaido government. According to the strategy, "Hokkaido's resources in the fields of food and tourism are far more competitive than those of other prefectures and can be easily established as Hokkaido brands. Since further growth of these fields of business is expected in the future, these fields should be subject to strategic development." Therefore, development of the food and tourism business to realize sustainable growth of Hokkaido is the strategy.

Under these circumstances, Hokkaido's task is to build independent and sustainable communities while the economy shrinks and the population decreases. To accomplish this task, a wide variety of regional and industrial promotions featuring regional food and tourism are being implemented. The following chapters introduce case examples of regional promotions in Hokkaido.

3. Case Examples of Regional Promotions

Twenty case examples of regional and industrial promotions in Hokkaido were selected as a result of discussion with the Advisory Committee. Focuses of these regional promotions were: creation of high value added food and tourism taking advantage of regional resources, expansion of the sixth industry using regional resources, promotion of community and social businesses, creation of regional brands, continuation of fine arts education, and development of sightseeing programs involving resident participation.

These regional promotion case examples were divided into town development, industrial promotion, and inter-municipality collaboration. Town development includes art-based regional promotions, government-led community development, green tourism promotion, and regional promotion from the social support perspectives. Industrial promotion focuses on economic activities such as brand creation using intellectual properties, generation of new business, revitalization of city centers, and job creation. Inter-municipality collaboration means wide-area activities by multiple municipalities. Successful projects and ongoing projects that are likely to succeed were selected. Table 3-1 shows the interviewees for this study.

Table 3-1 Interviewees for the regional promotion case example study

No.	Municipality	Category	Theme	Interviewee
1	Yubari City	Town development	Regional revitalization through compact city creation and effective use of locally-produced energy	Yubari City government
2	Bibai City	Town development	Regional revitalization featuring industrial heritage	Arte Piazza Bibai (NPO)
3	Tobetsu Town	Town development	Regional revitalization by creating an inclusive society	Yu Yu (social welfare corporation)
4	Niseko Town	Town development	Taking part in the Eco-Model City Project through town development with resident participation	Niseko Town government
5	Iwanai Town	Town development	Regional revitalization through cultural promotion and art education	Iwanai Art Association (NPO) Iwanai Town Board of Education
6	Esashi Town	Town development	Shopping street revitalization using historical resources	Esashi Historical Resource Study Group
7	Shimokawa Town	Town development	Building of a sustainable community with energy independence	Shimokawa Town government
8	Shikaoi Town	Town development	Regional revitalization by creating new tourism	Hokkaido Tourism Association
9	Kushiro City	Town development	Regional revitalization by supporting vocational rehabilitation of impoverished individuals	Social Business Create Conference (general incorporated foundation)
10	Sunagawa City	Industrial promotion	Regional revitalization by collaborating with the local shopping street	Sunagawa City government
11	Eniwa City	Industrial promotion	Regional revitalization through resident-farmer collaboration	Eniwa Kanona Co-op Eniwa City government
12	Muroran City	Industrial promotion	Regional economic revitalization through industry-university-government collaboration	Muroran City government
13	Date City	Industrial promotion	Regional revitalization by featuring regional resources: exercise and food	Japan Nordic Walking School (NPO)
14	Furano City	Industrial promotion	Regional promotion by revitalizing the city center	Furano City government Furano Chamber of Commerce and Industry
15	Higashigawa Town	Industrial promotion	Regional revitalization through a locally-produced rice brand	Higashigawa Town government
16	Haboro Town	Industrial promotion	Regional revitalization by creating a new business on the island	Revitalization Conference for Our Teuri Island (general incorporated foundation) Haboro Town government
17	Oumu Town	Industrial promotion	Regional revitalization by using a natural resource named after the town	Okhotsk Oumu's Treasure Rediscovery Council
18	Tokachi area	Inter-municipality collaboration	Regional revitalization by creating industrial clusters through inter-municipality collaboration	Obihiro City government Tokachizaidan
19	Abashiri River basin	Inter-municipality collaboration	Regional revitalization through agriculture-fishery liaison in the Abashiri River basin	Abashiri River Basin Agriculture-Fishery Liaison Council Abashiri City Hall
20	Okhotsk area	Inter-municipality collaboration	Rural development using the "terroir" approach	Okhotsk Terroir (general incorporated foundation)

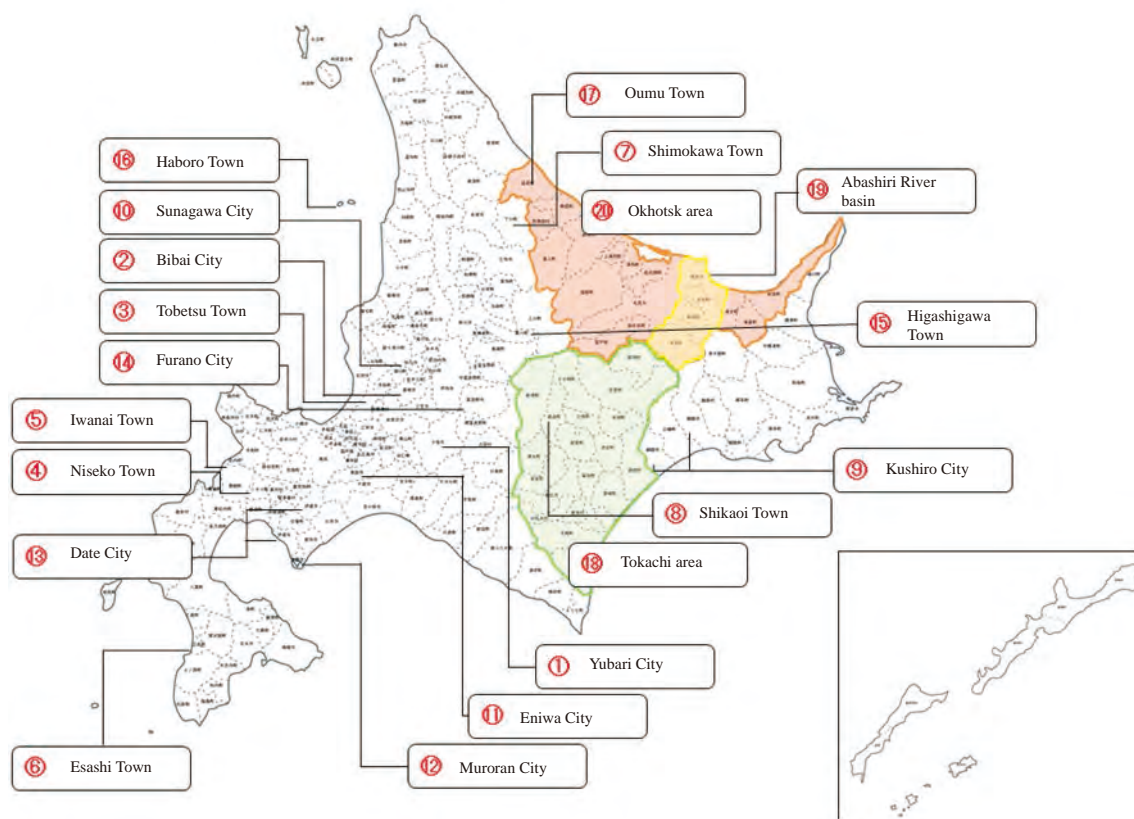


Figure 3-1 Locations of the interviewees

Subject organizations and local governments of their regions were interviewed at the same time. Prior to the interviews, regional information, history of colonization, and an overview of the region was collected and studied.

For revitalization of each region, ① an overview, ② regional promotion activities, and ③ summary and future possibilities are described.

3-1 Yubari City

Yubari City: Regional revitalization plan (compact city and energy)

Implementing organization: Yubari city government

Regional revitalization through compact city creation and effective use of locally-produced energy

[Basic data]

Organization	Yubari city government
Address	2, 4-chome, Honcho, Yubari-shi, Hokkaido
Population	9,801 (as of January 1, 2014)
Number of households	5,476 (as of January 1, 2014)
Activity overview	Development and approval of regional revitalization plans

1. Overview of the region

(1) Overview of the region

Yubari City is located at the center of Hokkaido, south of the Sorachi area. It is 24.89 km from east to west and 34.71 km from north to south. It has an area of 763.07 km². Yubari flourished as the central city of Ishikari coalfield after it opened in 1891. It was given city status in 1943.

In the 1950s, 24 mines of various sizes were opened by for example Hokkaido Colliery & Steamship (Hokutan) and Mitsubishi, and mine-related business also developed. Hokutan Kikai Kogyo (miner and industrial machine manufacturer) and Hokutan Kasei Kougyosho (coke and chemical product manufacturer) were just a few examples. The city population continued to increase to reach 116,908.

In the 1960s, Yubari City was challenged by energy transition from coal to oil, price competition with international coal, a series of mine accidents, and failing of the national coal policy. On top of these, in 1981, a gas explosion occurred at the new mine in Yubari operated by Hokutan Yubari Tanko. Hokutan Yubari Tanko was under Hokutan, which was one of the largest and most important companies, but was forced into bankruptcy. Decline of the coal industry accelerated and the population outflow continued.

A wide variety of domestic resource revitalization measures were implemented by both the government and the private sector, but none of them could turn the situation around. As a result, inexpensive international resources dominated the market and the government's rationalization policy, all coal mine business slumped and companies left the business. In 1990, the last mine, Mitsubishi Sekitan Kogyo Minami Oyubari Mine, closed.

After the last coal mine closed, Yubari City implemented agricultural promotions by growing Yubari cantaloupes taking advantage of the temperature differences, tourism promotions by hosting the Yubari International Fantastic Film Festival, and regional promotions by attracting companies to maintain employment. The city however suffered serious financial difficulties. On March 6, 2007, the city was registered as a municipality under rehabilitation and declared bankruptcy with a 35.3 billion yen debt.

In an attempt to shift into the tourism business, the city made a catch phrase "From Mines to Tourism" and promoted the tourism business. A large number of tourists visited the area, and the city

was recognized for its achievement for a while. According to "Why did Local Governments fail in Regional Management by Using Joint Venture Companies?" by Kunihiro Kawanishi, however, the joint venture companies responsible for the city's tourism business had accumulated losses. At the same time, the tourist attraction and accommodations operated by these venture companies were not as competitive as resorts of other areas. Therefore, the author concluded that they were in a vicious circle in which they could not make compensation investments to attract tourists.

The city originally opened due to mining and was not suitable for extensive agriculture. It did not have sufficient employment opportunities, causing an outflow of the young generation and dramatic depopulation. As a result, only elderly people remained and the city quickly aged. Depopulation sped up after the bankruptcy. The city population was 13,001 in 2005 census data. It went down to 10,925 in 2010, and became less than 10,000 in September 2013 according to the resident registry.

(2) Overview of the Yubari City rehabilitation plan (30th approval on January 27, 2015)

"Empowering Yubari with a Compact City and Local Renewal Energy"

A compact city, as defined by MLIT, is a town in which all city functions are within walking distance. To develop such a concentrated city, MLIT proposes relocation of dispersed city functions to one place and reconstruction of the area of living. In Yubari City, the population used to be 100,000 people and the city infrastructure had been built for that population size. Since the population is less than 10,000 now, a compact city for Yubari means a town suitable for the current population size.

Currently, communities are where mines used to be. In this wide-area, widely distributed community structure, the administrative cost such as maintenance of infrastructure is costly. Since the society is expected to continue aging and the population to decrease, the government is centralizing city functions. Reduction of financial burdens, efficient administrative services, and improved resident satisfaction are some of the advantages of a compact city.

Shimizuawa is the area where centralization of city functions is planned. Shimizuawa is rich in coal bed methane (CBM). Effective use of CBM may allow distribution of inexpensive energy to adjacent industrial complexes and farmers leading to revitalization of the local economy and also contribution to realization of a compact city.

Therefore, the rehabilitation plan targets: giving regional resources high added value, creation of a sustainable business model through energy cost reduction, increase of visitors, regional revitalization through effective use of CBM, and realization of a compact city.

2. Regional promotion activities

(1) Creation of a regional revitalization plan

In the regional revitalization program, the government provides support to voluntary and independent regional activities to revitalize the local economy, create employment opportunities, and comprehensively and effectively promote regional revitalization. A regional rehabilitation plan created by a local public entity and approved by the Prime Minister can receive support including financial support when executing projects described in the plan. It is important for a regional rehabilitation plan to be effective. The Yubari city government therefore had its Planning Section lead plan creation while consulting with experts.

The Japanese government planned to examine the regional rehabilitation plan submitted promptly by Yubari City, and granted the first approval (January 27, 2015). Commercialization of CBM use would require coordination with private companies, but the central government plans to flexibly handle the situation based on the regional rehabilitation plan.

A large part of the budget for executing the plan was yet to be determined at the time of the study. Currently, test drillers and mining rights concerning CBM are under examination.

CBM is the key energy in the plan. Although test boring is yet to be done, a survey has suggested that Yubari alone had 1,500 years' worth of CBM. Revitalization of Yubari relies on effective use of CBM, and the city is now considering hiring private businesses for it.

In August 2015, private businesses will start spoil tip recycling projects. Spoil tips are made of waste rocks from mining but may be able to provide high quality energy. Therefore, commercialization of them is anticipated.

Aside from the rehabilitation plan, Yubari City has a master town development plan created immediately after the city's financial collapse. The residents including organizations and community members developed this plan; they got together and produced a wide variety of ideas for it. Within restrictions due to the financial collapse, the residents chose to sustain the city by downsizing it. "Compact city" is the central concept of this plan, and it reflects their idea of "downsize and survive."

(2) Background of filing the regional rehabilitation plan

From the 1970s to 1980s, coal mines closed one after another, and depopulation continued. The city government resorted to tourism to create employment, developing tourist attractions and inviting tourists. The city however suffered a financial collapse in 2006. If depopulation continues at the same pace, the city population will be 5,181 in 2035. With this size of population, Yubari City may not be able to keep its city status.

Yubari City always had villages scattered throughout the city. In the Kashima district, village residents were relocated to the Nambu district where Shimizusawa is due to the construction of the Shuparo dam. The plan now is to build a compact city by centralizing the population, downsizing the city functions, and creating attractive features at the city center while motivating residents to move voluntarily instead of forcibly relocating whole villages.

Both junior high schools and elementary schools were consolidated into a single school apiece at the end of March 2010 and the end of March 2011, respectively. After the bankruptcy, public establishments are thus gradually being centralized at the city center. The city government is creating a mechanism to motivate the residents to move to the city center.

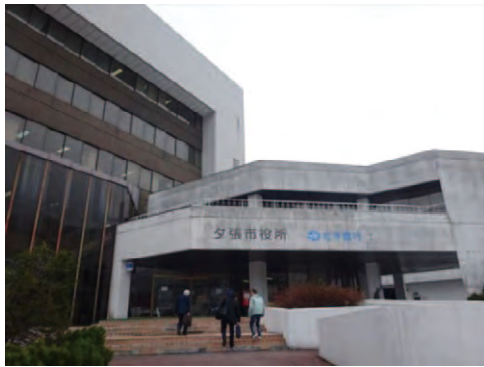
The word "compact city" first appeared in the master town development plan created in 2011. The plan was created under the initiative of the residents based on the guiding principles of: town development while keeping the mine-related historical artifacts and records; and eco-friendly town development.

Currently, the city has public establishments designed for a city with the population size of 50,000 to 70,000. These establishments including their operating costs produce financial burdens. The city government therefore will build a city that matches the current population size. For the city government "being compact" means staying alive instead of shrinking and declining. The rehabilitation plan aims to make full use of regional resources to empower the city, commercialize the resources, and establish sustainable businesses.

Residents who moved to the city center from their old houses occasionally complained to the government in the beginning. However, possibly finding that living in new residences was in fact convenient and comfortable, they now seem quite satisfied. If comments by these residents spread, the city will become compact automatically. The target of the city government is to make the city suitable for a population of 4,000 to 5,000 while following the rehabilitation plan at the same time.

(3) Strategies to translate the rehabilitation plan into regional promotions

Yubari City has 66 spoil tips at mine ruins. There has been strong demand to use them as flame control coal in thermal power generation. The spoil tips can therefore be regarded as unused regional resources. The city government is considering extracting high quality coal from spoil tips, recycling it, and commercializing it. It also plans to work with pharmaceutical companies to plant medical herbs and trees in the city-owned forests and commercialize them. As described above, the city has just made its first step towards regional survival by, for example, adding high value to unused energy and city-owned forests.



Yubari City Hall



Spoil tip and city-owned forest

The city government is also starting to create a mechanism to attract guests from outside. Effective use of existing public establishments and improved use of cultural and sports facilities are the objectives.

The City Hall however cannot find sufficient funds from general revenue and implement projects on its own accord. Therefore, projects must be carried out with creative minds possibly relying on grants and funds.

As for tourism, there is no clear vision for it. This is because the public felt that the failure of tourism development caused the bankruptcy. It is however true that the tourism provided stable employment for a long time. In the future, the city will need tourist attractions of appropriate size if students come for field work. Also, it may provide information on history, background, and future plans of the city for educational purposes. Furthermore, the city already has sports facilities large enough to host a big sports event. The city government therefore wishes to develop sports tourism. Note that private businesses already work together to operate a food stall plaza as a new tourist attraction featuring unique Yubari cuisine.

Yubari City used to focus on structural infrastructure but now started to focus on non-physical infrastructure such as energy development and tourism.



Public housing as a part of the compact city project



Yubari food stall plaza

3. Summary and future possibilities

Along the transition from being bankrupt to revitalization, the city has joined the frontier in solving problems with new approaches. It is now taking time to tackle the following issues: effective use of regional resources, forming of a compact daily living area, creating a town development plan aiming at more comfortable living, and motivating residents to voluntarily move to the city center.

While the population continues to decrease, downsizing the residents' daily living area will not only save administrative costs but also create new communities. This will lead to generation of social capital.

Yubari City was forced to start from square one after going through a financial collapse. Under the mayor's leadership and the government's initiative, its revitalization is on its way. JICA hopes Yubari City will be the future success model of a compact city.

3-2 Bibai City

Bibai City: industrial heritage and collaboration with an NPO

Implementing organization: Government-certified NPO Arte Piazza Bibai

Regional revitalization featuring industrial heritage

[Basic data]

Organization	Government-certified NPO Arte Piazza Bibai
Establishment	September 14, 2005
Address	Sakae-machi, Ochiai-cho, Bibai-shi, Hokkaido
Main location of activity	Arte Piazza Bibai
Activity overview	Environmental preservation and promotion of artistic and cultural activities to pass the historical heritage down to future generations
Activity outcome	Artistic and cultural exchanges with community residents using the historical heritage

1. Overview of the region

(1) Overview of the region

History has it that development of Bibai City started when Isojiro Fukushima moved in by the Bibai River, started business as a ferryman and became the first settler in 1886. The city is located at the center of the Sorachi area (east longitude: from 142 degrees 3 minutes 50 seconds to 141 degrees 40 minutes 40 seconds, and north latitude from 43 degrees 14 minutes 46 seconds to 43 degrees 24 minutes 58 seconds). Its area is 277.69 km², the population is 24,488 (as of January 1, 2014), and the number of households is 12,156 (as of January 1, 2014). Bibai City features Miyajiima-numa, designated under the Ramsar Convention and Japan's largest white-fronted geese-visited area, and Arte Piazza Bibai, displaying the work of world-renowned artist Kan Yasuda. Both of them attract many tourists; approximately 30,000 people visit Bibai City each year from inside and outside Hokkaido.

Agriculture, namely rice and wheat farming, is the major business of Bibai City. The total farming area is 9,450 hectares, the number of farming households is 790, the farming area per farming household is 11.9 hectares, and the value of agricultural products amounts to 7.15 billion yen (source: Statistics Department, MAFF, 2006).

Bibai coal mine used to occupy Ishikari coalfield. Accommodating large coal mines of Mitsubishi Mining and Mitsui Mining as well as many smaller coal mines, Bibai City flourished as one of the largest coal towns. At its peak, which was in the 1950s, the population exceeded 90,000. Like other mining areas, most of the mines are already closed. With the mines closed, more than 80 companies now participate in power generation study using CBM and carbon dioxide and technical development and dissemination of the snow cooling system designed for practical use of natural energy called the cryogenic energy of snow. Also, the Bibai New Business Study Group conducts study in the fields of environment, recycling, energy, health, and social support to explore the possibilities of creating new business.

Bibai City is recently in the town development phase. The goal is to create "Green Bibai City in the Beautiful Harmony of Food, Agriculture, and Art" by making full use of agriculture, commerce,

industry, and other attractive tourism resources. The Bibai City comprehensive plan called the 6th Term Bibai Mirai Kokyo Plan consists of a basic town development strategy divided into agriculture-commerce collaboration, parenting support, and urban infrastructure development.

Bibai City prioritizes green tourism. The city has opened many farmers markets and is trying to develop and expand sales channels of safe and reliable local agricultural products. Bibai is now often selected as the destination of school trips with hands-on activities. Every spring and fall, the city welcomes students who come to experience harvesting of agricultural products, try farm work, and stay and learn farming. Mining was once the key industry of Bibai. After its decline, the city shifted its core business to agriculture. Now tourism featuring the bounty of nature is gradually gaining visibility.

(2) Background of regional promotion activities

Bibai City once flourished as one of the largest mining communities of Hokkaido. East Bibai in particular had a population of 30,000 at its peak. As the main energy source shifted from coal to oil due to the energy revolution, mines closed one after another until the last one finished its operation in 1973. Then, houses became empty and schools shut down. As with Yubari, Bibai had a tragic coal mine accident and many miners lost their lives. To preserve the memory of the mines, the city government requested Bibai native sculptor Kan Yasuda to create artwork. In 1980, he erected Yamano Hi (Monument of the Mine) in Garo Family Park.

At the time of monument creation, Mr. Yasuda was already an internationally active artist based in Italy, and was looking for a studio in Japan. After he erected the monument, the city government introduced him to Sakae elementary school which was closed in 1980. The run-down wooden building had kept students' old memories alive. Seeing it, Mr. Yasuda determined to "create a space to set these children's minds free." The schoolhouse then became Arte Piazza Bibai.

2. Regional promotion implementing organization

(1) Overview of the implementing organization

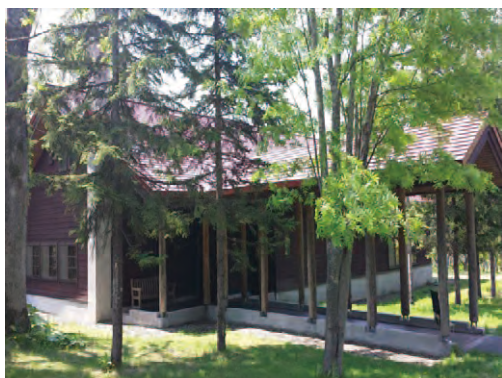
The Supporter Council established in 2003 to support Mr. Yasuda's exhibition "Tie to the Sky, Link with the Earth" (at the Hokkaido Museum of Modern Art and Arte Piazza Bibai) made great contributions to lead the exhibition to success. During the course of support activities, the council grew strong affinity to Arte Piazza Bibai. It continued to support Mr. Yasuda even after the exhibition and strongly suggested creation of an organization to support operation, maintenance, and management of Arte Piazza Bibai.

Meanwhile, Mr. Yasuda recommended development of a mechanism and organization to effectively use the large amount of donations that he was receiving and maintain Arte Piazza Bibai in the way it reflects its philosophy.

As a part of the Collaborative Town Development Program designed to help communities become independent, Bibai City sought the methods of efficient maintenance, management, and operation of public establishments. This included possible use of the designated manager system. The meetings to comprehensively deal with these issues started in May 2004. Then in October, the NPO Founder Council was launched, consisting mainly of the Bibai city government officers.

In April 2005, establishment of an NPO was decided. The objective of the NPO was to create the new Bibai of the 21st century and to help the community become further revitalized. In April 2006,

the Bibai city government entrusted management and operation of Arte Piazza Bibai to the NPO via the designated manager system. Today, the NPO continues to manage Arte Piazza Bibai.



Caffè Arte



Studio Arte (workshop studio)

(2) Details of regional promotion

As an establishment for art and cultural exchanges, Arte Piazza Bibai has been improved in stages since 1991 reflecting the ideas of the world-renowned sculptor Kan Yasuda. Overall facility improvement, expansion, and repair must match his basic concept of the establishment, and he therefore supervises and gives instructions on-site for the work. Arte Piazza Bibai is a high quality art space realized by extensive support of Mr. Yasuda and collaboration with citizens and the administration. For example, the Bibai city government allows the NPO to install purchased sculptures at only the cost incurred to do so or deposits many artworks for display.

After Arte Piazza Bibai became well recognized not only in Hokkaido but across the country, Mr. Yasuda won the Inoue Yasushi Award and the Murano Togo Prize (winning artwork: Arte Piazza Bibai) in 2002. This event made Arte Piazza Bibai widely famous. Now, the park is visited by people of all age groups from children to the elderly and enjoyed by them for its unique art and cultural events which make full use of the park environment.

Arte Piazza Bibai welcomes over 30,000 visitors per year. The government-certified NPO Arte Piazza Bibai maintains and manages the facility environment to make their visit a pleasant experience. It gives a tour to individual visitors or group visitors who come on a tour bus. It also creates an English version of the leaflet. As the number of guests from overseas increases, the NPO implements measures to support them.

In the artwork display space (formerly a gymnasium), over 20 live music performances, seminars, or recitals are held. Artists and citizens use this space to enjoy cultural activities of the community. Studio Arte (workshop studio) holds the "Spiritual Sculpting Workshop" every month. Over 300 people per year come from all areas of Japan for this workshop. Caffè Arte opened 2007. It serves food prepared with locally produced Bibai's specialties, haskap (honeyberries) and blueberries. The NPO explores the way to provide guests a relaxing experience at Arte Piazza Bibai and to enjoy Bibai food. In FY2014, 13,262 people visited the café.

3. Summary and future possibilities

Mine-related historical heritage exists in Arte Piazza Bibai, Bibai City, and surrounding areas. Active participation of local residents is essential for passing it down to future generations. They must

cooperate with relevant organizations to create a system to efficiently manage and maintain it from the user perspective.

Bibai City once flourished in the mining business. After the energy revolution, it shifted its core business to agriculture and used it in its industrial promotion. Bibai City is unique in the way that it recycled its industrial heritage, coal mines, and used this in non-physical ways to realize what is known now as Arte Piazza Bibai.

One of the activities of Arte Piazza Bibai is called "Mine Memory Project." This is a good example of using the industrial heritage in non-physical ways. It holds a photo exhibition to show old pictures for people who return to Bibai for the Japanese bon season. Or, it holds a memory-lane walk event in the Garo district which was once a busy shopping street of a mining city.

A new project has also begun; it archives over 20 years of the history and activities of Arte Piazza Bibai. This will pass down the history, culture, and practices of Bibai to future generations. Bibai City is using past resources in non-physical ways to turn them into new tourism resources which will continue to exist in the future. This whole approach will be a useful example to many municipalities.

3-3 Tobetsu Town

Tobetsu Town: Social support-focused regional promotion

Implementing organization: Social welfare corporation Yu Yu

Regional revitalization by creating an inclusive society

[Basic data]

Organization	Social welfare corporation Yu Yu
Establishment	2013 (obtained social welfare corporation status)
Address	70-18, Rokkencho, Tobetsu-cho, Ishikari-gun, Hokkaido
Main location of activity	Tobetsu Town and Ebetsu City
Activity overview	Integrated social support services including support for people with disabilities, elderly people, and children (all-inclusive social support)
Activity outcome	Achieve mutually supportive relationships for everyone

1. Overview of the region

(1) Overview of the region

Tobetsu Town was settled in 1871 by Date Kuninao, head of the Iwade-Date branch of the Date clan, with his retainers and approximately 340 retainers' family members. The town therefore has over 140 years of history. It is located in the north part of the area managed by the Ishikari Sub-prefectural Bureau. The town area is 422.86 km², the population is 17,606 (as of January 1, 2014), and the number of households is 7,654 (as of January 1, 2014). The temperature fluctuates dynamically from a high of 31.2°C to a low of -20.9°C. The town is adjacent to Sapporo City, approximately 40 minutes away by JR trains. The town population had increased while it was used as a bedroom community, but it is decreasing now.

Tobetsu Town is divided into the Honmachi, Futomimachi, Sweden Hills, and Kanazawa districts. Public facilities of the town are gathered in the Honmachi district with a population of approximately 9,600. The Sweden Hills district is unique; developed in 1987, it is populated by approximately 700 residents who came from other parts of Hokkaido or outside Hokkaido. The Kanazawa district accommodates the Health Sciences University of Hokkaido where approximately 4,000 people study or work. The university students are having a good influence on regional promotion.

The key industry of Tobetsu Town is agriculture. Approximately 20% (86.3 km²) of the town area is cultivated. Rice, wheat, and soy beans are grown taking advantage of the Ishikari plain. Tobetsu Town is also one of the top flower producers in Hokkaido and annual sales amount to 1 billion yen. Royce' Confect and Genmai Koso have their factories in this town.



Sweden Hills (reference image)



Royce' stall (the town invited the company)

(2) Background of regional promotion activities

With agriculture as the key industry, Tobetsu Town produces a wide variety of crops, vegetables, livestock products, and flowers. The town is working to create new product brands and adding value to them in the primary industry and promoting secondary processing and the sixth industry. The town is also trying to increase permanent residents. Industrial measures under implementation include economic revitalization, job creation, inviting people to the town, and use of renewable energy. A michi-no-eki (roadside rest area) to boost the measures listed above is now under construction.

One of the most unique regional promotions of the town relates to social support. The town government has been working with the Health Sciences University of Hokkaido.

2. Regional promotion implementing organization

(1) Overview of the implementing organization



Social welfare corporation Yu Yu



Yusuke Ohara, Director

Social welfare corporation Yu Yu ("Yu Yu") is the implementing organization of Tobetsu regional promotion. Yu Yu's predecessor NPO Yu Yu was established in 2005 by four graduates of the Health Sciences University of Hokkaido. It all started in 2002. As a part of the vacant store space utilization project, the Tobetsu town government requested students to engage in social support volunteer work of their choice. Students provided day care services for children with disabilities. The number of users increased steadily; 122 in the second year, 512 in the third year, and approximately 5,000 after

the fourth year. This increase was a result of the volunteers meeting the needs for a respite service in addition to the day care service. A respite service is designed to provide short-term accommodation to elderly people or people with disabilities to lift the burdens of their caregivers. The town had a small number of people who needed the day care service. The day care service would not have grown this much had they not recognized these additional needs. Understanding of the regional needs led them to establish a trusting relationship with the community members. The student volunteer group obtained NPO status in 2005, and the revised service now expands to Ebetsu and Yubari Cities. The organization obtained social welfare corporation status in 2013.

(2) Details of regional promotion

Tobetsu Town used to have a growing population as a bedroom community for Sapporo City, but the population is now shrinking and the community is aging. Social support services for children, elderly people, and people with disabilities are in general provided by vertically-divided government sections. In a small community, however, a single organization as the social support base should collect social support information and provide integrated services to all residents and people with special needs. This is in the best interest of all service users, and this the basic principle of Yu Yu. After repeated consultations with the government, Social Welfare Council, and relevant institutions and organizations, in 2008, Yu Yu decided to develop two bases for their activities: Tobetsu Town all-inclusive regional social support terminal and Tobetsu Town all-inclusive open salon. Prior to establishment of these bases, the regional social support terminal was designed and established in FY2006 as a key measure of the Tobetsu Town regional social support plan.

The current terminal collects all social support information related to Tobetsu Town, distributes the information with no delays, and serves as a comprehensive volunteer center. What makes it unique is its space for user communication. It is open for activities by all age groups, from elementary school children to elderly people. The space also hosts the All-Inclusive Salon to promote user interactions beyond generations. The All-Inclusive Salon opens once a month. More and more community members come each time and communicate and reach out to each other based on the belief that "we should help each other out in times of need."

The salon is open to everyone with the main target of children, elderly people, and people with disabilities. It is an employment support base for people with disabilities where both supporters and supported people can drop by anytime. At the salon, people with disabilities provide food service and manage a snack shop. Volunteers 65 years old and over work as staff members.

Yu Yu thus creates the foundation of regional social support and finds ways to effectively use idle facilities in the community. For example, Yu Yu spent 2 years from 2012 repairing old apartment buildings and turned them into multifunctional group homes.

In addition, Yu Yu manages a community farm restaurant Pekopeko-no-hatake to provide an employment opportunity to elderly people and people with disabilities such that they will hopefully regain something for which to look forward. People with disabilities work as restaurant staff members or farmers for the restaurant. The restaurant plays an important role; it is a place for elderly people to use their experience and be active in society and for children to get together and learn and have fun. The restaurant faced resistance from other restaurants in the community when it opened. Mr. Ohara commented that they became understanding of his restaurant once they saw Yu Yu's diligent activities including explaining to restaurants that the target customers would not overlap.

Through these social support activities, Yu Yu provides continued employment, supports elderly people's living, and prevents elderly people from becoming fully dependent on caregivers. At the

same time, it produces opportunities for volunteers to interact with children and people with disabilities and builds a community through collaboration between social support providers and business owners. Therefore, Yu Yu makes a great contribution to regional revitalization. At the time of the interview for this study, Yu Yu had created employment opportunities and hired new graduates from inside and outside the community.



Group home



Pekopeko-no-hatake

3. Summary and future possibilities

As the phrase "all-inclusive social support" suggests, Yu Yu's approach is characterized by mutually supportive relationships instead of conflicting relationships between providers and receivers of social support services. To Tobetsu Town, community development means social support staff members, people with disabilities, and elderly people who share the same place creating a bond between the community through for example volunteer activities. JICA hopes that Tobetsu Town will be recognized by the international community by its brand "FUKUSHI (social support)."

3-4 Niseko Town

Niseko Town: Resident participation and town development

Implementing organization: Niseko town government

Taking part in the Eco-Model City Project through town development with resident participation

[Basic data]

Organization	Niseko town government
Address	47, Aza Fujimi, Niseko-cho, Abuta-gun, Hokkaido
Population	4,857 (as of January 1, 2014)
Number of households	2,330 (as of January 1, 2014)
Activity overview	Local autonomy and town development with resident participation

1. Overview of the region

(1) Overview of the region

Niseko Town is located in the west part of central Hokkaido, at the center of Shiribeshi sub-prefecture. Its area is 197.13 km², population is 4,857 (as of January 1, 2014), and the number of households is 2,330 (as of January 1, 2014). It takes approximately 2 hours by car from Sapporo City or Chitose Airport and approximately 90 minutes by car from Otaru City. It is in a hilly basin with many wavy slopes surrounded by mountains including Mt. Yotei (1,898 m) in the east and Niseko Annupuri (1,309 m) in the north. The Shiribetsu River runs through the center of the city (recognized 7 times as Japan's clearest river between 1999 and 2006). Smaller rivers like the Konbu River, Niseko Anbetsu River, and Makkari River flow into Shiribetsu River. Niseko Town has an inland climate. Its average temperature is 6.3°C and snow may be as deep as 200 cm during the winter. It is a heavy snow area but the vast nature surrounding the town creates the "Hokkaido-like" landscape.

The key industry of Niseko Town is agriculture. Approximately 150 farming households make 2.4 billion yen from their agricultural products harvested in 2,000 hectare fields. The inland climate makes the farming period weather mild. Due to diversified geographic and farm characteristics, a wide variety of products such as bareisho potatoes, rice, cantaloupes, asparagus, tomatoes, and lily bulbs are grown. Rice is grown with a reduced amount of agricultural chemicals and is certified by the "Yes! clean" program. The michi-no-eki farmers market offers many agricultural products and provides opportunities for tourists and townspeople to interact.

Niseko is a resort town. It is designated as a national park and quasi-national park having a beautiful landscape year round. Outdoor sports like mountain climbing, canoeing, and rafting are popular during the summer. In the winter, Niseko's ski hills boast world class snow quality and area size. Niseko is now known to welcome a rapidly increasing number of tourists from overseas.

Summertime tourists including those who come for hands-on farming experiences are increasing in recent years. The town is now allocating a lot of resources to improve its resort environment in accordance with the landscape regulation. Across Niseko there are many hot springs with a wide variety of spring quality. Also there are many accommodations including hotels and unique bed & breakfasts.



Mt. Yotei



JR Niseko station

2. Regional promotion activities

(1) Details of regional promotion (Machizukuri Basic Ordinance)

In April 2001 the Machizukuri Basic Ordinance was put into effect. The objective of the ordinance is to allow local municipalities with autonomy to continue their autonomous state throughout the future. The ordinance is a town development rule shared by the residents. It conforms to the spirit of the law such as the Constitution of Japan and the Local Autonomy Act and guides the residents to take actions as the main players of town development. The ordinance was named "Machizukuri (town development) Basic Ordinance" with the hope that municipalities would build not only physical infrastructure such as roads, water systems, and townscape, but also non-physical mechanisms to achieve information sharing and resident participation. Taking advantage of such physical and non-physical structures, residents are expected to realize a town life that they can be proud of. The ordinance exists to make sure that information sharing and resident participation withstand the changes in municipality leaders and town governance.

Information sharing is an important foundation of town development. Information on town development is an asset shared by the residents. No sharing of information means no resident participation. The ordinance treats information sharing and resident participation as vehicles for town development and integrates them as an important principle of such development.

The ordinance is reviewed at least once every 4 years. The first review was in December 2005, and the second in March 2010. Views and social situation of information sharing and resident participation change constantly. New ideas and frameworks for autonomy are created. Niseko Town is envisioning the far future while always paying attention to the social trends inside and outside the country.

Japan's first basic autonomy ordinance "Machizukuri Basic Ordinance" was recognized throughout Japan. According to the result of the 2004 Cabinet survey, Niseko was the top municipality that other municipalities wanted to use as a reference.

[Kira Kaido (received 2002 Japan's Best Landscape Award)]

Route 66 runs through downtown Niseko which was improved when the construction of Niseko Bridge started. This improvement is believed to be the first resident participation in infrastructure project. The residents along the road formed a council to develop the regional landscape standard. Currently, Niseko Machizukuri Forum (NPO) consisting of resident volunteers takes care of plants,

flowerbeds, and benches to offer a warm welcome to visitors. This is one of the outstanding outcomes of the landscape ordinance.



Kira Kaido from the Niseko Town website



Niseko Town Hall

(2) Details of regional promotion (eco-model city)

On March 6, 2014 the Japanese government designated Niseko Town as an "eco-model city." An eco-model city is a city that sets a goal high and tries new approaches to realize a low-carbon society through dramatic reduction of greenhouse gases. The Niseko town government has proposed the "International Eco-Resort Niseko Smart Challenge 86" program which is developed based on the six eco-policies: low-carbon town development mainly in the thermal energy field, promotion of sustainable tourism, cross-sectional efforts in the tourism and environment industries, energy-saving in town living and dissemination of renewable energy, dissemination of renewable energy in agriculture and industry, and realization of a smart community.

The Niseko town government aims to reduce CO2 emission by 86% from the 1990 level. This target is more aggressive than the national target of 80%. Upon selecting Niseko as the eco-model city, the government commented that "Niseko's proposal is a highly feasible plan that reflects the strong eco-awareness of the residents and regional characteristics. Niseko's approaches will set examples for other tourism-intensive communities."

3. Summary and future possibilities

Niseko is a rare case in which the population is on the rise while other municipalities in Hokkaido are facing depopulation. This population increase is attributed to feature-rich town development programs implemented through resident autonomy. Government-private sector collaboration due to the Machizukuri Basic Ordinance is producing good results. For the future, the Niseko town government aims to make the city grow into a world-class international eco-resort by implementing both measures against global-warming and comprehensive environment preservation measures.

Over 50 municipalities in Hokkaido alone have adopted the so-called municipal constitution, the Machizukuri Basic Ordinance or the Basic Autonomy Ordinance, to guarantee that information will be shared with residents and activities will accept resident participation. Niseko Town is a frontier of open administration realized by the abovementioned ordinance.

By adhering to the municipality rules, the systematic town development will withstand replacement of the leader of the municipality or community. Much is expected from Niseko as a pioneer of town development with resident participation.

3-5 Iwanai Town

Iwanai Town: Art museum promotion

Implementing organization: Iwanai Art Association (NPO)

Regional revitalization through cultural promotion and art education

[Basic data]

Organization	Iwanai Art Association (NPO)
Establishment	October 24, 2007
Address	51-3, Aza Mandai, Iwanai-cho, Iwanai-gun, Hokkaido
Main location of activity	Iwanai Town
Activity overview	Promotion of art appreciation to the community residents and management and operation of an art museum by the private sector
Activity outcome	Local cultural and educational promotion through art appreciation and inter-municipality collaboration such as Shiribeshi Museum Road

1. Overview of the region

(1) Overview of the region

In 1751, an Omi merchant, Okada Yazaemon, came to Iwanai as a worker on commission. Since then, Iwanai has a long history of herring fisheries. Iwanai Town is located in the west part of Hokkaido (east longitude: 140 degrees 31 minutes, and north latitude: 42 degrees 59 minutes). The town area is 70.60 km². The population is 14,146 (as of January 1, 2014) and the number of households is 7,211 (as of January 1, 2014). The north part of the town borders the Japan Sea and is designated as Niseko-Shakotan-Otaru Kaigan Quasi-National Park. The south part of the town is surrounded by the natural environment with the view of Iwanaidake of the Niseko Volcanic Group.

The town's attraction, aside from the sea, view of the mountains, and tourism including local food and hot springs, is a large number of cultural facilities showing literary works and art works. Modern museums display many unique paintings. There are also folk museums that show the long history of the port town.

(2) Background of regional promotion activities

Herring fisheries brought wealth to Iwanai Town but ended with the spawning of a small school of herring in 1954. A huge amount of historical and cultural assets were created between 1751 and 1954. The volume was the second largest after Otaru within the Shiribeshi sub-prefecture. In September 1954, a massive fire exacerbated by typhoon number 15 consumed 80% of the town. The town lost a large part of its central functions and historical and cultural assets. While townspeople were in despair, Kinjiro Kida won the 6th Hokkaido Culture Award in November. This brought joy not only to him but also to the townspeople because his work would replace the lost historical and cultural heritage as new culture. Kinjiro Kida won the Hokkaido Shimbun Cultural Award in 1957.

Kinjiro Kida was born in Iwanai Town in 1893 (and died of a brain hemorrhage in 1962). He developed a passion for painting while working in the fisheries business. He spent his whole life in

Iwanai and became one of the well-known Western style artists. Over 1,500 paintings were lost in the fire, but he stayed in Iwanai, continued to pursue his art with passion, and developed his own unique style.

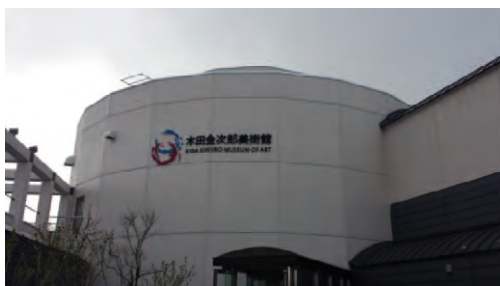
In 1982, the folk museum held the retrospective exhibition to commemorate the 20th anniversary of his death. After the exhibition, his wife endowed his work to the town government and requested construction of an art museum. A large number of owners of his work followed his wife and endowed the art pieces. In 1985, as the whole town wished for an art museum, the town government studied his work and examined the possibility of building a museum. In 1994, Kida Kinjiro Museum of Art opened.

Iwanai Art Association (NPO) has been managing the museum since it opened. In September 2006, it was appointed a designated manager by the Iwanai town government. The fact that people of Iwanai manage the art museum suggests that Iwanai has produced many painters and the townspeople grow up with art. As the community depopulates and ages in the future, it is important that the residents feel confident and proud of living in Iwanai whose regional resources are art museums that teach them the fun of fine art.

2. Regional promotion implementing organization

(1) Overview of the implementing organization

Iwanai Art Association was established in March 1994 to promote art in the Iwanai region and manage and operate Kida Kinjiro Museum of Art. The museum has been operated by the town-based private organization. In September 2006, the Iwanai town government used the newly implemented designated manager system to request the Association to operate the museum as the designated manager. In November 2007, the Association obtained NPO status.



Kida Kinjiro Museum of Art



Scene from the interview

(2) Details of regional promotion

Since 2004, former art club members of Iwanai Senior High School are taking turns to teach art to local students at workshops during the summer vacation. Also, teachers who taught for a long time at the same art club are hosting a painting class to produce a new learning opportunity for local residents and children. This class expands the role of the art museum: from a place to appreciate art to a place to create art. The painting class is expected to boost local publically sponsored exhibitions such as Furusato Kodomo Art Exhibition which has been held since the Kida Kinjiro Museum of Art opened.

The Kida Kinjiro Museum of Art Fan Club publishes the newsletter "Kuki" with a wide variety of information. Aside from the newsletter, the volunteer group Poplar engages in many art museum-related activities to disseminate information.

Poplar is a member of the Shiribeshi Museum Road which consists of the four art museums in and around Iwanai Town (Kida Kinjiro Museum of Art, Arai Memorial Museum of Art, Keiyu Nishimura Museum of Art, and Shu Ogawara Museum of Art) and a museum of literature (Arishima Takeo Memorial Museum). The participating museums are privately operated, publicly operated, or publicly established but privately operated. Regardless of how they are operated, they form a wide-area network of museums and host a joint exhibition every summer. Poplar plans to expand its activities by leveraging the Shiribeshi Museum Road network, which gives rich cultural resources to the Shiribeshi region.

* Shiribeshi Museum Road participating museums

[Kida Kinjiro Museum of Art]

It not only displays the artworks of Kinjiro Kida, it hosts unique special exhibitions and live music performances. Kinjiro Kida was an Iwanai-native solitary painter, who was one of the well-known Hokkaido Western style artists.

[Arai Memorial Museum of Art]

The Picasso block print collection is the must-see feature of the museum. The collection of 267 works covers The Frugal Meal from his early career and the 347 Series from his late career. Visitors, both fans of Picasso and those unfamiliar with his work, will be strongly drawn into his world of art. Building No. 2 features paintings by artists who have a connection with Hokkaido. These paintings are inspired by Takeo Arishima's novel "Umareizuru Nayami" featuring a character modeled after Kinjiro Kida or by the personality of Kinjiro Kida or Takeo Arishima.

[Keiyu Nishimura Museum of Art]

Keiyu Nishimura was an oil painter from Kyowa. He was based in Paris after the war. Featuring soft shades and delicate lines, his works were highly commended as "fusions of East and West." The soft shades in particular were called "the colors of Japanese confectionery" by Daniel Henry Kahnweiler, the art dealer who made Picasso famous.

[Shu Ogawara Museum of Art]

Shu Ogawara started his career as an avant-garde artist but gave it up due to World War II. After the war, he returned to his hometown Kutchan, lived there for over 60 years, and entirely focused on art. He visited China, Tibet, and India after he turned 60 and opened the door to a new way of art creation.

[Arishima Takeo Memorial Museum]

Takeo Arishima was a prominent writer who perfected the field of fictional realism through his novels "Kain no Matsuei," "Umareizuru Nayami," and "Aru Onna." Niseko Town, where Arishima Takeo Memorial Museum stands, was the stage for his breakthrough work "Kain no Matsuei." Takeo Arishima is also famous for "sharing the land" or giving his tenant farmers free use of his vast farm in Niseko, which he inherited from his father.

3. Summary and future possibilities

Kida Kinjiro Museum of Art is operated by a town-based private organization, Iwanai Art Association, under the slogan of "Museum by the people." Its activities have contributed to cultural promotion of Iwanai Town.

Also, the association is expected to effectively use the Shiribeshi Museum Road network, which is a rich cultural resource of the Shiribeshi region, to realize new Shiribeshi tourism, regional promotion, and revitalization of museum exchanges.

The association has communicated with the community through artworks for over 20 years since the museum opened. The activity has resulted in a network with municipalities around Iwanai and the new event "Iwanai: City of Paintings – Community Collection" to introduce the artworks of Iwanai-related painters by borrowing them from the community residents. The phrase City of Paintings serves as the keyword for creating a place for community members to socialize. The association not only established the museum but also operates it. Furthermore, it produces many creative ideas to effectively use the museum. All of these actions are contributing to outstanding activities of the association.

3-6 Esashi Town

Esashi Town: Town development featuring regional history

Implementing organization: Esashi Historical Resource Study Group

Shopping street revitalization using historical resources

[Basic data]

Organization	Esashi Historical Resource Study Group
Establishment	October 2013
Address	85, Aza Hashimoto-cho, Esashi-cho, Hiyama-gun, Hokkaido
Main location of activity	Esashi Town
Activity overview	Revitalization of a shopping street using historical structures
Activity outcome	Revitalization of a shopping street and launching of a new organization through government-private-sector collaboration

1. Overview of the region

(1) Overview of the region

Esashi Town is located in the southwest part of Hokkaido (east longitude: 140 degrees 08 minutes, and north latitude: 41 degrees 52 minutes). Its area is 109.53 km², the population is 8,579 (as of January 1, 2014), and the number of households is 4,448 (as of January 1, 2014). It is approximately 73 km away or an hour and 30 minutes' drive from Hakodate, one of Hokkaido's port towns. Esashi is called the home of the Hokkaido culture. In the Edo period, herring fisheries peaked and brought significant wealth to the town that, according to a folk song, "Even Edo is not as busy as Esashi in May" (meaning: even Edo was not as vibrant as Esashi). Esashi still has a large number of historical structures as well as both tangible and intangible cultural assets such as folk entertainment performances like Esashi Oiwake.

Esashi is the core of the Hiyama region managed by the Hiyama Sub-prefectural Bureau. In history, it came under the control of the Hakodate Magistrate in 1854, became part of former Hakodate prefecture in July 1869, belonged to multiple prefectures, and was put under the control of the Hakodate branch of the Development Commission in 1872. Esashi terminated the official town system and installed the village office. In 1897, the Development Commission opened the Hiyama branch, which managed Esashi. In July 1900, it became a 1st class municipality and then became what is known now as Esashi Town in February 1955 after merging with adjacent Tomari Village. The population decreased from 11,108 (7,899 in former Esashi Town and 3,209 in Tomari Village) in the 1920 census to 9,004 in the 2010 census.

Once flourishing with herring fisheries, the current key industries of Esashi Town are general fisheries and agriculture. Agricultural product sales in 2012 were 541 million yen while fisheries production was 662 million yen (source: Public Relations and Statistics Department, Esashi Town Development Promotion Division). According to the FY2010 census, among 3,918 employed residents, 6.9% or 271 people were in agriculture, 2.8% or 111 people were in fisheries, 16.1% or 632 people were in secondary industry, and 74.1% or 2,904 people were in tertiary business.

The town holds the Ubagami Grand Shrine Togyo Festival in August and the National Esashi Oiwake Competition in September. Tourists, participants, and contestants from across Japan visit Esashi Town for these major events.

(2) Background of regional promotion activities

Esashi Town is one of the few municipalities that have existed from the early Meiji period. In particular, the district along the old national route covering the Nakauta and Ubagami Town (known as Inishie Road) still includes the following: industrial establishments such as wholesale stores and storehouses for Japanese cypress lumber and herring businesses, merchants' residences; former commoners' residences; historic establishments such as temples and shrines; and historic sites and spots. The town has been implementing regional revitalization measures using these existing regional resources for a long time. The revitalization effort sped up with the sailing event of 1986 where a restored kitamae-bune (cargo vessel from the Edo period) sailed from Awajishima to Esashi. This made the whole town aware of its own history, and it became even more aware when the town was selected for the Hokkaido Strategy Project called "Town Planning that Highlights History" in 1989. The government and the private sector worked together to create the town development plan to drive this project. They proceeded with the town development plan while incorporating what they gathered from the interviews with neighborhood associations and private organizations.

2. Regional promotion implementing organization

(1) Overview of the implementing organization

The Esashi Historical Resource Study Group ("the Study Group") was launched in 2013 by the members of the Esashi Town Reki-Machi Shopping Street Association ("the Reki-Machi Association"). The objective of the Study Group is to effectively use the regional resources, namely Esashi Town's history and culture. The Study Group consists of the members of the Reki-Machi Association, Esashi town government, members of various associations in town, and staff members of the Hiyama Sub-prefectural Bureau. Mr. Muroya, the chairperson of the Study Group, is also the auditor of the Reki-Machi Association. The Study Group therefore is designed to put specific plans of the Reki-Machi Association into practice.

The Study Group was established based on the Reki-Machi Association. The Association was launched when it checked, cleaned, and displayed old supplies inside and outside the old establishments in Esashi Town for the kitamae-bune sailing event. While preparing for the event, the members of the Reki-Machi Association considered how they could restore and maintain this old town as their unique townscape instead of just creating a temporary display.

Meanwhile, the voluntary association called Reki-Machi Association was organized in 1992 to play an important role in putting together opinions of traders when creating the Hokkaido Strategy Project plan. The Association obtained corporation status in 1996 with the objective of creating a vibrant commercial area based on the following three fundamental concepts:

- Townscape creation highlighting local history, and preservation and rediscovery of historical structures
- Inheritance of traditional Esashi culture
- Town development involving both the landscape and residents

During the project, the Reki-Machi Association independently dealt with buildings that were not covered by national or prefectural subsidies. The association collected over 50 million yen of

donations from individuals and companies, and preserved and improved the townscape. After the project, the association formed the Study Group to continue its town revitalization effort.



Historical building



Inishie Road

The Study Group and the Reki-Machi Association have selected the shopping street along Inishie Road as the main location of activity. The roadside still has the historic landscape of the old downtown. Their activities consist of exchanges and training of personnel coming from inside and outside the town using local foods as the common ground, creation of menus, socialization with craftsmen to keep and develop craft culture, and dissemination of information to promote the use of historical buildings. Aside from planning and hosting events featuring a combination of history and craftworks as described above, the Hundred Storyteller Project is their most important activity.

In this project, shop owners and residents volunteer to talk about attractive features of the town that they are familiar with. It allows effective use of historical resources of the residents. They hold a workshop to improve volunteers' performances and deepen their knowledge of history. The workshop therefore provides an opportunity for socialization and training of the town residents.

The activities of the Reki-Machi Association have had positive influences on town development. As a result, multiple voluntary associations were established. A few examples are the Inishie Road Flower Club that engages in town beautification activities and the Esashi Painters' Guild that applies Japanese lacquer to old wooden materials in shops and residences rehabilitated in the Hokkaido Strategy Project as well as making furniture. The Study Group and the Reki-Machi Association therefore have created the foundation for shopping street and resident participation in town development.

The Study Group received financial support from the Toyota Foundation and repaired one of the unused soil warehouses in the shopping street. In 2014, rehabilitation was completed and the warehouse was opened as Satsukigura Chamise, a café operated by the Reki-Machi Association. The café provides a space for live music performances and cooking classes, thus contributing to socialization of the residences.

3. Summary and future possibilities

The shopping street never had organizations like the Study Group and the Reki-Machi Association until the kitamae-bune sailing event. The event motivated the shop owners to work together and the townspeople to revisit their town history, leading them to participate in town revitalization which highlighted the town's historical value as a regional resource. The residents have become

increasingly willing to drive regional revitalization by preserving historical structures and soliciting financial as well as physical donations.

Today, various town circles and townspeople open their stalls at Inishie Road events, which are planned and hosted by the Study Group and Reki-Machi Association. These events, featuring historical buildings and craftsmanship, are now involving the whole town. Furthermore, the Esashi town government declared Esashi to be a historic town in 1996. The government and private sector are now managing the unique revitalization approaches taking advantage of the historic resources of the town. This town development is now often referred to as a success example.

At the end of March 2016, the Hokkaido Shinkansen (high-speed line) will start running between Shin-Aomori and Shin-Hakodate-Hokuto. The Esashi town government is exploring ways take advantage of the Shinkansen. The current plan includes operation of the Esashi Kite Net Council through government-private sector collaboration within the framework of the Esashi Sightseeing Convention Association and use of the historic landscape as its competitive tourism resources.

The town once flourished so much that "3,000 ships come and go" and "Even Edo is not as busy as Esashi in May" was sung about it. With the goal of returning the same prosperity to the town, the town government is expected to implement various activities for the shopping street where shops have inherited the spirit of the old local merchants. These regional revitalization activities focusing on infrastructure development to preserve historical resources will be a good example for developing countries when they engage in town development highlighting their history and historical heritage.

3-7 Shimokawa Town

Shimokawa Town: "Future City" initiative and energy policy

Implementing organization: Shimokawa town government

Building of a sustainable community with energy independence

[Basic data]

Organization	Shimokawa town government
Address	63, Saiwaimachi, Shimokawa-cho, Kamikawa-gun, Hokkaido
Population	3,531 (as of January 1, 2014)
Number of households	1,801 (as of January 1, 2014)
Activity overview	Energy independence and community development

1. Overview of the region

(1) Overview of the region

Shimokawa Town is in the north part of Hokkaido. It is 100 km from Asahikawa City. The area is 644.2 km², the population is 3,531 (as of January 1, 2014), and the number of households is 1,801 (as of January 1, 2014). Approximately 90% of the town area is forest. The main industries are therefore forestry and agriculture. The town once flourished with zaibatsu (business conglomerate) mines, and the town population exceeded 15,000. The population dropped when the mines closed. The town is now depopulated. It has avoided merger with nearby municipalities; it has been trying to slow down the population decline through independent town development which consists of enhancement of social infrastructure and resident health and social support services. Shimokawa Town is a snowy and cold area. The highest temperature in summer is approximately 30°C and the lowest temperature is approximately 30°C below zero. Snow continues to fall from the end of November to the end of March.

In order to maintain the foundation of town management and stable employment, Shimokawa Town obtained a national forest in 1950. Learning from advanced German forest management, the town aims for sustainable forest management. Its approach consists of maintaining the forest area of 3,000 hectares, repeating deforestation and afforestation in a 50 hectare area, and setting the tree cutting age to 60. Not only trees old enough for cutting but also lumber from forest thinning are all processed into glued laminated wood, cylinders, or charcoal for example. This forestry practice and management of Shimokawa Town has been introduced an example for the nation, and an inflow of knowledge-seeking visitors continues. Currently, approximately 270 people in town are in the forestry or timber industry. Many young people, from inside and outside the town, work in Shimokawa Town. There is a waiting list of a few dozen people for employment at the Forestry Association. The town constantly welcomes new people, creating a virtuous cycle.

Shimokawa Town is one of the first municipalities in Hokkaido that engaged in energy conversion using forest biomass such as waste from glued laminated wood and forest-thinning and developed a local heat supply system. Being a pioneer in reducing carbon emissions, the town was designated as an eco-model city representing smaller municipalities in Japan. Follow-up on their low-carbon efforts has been ranked "A."



Ichinohashi Bio Village



Biomass wood boiler

2. Regional promotion activities

(1) Details of regional promotion

In 1953, Shimokawa Town purchased a 1,221 hectare national forest in accordance with the Act on Temporary Measures concerning National Forest Consolidation. The town promoted forestation and is now managing a 4,605 hectare town forest. Continuation of forestation of approximately 50 hectares per year while implementing appropriate forest management has led the town to establish a renewable forest management system of "50 hectares per year × 60 years." Furthermore, Shimokawa Town consolidated its national, private, and town forests and became the first municipality in Hokkaido to obtain the internationally-recognized Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) forest management certification in 2003.

In 2008, Shimokawa Town was selected as an eco-model city. An eco-model city is a city designated by the central government that sets a greenhouse gas emission reduction target and implements pioneering approaches to meet the target in order to create a low-carbon society to fight against global warming. Focuses of the Eco-Model City Promotion Project are regional industry promotion and creation of a comfortable living environment. Shimokawa Town linked this project with various other measures to promote regional industry, create jobs, revitalize the community, and achieve a low carbon society through absorption and reduction of a large amount of greenhouse gases.

Being snowy and cold, and relying on fossil fuels for heating, Hokkaido has high CO₂ emissions. Residents in Hokkaido emit more CO₂ than other prefectures. To address this issue, the town developed a mechanism to take advantage of forests' ability to absorb and assimilate CO₂ and prepared a wooden biomass-fueled local heating system to reduce CO₂ emissions and counteract global warming. The town also installed a wooden material manufacturing facility to collect wooden biomass.

At the town-operated elderly care complex, Akebono-En, approximately 210,000 liters of fuel oil was consumed per year, responsible for 20.6% of CO₂ emitted from public establishments inside the town (excluding power consumption). Facing this issue, the complex installed a 450 Kw biomass wood boiler in FY2010. The result was outstanding; the complex reduced CO₂ emissions by 80%, which translated into reduction of 464 tons of carbon per year.

In December 2011, the government selected Shimokawa Town as a "future city" and also a "special forestry business zone" in accordance with the "Future City" initiative and the Comprehensive Special Zone Program respectively, both of which have been implemented in accordance with the

new national growth strategy. The "Future City" initiative is one of the national strategy projects, which are included in the new growth strategy. The government selects a municipality or area engaging in strategic approaches in forward-looking technology, mechanisms, services, or town development to produce world-class success examples. The government concentrates relevant budget funds on the selected municipality or area for support.

For Shimokawa Town, the objective of the "Future City" initiative is to create a "forest-rich future city." The town government plans to transform the town into a model "forest-rich future city" by 2030. In this model city, innovation of the forestry and forestry product system gives rise to comprehensive forestry business, renewable energy allows 100% self-sufficient energy, and, by introducing apartment buildings and increasing elderly employment, all residents contribute to and comfortably live in the community.

The town government will consult with the central government and relevant private companies to speed up the development of small-scale distributed heat supply systems and also integrate forestry and forestry product industries.

3. Summary and future possibilities

Shimokawa Town shares its long history with the development of forestry and the forestry product business. After forestry declined and the mines closed, the population dropped. For more than 50 years since the 1950s, the town has been implementing the government-led renewable forestry management system.

The trees in the forest made after the war are approaching their maturity, and the volume of forests that can be harvested is growing. For the town forest in particular, the town government has been working on creating sustainable forests within the framework of renewable forest management. The goal of the town government is to use all forest resources in the form of construction material, city engineering material, charcoal, chopsticks, wood vinegar, and aroma oils, and achieve energy independence by using wooden biomass energy.

To take advantage of the national projects such as the Eco-Model City Project and the "Future City" initiative, the Shimokawa town government has created a network with the central government to collect information and make proposals. The town government has been cooperating in this way since the time of the national forest purchase.

Review of the efforts by the Shimokawa town government suggests that the keys to successful regional promotion are a long-term commitment to regional resources, which are forests, and training of personnel to give high added value to forests and achieve sustainable forest management.

3-8 Shikaoi Town

Shikaoi Town: Green tourism

Implementing organization: NPO Hokkaido Tourism Association

Rural revitalization by creating new tourism

[Basic data]

Organization	NPO Hokkaido Tourism Association
Establishment	October 2001
Address	35, 2-chome, Motomachi, Shikaoi-cho, Kato-gun, Hokkaido
Main location of activity	Shikaoi Town
Activity overview	Dissemination of green tourism and engagement in green tourism business
Activity outcome	Regional promotion using green tourism

1. Overview of the region

(1) Overview of the region

Shikaoi Town is located at the northwestern edge of Tokachi Plain, which is the major agricultural zone in Hokkaido. The north part of the town is a rural area that skirts Daisetsuzan National Park and houses the only natural lake, Lake Shikaribetsu, inside the park.

The interior of Tokachi including Shikaoi Town is characterized by the continental climate. Foehn wind blows during spring and the temperature is relatively high in summer. The temperature stays low in winter due to the continental cold anticyclone. It tends to be clear with little snow because the Hidaka Mountains stop the snow clouds. Precipitation stays low throughout the year. Shikaoi Town enjoys one of the longest sunshine durations in Japan.

Colonization is said to have started in 1902. In April 1921, Shikaoi Village was separated from former Otofuke Village and later became Shikaoi Town. The town population is 5,654 (as of January 1, 2014) and the number of households is 2,448 (as of January 1, 2014).

The town area is 402.88 km², and forest land occupies 59% of it (237.73 km²). The cultivated land area is 122 km², accounting for 30.2% of the town area. Agriculture is the key industry of Shikaoi Town.

Dry-field farming and livestock farming are at the core of farming in Shikaoi Town. Farming expanded after agricultural and livestock product imports were deregulated as a result of the Uruguay Round and Japan-US agricultural negotiations. Farming production increased from 1.43 billion yen in 1965 to 18.575 billion yen in 2014. Breakdown of the 2014 production is 5.188 billion yen for agriculture and 13.387 billion yen for livestock farming.

(2) Background of regional promotion activities

The overall agricultural business in and around the Tokachi region has been expanding, and Shikaoi Town was no exception. Farmers outside Shikaoi Town were generating side businesses by using the combination of agriculture and regional resources and operating farm inns and restaurants. They

were also engaging in what is currently known as the sixth industry. Koji Takeda, who later became director of an NPO called Hokkaido Tourism Association ("the Association"), learned about the business practice in the Tokachi region and attempted to import it to Shikaoi Town. He was a member of the town assembly at that time but previously was a local JA employee and had good knowledge of farm inns.

Around the same time, he and Kazunari Nakano, former director of the Association, were exploring the future and new direction of agriculture. Mr. Nakano was a farmer who owned a 25 hectare farm and ranch, and produced over 30 thoroughbred horses. As famous ranches in the Iburi and Hidaka regions prospered, he developed a sense of crisis in the sustainability of a small ranch. In 1988, he built a log house on his farm and renovated it into a farm restaurant "Daisougen no Chiisana Ie (meaning a little house on the prairie)." He then became one of the first green tourism business owners to start the farm inn business.

People who were interested in the farm inn business organized the Shikaoi Town Farm Inn Study Group in 1990. Together with Mr. Takeda, they held study sessions. They learned how they should steer their agricultural businesses by inviting experts to give lectures and observing places such as Europe with advanced farm inn businesses. The study group members developed a common understanding that "farm inn business relies on regional resources including natural environment, rural landscape, and agricultural products." It was natural for the study group to start regional promotion and community development activities.



Field featured in green tourism



Farmers restaurant "country papa"

2. Regional promotion implementing organization

(1) Overview of the implementing organization

The number of farm inn business owners had increased to 5 by the time the study group became active. All business owners joined the study group and began to cooperate with each other. In 2000, they established the Association with the objectives of using the network and know-how built into the study group activities to ① tackle new possibilities of agriculture and grow it as new tourism resources, ② secure continuity of their businesses including the farm inn business, and ③ contribute to regional employment.

(2) Details of regional promotion

When the Association was established, Hokkaido Tourism College opened at the same time to carry out the objectives described above. The college was designed to teach green tourism to students from inside and outside the town by providing knowledge acquired through study group activities including community development. Since the college was operated on a 3 years' worth subsidy from the Hokkaido government and Shikaoi town government, it had to close when the financial support ended. The philosophy of the college however was passed on to the Association's green tourism environmental improvement activities described above.

[Rural revitalization through city-rural exchanges]

① Green tourism business

The interview with the representative of the Association indicated that, as a result of the study group and Association's efforts to commercialize green tourism, approximately 300,000 tourists visit Shikaoi Town every year.

Such growth of green tourism is also attributed to establishment of the Hokkaido Green Tourism Network in 2005. With the Association being the core member, its establishment was inspired by the successful Hokkaido green tourism networking event in 2004. The event gave Hokkaido green tourism business owners an opportunity to network and learn. Networking parties have become routine events, and in FY2015, "Green Tourism Forum Hokkaido in Shikaoi" will be held to propose a new direction of green tourism business development.

② Working holiday in Tokachi and rural life at a ranch

The working holiday and ranch employment programs are the second-stage green tourism features. The Association provides support for attracting tourists for these programs. They are designed to find long stay tourists and possible new rural area settlers. They offer 60 to 70 openings, but they have always been full in recent years. The Association and the town government are now tackling regional issues such as vacant houses so that they can secure accommodations for long stay tourists.

[Development of tourism resources taking advantage of natural environment]

① Slow camping business

The Association registers green tourism business owners and farmers, and uses the Internet to send out information to and take reservations from tourists. It works with a major outdoor company and recommends all farmers in Hokkaido to offer fields for slow camping. Currently, the services are provided at six locations.

② Great Fishing in Lake Shikaribetsu

The Association decided to use the Dolly Varden trout (Miyabe charr) as a tourism resource. Miyabe charr live only in Lake Shikaribetsu and were once in danger of extinction. The Association has been appointed to manage fish in the lake. It accomplishes both preservation and use of the resources by implementing strict rules on use of fishing hooks and releasing the fish.

3. Summary and future possibilities

The new style of agricultural business across Shikaoi Town has set an example of sixth industry in the field. The contribution of the Association was significant in this regard; as an organization to support independence of regional farmers, it held study meetings, collected information including from overseas sources, and distributed it.

As demand for regional revitalization through creating regional business taking advantage of regional resources increased, the Association as the pioneer of green tourism expanded its activities throughout Hokkaido and now is highly commended for creating a model for rural revitalization.

As a result of the projects and programs described above, a wide variety of farm inns now welcome guests along the road that leads from the town center to the tourist attraction, Lake Shikaribetsu. The idyllic, beautiful landscape adds to the strength of the green tourism business.

To further disseminate green tourism and promote regional tourism, the Association is looking into creating a concierge, for which local business owners are expressing a need, and is implementing activities with a view to training business successors.

3-9 Kushiro City

Kushiro City supporting the impoverished

Implementing organization: Social Business Create Conference (general incorporated association)

Regional revitalization by supporting vocational rehabilitation of impoverished individuals

[Basic data]

Organization	Social Business Create Conference (general incorporated association)
Establishment	April 2, 2012
Address	Bikenwork Building, 12-1-14, Kitaodori, Kushiro-shi Hokkaido
Main location of activity	Kushiro City
Activity overview	Comprehensive employment support for the impoverished
Activity outcome	Pioneer activities resulting in full scale support activities due to the new law and producing good results

1. Overview of the region

(1) Overview of the region

Kushiro City is located in the east part of Hokkaido along the Pacific Ocean. Its area is 1,362.92 km². The city is blessed with a magnificent natural landscape including Kushiro-shitsugen National Park and Akan National Park. The key industries of the city are fisheries, livestock farming, forestry, coal mining, paper manufacturing, and tourism. For fisheries, Kushiro City boasts one of the highest catches in Japan. Kushiro is one of the largest cities in eastern Hokkaido; the population is 180,160 (as of January 1, 2014) and the number of households is 94,352 (as of January 1, 2014). The city dates back to 1880 when the Kushiro village office opened. Kushiro acquired city status in 1922 due to enactment of the municipal system. On October 11, 2005, Kushiro City, Akan Town, and Onbetsu Town were consolidated in the so-called "Heisei great merger," forming the new Kushiro City as it is known now.

In 2002, one of the key industries, coal mining, was significantly scaled down. The city finances as a result became exhausted, and a large number of households on welfare became a social issue. In 2004, the city government launched a project to support the independence of people on welfare. In 2006, it implemented the Kushiro City Independence Assistance Program to support the impoverished. The permillage of people on welfare, however, kept rising. It peaked in FY2012 at 55.1‰ (obtained from the number of people on welfare in every 1,000 people).

In 2013, the rate was still high at 54.6‰; 9,853 people and 6,637 households were on welfare. Among these households, 2,673 were elderly households, 813 were single mother households, 640 were households with people with disabilities, 1,324 were households with sick/injured people, and 1,187 were uncategorized.

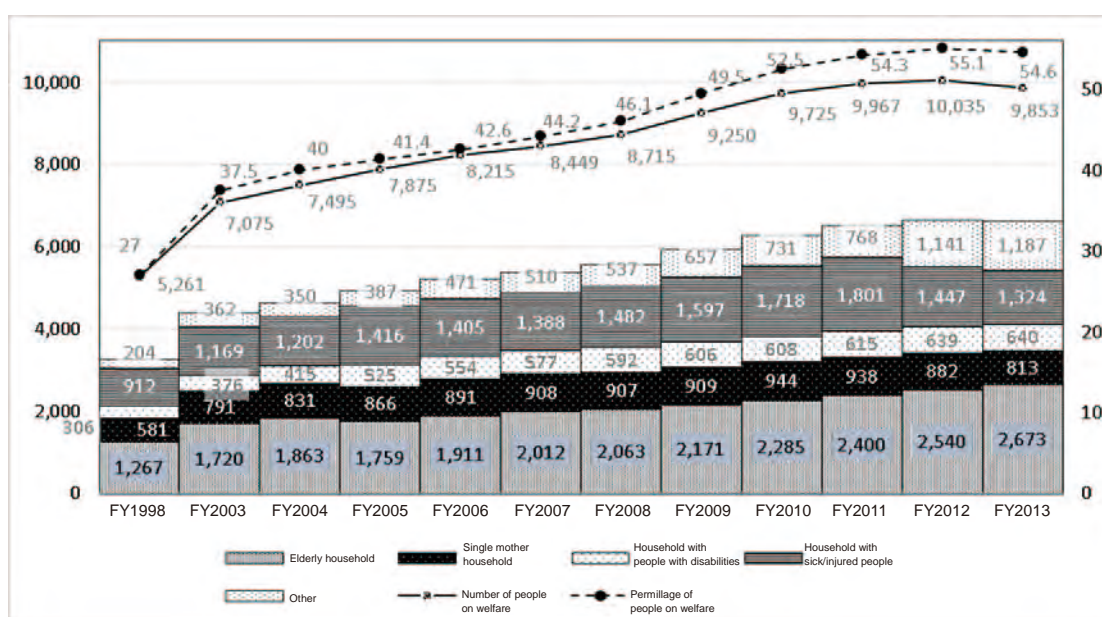


Figure 3-2 Number of households on welfare and the permillage of people on welfare

Note: created based on Kushiro city government data

The high permillage has been affecting city finances. The FY2013 financial capability index was 0.43, which was the lowest of 50 similar municipalities. The FY2013 current-account ratio was 97.6%, indicating poor financial flexibility. The social assistance expenditure was 15.3%, the 4th from the bottom of 50 similar municipalities. This means that welfare payment was causing a severe strain on the local finances.

Table 3-2 Local finance of Kushiro City

(Unit: %)

Fiscal year			2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Financial capability index	Kushiro City		0.48	0.46	0.45	0.44	0.43
	Average of similar municipalities		0.73	0.71	0.85	0.82	0.82
Current-account ratio	Kushiro City		94.3	97.2	96.6	93.5	97.6
	Average of similar municipalities		90.0	90.8	90.1	88.4	91.4
	Social assistance expenditure	Kushiro City	14.6	14.5	15.7	16.2	15.3
		Average of similar municipalities	9.1	9.8	11.3	12.0	12.0

Note: created based on Kushiro city government data

Financial capability index: indicates financial strength of a local public entity

Current-account ratio: indicates financial flexibility of a municipality

(2) Background of regional promotion activities

One of the regional promotions of Kushiro City was business incubation using vacant buildings in the city center, and Masaki Aihara was playing the central role in it.

Mr. Aihara was transferred to Kushiro City when he was working for a major private corporation. In Kushiro City, he launched the Rashin Project to provide tenkin-zoku (company employees who are

frequently transferred to different parts of Japan) a place for socialization. With this project as his turning point, he started to support civil activities. After learning the concept of social business from Shuji Koiso, former president of Kushiro Public University of Economics, he participated in the Public Entrepreneurship Support Network Project and became an entrepreneurship incubator for Kushiro City in 2008.

In 2010, he became director of an NPO, Community Life Support Network, and the whole country came to know his activities. The Kushiro city government also counted on him as an entrepreneurship incubator and considered creating a support system for his services. Mr. Aihara then became a working member of the Independence Assistance Program for people on welfare, and this led him to establish the Social Business Create Conference in April 2012. He started to support the impoverished through job creation.

Meanwhile, in 2004 and 2005, Kushiro City was selected as a model city for the Independence Assistance Program by the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare (MHLW). As a part of the program, the city government implemented the Single Mother Household Independence Assistance Pilot Project designed to provide internship or volunteer opportunities to single mothers on welfare to motivate them to work.

The support provided in this project was not one-sided; it incorporated single mothers' opinions collected in a survey and was designed to support them in obtaining a home helper certificate. Through this project, all 18 passed the certification test and 12 of them found employment. The city government expanded this project to everyone on welfare in 2006. Much attention is paid to the result of this advanced independence support effort.

2. Regional promotion implementing organization

(1) Overview of the implementing organization

The Social Business Create Conference ("the Conference") is the regional promotion implementing organization. It was established in April 2012 by Masaki Aihara and Taketoshi Kushibe, who was a former Kushiro City Social Support Office employee with experience in independence assistance projects. The president of the Kushiro Branch of Bikenwork took office as representative director. The objective of the organization was to support employment and social independence of the impoverished regardless of their welfare reception status.

The Conference provides support to the community residents based on the belief that the impoverished are also the building blocks of a community. The Conference combines social support and employment and provides stages of support covering consultation, support for preparing for employment, and internship.

(2) Details of regional promotion

In 2012, the study on employment and social independence concerning the impoverished uncovered the necessity of creating paid occupational training opportunities to help them gain social independence. In 2013, the Conference started a fishing net repair service as a pilot project in the Safety Net Support Project Subsidy Program.

This repair service is still in business. A few people enrolled in the support project work in the space provided in the same building as the Conference office. They work on commission to make an income. According to the current welfare rule, receiving an income means having to return about the same amount of welfare to the city government. They may stay on welfare, but if the number of

individuals on welfare who make money increases, the city government can reduce the welfare payment. Also, making money and returning the same amount of welfare gives individuals confidence and increased happiness.

Meanwhile, the shortage of future fishing net repairers and the possibility that the repair technique may not be passed down to future generations have been serious concerns. The Conference's service therefore has been highly commended by the fisheries industry. In FY2014, 70 people were hired as fishing net repairers through the consulting and support service. Employment can allow the impoverished, including those who are on welfare, to have an independent life, boost self-esteem, and get motivated to work or participate in society. Learning about such a positive effect, the Conference is now engaging in a health equipment assembly service and a paid garbage bag packing service in addition to the fishing net repair service. The Conference is expected to create a wider range of employment in the future.

The Kushiro city government converts Conference activities into numerical values and assesses social return on investment (SROI). SROI is obtained by dividing value generated by a project (yen) by resources used in a project (yen). In case of the Kushiro City Social Support Office, 412,541 yen is used in a project and the value generated is 1,599,020 yen. Therefore, SROI is 3.88 (FY2013). Corporate social responsibility (CSR) and social support business are usually not measured or assessed for their social value effectiveness, and this has been an issue for a long time. Also, the government in general does not assess policies. Under these circumstances, the city government has demonstrated a revolutionary approach to social support projects.

3. Summary and future possibilities

The current welfare rule requires the employment-based income be withdrawn from the welfare payment. The Conference therefore asked the impoverished how they felt about employment before enrolling them in the support program and found that they had strong employment needs. Working relates to human dignity. The Conference is there to provide the opportunity. The central government enforced the Law to Support Independence of People in Need in April 2015. The national and municipal governments held discussions over whether the occupational training programs, such as fishing net repair work, should be approved. At the end, the "Kushiro model" was approved; people in need will go through consultation, employment preparation, and employment or occupational training with the Conference. The basic form of the support program stipulated by the law became the Kushiro model.

The law now covers all support projects by the Conference. To further strengthen the project foundation and improve the wages from occupational training, the Conference plans to enter the agricultural market and expand the support to municipalities around Kushiro City.

The Conference also plans to work with other social support providers who are targeting young individuals or people with disabilities to enhance the support quality. Strengthening of collaboration with companies is another plan for the Conference. This new endeavor of the Conference to save the impoverished has begun.

3-10 Sunagawa City

Sunagawa City: Sweet Road and shopping street

Implementing organization: Sunagawa Sweet Road Council

Regional revitalization by collaborating with the local shopping street

[Basic data]

Organization	Sunagawa Sweet Road Council
Establishment	May 2002
Address	Kita 3-chome, Nishi 6-jo, Sunagawa-shi, Hokkaido
Executive office	Commerce, Industry, Labor, and Tourism Division, Sunagawa City Government
Main location of activity	Sunagawa City
Activity overview	Revitalization of the shopping street including the local confectionery business
Activity outcome	Regional promotion by the government and the private sector organization

1. Overview of the region

(1) Overview of the region

Sunagawa City is located near the center of Hokkaido where the Sorachi River flows into the Ishikari River. The town area is 78.68 km². The Ishikari River runs along the west rim of the city. The city center expands from north to south along Route 12 that runs through the city center from Sapporo City to Asahikawa City. In 2007, the Ministry of the Environment (MOE) selected Sunagawa City as an "amenity town (a town with a comfortable urban environment)". There are 20 of them across Japan and Sunagawa City is the only one in Hokkaido. Accommodating many parks such as Kodomo no Kuni prefectural park, Sunagawa Oasis Park, Hokkou Park, and Sunagawa Highway Oasis, the city has the largest park area (208.46 km²) per citizen in Japan (as of the end of March 2014; data from Public Relations, Sunagawa City Mayor's Office).

Sunagawa City, initially formed as Nae Village, was a part of Takigawa Village. The Takigawa village area became a traffic hub for the Chubetsubuto (Asahikawa) and Utashinai directions after Kawakami Kari Doro (currently Route 12) opened in 1886 and the Utashinai coal mine opened in 1887. Nae Village was separated from Takigawa Village in 1980, which was renamed as Sunagawa Village thereafter.

The population of Sunagawa City peaked at 32,495 in the year after implementation of the municipal system. Downsizing of companies that once contributed to the rapid economic growth caused the population decline, and the current population (as of January 1, 2014) is 18,444 according to the Basic Resident Register annual report. Development of Sunagawa City owed to the manufacturing and commerce industries of the surrounding areas. The city still houses headquarters and factories of national-level or Hokkaido-wide companies including Hokkaido Mitsui Chemicals, Oji Cornstarch Hokkaido plant, Sunagawa Power Station of Hokkaido Electric Power Company, HORI Confectionery, Kitakaro, SOMES SADDLE, and Sanko Construction. The city has long contributed to local commerce by being the traffic hub for the municipalities in the Sorachi coal mine district.

(2) Background of regional promotion activities

Sunagawa City once flourished as an industrial city, but as with other areas in Hokkaido, it was affected by various factors caused by the population decline. In order to escape from this situation, the city government and the community started to work together.

Although the population of Sunagawa City is approximately 19,000, its area of commerce covers the Nakasorachi area with a population of approximately 100,000. This is because the city runs the main hospital of the Nakasorachi area and has a developed traffic system. Another reason is that hospital-related businesses (food stores, confectioneries, and pharmacies) have also been around for a long time.

Due to the revised Law for the Revitalization of Central Urban Districts of 2006, the city became the first in Hokkaido in August 2007 to have its "Downtown Basic Revitalization Plan" approved by the Prime Minister. Following the plan, the city government renovated the city-run hospital using the subsidy provided in the Town Liveliness Restoration Program carried out by the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism. The city government also implemented the Sweet Road project for industrial revitalization and the Community Center Yu project as a civic activity.

Community Center Yu replaced an old community center. Its replacement plan was discussed by the Community Center Steering Committee established with resident participation and the new community center was constructed as a project subject to the Town Development Subsidy (MLIT).

2. Regional promotion implementing organization

(1) Overview of the implementing organization

As described above, Sunagawa City has been an important traffic junction and also had many confectioneries because of the hospital. Based on the understanding that people visited the city, often the hospital, from the surrounding municipalities and that sweets could be used as a part of hospitality, the city featured Sunagawa Sweet Road in industrial promotion. Sunagawa Sweet Road dates back to 2000. The eight confectionary companies in Sunagawa City took the initiative to develop the Sunagawa Sweet Road plan. To develop the plan they invited the Sunagawa Confectioners Association, who was holding confectionary cooking classes at the community center, and the person in charge of commerce and tourism promotion at the city government.

The staff members of the economic division of the city government built the concept of the Sweet Road. They made necessary adjustments with city residents and relevant divisions at the city hall. From the private sector, the Sunagawa Confectioners Association became their partner. In May 2002, the Sunagawa Sweet Road Council ("the Council") was established.

The Sweet Road plan grew into the Sunagawa Sweet Road Project. It has been implemented as a town development activity highlighting sweets.

The city government took the initiative in establishing the Council. The goals of the Council are to use the charm of sweets to improve the town impression and to attract consumers inside and outside the city. Operation of the Council has been supported by the government, the confectionary industries, and citizen participation in the form of organizations in different fields of business.



Sweet Road map



Sweets from Sweet Road

(2) Details of regional promotion

The objective of the Sunagawa Sweet Road Project is to draw the residents of the Nakasorachi region, which has a population of 116,818 (as of January 1, 2014), to the shopping street in Sunagawa City by leveraging the ability of sweets to attract people. The project aims to increase sales for not only the confectionery industry but the whole shopping street to revitalize it while creating the Sunagawa local sweets brand.

The Council carries out city promotion by highlighting the sweets, holds customer interaction lectures targeting shop owners in the shopping street, decorates the shopping streets for seasonal events, and directs the Halloween parade. It also serves as a volunteer guide in sightseeing tours hosted by the Doshin Bun Bun Club of the Hokkaido Shimbun Press, puts up Sweet Road banners on street lights along Route 12 and other streets, and prints the Sweet Road brochure introducing the participating confectioners.

The nine Sunagawa sweets shops have a higher possibility for increasing market recognition compared to the big three in Hokkaido. Continued promotions are therefore crucial. Since Sunagawa City is away from big cities like Sapporo and Asahikawa and its area of business has a small population, the Council needs to come up with new strategies to increase sales.

3. Summary and future possibilities

One of the positive outcomes of the Sunagawa Sweet Road Project is that some confectioners acquired business successors. Also, the Sweet Road activities of the Council had a ripple effect on the local ramen noodle shops. Owners of the local ramen noodle shops used the know-how of the Council to organize the Sunagawa Ramen Masters Association. The activities of the Council therefore have formed a virtuous cycle. Furthermore, an unused shop space kindly offered by a local shop owner has been named "Town Guide SuBACo" and used to distribute information on events at the local shopping street and other facilities. The regional promotion with resident participation was triggered by the activities of the Council and now is spreading across the city.

As described above, regional promotion of Sunagawa City started with the idea provided by the city hall. The city government employees and the citizens worked hard and supported each other to give shape to the idea. Town development through government-citizen collaboration while making full use of the government functions can be applied to other communities.

3-11 Eniwa City

Eniwa City: Michi-no-eki and farm-fresh products from urban neighborhood

Implementing organization: Eniwa Agricultural and Livestock Product Market Council (under application: Eniwa Kanona Co-op)

Regional revitalization through resident-farmer collaboration

[Basic data]

Organization	Eniwa Agricultural and Livestock Product Market Council (under application: Eniwa Kanona Co-op)
Establishment	December 2006
Address	18, Minami Shimamatsu 817, Eniwa-shi, Hokkaido
Main location of activity	Eniwa agricultural and livestock product market "Kanona" in the michi-to-kawa-no-eki (road- and river-side rest area) "Flower Road Eniwa"
Activity overview	Advertising of local agricultural and livestock products and revitalization of local agriculture through the farmers market
Activity outcome	Improved farming business and revitalization of local agriculture

1. Overview of the region

(1) Overview of the region

Eniwa City is at the halfway point between Sapporo City and New Chitose Airport. The city area is 294.65 km², the population is 68,893 (as of January 1, 2014), and the number of households is 31,060 (as of January 1, 2014).

Due to the easy access to the airport and Sapporo and the mild climate, city development started early to make it into a residential area. The urban infrastructure including the public sewerage system, university, vocational school, and industrial complex was also built at the same time. Under these circumstances, the city population is steadily growing.

History of Eniwa City dates back to 1870 when settlers from Kochi domain moved in. In 1886, settlers from Yamaguchi prefecture followed. The key industry of Eniwa City is agriculture covering dry-field farming, livestock farming, and stockbreeding. It is linked with various industries such as food logistics and food processing, and therefore is playing an important role as the key industry of the city. Eniwa City is also famous for town development using flowers.

(2) Background of regional promotion activities

In 2003, the Hokkaido Regional Development Bureau, the city government, and local residents held a workshop to extensively discuss the fundamental concept for the Urban-Rural Exchange Plan, which included creation of a michi-no-eki. In the workshop, the local residents suggested: selection of vegetables to represent the city and sell them at farmers markets or sell them as ingredients for processing; making food recipes with these vegetables to increase their recognition; and making restaurant menus using these vegetables and adding them to the image of the facilities. They proposed that promoting the city and agriculture as a whole will improve the impression of the city

and advertise local vegetables. The workshop produced a large number of requests from the local residents to create local farm product brands and sell them at farmers markets.

In the attempt to revitalize the whole community, forming of a farmer group was necessary to ensure the proper functioning of a michi-no-eki, which would serve as a place for urban-rural exchanges. The farmers took the initiative to establish the Eniwa Agricultural and Livestock Product Market Council ("the Council") with the support of the government and Japan Agricultural Cooperatives (JA), and this was the starting point of the regional promotion activities.

2. Regional promotion implementing organization

(1) Overview of the implementing organization

In July 2006, the michi-to-kawa-no-eki "Flower Road Eniwa" opened. The Multi-Purpose Space & Shop was built next to it. In December, 48 volunteer farmers established the Council with the objectives of facilitation of farmers market operation, promotion of local agricultural and livestock products through producer-consumer exchanges, and revitalization of local agriculture. In April 2007, outlet product sale started at Multi-Purpose Space & Shop under the nickname of Kanona (flowers and vegetables).



Farmers market



Michi-no-eki Flower Road Eniwa

(2) Details of regional promotion

In 2007, Flower Road Eniwa started with a selling area of 103.68 m² and an open rest area of 77.76 m². In 2009, the selling area expanded to 260 m² and a seedling store of 78 m² was added to improve customer traffic. As a result, the number of visitors increased to approximately 300,000. As sales of Kanona increased, however, new organizational issues such as accountability and employment emerged. To address these issues, Kanona is now working to obtain corporate status and operate as Eniwa Kanona Co-op.

One of the reasons for the success is the Sancho system designed to prevent out-of-stock events. Its use started on June 1, 2009. The system sends email to producers' mobile phones to notify them of the sales status. It contributes to reduction of opportunity losses during a busy season and improvement of customer satisfaction. The system also allows producers to check sales and sales volume of their products on a mobile phone. Furthermore, the system notifies the producers if their products go out of stock. The system not only reduces opportunity losses but enables producers to deliver high quality products, making producers more competitive with each other. In 2010, Kanona increased the number of POS cash registers from 3 to 5. The number of employees increased to 11

under the shop owner. While attempting to further increase sales, Kanona has started to donate a portion of sales to city government projects.

Kanona actively implements new plans. In 2011, Kanona increased business days by 2 weeks a year. It also further expanded the selling area. This has allowed shoppers to use carts and resulted in an increase of the per-customer spending.

Kanona is increasing opportunities to interact with community residents. For example, it participates as a special guest in the Flower and Lifestyle Fair hosted by the Eniwa Flower Town Development Promotion Council and also holds seasonal events (Summer Fair in August, Harvest Festival in September, Halloween pumpkin display and sale of pickles and vegetables for winter stock in October and November). It plays an active role in regional revitalization through the following: joint product development with local processors; offering of food materials to local nursery schools; hosting of local students for hands-on lessons; dissemination of information via the community FM radio station "e-niwa"; providing logistics service systems using local transport companies; collaboration with the city government for the Flower Town Development Plan; and distribution of the Eniwa green tourism map.

3. Summary and future possibilities

In this case example, the Council includes the large, nearby commercial area Sapporo in its own business area and directs customers to Eniwa City. It also contributes to increase of local primary producers' income and local employment. The regional promotion is in line with marketing strategies designed from the public sector perspectives.

The Council greatly contributes to regional revitalization through its farmers market. After becoming a corporation (co-op), it is expected to strengthen its organizational structure and contribute to regional promotion at a higher level.

The interview with the Council uncovered that Kanona does not have a sufficient amount of products for the winter. The future tasks therefore include agriculture-commerce-manufacturing collaboration, manufacturing of processed food by co-op members, and development of sales strategies. The Council is actively working to secure its sustainability.

3-12 Muroran City

Muroran City: Shift from iron business

Implementing organization: Muroran city government

Regional economic revitalization through industry-university-government collaboration

[Basic data]

Organization	Muroran city government
Address	1-2, Saiwai-cho, Muroran-shi, Hokkaido
Population	91,276 (as of January 1, 2014)
Number of households	47,442 (as of January 1, 2014)
Activity overview	Creation of a new growth foundation for Muroran City as an eco-business city
Activity outcome	Development of the Green Energy Town Plan unique to an eco-business city

1. Overview of the region

(1) Overview of the region

Muroran City is located in the southwest part of Hokkaido. Its area is 80.88 km², the population is 91,276 (as of January 1, 2014), and the number of households is 47,442 (as of January 1, 2014). It is about an hour and 30-minute drive to Sapporo and an hour drive to New Chitose Airport via the Hokkaido Expressway. Muroran City is an industrial city. Since the Port of Muroran opened in 1872, the city has developed with its core industries which are steel, shipbuilding, and oil refining industries in the harbor district. The city boasts Hokkaido's highest product shipment value of 1.2154 trillion yen (source: 2013 census of manufacturers). The three sides of the city border with the sea, making the city rich with marine products and tourism resources.

Muroran City has developed as a city of monozukuri (craftsmanship) with high-level industrial techniques accumulated with experience with steel business, excellent industrial and port infrastructure built by individuals and companies, and research institutions such as universities. In 2003, the city government established the Muroran Eco-Industrial Base Formation Plan to leverage the industrial infrastructure due to the recent emphasis on the importance of a resource recycling society. In line with the plan, the city government proceeded with its eco-industrial promotion including establishment of a resource-recycling and low-carbon city by disposing of waste through industry-university-government collaboration. The plan ended in FY2010. The city government then proposed the future direction of forming an eco-industrial base. Meanwhile, the city was required to implement measures to address global warming and energy issues that arose after the Great East Japan Earthquake.

Under these circumstances, the city government acknowledged the importance of forming a new low-carbon city. The low-carbon city plan included forming of an energy network to locally generate and use energy and realization of regional independence, economic revitalization, industrial promotion, and strengthened disaster prevention functions. Although this type of plan is often created from the government point of view, the Muroran city government involved the residents in the early stage of planning. By doing so, the city government aimed to realize promotion of

eco-business, revitalization of the regional economy, and low-carbon town development through industry-university-government-citizen participation.

2. Regional promotion activities

(1) Details of regional promotion

The city government established the Muroran Regional Eco-Business Promotion Council in September 2001 and created the Muroran Eco-Business Base Formation Plan in March 2003. The following were the goals of the plan: creation of a northern Japan Eco-Business base city; regional and industrial promotion; and contribution to environmental preservation inside and outside the community. To achieve these goals, the city government implemented the core project, expansion project, and infrastructure project. The core project promoted recycling, disposal of toxic substances including PCB^{*1}, and new energy plans with the goal of creating the "core" of the eco-business taking advantage of the key industries and logistics functions. In the expansion project, accumulated techniques as well as technical development and commercialization support functions were used to extensively develop the eco-business. The infrastructure project aimed for creation of a regional eco-business support system. Instead of forming individual bases for large projects carried out by key industry providers, this support system was designed to make work, living, and streets eco-friendly throughout the community and formed environmental preservation-related assignments involving first and tertiary industries.

The 2003 plan ended in March 2011. During this period, the city government made some achievements; it established the resource recycling industry and built and opened the PCB disposal and treatment facility. Opening of this facility was the largest task for the city but was realized in the core project through the community competence. As a result, new companies in the related fields started business in the city. This PCB disposal and treatment facility is now serving 16 prefectures including Hokkaido.

Understanding of resource recycling as the core of eco-business spread among major companies. Also, sale of electricity from wind power generation started, and existing companies started manufacturing and selling of wind power generation systems.

Reviewing the result of the Muroran Eco-Business Base Formation Plan, the Muroran city government concluded that a new energy plan must be developed using public involvement technique^{*2} for the early stage of planning. The plan should result in creation of a new low-carbon city that can contribute to community independence, economic revitalization, industrial promotion, and strengthened disaster prevention functions. The city government therefore developed the Muroran Green Town Plan which would realize local energy production and consumption to effectively use hydrogen, renewable, and unused energy and that would lead to development, demonstration, commercialization, and advertising of innovativeness of new technologies and systems in the local community. The objectives of the Muroran Green Town Plan were ① creating, as an eco-business city, the new growth foundation to revitalize the local economy, ② leading Hokkaido in creating a future energy society, ③ and reduction of environmental impact and establishment of a citizen-friendly low-carbon city for everyone from children to the elderly.

The Muroran Green Town Plan was created as a part of the Low-Carbon City Planning with Resident Participation Pilot Project implemented for two years by MOE (FY2013 and FY2014).

The Muroran Green Town Plan promotes application of ingredients of technology at local companies unique to an eco-business city and research institutions such as Muroran Institute of Technology, development of new technology, and more effective use of unused and by-product energy. It also

promotes the energy-saving policy for heating in cold regions in which the residents are highly interested. Through these activities, the objective of the Muroran Green Town Plan is to establish Muroran Green Energy Town which maximizes the use of regional renewable and unused energy and uses locally produced energy.

For the time being, the city government will promote renewable and unused energy business which is expected to be profitable and building of infrastructure for the future hydrogen powered society. At the same time, it aims for development of hydrogen-related technology and reviewing of pilot project results. It will also implement the energy-saving policy to raise citizens' awareness. In the future, it will expand the use of renewable, unused, and hydrogen energy and create an energy management system which uses excess from unstable renewable and unused energy supplies in hydrogen manufacturing or power generation to match electricity supply to its demand. The city will work to import inexpensive hydrogen energy, supply hydrogen energy to various parts of Hokkaido, and supply electricity through large-scale hydrogen power generation. As an operating organization of projects for turning Muroran into Green Energy Town, the city government will establish and realize regional PPS^{*3} in new areas.

- *1) PCB (polychlorinated biphenyl)
PCB was widely used from 1954 in electrical equipment and as a heating medium because of its electrical resistance and non-inflammability. After the Kanemi rice oil disease incident in 1968, the toxicity of PCB became a problem. In the end, manufacturing and use of PCB became prohibited. PCB has been long stored, but there has been a concern that it may be leaking into the environment due to for example missing storage containers. Prompt neutralization is demanded.
- *2) Public involvement technique
Public involvement technique means sharing information with the public at the early stage of planning, collecting public opinions, and incorporating into plan development.
- *3) Regional PPS
Regional PPS means procurement and supply of local electricity. It is done by an electric company established with investments from local business owners, the government, and the citizens. The company distributes electricity through an electricity transmission network.

For Realization of Muroran Green Energy Town

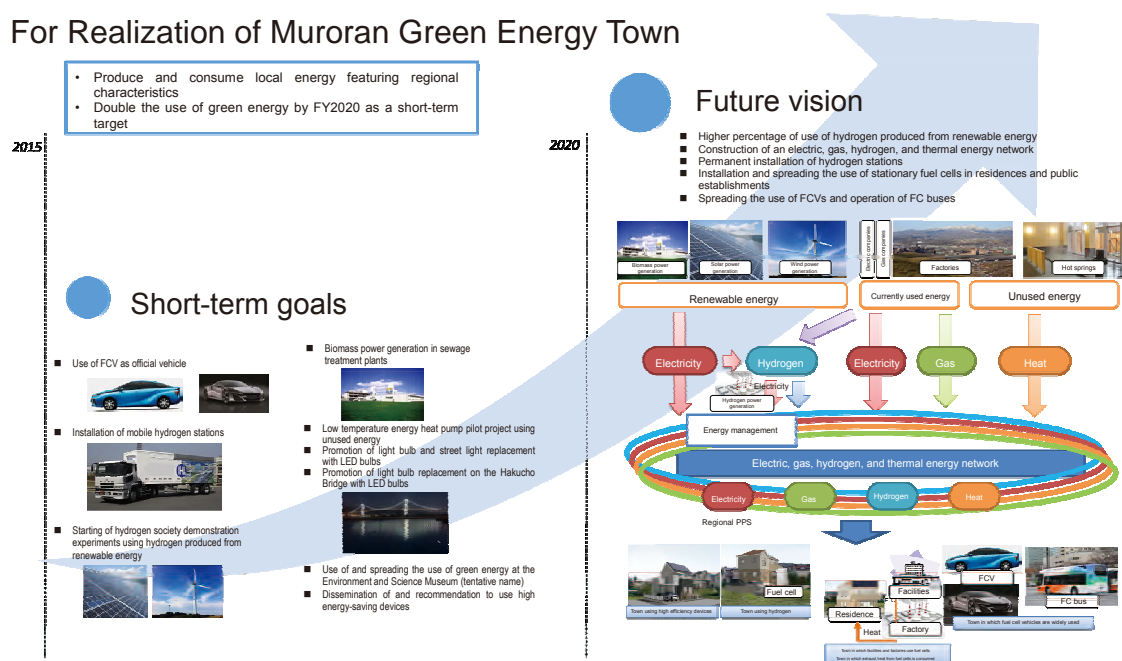


Figure 3-3 Green Energy Town Plan

3. Summary and future possibilities

Muroran City has been an industrial city relying on steel, shipbuilding, and oil refining business. It is however now changing into an eco-business city due to global warming, environmental issues, and other social conditions.

The Muroran citizens took part in development of the clean energy plan. Promotion of eco-business, revitalization of the local economy, and low-carbon town development will further require industry-university-government-private sector collaboration. One of the examples of such collaboration in Muroran City is the Muroran University-Government-Finance Monozukuri Business Revitalization Team established by four government and private organizations (Muroran city government, Muroran Advancement Center of Industrial Technology and Management, Muroran Shinkin Bank, and Muroran Institute of Technology) in November 2013. The team has been actively helping local companies obtain public subsidies. In just over a year, there have been 29 subsidy projects that any of the team members participated in. The team therefore is actively and steadily producing results.

Muroran City has experienced the decline of smokestack industries such as steel and oil refining business and a shift into eco-business through industry-university-private sector collaboration. This case example will provide tips for development of developing countries.

3-13 Date City

Date City: Health promotion through diet and exercise

Implementing organization: Japan Nordic Walking School

Regional revitalization by featuring regional resources: exercise and food

[Basic data]

Organization	Japan Nordic Walking School
Establishment	April 25, 2011
Address	64-10, Yutoku-cho, Otaki-ku, Date-shi, Hokkaido
Main location of activity	Otaki Ward, Date City
Activity overview	Dissemination of information on Nordic fitness sports and health promoting activities through collaboration with hot spring hotels and long-term care health facilities
Activity outcome	Creation of a healthy city through Nordic walking

1. Overview of the region

(1) Overview of the region

Date City faces Mount Usu and Showa-shinzan in the northwest and Uchiura Bay (also known as Funka Bay) in the south. The city is adjacent to the industrial Muroran City and the nationally famous hot spring and sightseeing spots Noboribetsu City and Toyako Town. The city area is 444.21 km². The population is 36,195 (as of January 1, 2014) and the number of households is 17,976 (as of January 1, 2014).

The first settlement was 1870 by Kunishige Date, a Date family in Sendai domain and the head of sub-domain Watari, and his vassals. According to history, however, Otaki Ward was developed by settlers from Aomori prefecture in 1894. Date became from a town to city in April 1972. It merged with a distant Otaki Village (currently Otaki Ward) in March 1, 2006 and restarted as the new Date City. The city has a mild climate year around and has little snowfall. Otaki Ward, which is interior of the city surrounded by mountains, however, has very cold winter and a lot of snowfall.

Date City relies on first industry such as agriculture and fisheries. Vegetables are the main agricultural products, and over 100 types of vegetables are grown in the city. Fisheries feature scallop farming and autumn salmon fishing. Otaki Ward has a high volume of forestry and agricultural business. It is also a sightseeing spot featuring the Kitayuzawa hot spring village.

In Date City, the cultivated area is 6,413 hectares, the number of farming households is 641, the cultivated area per farming household is 10 hectares, and production is 4.38 billion yen for crops and 4.75 billion yen for livestock farming and stockbreeding (as of January 2012).

(2) Background of regional promotion activities

Japan's first Nordic walking activities spread in former Otaki Village in 1999, and the Nordic Walking Association (currently the Ootaki Nordic Walking Association) was formed in 2000. This

marks the beginning of the regional promotion activities.

2. Regional promotion implementing organization

(1) Overview of the implementing organization

The Japan Nordic Walking School was established in 2011 to take over the Nordic Walking Association's activities, disseminate information on Nordic fitness sports, hold various events, and contribute to improvement of citizens' health and lifestyle. Being recognized for its persistent efforts, Otaki Ward has become the leader of Nordic walking activities.

(2) Details of regional promotion

Otaki Ward has been officially recognized as a depopulated area. The population tendency has been the same even after the merger with Date City. The ward has a particularly higher percentage of elderly households, but the city has expectations for the ward as Japan's leading Nordic walking area. The permanent course filled with woodchips and the hot springs for resting the tired body provide an ideal environment for enjoying Nordic walking.

The Japan Nordic Walking School implements anti-depopulation and regional revitalization projects aside from the regular activities. It works with the city government in its projects: Fundamental Concept for the 6th Date City Comprehensive Plan, improvement of elderly social support quality, and maintenance of health with citizen participation. By working with the city government, the school attempts to increase the number of individuals who achieve lifelong unassisted walking to extend their healthy life expectancy.

The school also ties up with the rehabilitation divisions of long-term care health facilities to incorporate Nordic walking in rehabilitation training and walking exercise for the residents. It also aims to create the base for active healthy promotion by developing a wellness resort accommodation with Otaki Ward. The accommodation will feature Otaki Ward's resources such as hot springs, swimming pools, and the natural environment, and provide fun and easy exercise programs.

The school is playing an important role in regional revitalization by working with the tourism industry to invite a large number of fitness sports enthusiasts to Otaki Ward.

The school has demonstrated through its support activities for people affected by the Great East Japan Earthquake that Nordic walking contributed to prevention of the economy class syndrome and lack of exercise. The school has also been highly commended for its locomotive syndrome prevention initiative, which proposes a new way to prevent becoming bedridden or dependent on caregivers prevention. More specifically, the school printed a brochure introducing 10 types of everyday stretch exercise to prevent becoming bedridden or dependent on caregivers.

The school still engages in volunteer work to maintain the health of people affected by the earthquake. Also, it implements Japan's first community development method. It takes advantage of the Nordic walking courses in Otaki Ward and also regional or functional foods such as mushrooms, edible wild plants, and chokeberries. This way, the school comprehensively supports health promotion by providing a combination of healthy food and exercise programs. The school is accumulating experience with Nordic walking activities including instructor training and building the capacity to welcome the guests.



Scenes from Nordic walking

3. Summary and future possibilities

The Date city government ensures a safe and comfortable life for the elderly and people with disabilities. In the town development process, the city government uses Nordic walking to promote citizens' health and improve their lifestyle and also aims to make the city into a universal sightseeing spots featuring the combination of regional resources and Nordic walking. The Date city's approach is expected to serve as a model for town development across Japan.

Date City is in Greater Nishi Iburi. Nishi Iburi has abundant medical resources and tourism resources including hot spring facilities, and therefore has an advanced medical tourism environment. Medical tourism will further prosper if medical data proving the health promoting effect of Nordic walking is collected and as a result, Nordica walking is featured in medical tourism. For this reason, collaboration with medical institutions is expected in the future.

3-14 Furano City

Furano City: City center revitalization

Implementing organization: Furano Machizukuri Corporation

Regional promotion by revitalizing the city center

[Basic data]

Organization	Furano Machizukuri Corporation
Establishment	October 2003
Address	13-1, Saiwai-cho, Furano-shi, Hokkaido
Main location of activity	Furano City
Activity overview	Operation of Furano Marche to revitalize the city center
Activity outcome	Revitalization of the city center and revival of the shopping street through city sightseeing

1. Overview of the region

(1) Overview of the region

Furano City is located at the south part of Kamikawa sub-prefecture, which is roughly at the center of Hokkaido (north latitude: from 43 degrees 09 minutes to 43 degrees 24 minutes, and east longitude: from 142 degrees 16 minutes to 142 degrees 40 minutes). The area is 600.71 km², the population is 23,579 (as of January 1, 2014), and the number of households is 11,026 (As of January 11, 2014). Furano City has Ashibetsudake of the Yubari mountain range in the west and the University of Tokyo Hokkaido Forest, which is a sea of natural trees, in the south (22,716 hectares as of April 2015; source: the University of Tokyo). The cultivated area is 10,500 hectares (source: 2014 Statistics on Crop by MAFF), accounting for 17% of the city area. The continental climate, which makes summer hot and winter cold, creates four distinctive seasons. The temperature fluctuates not only throughout a year but also within a day. This temperature difference has greatly improved the quality of agricultural products. These products, known as the Furano brand products, are popular across the country. Furano City is also known as a ski town. Since 1977, it has hosted the FIS Alpine Ski World Cup 10 times.

Development of Furano City started in 1896 when the Furano plain settlement divisions were created, and settlers moved in the area now known as Ogiyama district the following year. In 1903, the Shimofurano village office opened in the Furano city center. Furano obtained town status in 1919 then city status in May 1966 as the 29th city in Hokkaido.

Furano City and neighboring three towns and one village (Kamifurano Town, Nakafurano Town, Minamifurano Town, and Shimukappu Village) constitute the South Kamikawa area. The municipalities in this area have been in close relationships and collaboration since the time of development. In FY2008, the Furano Municipal Union was established for operational efficiency. The union implemented inter-municipality processing of administrative work for firefighting, emergency medical service, school food program, human excreta disposal, and public ranches. Note that their administrative work used to be jointly handled by some of the administrative associations. The municipalities also shared general waste disposal, agriculture, tourism, installation of the

Certification Committee of Needed Long-Term Care, and various facilities including libraries and social educational establishments. In December 2013, the Furano Self-Contained Settlement Area was formed.



Furano Marche



Furano Marche 2 Navel Town

(2) Background of regional promotion activities

The tourist inflow continued to increase due to a TV drama set in Furano City in 1981. Locations of shooting were made into sightseeing spots. The Chamber of Commerce and the Furano Tourism Association at that time created a shooting location map and spent a lot of efforts in attracting tourists. In 2003, the year following the last season of the drama, 2.49 million people visited Furano City (source: Commerce and Tourism Division, Department of Economic Affairs, Furano City Government).

These sightseeing spots however were generally in suburbs at the foot of mountain, and the shopping street in the city center did not benefit from it. The number of shops had decreased to 105 by 2007. The shopping street further declined after the city's core business, Furano Hospital, moved out the city center in 2007.

This situation motivated the shop owners in the shopping street to organize a council and revive the shopping street by using the vacant lot where the hospital used to be. Their plan had two steps: creation of a base point in city center to attract tourists; and revitalizing the city center through more efficient and effective dissemination of city sightseeing information. The Furano city government incorporated this plan into its Furano City Center Revitalized Plan (Basic Plan). It was approved by the national government in 2008, and the project was launched.

2. Regional promotion implementing organization

(1) Overview of the implementing organization

Furano Machizukuri Corporation ("the Corporation") was established when the area in front of Furano station was developed. It is a town management organization that carries out and manages town development. Its purpose is to coordinate town development participated in by various organizations in a cross-sectional and comprehensive manner.

Insufficient capital and weak management were the issues identified before the Corporation was assigned to drive the Basic Plan. Business owners in the city addressed this issue; the capital was increased to 83.5 million yen and 70% of it was from private investors. Executive offers of the

Corporation are all local business owners. Furano City therefore shows a very unique style of town development led by the private sector.

(2) Details of regional promotion

The core of the Basic Plan is the Furano Marche project. The Corporation as the project leader constructed and now manages the commercial establishment spending approximately 280 million yen. The Corporation also received a 130 million yen Strategic City Center Revitalization Support Project Subsidy.

Furano Marche is a commercial complex designed to guide tourists who already visited suburban sightseeing spots to the city center. It is a place to spread sightseeing information including city's features to make a flow of tourists. The building structure is inspired by a European marketplace. The building has an event space on the side to provide community functions. In addition to tourists, many local residents such as mothers and their children visit Furano Marche.

3. Summary and future possibilities

In FY2010, Furano Marche welcomed 555,000 customers in the first year. Sales for the entire facility were 517 million yen. By FY2014, the number of customers increased to 852,000 and sales to 637 million yen. It created employment for 98 local people, its economic ripple effect was 1.94 times higher than sales, and it increased the land price along the nearby train line as well as the benchmark land price. This city center revitalization project, led by the private sector and supported by the government, has been recognized as a success example.

Creation of an event space designed after a European marketplace had a large number of problems to be addressed due to the national rules. Negotiations with the supervisory office were extremely challenging. The Corporation staff members repeatedly visited the supervisory office in Tokyo to describe the Furano situation and perseveringly negotiated with them. As a result, construction of Furano Marche was approved.

In June 2015, the Corporation opened Furano Marche 2 and Navel Town. Furano Marche 2 is a facility with commercial tenant built adjacent to Furano Marche. Navel Town consists of a nursing home and a nursery school. Establishment of these two facilities was the climax of the Basic Plan and aimed to reconstruct in the city the roles and functions of the city center to support daily living.

Establishment of Navel Town required citizens' consensus but the private sector alone could not arrange it. City government employees gave strong support to the Corporation, and finally the mayor decided to provide government cooperation. Since then the Corporation and the city government meet regularly. The Furano style town development is characterized by producing outcomes through the government support and maximization of private sectors' ideas and methods. This style is expected to expand to other areas.

3-15 Higashikawa Town

Higashikawa Town: Creation of a rice brand and promotion of permanent settlement

Implementing organization: Higashikawa town government

Regional revitalization by producing a locally-produced rice brand

[Basic data]

Organization	Higashikawa town government
Address	16-1, 1-chome, Higashi-machi, Higashikawa-cho, Kamikawa-gun, Hokkaido
Population	7,948 (as of January 1, 2014)
Number of households	3,477 (as of January 1, 2014)
Activity overview	Branding of locally produced rice and the relocation and settlement promotion strategy
Activity outcome	Acquisition of a regional collective trademark and population increase

1. Overview of the region

(1) Overview of the region

Higashikawa Town is located roughly at the center of Hokkaido. Its area is 247.30 km² (36.1 km long from east to west, and 8.2 km long from north to south), the population is 7,948 (as of January 1, 2014), and the number of households is 3,477 (as of January 1, 2014). It is 13 km away from the center of Asahikawa City, which is the central city of northern Hokkaido, and 7 km away from Asahikawa Airport. The town is in the inland basin of the Kamikawa area. The temperature fluctuates greatly, and the four seasons are clearly distinct. Asahidake hot spring village and Tenninkyo hot spring village both boast the finest seasonal landscape including alpine flowers, fresh green forests, vividly colored leaves, and powdery snowy landscape.

Asahidake (2,291 m) is the highest of the Daisetsuzan mountain range which is known as "Roof of Hokkaido." Its rich forest resources and excellent natural landscape are highly appreciated as tourism resources. Higashikawa Town is the only town in Hokkaido without the water system. All townspeople use ground water. This water comes from Asahidake; its meltwater very slowly seeps into the soil and trickles down. The volume of spring water is 6,000 tons per day. It is mineral rich and was selected in 2008 as one of the top 100 Heisei water by MOE. To commercialize this water resource, the town government, JA Higashikawa, and Co-op Sapporo established Taisetsu Mizu Shigen Hozen Center in January 2013 and started bottled water production and sale.

Higashikawa Town has a good balance of primary, secondary, and tertiary industries. Rice farming takes advantage of fresh streams from Mount Daisetsu. Forest resources are used for regional specialty furniture and wooden craft works. Tourism benefits from the bountiful nature featuring the beauty of Mount Daisetsu.

Higashikawa Town developed under the catch phrase of "Town of Rice, Craft Works, and Tourism." In 1985, Higashikawa Town became the world's first "Town of Photography." Since then, the town is holding long-running international photograph festivals such as the Higashikawa International Photo

Festival and the Photo Koshien (senior high school photograph club competition) every July through September. Higashikawa Town is now globally known as the Town of Photography.



Daisetsuzan mountain range



Hagoromo Water Falls

Photos from DO PHOTO, the free Hokkaido photo website

2. Regional promotion activities

(1) Details of regional promotion (branding of locally produced rice)

Rice is widely produced in Higashikawa Town. Farming using nutritious underground water from the Daisetsuzan mountain range is the strength of the town. Higashikawa Town was the first municipality to plant the Hoshinoyume rice breed, which was developed at Kamikawa Agricultural Experiment Station in 1996. The Higashikawa Town Rice Farming Study Group ("the Study Group") in JA Higashikawa held promotions to spread the use of Hoshinoyume across the town. Hoshinoyume was more palatable than Kirara 397 which was commonly consumed at that time. Since it had a good balance of hardness and stickiness, it became more widely grown than Kirara 397.

In 2003, the Study Group started to promote recordkeeping of cultivation history, established the Higashikawa rice production standard, and held a new rice promotion at the michi-no-eki called Michikusa Kan. In 2004, it started to affix a producer photo sticker to every rice bag shipped. In 2007, it established the 10 Higashikawa Rice Reliability Rules. It also opened a facility to disinfect rice seeds with warm water and successfully eliminated waste fluids from the disinfection process. The Study Group was recognized for its uncompromising safety control and eco-friendly measures and received a special award at the 4th Co-op Sapporo Farmers Award. In 2010, it created and implemented the unique Higashikawa Rice Good Agricultural Practice (GAP). In 2011, it started the sale of Yumepirika, the new brand grown with accumulated experience. In 2012, the regional collective trademark (regional brand) "東川米 (Higashikawa Mai, meaning Higashikawa rice)" was registered as the first Hokkaido rice breed five years after application.

The Study Group places importance on communicating with consumers. The Study Group members not only ask consumers to observe and report how farmers grow rice in the area but also promote Higashikawa rice at supermarkets. The Study Group therefore aims to improve rice palatability while collecting consumer opinions.

The Higashikawa town government and JA focus on the regional strength, which is rice, and continue to engage in activities to improve regional resource value such as development of the

branding rules, establishment of the production standard, acquisition of an intellectual property, and promotion of product sales.

(2) Details of regional promotion (promotion of moving in and settling in the town)

The town population continued to decrease after its peak at 10,754 in 1950. It became less than 7,000 in March 1994. The number of people who moved in to Higashikawa Town increased after 1995. Higashikawa Town Land Development Corporation and private realtors had good sales years, and recently vacated residents were renovated into restaurants. As of the end of March 2015, 7,967 people live in Higashikawa Town. The town's relocation and settlement promotion strategy thus successfully increased new residents from outside the town. An increased number of them engage in creative work such as crafting, furniture creation, photographing taking advantage of the beautiful landscape and an easy-to-live environment. For the past three to four years, more new residents open restaurants, bakeries, and lifestyle stores.

① Long-term accommodations

Daisetsu Yusui House is a long-term accommodation that allows visitors to experience what is like to move into the town. It has a living room, kitchen, and a loft and costs 10,500 yen for an overnight stay. The place serves for people who are thinking about relocation. The rental summerhouse Kevin and the 1BD accommodation Ma Maison PII are other options to serve the same purpose.

② Landscape Preserving Residence Construction Support Project

The town government financially supports building of new residences that match the beautiful landscape of Higashikawa Town and meet the requirements of the Higashikawa-style Residence Design Guidelines. For construction of a building attached to a carport and a storage shed, the government will pay up to 50% of the construction fee with the maximum of 500,000 yen.

Table 3-3. Outline of the Landscape Preserving Residence Construction Support Project

Inside the designated area	Description	Support for construction of a building attached to a carport and a storage shed
	Condition	Use of a construction company in Higashikawa Town
		Up to 50% of the fee
		Maximum of a 500,000 yen support (1 million yen for a duplex)
Outside the designated area	Description	Support for construction of a building attached to a carport and a storage shed or for a purchase of wooden furniture manufactured by a company in Higashikawa Town
	Condition	Use of a construction/furniture company in Higashikawa Town
		Up to 50% of the fee
		Maximum of a 200,000 yen support (400,000 yen for a duplex)
Requirements (for both areas)	Floor space of 50 m ² to 280 m ² (compliant with the approval criteria of the Higashikawa Town Landscape Preserving Residence Construction Support Project)	
Past support record	38.21 million yen support for 87 residents, from 2006 to 2014	

③ Private Sector Rental Residence Construction Support Project

The Higashikawa town government created the 2nd Term Higashikawa Town Basic Plans for Housing in March 2013. It has been implementing housing administration since FY2013. As of the end of May 2013, the town has 247 rental apartments in 47 private apartment buildings. The occupancy rate is 98.4% (as of the end of October 2013). There are also government-managed public rental houses. There are 301 public housing apartments, 28 government-managed public housing

apartments, and 5 apartments in a preferable living environment. The occupancy rate is 100%. Because of the strong needs for these residences, the town government launched the Private Sector Rental Residence Construction Support Project in 2013. The objective of the project was to supply high quality private rental residences constructed with the help of creativity of private companies with high planning and technical competence. The project resulted in an increase of rental residences, which will in turn contribute to town population increase.

Table 3-4 Outline of Private Sector Rental Residence Construction Support Project

Condition	Up to 25% of the private rental resident construction fee
	Maximum of 40 million yen if the construction company is a Higashikawa Town local
	Maximum of 32 million yen if the construction company is from outside Higashikawa Town
	38,000 yen/m ² (local construction company) 30,400 yen/m ² (non-local construction company)
	The rental houses must conform to the standard specified in the Basic Plans for Housing which ensures support for diversified lifestyles to achieve a comfortable residential life for all family members.
Past support record	The number of residences subject to support: 6 (2013 and 2014)

(3) Details of regional promotion (other features)

① Marriage registration

The Higashikawa town government started to offer a new style of marriage registration on October 3, 2005. A married couple can receive a copy of their marriage registration as a keepsake of their emotions and memories of that time. The town government also takes a picture of the couple the moment they become husband and wife at the town hall. If the couple leaves a message on the message sheet provided, their message and the photo will be stored at the Higashikawa Bunka Gallery.

② Kimino Isu (Your Chair) project

The Kimino Isu project started in Higashikawa Town in 2006. It is a project to give a handmade chair to each child born in the town. The project has expanded to Kenbuchi Town, Aibetsu Town, Higashikagura Town, and Nakagawa Town. Chairs created at ateliers in Higashikawa Town are given to children born in these areas.

3. Summary and future possibilities

While the majority of municipalities in Hokkaido are steadily aging, Higashikawa Town is a rare example in which measures such as the relocation and settlement promotion strategy resulted in a population increase. The government and the private sector jointly implemented long-term projects that highlighted regional resources and aimed to create local product brands. These projects include the local rice brand project, Kimino Isu project to promote local parenting, and commercialization of local spring water that is rich in minerals and has been selected as one of the top 100 Heisei waters. The current rise in the population is the result of these efforts. On a different note, the brochures, flyers, and website of the town government are so professionally created that they certainly differentiate themselves from those of other municipalities in Hokkaido. This should also facilitate creating local product brands.

As described above Higashikawa Town is a successful example of long-term government-private sector collaboration highlighting regional resources and aiming for branding local products.

3-16 Haboro Town (Teuri Island)

Haboro Town: Business solving problems for this remote island

Implementing organization: Revitalization Conference for Our Teuri Island (general incorporated association)

Regional revitalization by creating a new business on the island

[Basic data]

Organization	Revitalization Conference for Our Teuri Island (general incorporated association)
Establishment	2014
Address	40, Aza Benten, Oaza Teuri, Haboro-cho, Tomamae-gun, Hokkaido
Main location of activity	Teuri Island
Activity overview	Economic activities (marine product processing and tourism), environmental preservation, and education to ensure continuity of Teuri Island
Activity outcome	Increased local employment and product sales as well as acquisition of new business

1. Overview of the region

(1) Overview of the region

Teuri Island was first settled during the Edo period by those seeking the abundant marine resources such as herring. The island flourished with herring fisheries and had a population over 2,000 at its peak. It is 30 km west of Port of Haboro in Haboro Town. It is a very small island with an area of 5.50 km² and a population of approximately 340 (as of May 1, 2015). Hokkaido Teuri Senior High School established by the municipality is one of the features of Teuri Island. At present it has four students; two third years and two second years. It is officially the smallest senior high school in Hokkaido. It is also a part-time school. The students work during the day and study at school and engage in club activities at night. On the island, these students are important workforce.

People live on the east coast of the island. The west coast is a cliff where sea birds make their nests for reproduction. The island is a very rare place as it is inhabited by 800,000 rhinoceros auklets and the protected species, common murre.

The key industry of Teuri Island is fisheries. The island, the port in particular, becomes lively during the sea urchin fishing season that starts in June. Farming of octopus, codfish, and young scallop also adds to the foundation of the livelihood on the island. Note that almost 100% of the catch is exported from the island unprocessed.

May through September is the tourism season. Approximately 20,000 people visit the island. The tourism industry includes Japanese style inns, rental motorcycles, and sightseeing buses.



Sea birds breed on the west coast



Teuri Senior High School with a long history

(2) Background of regional promotion activities

The implementing organization of regional promotion was established in 2012 as a voluntary association. The organization obtained corporation status in April 2014 as the Revitalization Conference for Our Teuri Island.

Establishment of the conference was inspired by the observation trip to Ama Town on Oki Island of Shimane prefecture. Ama Town is a successful example of remote island revitalization. Younger people of Teuri Island who were concerned about the continuing depopulation that would ultimately leave the island uninhabited visited Ama Town. A presentation on the observation trip after returning to the island motivated many islanders to create employment in fisheries, tourism, and in the town through conference activities. The conference consists mainly of younger islanders in their 30s and 40s in transportation, tourism, and fisheries industries as well as Japan Fisheries Cooperative (JF) employees and company employees.

2. Regional promotion implementing organization

(1) Overview of the implementing organization

For the first financial year, the conference focused on: ① development of recipes, Western-style food menus, and new products using unused resources such as locally harvested blue sea mussels and octopus that is not sold on the market, ② opening, management, and operation of camp sites, ③ personnel training as a preparation for new tourism businesses including scuba diving and sea kayaking, and ④ enhancement of the attractiveness of the senior high school by working with the Board of Education.

Items ① through ③ are the main regional revitalization activities in the food and tourism fields. They are important in terms of securing internal revenue. Traditionally, workers in primary industry, fisheries for the island, made a living by selling marine resources. Recently, they started to process the products at the primary and an extended level (halfway to secondary) and ship them to smaller sales channels. Their purpose is to develop new food menus and processed food and also to produce economic value from unused resources, blue sea mussels and octopus, by commercializing them. As a result, although still small in scale, they found business partners in Sapporo City and are shipping deli ingredients.

The MOE is outsourcing the capture of stray cats to the conference. Teuri Island is a paradise for sea birds, but cats brought in by humans increased to 200 to 300 strays and are affecting other existing wild animals. The conference captures them, tames them, and finds new owners. Teuri Island is a unique example where the conference takes part in activities to maintain the nature-animal balance.



New camp site on Teuri Island



Stray cats on the island

Another focus of the conference is to increase the attractiveness of Teuri Senior High School. Currently four students go to this part-time senior high school. The students work at the post office or in the fisheries business during the day, and study and engage in club activities at night. For a small community of approximately 340 residents, senior high school students are an important workforce. At the same time, the existence of the high school is the reason for some families to settle on this island and raise children. Continuity of the school is essential for the future of the island.

There are two possible strategies to ensure continuity of the school and produce a good effect on the future of the island: first, make the school more attractive and cultivate needs for students outside the area by developing unique curricula and creating paths to higher education for students although the school is quite small; and second, create employment for senior high school students. The conference is contributing to employment creation through its industrial promotion activities.

For 2015, the conference plans to work with the senior high school to use its fisheries practice room and create a new product unique to the island.

Upon obtaining corporation status, the conference hired three employees: a Teuri-native in their 20s who studied cooking at a vocational school in Sapporo City and came back; a first year Teuri Senior High School student, and a woman who relocated herself to the island.

A remote island certainly has disadvantages in revitalization. Teuri Island however takes advantage of its small community size. Young residents as leaders act fast and tackle new issues to drive revitalization.



Teuri Senior High School



Fisheries practice room at school

3. Summary and future possibilities

Teuri Island is a remote island with a community size of 340 residents. Creating employment for a few people makes a significant contribution to the community. The council was established in 2014. It has participated in various events by setting up a booth and expanded product sales channels. At least in part due to such conference activities, the island community seems to be gradually becoming revitalized. A new restaurant opened for the first time in a few years and the number of sightseeing boats increased. This shows that younger people can change the community.

The conference keeps the residents up to date on its activities. The residents deepen their understanding about the conference and welcome new business. The conference holds a festival to show its appreciation to the residents every summer and publishes the Oraga Shima Newspaper. Enhancement of residents' understanding is another contributing factor to town revitalization.

The conference as a corporation requires financial sustainability and its future task is to create new business.

3-17 Oumu Town

Oumu Town: Intellectual property and product export

Implementing organization: Okhotsk Oumu's Treasure Rediscovery Council

Regional revitalization by using a natural resource named after the town

[Basic data]

Organization	Okhotsk Oumu's Treasure Rediscovery Council
Establishment	September 2013
Address	1885-14, Aza Oumu, Oumu-cho, Monbetsu-gun, Hokkaido
Executive office	Oumu Town Commerce and Industry Association
Main location of activity	Oumu Town
Activity overview	Activities making use of regional resources to increase visitors and revitalize the local economy
Activity outcome	Starting of specific use of intellectual properties in order to create a brand for locally produced kombu (edible kelp)

1. Overview of the region

(1) Overview of the region

Oumu Town is the northernmost municipality managed by the Okhotsk General Sub-prefectural Bureau. It is in the northeast part of Hokkaido along the coast of the Sea of Okhotsk. Its area is 636.86 km², the population is 4,784 (as of January 1, 2014), and the number of households is 2,266 (as of January 1, 2014).

Fisheries and livestock farming are the key industries. Fishing grounds enjoy the blessings of the drift ice along that coast line that extends for approximately 30 km, and nurturing pastures spread in inland areas. Agricultural development started in Oumu Town around 1900. The town was not suitable for dry-field farming due to the heavy clay soil and cold climate. Dry-field farming therefore was replaced by livestock farming.

One of the most notable characteristics of Oumu Town fisheries is that the business stops during the winter because drift ice covers the shore (of the sea of Okhotsk). Drift ice brings plankton and seaweed reproduces under the ice, creating bountiful fishing grounds. In March, drift ice thins out and scallop and horse crab fishing starts. Oumu enters the busy fishing season after that. Kombu and sea urchins are harvested in summer, and autumn salmon including Mejika and Yuhou brand salmon are caught in fall. The ports of Sawaki, Oumu, Motoineppu, and Horonai are used in Oumu fisheries. Another characteristic of Oumu fisheries is that these ports are gradually being made into hygiene-controlled ports to ensure the safety of shipped marine products.

Farming is mostly livestock farming. It spread in Oumu Town because livestock farming withstands cold weather damage. Approximately 9,000 dairy cows and beef breed cattle are kept. Processed food such as ice cream and cheese are also in development. Buckwheat is the new local specialty from dry-field farming, and relevant organizations inside and outside the town work together to commercialize processed food using buckwheat such as shochu spirits and croquettes.



Workplace for kombu fishermen



Intellectual property seminar

(2) Background of regional promotion activities

Traditionally, each regional promotion activity was carried out by an organization in the relevant industry. Rechecking of regional resources of the town confirmed that the town had thick forests, marine resources such as sea urchins, horse crabs, and salmon, and river resources such as rainbow trout. For regional promotions of these resources, there was a need for collaboration of the Commerce and Industry Association, town government, and organizations from various industries. This led to establishment of the Promotion Council with the purpose of involving all business fields in rediscovering town value. The council consisted of the following: JA, JF, Kitami Shinkin Bank, Wakkanai Shinkin Bank, Hinodemisaki Hotel, Commerce and Industry Association, Forestry Association, Marine Product Processing Association, Construction Association, and Tourism Association.

The first theme of the Promotion Council was kombu. It started its activity to spread the name of Oumu through kombu sale and not to treat kombu sale as only JF's job.

2. Regional promotion implementing organization

(1) Overview of the implementing organization

People fished kombu during the town development days. Oumu Town produces Rishiri Kombu, the renowned and expensive brand of kombu. Many think that Rishiri kombu is fished near Rishiri because of its name, but it is actually grown in the sea near Soya sub-prefecture and Okhotsk sub-prefecture.

According to the study, 83 out of 110 fishermen in the town belonged to the Sea Urchin and Kombu Working Group. Many fishermen thus engaged in kombu fishing. Even if locally fished kombu were named Oumu Kombu, consumers would still pay more attention to the high-class kombu brand Rishiri Kombu. The name Oumu was hardly ever presented to the public, and the market price for Rishiri kombu from Oumu was approximately 80% of Rishiri kombu from Rishiri. This situation generated the necessity for creating the Oumu Kombu brand. The Promotion Council therefore took the initiative and teamed up with the economic organizations in the town to start working on creating the Oumu Kombu brand.

(2) Details of regional promotion

The council started with study sessions for learning how regional brands and kombu could be used effectively. In 2013, it launched various projects to establish the kombu brand.

The first project was nutrition analysis of Rishiri kombu from Oumu, Rishiri kombu, Mitsuishi kombu, makombu, hosome kombu, and naga kombu to prove the safety and quality of Rishiri kombu from Oumu. Afterwards, the council held more study sessions. Meanwhile, it was selected as a recipient of support in the Regional Brand Establishment Support Project by the Hokkaido Bureau of Economy, Trade, and Industry. The council then held an intellectual property seminar five times within a short period of time followed by implementation of specific actions for exercising the intellectual property rights to establish the Oumu Kombu brand. Lawyers, designers, and buyers taught at the seminar to support the regional brand establishment effort.

The council now is considering the use of a general trademark and a regional collective trademark. JF Oumu will file the regional collective trademark application. The effort to market Oumu Kombu across the country is on its way.

One of the objectives of the council is to spread the name of Oumu. It plans to start with marketing of Oumu Kombu and then implement various activities such that Oumu people can be proud of Oumu Kombu.

Its future tasks include generation of ideas for processed food and specialties using Oumu Kombu and promotion of vinegar using Oumu kombu, which is already under development. Public funds are effectively being used in the attempt to raise the visibility of Oumu Kombu and establish the Oumu Kombu brand. For example, the Promotion Council uses the Hokkaido Smaller Business Support Fund, and the Oumu Town Commerce and Industry Association uses the Shopping Street Revitalization Subsidy to host kombu-related events.

3. Summary and future possibilities

Rishiri Kombu from Oumu has been sold at a lower price than Rishiri Kombu from Rishiri. This triggered the attempt to establish the Oumu Kombu brand which has just begun. Establishment of a regional brand needs more than a few years. For the next few decades, it is necessary to use the intellectual properties effectively to protect and strengthen the Oumu Kombu brand.

Establishment of a product brand based on a resource unique to the region is the most important element for regional revitalization. To differentiate the regional specialty from those of other regions requires strategic use of intellectual properties. Therefore, it is important to consult with patent lawyers who have expertise in regional collective trademarks and protected geographical indications before creating the brand. There have been cases where companies found out that their products violated the intellectual property rights of third parties after deciding product names. To avoid such situations, a trademark search must precede execution of strategies to establish a regional brand.

3-18 Tokachi Area

Obihiro City: Establishment of Food Valley and inter-municipality collaboration

Implementing organizations: Obihiro city government and Tokachizaidan (public interest incorporated foundation)

Regional revitalization by creating industrial clusters through inter-municipality collaboration

[Basic data]

Organization	Obihiro city government
Address	1, Minami 7-chome, Nishi 5-jo, Obihiro-shi, Hokkaido
Main location of activity	Obihiro city government, and Tokachi General Sub-prefectural Bureau
Activity overview	Promotion of Food Valley Tokachi
Activity outcome	Revitalization of food-related business in the Tokachi area through inter-municipality collaboration
Other information	Food Valley Tokachi Council (consists of 41 organizations)

Organization	Tokachizaidan (public interest incorporated foundation)
Establishment	Originally August 1993 and obtained public interest incorporated foundation status in April 2013
Address	23-9, Kita 2-chome, Nishi 22-jo, Obihiro-shi, Hokkaido
Main location of activity	Tokachi General Sub-prefectural Bureau
Activity overview	Giving local food higher added value
Activity outcome	Implementation of the Tokachi Brand Certification Program to approve locally produced processed food as Tokachi brand food

1. Overview of the region

(1) Overview of the region

The area generally known as Tokachi is an area managed by the Tokachi General Sub-prefectural Bureau and consists of 1 city, 16 towns, and 2 villages. The area is located in the southeast part of Hokkaido. Its vast Tokachi Plain borders the Daisetsuzan mountain range in the north, Hidaka Mountains in the west, and the Pacific Ocean in the south. Its area is 10,831.62 km², and the population is 347,903 (as of January 1, 2014).

Obihiro City plays the central role in the Tokachi area. Its area is 618.94 km², and the population is 169,104 (as of January 1, 2014). It is the most populated municipality in the sub-prefecture.

In the early Edo period, a place for trading with Ainu was created. This was the beginning of the Tokachi area. In the late Edo period, it became widely known by Takeshiro Matsuura who wrote the Tokachi Journal, which was his expedition and field study record. In 1883, a private organization Banseisha led by Benzo Yoda started full-scale development of the area. In 1933, the municipal

system was implemented and the Tokachi area took its current form. Historically, the private sector has had a lot of power in this area.

Tokachi Plain has less snow than the municipalities along the Sea of Japan. In fact, clear weather often continues for days. This weather is called Tokachi Bare (clear Tokachi sky), and the Tokachi area enjoys one of the highest amounts of sunshine in Japan.

The key industry of the Tokachi area is agriculture. The fertile land, rich water resources, and a large daily temperature difference all contribute to production of high quality farm products. Owing to the larger farm machines and improved plant breeding technology, the key products are grown in rotation, including wheat as well as bareisho potatoes, and sugar beets that withstand cold weather damage. The Tokachi area is also one of the top livestock farming areas in Japan. The amount of dairy cow, beef cattle, and pig production accounts for 56.5% of the entire farming production of the area. In addition, the area engages in a lot of food processing business. For example, buckwheat noodles are produced in Shintoku Town and wine is produced in Ikeda Town. The Tokachi area therefore is one of the largest food suppliers in Japan.

The key crops are shipped out for processing and do not reach consumers directly. Therefore, there must be ways to give them added value. The Tokachi area needs to work with public research institutions to improve food processing techniques including inviting relocation of food processing plants to the area.

2. Food Valley Tokachi

(1) Activity Overview

"Food Valley Tokachi" serves as the common ground for industry-university-government collaboration, agriculture-commerce-industry collaboration, and activities by individual institutions and departments in the industrial cluster.

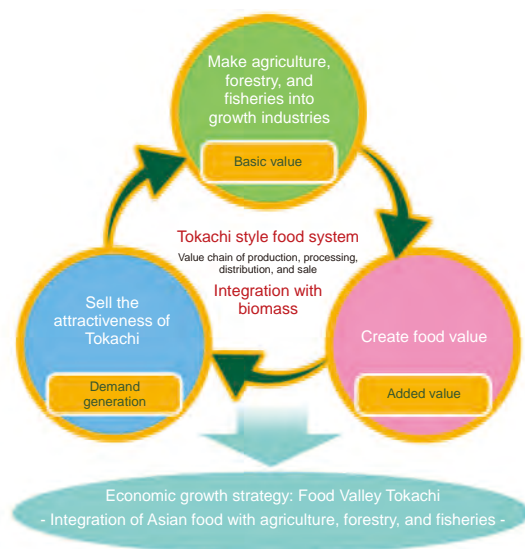


Figure 3-4 Mechanism of Food Valley Tokachi

Source: Food Valley Tokachi website

Agriculture is the foundation of regional revitalization. Increased agricultural business boosts the food industry which in turn generates food processing business. Flourishing business attracts people

to live in the area. When people start a family, education for children is needed. Medical care and social support infrastructure are required in case of illness. An increased population results in development of disaster prevention and traffic infrastructure. This will draw more people into the area, thus creating a virtuous cycle. The Food Valley Tokachi Council was established in 2011 to create Food Valley Tokachi which provides the base for the abovementioned regional revitalization and where businesses gather.

(2) Details of regional promotion

The Food Valley Tokachi Council is the operating organization of Food Valley Tokachi. Its executive office is in the Obihiro city government building. In general, when a municipality serves as an executive office of some kind of activity, that activity is carried out only in that area. It is extremely rare that a single executive office coordinates inter-municipality collaboration. The most prominent characteristic of Food Valley Tokachi is the inter-municipality collaboration. The whole Tokachi community working as a team gives great strength to Food Valley Tokachi.

The municipalities managed by the Tokachi General Sub-prefectural Bureau have a very similar industrial foundation regardless of the location (mountain side or sea side) and have been familiar with the word "Tokachi" since its development started. They can therefore implement regional promotion activities through flexible collaboration and solidarity.

Also, across Japan, farm products from Tokachi are seen as safe and palatable. Twenty-four JA branches in the areas managed by the Tokachi General Sub-prefectural Bureau organized the JA Network Tokachi (Tokachi Nokyoren) to implement Tokachi Good Agricultural Practice (GAP) for preventing production incidents or hazards. Meanwhile, producers shipping their products to JA must record daily work and fertilizer use and submit it at the time of shipment. The network thus distributes products that meet the specified quality level and is implementing various activities across Tokachi to establish more product brands.

In addition to the regional business structure described above, the network invited to the Tokachi area public laboratories and research institutions which study Japanese and Hokkaido agriculture and food. These institutions include Tokachizaidan, Obihiro University of Agriculture and Veterinary Medicine, Hokkaido Agricultural Research Center, and Tokachi Agricultural Experiment Station, and the network's goal is that everything from research to food processing and sales is carried out in Tokachi.

To tighten the municipal collaboration, the Obihiro city mayor invited 19 municipalities to sign the Tokachi Self-Contained Settlement Area Agreement. According to this agreement, Obihiro City will work with surrounding municipalities in medical care and disaster prevention and will implement industrial promotion while making full use of the strengths of the Tokachi area. More specifically, the agreement aims to: match up producers, manufacturers, and sellers in Tokachi; provide information to these parties; make agriculture, forestry, and fisheries into growth industries; and revitalize regional business, expand sales channels, and develop new products.

(3) Use of national programs

Food Valley Tokachi is promoted by various measures implemented with the support of national programs. These national programs include: the Hokkaido Food Complex Comprehensive Special Zones for International Competitiveness Development Program (December 2011) which aims to dominate the fast-growing East Asian food markets and grants selected municipalities with preferential treatment in taxation, finance, and regulations; the Tokachi Biomass Industry City

Project (June 2013); and the Obihiro Hokkaido Regional Revitalization Model Case Program (May 2014) which focuses on agriculture among activities of Food Valley Tokachi and supports growth industries in the food, tourism, and health fields.

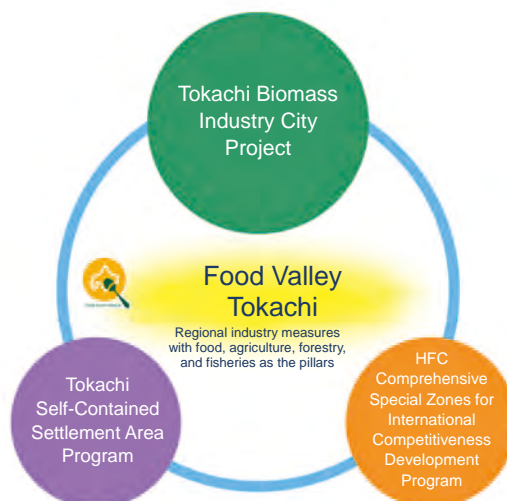


Figure 3-5 Food Valley Tokachi working with various programs

Source: Food Valley Tokachi website

3. Tokachi Brand Certification Program

(1) Activity overview

The Tokachi Brand Certification Program certifies Tokachi local processed food as Tokachi brand food. It is a voluntary certification program. Producers whose product has been certified join the Tokachi Brand Certification Body. In the certification body, they set and keep the certification criteria and certify peer producers. The following products are subject to certification (date certification began): cheese (2003), bread (2007), confectioneries (2010), and dairy products (2014). There are general standards, general safety standards (hygiene and quality control check), safety standards for each product category (manufacturing in Tokachi, Tokachi produced main and secondary ingredients (certificate of origin required), and additive regulations), and palatability standards (sensory evaluation). Products that meet all these criteria can show the Double Star symbol (certified Tokachi brand food).



Figure 3-6 Tokachi brand certification symbol

Source: Tokachi brand certification body website

(2) Detailed description of the certification program

Ingredients produced in Tokachi are highly appreciated by long-established manufacturers, and demand for them has always been high. These ingredients are loosely recognized as Tokachi brand food and are used by many companies. The word Tokachi brand however has no clear definition or criteria, and can be freely used by companies both inside and outside the area. Needless to say, there are no independent organizations to guarantee the quality of them. Certification of products that meet the specific criteria as Tokachi brand food started with the objective of giving a meaning to the term Tokachi brand and differentiating certified food from food loosely and easily defined as Tokachi brand food.

Regional experts started to plan the certification program in 1999. It was around the time that demand for Tokachi cheese was growing owing to the wine boom. In June 2000, however, an incident occurred and severely damaged the reliability of Tokachi dairy products. In general, even though a factory produces safe and reliable products under thorough, strict, and perfect management, its sales will drop in a chain reaction if another factory in the same area damages the Tokachi brand. Following the incident, such a chain reaction affected many companies. As a result, the cheese manufacturers decided to implement region-wide hygiene and quality control and developed the certification criteria and instruction system. In 2003, they launched the pilot project to certify local cheese. In 2007, the certification program took on its current form. Since then the program has expanded subject product categories. Due to this background, the certification body members continue to review the certification program of the product category they produce with the mission to keep producing better products.

Tokachizaidan serves as the executive office of brand certification and is responsible for project implementation and promotion activities.

4. Summary and future possibilities

The whole Tokachi area as a team, instead of individual municipalities, implements regional promotion. It produces a business mechanism only possible with inter-municipality collaboration. The municipalities share the vision of living together and use agriculture and local food to solve the lifestyle, medical care, education, disaster prevention, and energy problems that are likely to occur in the near future.

In general, inter-municipality collaboration does not function well. Tokachi however is an exception. According to the interview for this study, collaboration led by the private sector, not the government, was the key to the success.

As the history of Tokachi colonization suggests, the area has a mature private sector. We determined that the Tokachi area has a mechanism for the private sector to influence the government and this allows the whole area to move forward together. It is hoped that the private sector will grow in the same way in other regions such that private sector-led regional promotion expands.

3-19 Abashiri River basin

Abashiri River basin: Basin management

Implementing organization: Abashiri River Basin Agriculture-Fishery Liaison Council (also known as the Land and Sea Community)

Regional revitalization through agriculture-fishery liaison in the Abashiri River basin

[Basic data]

Organization	Abashiri River Basin Agriculture-Fishery Liaison Council (also known as the Land and Sea Community)
Establishment	May 20, 2011
Address	4-63, Minatomachi, Abashiri-shi (Abashiri Fisheries Cooperative Association)
Main location of activity	Abashiri River basin
Activity overview	Sustainable business development of agriculture and fisheries in the Abashiri River basin
Activity outcome	Establishment of a collaborative relationship between agricultural and fisheries workers in the Abashiri River basin, and implementation of the Certificate of Support Program by fisheries workers
Other achievement	Establishment of the Abashiri River Basin Community joined by all governments in the Abashiri River basin, agricultural, forestry, and fisheries organizations, and many local residents

1. Overview of the region

(1) Overview of the region (Abashiri River basin)

The Abashiri River system starts at the foot of Ahorodake, a part of the outer rim of the Akan caldera, in Tsubetsu Town. The Abashiri River is a 115 km long first-class river that runs through Bihoro Town and Ozora Town, and then flows into the Sea of Okhotsk in Abashiri City via Lake Abashiri. Agriculture and fisheries are the key industries in the river basin. Abundant sunshine and the vast, fertile land foster agriculture, while the world-class fishing ground, the Sea of Okhotsk, and the productive brackish water lake support fisheries.

(2) Overview of the region (Abashiri City)

In 1872, the Abashiri District was defined inside Kitaminokuni, and the current city area became Abashiri Village. In 1897, the Abashiri sub-branch of the Nemuro branch of the Development Commission was established to serve as the center of the four Kitaminokuni districts (Shari, Abashiri, Tokoro, and Monbetsu). On February 11, 1947, Abashiri obtained city status.

In 1890, Kushiro Road (between Abashiri and Kushiro) opened and Chuo Road (between Abashiri and Asahikawa) opened in 1891. In 1919, port construction started. The Senmo line, former Abashiri line, and former Yumo line opened afterwards. The port and train lines thus covered important locations in Abashiri. Agriculture, stockbreeding, the marine product industry taking advantage of the fishing ground in the Sea of Okhotsk, and the food processing business prospered as a result. As

the industries grew, government offices and business offices concentrated in the city. Cultural facilities were also constructed one after another.

Abashiri City through which the Abashiri River runs is located in the east part of the Okhotsk sub-prefecture (east longitude: 144 degrees 14 minutes, and north latitude: 44 degrees 02 minutes). The area is 471.00 km², the population is 38,240 (as of January 1, 2014), and the number of households is 18,578 (as of January 1, 2014). The city is characterized by the unique winter phenomenon, drift ice. It starts to arrive at the coast in January. It completely covers the coast at its peak, cutting off all sea traffic. It is inconvenient for local citizens, but supports local tourism.

Drift ice also brings in abundant marine resources. These resources are maintained during the off season. Many JA Abashiri members engage in set net fishing, scallop dredging, set gill net crab fishing, and horse crab pot fishing along the Abashiri coast. Abashiri City has Lake Noto in the northwest, Lake Abashiri in the southwest, and Lake Mokoto and Lake Tofutsu (wetland registered under the Ramsar Convention) in the southeast. There is therefore a lot of inland water fishing within the city limits. Members of JA Abashiri and JA West Abashiri fish scallops, pond smelts, fresh-water clams, and shrimp in these lakes. In 2013, the total capture production was 62,354.8 tons and 14.9165 billion yen in Abashiri City. For ocean fisheries, the capture production was 58,578.7 tons and 13.6455 billion yen. For inland water fisheries, the capture production was 3,776.1 tons and 1.29709 billion yen.

Agriculture in Abashiri City centers on wheat, beet, and bareisho potato production. Farming groups engage in large-scale dry-field farming and grow vegetables including daikon radishes, Chinese yams, burdocks, and carrots. In the city, the cultivated area is approximately 14,000 hectares, the farming population is 1,726, and the number of farming households is 357. The cultivated area per household is 39.2 hectares.

(3) Overview of the region (Tsubetsu Town)

Tsubetsu Town is an inland town of the Okhotsk area, which is in the east part of Hokkaido (east longitude: from 43 degrees 27 minutes to 43 degrees 45 minutes, and north latitude from 143 degrees 46 minutes to 144 degrees 14 minutes). The area is 716.60 km² (37.2 km long from east to west, and 34.1 km long from north to south), the population is 5,369 (as of January 1, 2014), and the number of households is 2,527 (as of January 1, 2014). The inland climate of the east part of Hokkaido brings the town a very hot summer, but drift ice makes winter cold. The temperatures thus vary greatly throughout a year. The town has many clear sunny days, low precipitation, and one of the highest percentages of possible sunshine in Japan. The fan-shaped flatland of the Abashiri River basin and the mountains make up the town. The mountains consist of the outer rims of Lake Akan and Lake Kussharo, and also the mountains that border Kitami City. National and Hokkaido forests cover approximately 86% of the town area.

In the town, the cultivated area is 5,051.9 hectares, the farming population is 754, and the number of farming households is 160. Livestock farming, stockbreeding, and dry-field farming of cold-resistant crops such as wheat, bareisho potatoes, and beets, together with forestry, are the core industries of the town.

The town is surrounded by forests, and the local forestry industry takes advantage of this. Forestry-related business including wood processing and wood product manufacturing have developed. Twelve companies are engaging in the related industries, and they are greatly contributing to creation of local employment. The forests here produce enough oxygen to keep

17.8% of the Hokkaido population alive. The environmental preservation measures of the town feature the forests, and all town residents take part in creation of an eco-friendly town.

(4) Overview of the region (Ozora Town)

Ozora Town is in the Okhotsk sub-prefecture in the northeast part of Hokkaido (east longitude: from 144 degrees 23 minutes to 144 degrees 02 minutes, and north latitude: from 43 degrees 42 minutes to 43 degrees 58 minutes). The area is 343.66 km², the population is 7,841 (as of January 1, 2014), and the number of households is 3,098 (as of January 1, 2014). It is adjacent to Koshimizu Town in the east, Kitami City in the west, Bihoro Town in the south, and Abashiri City in the north. The town is near Abashiri Quasi-National Park and Akan National Park. A panoramic landscape featuring Lake Kussharo and 1,000 meter-tall Mount Mokoto spreads in the south of the town, and Lake Abashiri having a beautiful waterfront view and abundant aquatic resources borders the north side of the town. The typical Okhotsk coast climate makes the town a sunny place; post rain/snow dry seasonal wind blows from the Pacific Ocean coast in summer and from the Sea of Japan coast in winter. Ozora Town was formed in 2009 as a result of merger between Memanbetsu Town and Higashimokoto Village.

The key industry of the town is agriculture. The cultivated area is 12,667 hectares and accounts for approximately 37% of the town area. The town is the easternmost rice farming area. It also grows a wide variety of crops including different types of wheats, bareisho potatoes, beets, beans, and vegetables.

(5) Overview of the region (Bihoro Town)

Bihoro Town is roughly in the center of the Okhotsk sub-prefecture in the east part of Hokkaido (east longitude: from 143 degrees 54 minutes to 144 degrees 20 minutes, and north latitude: 43 degrees 35 minutes to 43 degrees 53 minutes). Its area is 438.41 km², the population is 21,038 (as of January 1, 2014), and the number of households is 9,744 (as of January 1, 2014). The town is adjacent to Memanbetsu Airport which serves as the gateway to eastern Hokkaido. Also, JR Sekihoku Main Line and four national routes run through the town. The town is therefore in a convenient traffic environment and serves as a sightseeing location and an interchange. The town is surrounded by Shiretoko National Park, Akan National Park, and Abashiri Quasi-National Park. The Bihoro mountain path overlooks Lake Kussharo and Mashudake in a panoramic view. Approximately 800,000 tourists visit the Bihoro mountain path every year. Over 60 beautiful rivers, including the Bihoro River selected in 2002 as Japan's clearest river, run through the town. Bihoro Town is a place with beautiful green nature and clear water and is blessed with fertile land and a high percentage of possible sunshine.

The key industry of Bihoro Town is agriculture. Beets, bareisho potatoes, wheat, and onions are mainly grown. A wide variety of Hokkaido specialties are produced in town at a starch factory with the highest production volume in Japan and farm product food processing factories.

(6) Background of regional promotion activities

JF Abashiri and JF West Abashiri were troubled by the worsened fishing ground environment caused by muddy water and excess nutrient salt from upstream. In 2007, they invited JA Tsubetsu, whose members were farming the upper most portion of the river, to join the Salmon Action Plan implemented by the Hokkaido Regional Development Bureau. The Salmon Action Plan was a

regional development plan in which agricultural and fisheries workers in the basin would work together to preserve the river environment and establish brands of products harvested in that area. Although Tsubetsu Town farmers were already recycling organic materials, and some of them were shifting to eco-friendly agriculture, they felt responsible for their upstream activities when they saw a typhoon carried containers in Tsubetsu Town to Lake Abashiri. To address issues concerning the river and the sea, fisheries workers fishing downstream (JF Abashiri and JF West Abashiri) partnered with agricultural workers farming upstream (JA Tsubetsu) and signed the Joint Declaration on Sustainable Agricultural and Fisheries Development in the Abashiri River Basin in 2010. This marked the beginning of regional promotion activities.



The Abashiri River Story brochure created
by the Abashiri River Basin Agriculture-Fishery Liaison Council

2. Regional promotion implementing organization

(1) Overview of the implementing organization

Based on the joint declaration of 2010, JF Abashiri, JF West Abashiri, and JA Tsubetsu formed the Abashiri River Basin Agriculture-Fishery Liaison Council in 2011. The objective of the establishment was to promote sustainable development of agriculture and fisheries, which were the key industries in the Abashiri River basin, while preserving and living with the rich natural environment of and around the Abashiri River.

(2) Details of regional promotion

In July 2006, the Hokkaido Regional Development Bureau gave an outline of the Abashiri River Salmon Action Plan to address various issues concerning the Abashiri River basin. In February and April 2007, agricultural and fisheries workers had meetings. In August 2008, the Agriculture and Fisheries Joint Conference was held based on the meeting results to discuss future directions and detailed measures.

In February 2009, JF Abashiri, JF West Abashiri, and JA Tsubetsu jointly held the Agriculture-Fisheries Liaison Forum to further discuss the Abashiri River basin issues. In November 2009, they made a presentation on the current issues for the Abashiri River basin and future strategies at the Sustainability Weeks 2009 Opening Symposium at Hokkaido University. In March 2010, they held the 2010 Symposium on a Sound Water Cycle in Hokkaido and invited Professor Ono from the Faculty of Tourism and Environmental Studies of Nagano University to give a talk. In

October 2010, they completed the brochure to illustrate the environmental preservation efforts in the Abashiri River basin (the Abashiri River Story by Farmers and Fishermen). In November 2010, the Joint Declaration on Sustainable Agricultural and Fisheries Development in the Abashiri River Basin and Commemoration Forum was held, and JF Abashiri, JF West Abashiri, and JA Tsubetsu signed the joint declaration and reported the declaration to the governor of Hokkaido.

In accordance with the joint declaration, the upstream farmers (in Tsubetsu Town) engage in agriculture that would have less environmental impact on the river. Also, the Abashiri River Basin Agriculture-Fishery Liaison Council hold the Abashiri Basin Area Study Meeting, host the Abashiri Basin Tree Planting Event, and study composting of starfishes culled from the Abashiri coast.

Aiming for regional environmental preservation and development, the council's future plans are: further promotion of the Certificate of Support program in which fisheries workers support eco-friendly farmers; networking with organizations, including citizen groups, related to the Abashiri River basin; and cooperation with forestry workers and Abashiri River basin farmers outside Tsubetsu Town.

3. Summary and future possibilities

Inter-regional collaboration in the Abashiri River basin sets an excellent model for building of a sustainable economic society for the involved regions. It will make a great contribution if applied across Hokkaido or applied to environmental preservation activities in other basin areas. Developing countries are facing pollution issues in their development process that Japan once encountered in the past. This Abashiri River basin example will provide valuable information and specific tips on how to handle these issues.

For the future, the council is expected to aim for autonomous operation to become an independent organization, achieve further development of the Abashiri River basin, implement sustainable activities, and finally revitalize the basin area.

3-20 Okhotsk area

Okhotsk area: Terroir

Implementing organization: Okhotsk Terroir (general incorporated association)

Rural development using the "terroir" approach

Organization	Okhotsk Terroir (general incorporated association)
Establishment	August 2011
Address	2-6, 4-chome, Saiwai-cho, Monbetsu-shi, Hokkaido
Main location of activity	Across the Okhotsk area
Activity overview	Regional promotion centering on production and supply of high quality products coming from the regional terroir formed on the natural environment, landscape, and past generations' lifestyle
Activity outcome	Publication of the HARU magazine introducing the people, food, and nature of Okhotsk, and opening of Okhotsk Terroir Store in collaboration with Co-op Sapporo

1. Overview of the region

(1) Overview of the region

The Okhotsk area is located in the northeastern part of Hokkaido. It consists of 3 cities, 14 towns, and 1 village. The area is 10,691.60 km², accounting for 12.8% of the entire Hokkaido area. The population is 300,789 (as of January 1, 2014).

The area spreads along the coast of the Sea of Okhotsk. One of the very unique features of the area is drift ice that covers the sea from the end of January to March every year. Nature dating back to ancient times also remains in the area. The area boasts beautiful natural landscapes; Shiretoko National Park is a World Heritage site, and Abashiri Quasi-National Park houses Lake Tofutsu, a wetland registered under the Ramsar Convention.

Along the coast of the Sea of Okhotsk remain ruins of Jomon, post-Jomon, Okhotsk, and Ainu cultures. Ruins of the Old Stone Age are found in inland areas. In 1869, the Development Commission was established, and the name Ezochi was changed to Hokkaido. The Okhotsk area used to be Kitaminokuni having the Abashiri, Shari, Tokoro, and Monbetsu Districts. Kitaminokuni belonged to multiple local branch offices until the Abashiri branch office opened in 1877. Colonial soldiers entered Kitami City and Kamiyubetsu Town immediately after the branch opened, and full-scale colonization started in this area. Around the same time, Hokkosha consisting of people from Kochi prefecture also started to colonize the same area. According to census data, the population of the Okhotsk area peaked at 425,126 in 1960. It is on the decrease, and it was 310,009 in 2010.

The key industries of the Okhotsk area are agriculture and fisheries. Agriculture centers on dry-field farming, and onions, wheat, beets, and bareisho potatoes are grown. Stockbreeding is also conducted. The cultivated area is 166,000 hectares (source: Okhotsk General Sub-prefectural Bureau, 2013), accounting for 14.4% of the total cultivated area in Hokkaido (1,151,000 hectares according to the 2013 MAFF Survey on Cultivated Land Area). The cultivated area of the Okhotsk area is the second largest only after the 255,000 hectare area managed by the Tokachi General Sub-prefectural Bureau

(source: Tokachi General Sub-prefectural Bureau, 2013). In fisheries, scallop dredging and set net salmon fishing are conducted along the coast of the Sea of Okhotsk. There is also offshore trawl finishing. The Okhotsk sub-prefecture recorded the highest production of 71.579 billion yen in Hokkaido in 2013 (source: Hokkaido Fisheries Statistics).



Co-op Sapporo Bihoro Branch



The HARU magazine

(2) Background of regional promotion activities

In June 2009, Okhotsk local farmers, commerce and tourism personnel, planning firm employees, government employees, and university researchers participated in the French Country Home Tour. Being surprised by the liveliness of hilly areas in France compared to those in Hokkaido, they started a study group with volunteers. This was the first form of what later became Okhotsk Terroir. Since then, almost every year the study group invites and learns from Jean-Robert Pitte, who is a human anthropologist and former president of Université Paris Sorbonne-Paris IV.

Okhotsk Terroir initially operated as the Okhotsk Nature Park Promotion Council. Its first assignment was to study the French Regional Nature Park (PNR: Parc Naturel Régional) Program as a reference for Okhotsk regional development. PNR is a program to support sustainable economy and social activities while making the best use of unique regional nature and regional resources. A community creates a project plan, has it approved by the national government and relevant organizations, signs a contract with the government, and works with it to implement regional development.

The Okhotsk area has the Sea of Okhotsk nurtured by drift ice, lakes and rivers spread along the long coast line, and rich forests that stretch from the Kitami Mountains to the World Heritage site, Shiretoko, with fertile farmlands in between. The area has a very unique climate and culture, and distinctive lifestyle and economic areas. The goal of the council activities was therefore to promote private sector-led regional promotion efforts highlighting the uniqueness and competitiveness of the Okhotsk area.

2. Regional promotion implementing organization

(1) Overview of the implementing organization

While proceeding with its activities, the Okhotsk Nature Park Promotion Council decided to execute the "terroir" strategy in which the whole region works as a group to heighten regional value in order

to highlight the uniqueness and competitiveness of the region and regional resources. In 2011, the council obtained corporation status and became Okhotsk Terroir.

Its activities are generally inside the Okhotsk area, but it also partners with nearby areas with similar terroir. The activity area is therefore quite extensive for the private sector.

The word terroir is French and broadly defines the sense of a place based on its nature, landscape, history, and culture. In France, terroir is used as a regional policy strategy and this is linked closely with the Controlled Designation of Origin certification program (AOC: Appellation d'Origine Contrôlée) and the Remarkable Site of Taste certification program (SRG: Site Remarquable du Gout).

(2) Details of regional promotion

Okhotsk Terroir has been engaging in the following activities for the future of the area since its launch:

① Holding of symposiums and seminars to widely spread the terroir activities and information

Okhotsk Terroir has been holding symposiums and seminars for six years since its launch, inviting experts from inside and outside the Okhotsk area as speakers. Symposiums and seminars explore ways to customize the PNR and SRG to the Okhotsk area, envision the future of the area, and study how to apply familiar terroir to local life and economic activities.

The symposiums and seminars are open to the public to foster residents' understanding about terroir. They also serve as an opportunity for Okhotsk Terroir to find new partners.

② Holding of regional marché and Hokudai Marché events, and management of stores to rediscover good local food materials and expand sales channels

A simple question of "Why can't we buy farm products harvested in our town?" led Okhotsk Terroir to open marché in various locations in the area. The objective of these marchés is to realize small volume production and small lot distribution instead of large volume production and large lot distribution that are current trends in the global economy. These marchés allow Okhotsk Terroir to rediscover good food materials and develop its own Okhotsk certification criteria.

The advanced version of regional marché is Okhotsk Terroir Store, which opened in 2011 as a tenant of a large supermarket in Bihoro Town. The objective was to create high value added products by working with producers and design a value chain that is completed inside the area. Okhotsk Terroir has changed the store management style since and currently has stores in Bihoro Town, Kitami City, and Abashiri City.

③ Publishing of the HARU magazine to disseminate terroir activity information to foster residents' understanding

Since 2012, Okhotsk Terroir has been publishing the guide magazine HARU semi-annually. Okhotsk Terroir puts together information on local people, food, agriculture, and tourism, and sells it at major bookstores in Hokkaido instead of distributing it free for the PR purpose. The word HARU means a blessing of food from nature in Ainu. It became the magazine title because its concept matched the terroir activities to produce high-quality local food.

Okhotsk Terroir presents the terroir concept through discovered or rediscovered regional resources including history and culture, daily living of local people, and local lifestyles and production activities.

The HARU magazine has won the grand prize at the 2013 Japan City Magazine and Free Paper Award sponsored by METI, Japan Tourism Agency, and Japan Travel and Tourism Association.

- ④ Becoming a certified collaborative project support organization to support businesses in sixth industry in the Okhotsk area

In 2012, Okhotsk Terroir was certified as an organization to support agriculture-commerce-industry collaborative projects in order to develop high value added products using high quality local farm and marine products and to support businesses developing new services to prepare to enter the sixth industry. The first support activity was mead development through collaboration between a beekeeper in Kunneppu Town and a brewing company in January 2014.

- ⑤ Collaboration with the Okhotsk General Sub-prefectural Bureau

Since the time of launch, Okhotsk Terroir has worked to gain the understanding of relevant government offices and also worked with the local government while explaining to them the philosophy of its activities and how they are implemented. For the past five years, Okhotsk Terroir has received work from the Okhotsk General Sub-prefectural Bureau. Regional resources are the foundation of terroir. Okhotsk Terroir has found such regional resources and disseminated food information inside and outside Hokkaido with the objective of using natural energy to create additional value.

3. Summary and future possibilities

Members of the 2009 French rural observation tour were shocked to see that French farmers in disadvantageous hilly areas were working and living vibrantly and happily. Although Hokkaido seemed to be more advantageous than France in terms of farming, French farmers had a much more positive attitude and outlook. The terroir activities started when the members wondered where this difference came from.

Starting from PNR and then to SRG and AOC, Okhotsk Terroir continued to study regional development and monozukuri carried out by the French government. Finding out that the concept of terroir was the foundation of these activities, Okhotsk Terroir has put the philosophy of terroir first in its activities. Adjusting the organizational structure and creating activity systems to match the philosophy are the current issues.

It is clear that an increased number of people understand terroir not only in Hokkaido but across the country. For the future, Okhotsk Terroir needs to further spread information on how it plans to create regional brands, especially food brands.

3-21 Summary

This study has put together 20 Hokkaido regional revitalization case examples, ranging from successful ones to the ones that have just begun, and illustrated their applicability to international cooperation.

These case examples often suggest that key people in the area tend to be in the spotlight and are considered to be the most important factor of regional revitalization. Analysis of the successful examples however tells us that revitalization is not all about the people. Successful regional revitalization is characterized by unique methods, mechanisms, and systems to develop strategies, which incorporate environmental changes and regional characteristics and strengths, and to plan tactics, create organizations, and find partners to achieve these strategies. These examples provide important tips for other areas; representatives of such areas can refer to these examples while incorporating their own features.

Although these case examples contain useful information for regional revitalization, their measures are highly diversified. It is impossible to analyze their success factors, create a model from them, and implement it across regions. Also, it is common sense in business that copycats will not succeed. Therefore, the government and the private sector must work as a team to create ideas for revitalization plans unique to that area.

While the government's initiative on local economy revitalization boosts regional revitalization, the most important thing is to thoroughly analyze the characteristics, human resources, history, and resources in the local area and create the most suitable regional revitalization plan. Also, its success relies on how key people are trained and provided with the opportunity to demonstrate leadership.

In this study we visited private organizations and municipalities that were engaging in regional promotion. We checked their regional promotion progress and asked them if there was a need for JICA's assistance provided based on its experience in international cooperation. The interviews indicated that because of the impression of the phrase international cooperation the interviewees had difficulty imagining what collaboration with JICA would be like. Some municipalities however were positive about working with JICA to implement regional promotion. As a result, we were able to find out about the needs for information based on experience in international cooperation, creation of regional brands, and most importantly, assistance for human resource development. Based on these inputs, the next chapter describes future directions of JICA projects.

This document covers a wide range of information. Some key examples include business in the fields of energy, forestry, agriculture, and tourism, as well as government-led regional development. We believe that a municipality will be able to revitalize its economy if the local residents create a regional revitalization plan while keeping in mind the case examples reported in this document. In many case examples introduced in this document, the regional revitalization plan was not created by an expert consultant; it was created and implemented by the whole community working as a team.

We hope that this study will become widely known through JICA projects and contribute to reduction of urban-rural discrepancies in developing countries and also to regional revitalization not only in Hokkaido but across Japan.

4. Applicability of Hokkaido Regional and Industrial Promotion Case Examples

4-1 Applicability of Regional Promotion Case Examples to International Cooperation

- (1) Regional discrepancies are expanding in developing countries. Cities enjoy rapid economic growth due to direct overseas investments. Other areas are left behind. The diversity, difficulty, and complexity of development needs have increased with the evolution and growth of ICT. Since city development is prioritized over rural development in many developing countries, meeting rural economic, social, and developmental needs and reducing regional discrepancies are urgent tasks. Rural areas have limited resources and manpower for regional development and promotions. Therefore, they are interested in and expect much from Japanese municipalities having insight into and experience with regional development and promotion including the "One Village One Product movement."
- (2) Among developing countries, East and Southeast Asian countries are experiencing negative population growth. Including China and Thailand that have already started to age, an increased number of Asian countries are predicted to face the same issue in the future. Middle-income countries such as BRICs are growing slower in recent years but are maintaining high consumer confidence. At the same time, their energy consumption and impact on the environment are increasing. They must further care for the environment to achieve a sustainable society.
- (3) Hokkaido is facing depopulation, an aging society, and a concentration of people, goods, and capital in large cities which causes a decline in provincial cities. Developing countries will also face these issues in the near future. As Hokkaido and developing countries share the same issues, this study will suggest how to implement effective and efficient international cooperation.

In this study, an overview of the current state and issues for Hokkaido was first examined. Then, 20 case examples of regional promotions in Hokkaido to address these issues were divided into town development, industrial promotion, and inter-municipality collaboration. Some projects introduced as case examples have just begun or are still continuing. Their outcomes are yet to be determined, but they still include new ideas, implementation methods, and implementation systems. This information will illustrate how to precisely meet the diversified and difficult needs of countries subject to our ODA.

① Town development

- (a) In addition to Asian countries such as Thailand, Malaysia, and China, Latin America, Oceania, and Middle Eastern Countries are also facing an increase of lifestyle diseases caused by modernization of diet, an aging society, and declining population growth. Their urgent tasks include development of a social security system and creation of a social support system for the elderly population. To address these issues, the advanced approaches by Tobetsu Town, which has built a new social support system involving the whole community, and Yubari City, which makes full use of limited resources to achieve efficient resident support, have high applicability. The goal of Tobetsu Town is to first create a new type of community based on the spirit of mutual support instead of

dividing residents into providers and recipients of social support services and then develop necessary measures. Yubari City demonstrates an interesting approach in which a compact area of living is formed to improve resident support efficiency.

- (b) Shimokawa Town carries out regional promotion while maximizing the use of its limited resources. The town government promotes the use of the unused resource, forest biomass, and gives forest environment education to young generations who will lead the future of the town. The town's activities aiming for a sustainable community will be a good sustainability example for many developing countries that tend to prioritize development and ignore preservation of the environment.
- (c) Among the 20 municipalities subject to the field study, Shikaoi Town, Bibai City, Niseko Town, and Kushiro City set other examples of town development-focused regional promotion. All these examples address an aging society and rural depopulation. The municipalities produce multiple combinations of social support for the elderly, preservation of the environment, effective use of available resources, and unique regional history and culture to produce the maximum effect. It should also be noted that, upon implementing specific regional promotion activities, these municipalities communicate sufficiently with their residents to build trusting relationships.

② Industrial promotion

- (a) Date City and Sunagawa City give examples of the whole community, instead of individual regional specialties, being the feature of industrial promotions. In Date City, the implementation organization creates new value by combining the unique forest resources, local food, and health promoting activities. In Sunagawa City, promotion of a dessert shop network as the Sweet Road brand has contributed to acquisition of new customers.

Many developing countries tend to prioritize benefits for individuals and are unlikely to implement measures to produce benefits for the whole community. These countries are attempting to reduce poverty and regional discrepancies, and a lot can be learned from the approaches introduced above; the government, private sector, and community residents sufficiently discuss regional advantage and characteristics, share the objectives, and try to develop the whole community. JICA places importance on conversations among the government, community residents, and relevant organizations (including companies) in regional development, environmental preservation, and peace building activities. It is therefore likely that JICA will continue monitoring various approaches taken in Hokkaido and their outcomes and apply preferable examples to developing country assistance.

- (b) Oumu Town's strategy is to add high value to local marine products by acquiring trademark rights and differentiating local products from competitors. This can be applied to regional development and town revitalization in regions rich in marine resources such as Southeast Asia, Indochina, and Oceania. Teuri Island is a small island with approximately 300 residents. There, the whole community is working to create reasons for young generations to stay while maximizing the benefit of the local specialties, which are marine resources, and maintaining the educational establishment (senior high school). Marine products are processed at the primary and an extended level (halfway to secondary) and a logistics system to handle small product lots is being created. These approaches provide tips for international cooperation in Oceania where many small island nations exist.

- (c) Furano City and Eniwa City have been established as tourist site brands. Using this as their advantage, the residents actively participate in creating tourist attractions such as "michi-no-eki" and "Marché" to draw not only the community residents but also domestic and international tourists. Although these areas rely on primary industry, they could generate profits only at the end of the value chain through logistics services and retail sales. To address this issue, they integrated a whole value chain and have succeeded in making a flow of funds and distributing profits inside the community. As for creating structure for regional promotions, the government makes sure that the residents agree with it and actively participate in it and then proceeds with projects based on government-private sector collaboration. Creating a mechanism to involve the whole community is also one of the success factors for these cities.

The case examples of Furano City, Eniwa City, Oumu Town, Higashikawa Town, and Sunagawa Town demonstrate how the government and the private sector work together to discover and improve unique regional resources and use creative ways such as acquisition of intellectual property rights to protect them from market entries by large companies. It is also noteworthy that the residents of these areas train future leaders while actively carrying out industrial promotions without being completely dependent on the municipal government.

③ Inter-municipality collaborations

- (a) Food Valley Tokachi in the east part of Hokkaido is based on inter-municipality collaboration. It voluntarily established the safe and reliable food quality level under the initiative of the private sector, made agriculture a growth industry by working with government organizations, and created new value for local food. In the areas participating in Food Valley Tokachi, primary industry workers actively get involved in secondary and tertiary industries to add high value to their products. Their advancement into the sixth industry can teach a lot to developing countries focusing on primary industry. Business industries in eastern Hokkaido are expanding and systemized. They are developed in about the same scale as the business industries of a small developing country. Therefore, the method of and organizational structure required for such development can be used as an example when exploring the business development method for many primary industry-intensive developing countries.
- (b) The comprehensive Abashiri River basin management is realized through symbiosis of farmers working upstream and fishermen working on the river. This is an interesting example in which farmers and fishermen, who usually have conflicting interests, share information and deepen mutual understanding to establish a cooperative relationship to create a symbiotic environment through regional promotion. Management of international river basins causes great difficulties as seen in the conflict between India and Bangladesh over the Ganges water distribution and coordination among countries relevant to the Mekong River. The Abashiri River example will be useful when trying to bring conflicting interested parties closer through repeated patient discussions and establish a collaborative relationship between them.

As described above, industrial promotions are carried out to correct income discrepancies and create employment, town development is designed to create a new social support system and build social capital, and inter-municipality collaboration contributes to coordination of interested parties and generation of high added value. All these case examples can be used to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of JICA projects targeting developing countries.

4-2 Applicability of JICA Projects to Regional Promotion and Revitalization Effort in Hokkaido

One of the objectives of this study is to examine how JICA international cooperation activities carried out in Japan can contribute to regional promotions and revitalization in Hokkaido in line with the "regional revitalization" goal proposed by the government (Task Force for Overcoming Population Decline and Revitalizing Local Economies). Section 4 above explored the possibility of applying measures implemented in Hokkaido to international cooperation projects carried out in developing countries to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of JICA projects. This section examines how JICA's human networks and knowledge and experience accumulated in international cooperation can contribute to regional promotions in Hokkaido which will be further strengthened in the future.

The section discusses the feasibility of JICA's contributions based on: comments and requests provided by the Advisory Committee members; implementation status of observed regional promotions in the subject 20 regions; and needs and expectations for JICA from the organizations visited during the course of the study.

(1) Possible contributions feasible within the existing framework (draft)

① Improvement of the regional brand visibility (domestic and international advertising and rediscovery of attractive features)

- (a) Increase of opportunities for exchanges between the personnel in individual regions in Hokkaido and JICA training participants (increase of observation opportunities in JICA training programs)

Hokkaido hosts approximately 130 training programs in total per year in Sapporo and Obihiro. From FY2012 to FY2014, 900 to 1,000 participants stayed in these areas per year (570 to 650 participants in Sapporo and 310 to 350 participants in Obihiro). Short-term training programs last a few weeks to a year, while long-term training programs last longer than a year. Participants stay in Hokkaido on average for 45 days or 1.5 months. The breakdown of participants' area of origin after FY2000 is as follows: ① Asia (49%), ② Africa (24%), ③ Latin America (14%), ④ Europe (6%), ⑤ Middle East (5%), and ⑥ Oceania (2%). The respective fields of training are as follows: ① agriculture, forestry, and fisheries (33%), ② environment and water resources (11%), ③ education (11%), ④ healthcare (10%), and ⑤ infrastructures and urban development (10%).

During the visits of subject regions in the study, the personnel in each subject region requested JICA's assistance because exposure of regional promotions to third persons (foreigners) would allow them to discover new sales points of the region and also to create a checklist for inviting foreign tourists. JICA will therefore add places to visit for observation to the current training programs and also include observation of requested places in new training programs which will be available in the future.

Many JICA participants staying in Hokkaido use social network services (SNS) to exchange information frequently with their family or individuals related to their country of origin. It is expected that information on regional specialties or visitor attractions be also shared through SNS.

- (b) Invitation of key stakeholders to foster their understanding of Japanese technologies and build relationships with them

In addition to training programs, JICA invites key stakeholders of developing countries for the following reasons: to foster, through interactions and communication, key persons' understanding of Japanese techniques, experiences, and approaches to developmental issues; and to encourage the building of relationships with the Japanese parties. Active distribution of Hokkaido's technical and experience information as well as collecting information and exchanging opinions about needs of developing countries will enhance key persons' understanding of Japan and lead to building of good relationships. This will in turn improve the visibility of Hokkaido regional brands. Therefore, apart from making efforts in increasing opportunities for exchanges between Hokkaido and developing countries via training programs, key persons will be strategically invited to engage in important activities of Hokkaido companies, municipalities, and universities.

(c) JICA Partnership Program for overseas expansion of regional brands and companies

The JICA Partnership Program hosts collaborative projects between JICA and Japanese NGOs, universities, municipalities, and nonprofit organizations. JICA Hokkaido International Center is implementing 20 projects, and 9 of them are in Mongolia. Both Hokkaido and Mongolia seem to have a strong desire for increased implementation of the JICA Partnership Program for two reasons. First, these projects seem to fully demonstrate techniques and knowledge suitable for cold places in Hokkaido and also agricultural and stock-farming techniques and knowledge. Second, the Hokkaido government has signed a memorandum with the Mongolian Ministry of Energy and Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Light Industry to promote economic and technical exchanges.

Recent development shows examples of collaborative projects with local companies in anticipation of regional revitalization (strengthening of the local economy). These projects are carried out in Mongolia, Thailand, Malaysia, and Vietnam. Local municipalities, companies, and relevant organizations involve their whole community in these projects. Further enhancement of the project quality is desired in order to strengthen the relationships with these countries.

② Tapping international demands and creating opportunities for Hokkaido companies to enter overseas markets

(a) Promotion of JICA's partnership with the private sector; Support for Japanese SMEs Overseas Business Development

JICA supports companies that wish to expand their business to overseas. In this program, companies provide technical support in developing countries and use this experience to enter overseas markets. The reality however is that not so many companies use this program. Interviews with financial institutes and industry groups in Hokkaido suggested that many companies whose headquarters are in Hokkaido do not have sufficient time and capacity to consider or start overseas business expansion. The abovementioned JICA Partnership Program may motivate companies in Hokkaido to join this support program.

(b) Provision of former JICA training program participants' information to companies

JICA accepts approximately 10,000 participants per year at 15 branch offices in Japan, and they have a participant database. Some participants hold important positions in various fields after returning to their own countries. Therefore, the database offers

valuable information on human resources that could help companies in Hokkaido expand their business overseas. In particular, the JICA Alumni Association is a valuable human network and will be useful in consultations with companies that wish to trade internationally.

JICA is planning to send out JICA Friendship Mail (tentative name) to all participants. It will facilitate sending/collecting of information to/from former JICA participants who have returned to their homeland and can be used as a new way to provide information to companies.

(c) Assessment of Hokkaido resources by JICA participants

Since its foundation in 1996, the JICA Hokkaido International Center has taken in approximately 13,000 participants cumulatively. Participants from Asian countries account for the largest group. There are also many participants from Islamic countries such as Indonesia, Malaysia, and Bangladesh. Both the government and private sector of Hokkaido are working to attract inbound tourists, and information on Islamic nations may be beneficial for them. JICA has so far conducted surveys of participants coming to Japan about training program contents and places to visit for observation. It has not however collected data from visitors' perspectives such as the impression of Hokkaido and infrastructure at tourist attractions. JICA needs to put together data which can contribute to attracting tourists to Hokkaido.

③ Human resource development

(a) Contribution to development of human resources with global competence (further improvement of the quality of developmental education support)

JICA has a program to provide an overview and describe the necessity of international cooperation to students (from elementary school children to undergraduates) and the general public. JICA can send speakers to schools or students can visit the JICA center. Each year, approximately 8,300 people participate in the program at schools, and approximately 1,500 people visit the JICA center.

Increasing overseas expansion of business through government-private sector partnership is required, and training of personnel with a global perspective is an urgent task. JICA should provide intensive support for developmental education targeting younger generations. Increased lectures both at schools and the center and offering of catchy program content that gets more people interested in international cooperation are essential. To achieve this, JICA must promptly build relationships with educators (board of education and universities) in Hokkaido to create a system for training personnel with global competence.

(b) Contribution to human resource development of companies expanding to overseas

Lack of competent personnel is one of the problems that companies in Hokkaido face when they attempt business expansion overseas. The Ministry of Economy, Trade, and Industry (METI) and the Small and Medium Enterprise Agency are implementing measures to support personnel training. JICA has been providing financial and technical cooperation in developing countries. The technical cooperation includes human resource development and JICA has accumulated personnel training know-how and skills. It should therefore develop a plan to use such know-how and skills to help companies expand their business overseas.

(i) Promotion and dissemination of information about the Overseas Volunteering

Program with Private Sector

As companies become globalized JICA is receiving an increased number of inquiries about its volunteer programs, such as Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers (JOCVs) and Senior Volunteers (SVs), from companies that wish to train their young employees or management-level employees. JICA established a program called the Overseas Volunteering Program with Private Sector three years ago to support these companies. An overview of the program is as follows:

- Year round application acceptance: companies select candidates and recommend them to JICA, and JICA screens and interviews them
- Host countries: host country, job description, and activity details are determined based on the company needs
- Volunteer period: In principle, long-term (one to two years) is desirable, but short-term (shorter than a year) can be considered
- Volunteers participate in the currently implemented pre-dispatch training
- Labor cost reimbursement is available (for small to medium sized companies that meet specified criteria)

Companies wishing to prepare competent employees for overseas market entry use the Overseas Volunteering Program with Private Sector, and since its launch, 49 individuals from 33 companies (93 companies have signed the agreement) across Japan have already participated in it. This program allows companies to send their employees to target business territories to train their language, communication, and cultural adaptability skills while making contributions to developing countries. In consideration of its effectiveness, JICA should further advertise this program to companies in Hokkaido.

- (ii) Promotion of use of JICA volunteers' experience at companies expanding overseas

The number of JOCVs and SVs exceeds 48,000 cumulatively (including Youth and Senior Volunteers for *Nikkei* Communities). Former volunteers play important roles across Japan including making contributions to society. In Hokkaido, over 1,000 former JICA volunteers engage in activities that help regional promotions and town revitalization. JICA should recommend companies in Hokkaido to take advantage of JICA volunteers' experience.

(2) Possible new approaches

- ① Collaboration with the Community-Reactivating Cooperator Squad formed by the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications

The Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications (MIC) formed the Community-Reactivating Cooperator Squad in 2009. It is growing in size steadily as activities aiming to strengthen local economies are increasing. As of the end of March 2015, a total of 1,511 individuals from 444 areas across Japan (7 prefectures and 437 municipalities) engage in community revitalization activities. Among them, a total of 225 individuals from 75 municipalities are in Hokkaido.

Interviews with municipal personnel during the course of observation for this study revealed that all these municipalities were facing difficulty recruiting competent members

for the Community-Reactivating Cooperator Squad. JICA received many requests from them to help securing competent human resources.

Forty former JOCVs across Japan (five in Hokkaido) became the members of the Community-Reactivating Cooperator Squad after returning to Japan. JICA believes experiences of former JICA volunteers will contribute to regional promotions across Hokkaido to overcome depopulation, especially in rural areas.

* JICA signed a partnership agreement with the Reconstruction Agency and the Japan Overseas Cooperative Association (JOCA) and has recommended former JICA volunteers to the Reconstruction Agency as reconstruction workers for the areas affected by the Great East Japan Earthquake. Approximately 150 of them have been hired.

(3) Points to keep in mind in implementation of support activities

① Promote JICA projects in Hokkaido more

The Advisory Committee consists of experts from the business, academic, administrative, financial, and news media fields. In assessment of future contributions of JICA in regional promotions, the committee pointed out that municipalities, universities, and companies in Hokkaido did not necessarily understand the content or programs of JICA projects and that JICA should further promote its projects. The municipalities JICA visited in this study knew well about the JOCV program but not JICA itself. JICA therefore must place further importance on promotion of its projects.

② Select recipients of support

Many of the municipalities that JICA visited for this study have overseas sister-cities. Due to the budget situation, however, their relationships are not always active, and only a few municipalities have an emphasis on international cooperation during their regional promotions. When implementing regional promotion assistance measures, JICA must first closely examine the direction and details of regional promotion strategies and plans that municipalities intend to develop, and give priority to municipalities interested in international cooperation.

③ Discover new partners

The “Development Cooperation Charter” approved by the Japanese Cabinet in February 2015 aims for international cooperation while fostering Japanese people's wide understanding of its importance. Achievement of this objective requires further strengthening of government-private sector collaboration as well as collaborative relationships with new partners in various fields of business.

JICA projects carried out in Hokkaido, such as acceptance of training program participants and providing grass-roots level technical assistance, are supported by relevant organizations in corresponding fields in Hokkaido. Needless to say, it is important to strengthen the relationship with current partners, but it is also essential to build new partnerships. Increased marketing activities through project PR are therefore necessary. When working with these partners, it is important to understand the regional needs and provide thorough consultation.

④ Increase support for JICA volunteers who returned to Japan

Job postings targeting JICA volunteers who are back in Japan are increasing steadily; therefore, sufficient support is provided to them. However, only a few municipalities have

a preferential system for hiring former volunteers as school teachers or municipal officers. JICA should make a stronger request to municipalities to implement such a system. Since FY2015, the Tokyo government has entitled individuals who spent two years or longer as volunteers such as JOCVs to a special screening program for selecting prospective public school teachers. JICA should encourage municipalities and educational organizations in Hokkaido to consider implementing a similar system.

⑤ Cooperate with the JOCV alumni groups and The Supporting Organization of JOCV

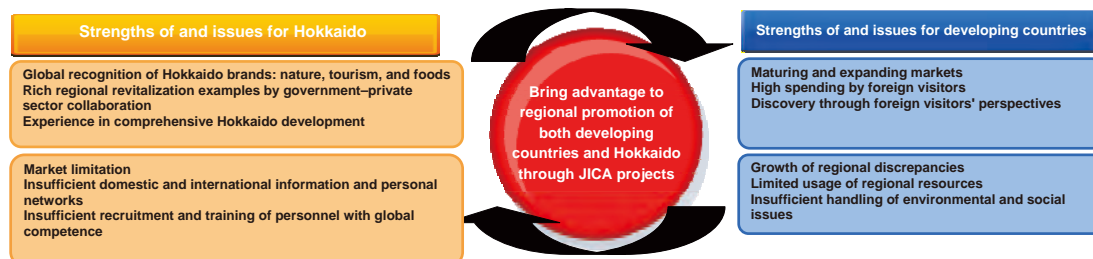
Started in 1965, the JOCV program celebrates its 50th anniversary in 2015. Approximately 41,000 volunteers were sent to 88 countries, and about 2,400 of them cumulatively were from Hokkaido. According to the alumni groups in Hokkaido, about 1,000 former volunteers work at governments and companies. These alumni groups are quite active; at six different locations in Hokkaido, they host sports and other events to socialize with community residents and current JICA participants. It is necessary to strengthen the collaborative relationship with them as well as with The Supporting Organization of JOCV.

⑥ Strengthen collaboration with administrative organization in Hokkaido

When implementing projects, JICA must take into consideration the development plans and strategies of the Hokkaido government as well as future regional promotion strategies and plans of municipalities, such as the cities of Sapporo and Obihiro, and meet their various needs. Before implementing regional promotion support measures, JICA must build close partnerships with relevant organizations (national administration, municipalities, universities, research institutions, companies, NGOs, and NPOs) because regional promotion and town revitalization require comprehensive approaches based on factors such as increased economic activities, education, and social security. For business support, JICA already meets with METI, JETRO, the Organization for Small & Medium Enterprises and Regional Innovation, and the Chamber of Commerce regularly but needs to build a new mechanism to strengthen partnerships with educational and healthcare organizations. It is therefore important to consider creation of a cross-sectional collaboration framework.

Contribution of JICA projects to developing country assistance and regional promotion efforts in Hokkaido (draft)

1. Current state analysis



2. Applicability of JICA projects

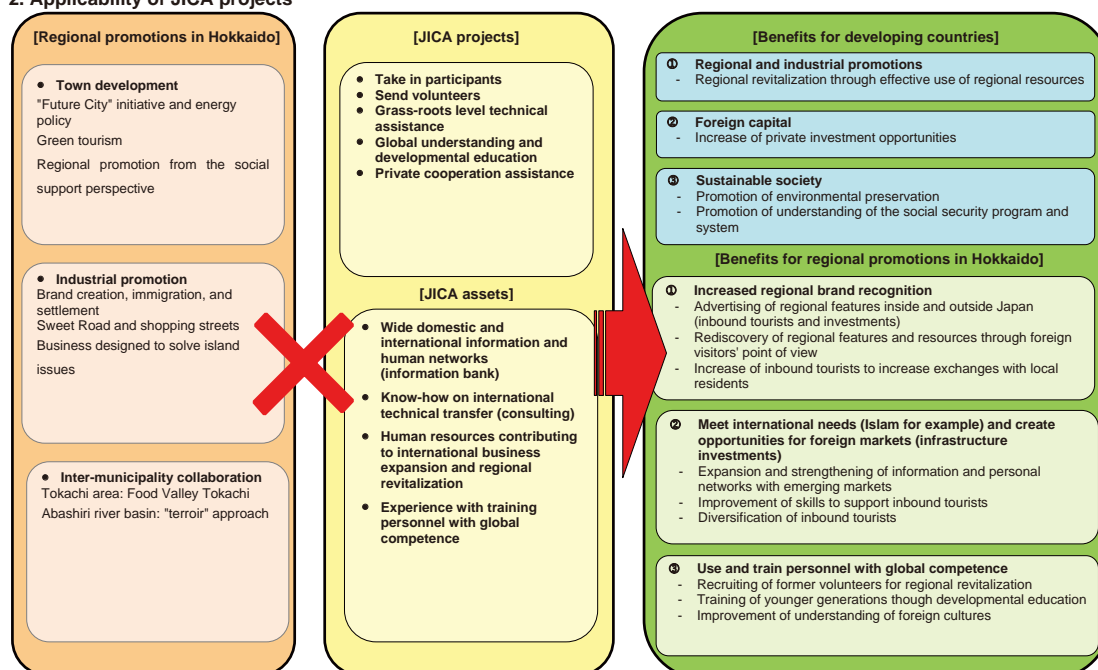


Figure 4. Contribution of JICA projects to developing country assistance and regional promotion efforts in Hokkaido (draft)

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