

Recommendations to prepare for future mega-disasters in Japan

Study Group on the Great East Japan
Earthquake & International Humanitarian Assistance

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Executive Summary

The following eight recommendations are presented, specifically with regard to the system for receiving international assistance, **which is now common practice** when a large scale disaster occurs.

Part I: System for Receiving International Assistance

1-1. A clear basic policy on receiving international assistance during disasters

As it is expected that international community will offer assistance when a large scale natural disaster hits Japan, the Government of Japan should pre-establish its basic policy clarifying the criteria and procedures for receiving - or declining - offers of international assistance. Putting in place such a policy will help not only promote diplomatic relations but also compliment domestic response efforts. The basic policy and overall procedures for accepting international assistance should be translated into foreign languages and shared with the international community during the pre-disaster phase

1-2. Enhancing the role of the Government for acceptance of international assistance

A comprehensive disaster management body within the (central) Government of Japan should make centralised and proactive decisions on the acceptance of incoming international assistance. This body will need to be strengthened in a way that can bear full responsibility in terms of quick and smooth acceptance of assistance, including transport of relief goods and personnel to disaster affected areas, temporary storage of relief items.

1-3. Development of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for accepting international assistance

In order to support quick and smooth acceptance of international assistance with centralised and proactive decisions by the comprehensive disaster management body in the Government, Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) needs to be developed for the officials of the respective Ministries. Joint exercises testing such SOPs with the involvement of multiple stakeholders need to be conducted once a year. The SOPs need to be developed by taking into consideration existing international guidelines.

1-4. Legal arrangements and administrative orders

Legal arrangements and administrative orders on liability for damages and indemnification need to be put in place for handling any damages caused by international responders as well as any accidents or incidents that may occur to international responders. Based on the lessons learned of receiving international assistance in the past and in light of the existing international guidelines such as the International Disaster Relief Laws (IDRL), exceptional legal measures and administrative orders need to be put in place before a disaster strikes.

1-5. Concluding partnership agreements

Legal frameworks with foreign countries, from where the likelihood of receiving international assistance is high, should be established in advance, so that legal problems related to accidents/damages associated with relief operations can be avoided.

1-6. Securing and developing human resources

A system needs to be developed that allow pre-registration and deployment of human

resources those who have experiences related to international disaster relief from outside the Government structures. The (central) Government of Japan should nurture ‘disaster response professionals’ who have sufficient knowledge and experience to lead effective coordination in the acceptance of domestic and international assistance.

1-7. Ensuring accountability

The (central) Government of Japan should bear full responsibility to monitor the utilization of international assistance and to explain the results and impacts of such assistance to the international community with the use of standard reporting formats.

1-8. Timely dissemination of accurate information to the international community

The Government of Japan should develop a system by which it can communicate well with the international community from the on-set of large scale disasters. The messaging should include damages caused, response activities and specific needs for international assistance, and the Government’s communications efforts need to be more proactive, timely as well as be conducted in English.

Part II: Application of the existing international norms and standards

In the response to the Great East Japan Earthquake, existing international standards such as ‘Human Rights Based Approach’ and The Sphere Project – the Humanitarian Charter and the Minimum Standards in Humanitarian Response’, as well as specialized knowledge and capacity of private companies, NGO/NPOs and individual volunteers were not fully utilised. It is therefore recommended that based on the existing international standards, minimum standards applicable to disaster response are established and applied in Japan. In view of current international practices, closer involvement of actors other than the Government and designated public institutions is also recommended.

2-1. Establishment and application of national minimum standards for future disaster response in Japan

With a view to improve Japan’s disaster management system, and to ensure fully responding to future large scale natural disasters in Japan, it is recommended that an expert group, which is tasked to review the existing Japanese disaster management system from an international and institutional point of view, is established. More specifically, such an expert group should discuss and implement action items indicated below.

- Develop national minimum standards that are based on the existing international norms and standards as well as examples from overseas, and that do not contradict with Japan’s local characteristics and socio-cultural background. Such minimum standards should include methodologies of needs assessments as well as types and qualities of assistance to be provided;
- Ensure that institutional aid providers fully recognize their obligations to abide by humanitarian principles including humanity, neutrality, impartiality and operational independence and etc.;
- By fully recognizing that assistance needs during disasters differ depending on variables of the affected populations, such as gender, age, disability, nationality, mother tongues,

family composition and livelihoods, and reflect such variations when developing the national minimum standards appropriately;

- Put in place administrative measures that ensure full participation of the affected populations in consultations where they can demand the assistance they need, and thereby transform the current disaster relief system into the one which is more closely aligned with the human rights based approaches;
- Explore concrete measures to realize the principles outlined in the 'Guidelines for disaster planning, response and reconstruction from a gender-equal perspective' issued by the Government of Japan in May 2013; and
- Promote awareness-raising among the disaster response actors in Japan on the recent developments and debates on the international standards in disaster relief.

2-2 .Role of NGOs/NPOs, the civil society and actors other than designated public institutions

- Recognizing the role of NGOs/NPOs and the civil society more institutionally, guidelines for local authorities should be developed, by which these diverse actors can promote the national minimum standards, and help integrate them into local disaster management plans.
- NGOs/NPOs and the civil society should recognize their leading roles in promoting responses to meet the diverse needs of the affected populations and in enhancing human rights based approaches. NGOs and the civil society should also strengthen their engagement in the policy processes in this particular domain.
- Coordination mechanisms need to be built in the pre-disaster phase, so that NGOs and NPOs can implement their assistance programmes in a coordinated and collaborative manner. For this purpose, frameworks of coordination need to be designed; a secretariat facilitating the coordination work needs to be supported; human resources of those who are involved in the coordination work needs to be developed, and roles of NGOs/NPOs need to be articulated in local disaster management plans.
- NGO/NPO staff should participate in the relevant meetings and trainings as well as build relationships with other actors during the pre-disaster phase, so that smooth and effective deployment of assistance can be ensured. In addition, common codes of conduct should be developed for NGOs/NPOs involved in assistance activities.

Part III: Human Resource Development

Providing support for human resource development of practitioners, who are familiar with disaster response and assistance for affected populations, is critical in realising rapid response; ensuring the quality of assistance; as well as making sure that response activities are systematic and well coordinated - including appropriate acceptance of international assistance - in future large scale disasters in Japan. With the aim of human resource development of those who are equipped with necessary knowledge and skills for disaster response and who can fully demonstrate required competencies in the midst crises – both in Japan and overseas

– the following seven recommendations are made.

3-1. Identification of priority areas where human resource development is particularly needed.

This will include: information collection, needs assessment, coordination and collaboration with various actors, logistics, providing assistance based on norms and standards, acceptance of international assistance, and communications with the international community.

3-2. Identification of professional duties to be targeted for human resource development

Human resource development programmes need to be implemented for both professionals who will be responsible for overall management required for disaster response and for specialists focusing on particular functions.

3-3. Implementation system of the human resource development programmes

Leadership for human resource development of disaster response professionals should be centralised and located inside the (central) Government, such as in the Cabinet Office. Human resource development should be promoted and maintained in close cooperation with the Japanese Ministry of Defense/Self-Defense Forces, academic institutions, local authorities, NGOs/NPOs and the Japanese Red Cross Society. Methodologies of disaster response training should be standardized, and the progress should be measured following a common national curriculum.

3-4. Basic curriculum and methodologies of trainings

As the overall framework of the professional education, the following three categories should be introduced: (a) knowledge education (lectures), (b) skills education (lectures/exercises) and (c) competency education (lectures/training).

3-5. Functions required for human resource development

In order to implement the human resource development programme in the medium and longer term, a capacity is needed to develop and manage associated budgets, facilities and teaching materials as well as to conduct researches and evaluations.

3-6. Registration and mobilization of the pools of trained professionals

A centralised system needs to be developed at the national level to register the disaster response professionals and to facilitate their human resource development. The registered professionals can be divided into three categories including: (a) immediately deployable capacity; (b) deployable reserve forces; and (c) identified talents to be trained further. The Government of Japan and local authorities should provide specialist career paths, and make efforts for placing the trained professionals in appropriate and strategic positions, taking into consideration their possible deployments once a disaster occur.

3-7. Promotion of international cooperation building on domestic disaster response experiences

A system needs to be developed that disaster management professionals working domestically and internationally are encouraged to exchange their knowledge and experiences between them. Contribution to as well as learning from the international community need to be considered, including deployment of human resources, who were involved in domestic disaster response, to international disaster relief operations.

Part IV: Discussions on the topics of background of the above recommendations

Discussions on the following topics of background of the above recommendations

4-1. IDRL (International Disaster Response Laws)

4-2. Human Rights Based Approach

4-3. Gender

4-4. Children

4-5. Vulnerable groups including elderly and handicapped people

4-6. Role of NGO/NPO during domestic disaster

Abbreviations

GEJE	Great East Japan Earthquake
GOJ	Government of Japan
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
HAP	Humanitarian Accountability Partnership
HRBA	Human Rights Based Approaches
IAEA	International Atomic Energy Agency
IASC	Inter-Agency Standing Committee
IDRL	International Disaster Response Laws, Rules and Principles
IFRC	International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
INSARAG	International Search and Rescue Advisory Group
JANIC	Japan NGO Center for International Cooperation
JDR	Japan Disaster Relief Team
JICA	Japan International Cooperation Agency
JOCV	Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers
JRCS	Japanese Red Cross Society
MAFF	Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries of Japan
MHLW	Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare of Japan
MoFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NPO	Non-Profit Organisation
OCHA	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
RDC	Reception and Departure Centre
SOP	Standard Operating Procedure
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
UNISDR	United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction
UNDAC	United Nations Disaster Assessment and Coordination
Virtual OSOCC	Virtual On-Site Operations Coordination Centre
WFP	World Food Programme
WHO	World Health Organization

Study on the Great East Japan Earthquake and International Humanitarian Assistance
Recommendations

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Preface

Given its geographic, topographic, meteorological and various other conditions, Japan is a country prone to natural disasters, such as earthquakes, volcanic explosions, typhoons, torrential rain and heavy snow. Up to the 1950s, large-scale earthquakes and typhoons had frequently caused thousands of casualties. In recent years, the Government of Japan has striven to develop and strengthen its disaster-management system, promote national land conservation, improve the accuracy of its meteorological forecasting, and upgrade emergency communications. Accordingly, Japan has successfully alleviated its vulnerability to natural disasters, enhanced its disaster-response capacity, and achieved a reduction in the loss and damage caused by natural disasters. This could be attributable to a decentralized disaster-response system, in which local authorities have been carefully committed to improving preparedness at each stage of the disaster-management cycle.

Nevertheless, the Great East Japan Earthquake in March 2011 featured a combination of an earthquake, tsunami, and nuclear power-plant accidents, constituting a large-scale complex disaster on an unprecedented scale for Japan. Some local authorities in the disaster-affected areas were temporarily unable to function and the disaster caused widespread damage, which hindered efforts to immediately determine the overview of needs for assistance and smoothly utilize domestic and incoming international assistance.

Reviewing the experience, the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) and the Japanese Red Cross Society (JRCS) jointly organised a Public Seminar on International Humanitarian Assistance on July 5, 2012 at the Hiroo Campus of the Japanese Red Cross College of Nursing in Tokyo. The seminar began with a keynote speech made by the head of the OCHA New York Headquarters concerning issues in international humanitarian assistance, which was followed by lectures by officials of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan (MOFA) and JICA on Japan's initiatives for international emergency relief and humanitarian assistance. The following panel discussion was held by representatives of the Cabinet Office, JRCS, the Japan Business Federation (Keidanren), Japan Platform (JPF) and the OCHA Kobe Office. The facilitator was served by the Director General of the Secretariat of Japan Disaster Relief Team (JDR) of JICA at the time of the GEJE. At the seminar, practitioners exchanged frank views and opinions concerning (1) issues arising and lessons learnt from coordination among the related parties in how to accept incoming international assistance and assistance for populations affected by the GEJE; and (2) how to utilise the experience of the earthquake for future international humanitarian assistance. In particular, the participants recognised quite a few underlying issues common to international humanitarian assistance and the domestic responses to the GEJE; and the importance of parties engaging in disaster response and humanitarian assistance, both domestically and overseas, sharing their experiences and strengths and taking the initiative to engage in specific actions to improve the domestic and international disaster response. Asked to deliver closing remarks, I proposed that we should not leave the seminar as a one-off event but establish a study group to continue and deepen these discussions based on the achievements of the seminar¹. Following my proposal, a study group of the Great East Japan Earthquake and International Humanitarian Relief was established hosted by the Japanese Red Cross Institute for Humanitarian Studies and voluntarily joined by various

¹ For the reports delivered in the seminar, visit the website:
http://www.jica.go.jp/topics/news/2012/20120720_01.html (in Japanese.)

organisations engaging in international humanitarian assistance.

The study group, mainly comprising the presenters of the aforementioned seminar and those in agreement with the purposes of the group and contributing to dialogue, established its Secretariat in the Japanese Red Cross Institute for Humanitarian Studies on the premises of the Japanese Red Cross College of Nursing. The co-organisers and some seminar presenters also joined the Secretariat for liaison and other supportive work. I would like to note that members from various backgrounds collaborated beyond organisational boundaries, sincerely engaged in dialogue from professional perspectives, and committed to giving up their own time in contributing to produce these recommendations. The members of the Study Group and the Secretariat were mentioned in the Appendix lists.

The objective of the study group was to examine lessons learned of the emergency response to the GEJE in light of international standards and practices by exchanging sincere opinions among the diverse stakeholders involved in humanitarian assistance and disaster relief domestically and overseas. Doing so would enhance readiness for future large-scale natural disasters in Japan as well as promoting international cooperation based on such experience and lessons learnt.

More specifically, the study group aimed to summarise issues emerged during the emergency response to the GEJE mainly from the following two perspectives, and present forward looking recommendations with a view to promote relevant institutional reforms, mutual understanding among domestic disaster-relief organisations, enhancement of a coordination mechanism, and human-resource development, including capacity development of experts involved in coordination.

(1) Acceptance of incoming international assistance, and development of coordination frameworks, administrative orders and legal arrangements in Japan

Following the GEJE, numerous organisations offered various forms of assistance, including financial resources, rescue teams, medical teams, and armed forces. The assistance included intergovernmental cooperation, assistance from international organisations, assistance from the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, cooperation by private companies, and by NGOs and civil society. However, many issues arose in the course of reception, coordination and provision of assistance, particularly a mismatch between the needs of disaster-affected communities and the assistance provided. Assuming that similar international assistance would certainly be offered if another large-scale disaster were to hit Japan, the Government of Japan must clarify issues revealed in the GEJE and take remedial measures to enhance preparedness. Although the international assistance is meant to complement its domestic disaster response, such remedial measures must also be taken into account when reviewing Japan's overall policy on accepting incoming international assistance. Moreover, Japan's policy on accepting incoming international assistance must be re-established beyond the existing boundaries of individual sectors or organisations, considering its consistency with existing international humanitarian-assistance systems as well as related assistance tools and coordination mechanisms. In addition, issues around domestic laws and regulations in accepting incoming international assistance at the time of disaster have been noted as a reason why assistance was deployed on an ad-hoc or personal basis and this must also be considered.

(2) Application of existing international norms and standards to Japan, and relevant issues from a perspective of international humanitarian assistance

One of the lessons learnt from the GEJE is that various assistance methods and coordination mechanisms established as international standards were not necessarily utilised, or that Japan had no grounding in practicing such standards. From this perspective, the study group members acknowledged the need for further study on the following issues:

- Types of assistance to help alleviate suffering of the affected populations
- Applying norms and standards of humanitarian assistance such as the Sphere standards and consideration of gender aspects
- Methods to assist affected populations, particularly management of emergency-evacuation Centres
- Constraints caused by applying legal and institutional framework assuming peacetime to emergency situations, and the need of more flexibility in applying administrative rules during emergency relief and early recovery phases
- Coordination mechanisms among aid providers
- Strengthening coordination mechanisms like the cluster system, and promoting collaboration among responders by overcoming their organisational barriers
- Needs assessment, communication with affected populations and information management tools
- Civil-Military coordination for humanitarian assistance
- Leveraging expertise of NGOs for disaster response in Japan; particularly staff of those organisations experienced with emergency relief and humanitarian assistance overseas, while noting that the present Disaster Management Basic Act has limitations in the sense that defines that local authorities are the primary responder.
- Substantive contributions made by private companies in assisting the affected populations and potential for effective partnerships with them
- Using charity funds and cash donations more effectively
- Differences in financial assistance among the recipients of charity-funds (i.e. the amounts granted vary depending on the total amount of funds collected) and differences by types of disasters (e.g. floods and other low profile disasters as opposed to earthquakes)
- Assistance to the affected populations via cash transfers including through charity funds and donations
- Disparities in terms of mobilisation and usage of humanitarian finance across different phases of a disaster, especially, emergency relief v.s. early recovery.

The study group met more than ten times before compiling this report with recommendations. However, although time constraints prevented the group from discussing all the issues initially suggested for consideration. The present report and the recommendations reflect personal views of the members of the study group and should not be attributed to any of the organisations to which they belong.

The recommendations reflect the study group's account of the GEJE from an international perspective, and the present report consists of the following four parts:

- Part I: How Japan should receive international assistance when a large scale natural disaster strikes, such as earthquakes predicted along the Nankai Trough or directly beneath the Tokyo Metropolitan Area
- Part II: How Japan should apply internationally gained wisdom and good practices related to humanitarian assistance to its domestic disaster response

- Part III: How Japan should develop human resources to better respond to disasters in Japan and overseas
- Part IV: Background Discussions by the Study Group

The Study Group discussed how Japan's future system for receiving international assistance should look like based on the experience of the GEJE. The Study Group prioritised to discuss matters that would contribute to populations and communities affected by a disaster, and it tried to avoid an assumption that Japan ought to receive international assistance always. The members of the Study Group kept in mind that the recommendations should not be taken as imposition of international norms and standards. Japan is prone to earthquakes, with a possibility of another large earthquakes such as the GEJE, thus the Study Group believes that facilitation of incoming international assistance will always be an important issue that the country must consider. Moving toward establishing a better system for receiving international assistance is particularly important for Japan, but it will also have significant implications to other developed countries. From this perspective, the Study Group intended to offer rather practical and detailed recommendations.

We hope that these recommendations will be taken into consideration for reviewing measures against large scale disasters in future, including revision of domestic legal arrangements, relevant institutional reforms, development of practical manuals. We also hope that the recommendations will be utilised to promote advocacy and awareness raising among various actors involved in disaster preparedness. Furthermore, we hope that the recommendations will eventually be shared with the international community, including high and middle income countries, and to be used as a reference for responding to and preparing for large scale natural disasters.

Finally, we hope that these recommendations will help protect people's lives, health and dignity- where-ever they are.

March, 2014
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On behalf of the Study Group on the Great East Japan
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Recommendations

Part I: System for Receiving International Assistance

1. Background to the recommendations

(1) Objectives and reasons for the recommendations

- The global media reported on the Great East Japan Earthquake (GEJE) immediately, and many organisations and people across the world started to offer personnel, material and financial assistance to Japan. The Government and relevant organisations in Japan strove to accept as many of these offers as possible. The Government's Emergency Disaster Response Headquarters established a team to handle incoming international assistance, which also coordinated with affected local authorities at prefecture and municipality levels. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan (MOFA) decided to accept a specialised team of the United Nations Disaster Assessment and Coordination (UNDAC team)² for the first time as a developed country. The MOFA deployed liaison officers, who together with Japan's rescue teams, supported on-site coordination with the rescue teams arriving from various countries. As for material assistance, the Government of Japan prioritised those corresponding to the needs of disaster-affected communities and liaised and coordinated closely with the municipalities concerned. The Japanese Ministry of Defense (MOD) and Self-Defense Forces (SDF) cooperated with the U.S. and Australian armed forces for the first time in its domestic disaster-relief operations.
- The efforts of such responders should be highly valued, but efficiency in terms of receiving international assistance should also be assessed as an important element that complements self-help and mutual assistance by the disaster-affected communities. International assistance should be considered a part of "external help" among the three types of disaster-response activities, namely self-help, mutual support and assistance from outside. In this context, the Government of a disaster-affected country must accurately grasp people's needs so as to ensure that necessary assistance are provided for right locations, proactively disseminate information to the international community, and coordinate with countries and organisations that are willing to offer assistance. As assistance rush to the affected areas, the Government must also coordinate incoming international assistance on-site, in order to avoid confusion and unnecessary burden on the disaster-affected communities. Moreover, the Government is accountable for ensuring appropriate use of the assistance received and responsible for reporting the results of such assistance back to the international community.
- The international humanitarian community has established and utilised mechanisms to share information and coordinate assistance between disaster-affected countries and international aid providers. Besides, the Government of Japan and NGOs participate in such mechanisms when they implement overseas disaster-relief operations. However, in the case of the GEJE, such system was not fully made aware of among the actors involved. Thus, the country received offers of assistance from overseas rather passively,

² An UNDAC team is deployed at the request of governments of or UN offices in disaster-affected countries. Its core tasks involve assessing the humanitarian situation of disaster-affected areas, reporting it to the international community and coordinating incoming international assistance. It is staffed by UN officers and experts registered by the governments.

making arrangements for accepting the international assistance on an ad-hoc basis on many occasions.

- International assistance during natural disasters undeniably has diplomatic implications. However, to avoid wasting good intentions of those offering assistance and to maximize its benefit for affected populations, the Government of Japan should work further to improve and innovate its way to receive and manage international assistance on various fronts.

(2) Issues emerged during the response to assistance after the Great East Japan Earthquake

The GEJE caused damages in wide areas, severely affecting the capacity of local authorities. Thus, in the initial phase, the Government of Japan was unable to grasp the overall humanitarian needs and determine which assistance was needed in which disaster-affected areas. Moreover, it took time to coordinate between the central government and affected local authorities, in terms of matching the international assistance offered and beneficiaries. In addition, both sides lacked knowledge and sensitisation about receiving international aid, including how to receive incoming rescue teams and awareness about possible risks of property damages and accidents that could occur during the relief operations. Since Japan experienced the Great Hanshin Awaji Earthquake, both the central government and local authorities had assumed that they would receive international assistance. However, how they managed receiving international assistance during the GEJE was rather passive and ad-hoc.

a. Issues in terms of efficient acceptance of assistance by reflecting the needs of disaster-affected communities

- At the initial phase, it was difficult to consolidate all the necessary information because of massive and wide spread damages that were coupled with severe destruction of key infrastructures. The central government was unable to determine assistance needs, because the affected local authorities, that would normally be responsible for gathering information about the damages and assessing the overall needs on the ground, were often unable to do so. Moreover, there was confusion about what kind of offers should be accepted in the absence of a clear set of standards or criteria.
- Partly due to diplomatic considerations, many rescue teams at various levels of competencies showed up in the affected areas, including those that would have been disqualified for international deployment in accordance with the INSARAG³ standards, and those that were poorly equipped and short of running their operations self-sufficiently. Some teams dispatched in the initial phase were small-sized, thus unable to fully demonstrate their teams' capability.
- As for the material assistance, the Government tried its best to prioritise accepting the items that matched with the needs most. However, it was unable to gain a

³ The International Search and Rescue Advisory Group (INSARAG), established in 1991, is a voluntary network of countries, including Japan, that are dedicated to international search and rescue operations during disasters and related operational coordination. Its objectives include standardising the capacity of search and rescue teams dispatched to disaster affected countries, as well as strengthening their coordination capacity. The Field Coordination Support Section, located within the OCHA Headquarters in Geneva's Emergency Services Branch, functions as the INSARAG Secretariat.

comprehensive picture of what was most urgently needed and where they were needed. Therefore, the Government response ended up being nothing more than passive, without issuing a consolidated appeal for international assistance. Based on the offers of international assistance it received, the central Government contacted the affected local authorities directly and individually, and asked what they needed and would accept from the list of offered items. In the absence of a clear messaging from the Japanese, foreign governments and international organisations suggested a wide range of relief items. It is clear that this complicated the situation with significantly added time required for matching between the specific items offered and local authorities' needs. In fact, all the accepted items were not necessary essential for the affected populations' survival. It also took significant time for some countries to ship materials after expressing their support (up to 3 to 4 months). Nevertheless, once the willingness and readiness to accept international assistance was confirmed with the local authorities, the delivery process that followed was basically smooth.

- The Government of Japan had no common standards for receiving assistance by foreign armed forces for disaster response. However, the U.S. forces played a crucial role in logistics and to rehabilitate infrastructures, while the Australians also contributed to the air transport. On the other hand, it is unclear whether or not the Government of Japan was fully made aware of the fact that the Israel medical team was part of its national armed forces, and considered its legal status and implications of receiving such a team.
- It took several days for the Government of Japan to decide on setting up a framework for accepting and using cash donations from foreign governments and citizens⁴. In other words, it took considerable time before the Government of Japan had decided that the Government established a body that accepted such donations in itself. On note here is that while the Government expressed its intention to accept all kinds of assistance including personnel, material and financial assistance, the JRCS decided only to accept financial support. In this regard, it is unclear whether the Government of Japan was able to give persuasive explanations to the international humanitarian community about the different stance it took from that of JRCS.

b. Issues in terms of domestic coordination when accepting international assistance

- In several cases, acceptance of rescue teams required extra time so as to ensure appropriate coordination at each stage. This included coordination at the level of contact points accepting offers (i.e. MOFA and embassies/diplomatic missions); coordination between affected municipalities and relevant ministries of the central Government (with the involvement of the Emergency Disaster Response Headquarters supported by a coordination team tasked specifically on the acceptance of international assistance); and coordination for practical preparation for receiving teams on-site involving the Fire and Disaster Management Agency, National Policy Agency and the affected prefectures and municipalities.
- The Japanese Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare (MHLW) issued a notice immediately after the disaster struck and indicated that minimum medical services provided in the disaster affected areas by those with foreign license of medical

⁴ After consultations between MOFA and JRCS, the Government of Japan decided that since March 14 2011, it accepted cash donations from foreign governments and citizens through JRCS.

practitioners would not be deemed violation of the Medical Practitioners' Act in Japan. However, the MHLW did not clearly define the scope of medical services that foreign medical practitioners were allowed to offer. Moreover, MHLW avoided making a decision on receiving international medical teams proactively, stating that it respected the affected local authorities' opinions.

- Likewise the rescue teams, complicated coordination processes at various stages were required for accepting material assistance, causing long time before confirming the local authorities' willingness to accept them. This included contact points accepting offers from overseas (i.e. MOFA and embassies/diplomatic missions), coordination with municipal governments by the Emergency Disaster Response Headquarters and its coordination team, and coordination between prefectural governments and local authorities. Moreover, the assistance needs had often changed by the time when relief items actually arrived on site, whereas there were always time lags for international shipping.

c. Issues in terms of facilitating acceptance of international assistance operationally

- The Government of Japan did not establish a single focal point for accepting rescue teams, but made arrangements with countries that offered assistance on a bilateral basis. Therefore, the teams' travel from airports to the operation sites of the disaster affected areas was not managed systematically⁵. Operational on-site coordination often relied on the knowledge and capacity of the hosting local authorities and the supporting teams from Japan. MOFA dispatched liaison officers and they coordinated effectively with the affected local authorities. However, they were not necessarily well familiar with international relief operations. Therefore, there is room for improvement in terms of allocating personnel who are familiar with relevant international guidelines under such circumstances. Moreover, foreign rescue teams completed their mission essentially at their own discretion, because the Government of Japan did not declare termination of the search and rescue phase officially⁶.
- The Government of Japan did not provide centrally controlled means of transporting materials from airports to disaster areas, such as vehicles, and it did not make budgetary arrangements to the necessary cost for it, either.⁷ As a result, the assisting countries

5 Relevant UN guidelines stipulate that a disaster-hit country should establish a Reception and Departure Centre (RDC) located at the arrival point of international relief teams. According to the guidelines, the RDC's primary responsibility is to register teams and provide them with situational updates, and other operational information including domestic transport.

6 International rescue teams normally end their operations and return home after the hosting government declares the "termination of the rescue phase."

7 Japan's Disaster Relief Act stipulates that disaster response expenses can be financed from the national treasury. The share of prefectural contributions becomes lower for larger natural disasters. This provision could be applied to the domestic transport of foreign aid, but this was not the case during the GEJE. This was mainly due to the following reasons: The Disaster Relief Act respects the principle of decentralisation, thus expects prefectures to step in when the capacity of the municipal governments is overwhelmed, and in which case the central government can provide financial support. However, the acceptance of international assistance was negotiated directly between the central government and municipalities – without the involvement of prefectural governments. In addition, the application of the Disaster Relief Act requires prefectures to follow certain administrative procedures with, though limited, some cost implications. Thus, it was difficult for the municipalities to request the cost-sharing by prefectures as they were not directly involved in the decision to accept international assistance. Immediately after the GEJE struck, the central government allocated 30.2 billion Yen from its reserve fund for FY2010 to procure and transport aid materials, and this was a governmental initiative beyond the traditional

needed to make arrangement for transporting relief items themselves. Moreover, because means of transport were limited, certain materials needed to be stored at Narita or other airports temporarily. In such cases, it was not entirely clear whether the Government of Japan or assisting countries were responsible for securing such temporary storage facilities.

- Collaboration between the SDF and the U.S. and Australian armed forces produced positive results. However, the forces were not well informed of their mutual disaster response capabilities and their understanding on relevant procedures for mutual coordination were not sufficient.

d. Issues in terms of recognising risks associated with accepting international assistance

- Fortunately, there was no major accident involving international rescue teams. However, it is not clear whether the Japanese domestic actors were fully aware of responsibilities related to (and their need to potentially responding to) possible damages to private properties and human beings. The latter included medical malpractice and treatment not conforming to Japanese standards, and injury or death of rescue team members that could happen during the relief operations, as well as in response to any of these incidents.
- It is uncertain whether the Government of Japan had adequately discussed in peacetime the extent to which public health standards for food and medicine should be complied in the time of emergencies⁸.

e. Issues in terms of actively disseminating information to the international community by the Government of Japan

- The UNDAC team deployed to Japan issued situation reports in English and almost on the daily basis. WHO, IAEA and other organisations also released reports on the GEJE occasionally. However, there was a serious lack of information shared by the Government of Japan with the world in foreign languages – despite the certain level of efforts made by the office of the Chief Cabinet Secretary. Japanese citizens and foreign countries needed different types of information, but the Government was unable to provide accurate information that was meant to meet the expectation of the international community swiftly.

framework of the Disaster Relief Act. However, this funding was used for only a small portion of domestic transport of relief items provided internationally. This was because the allocated reserve fund was intended for aid materials in general and not particularly designed for handling items arriving from abroad. To secure this funding, the central government had to match donor countries with recipient municipalities, and fix the departure points (e.g. airports where materials arrived from abroad) and final destinations (i.e. municipalities receiving materials) in Japan by the end of March 2011. This execution deadline was extremely tight. In addition, the reserve fund was only applicable to procurement and transport of materials for the three most seriously affected prefectures, namely Iwate, Miyagi and Fukushima. Other affected prefectures were requested to comply with the normal provisions of the Disaster Relief Act.

⁸ International disaster-response laws, rules and principles (IDRL), which the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) and other international organizations encourage countries around the world to adopt, also require the protection of public health and environmental benefits in disaster-hit countries. The IDRL also stipulate that medicines provided to disaster-hit countries must be those permitted in both the providing and receiving countries.

- There are tools for information sharing, such as Virtual OSOCC⁹, that are used as an informal network among international disaster responders. However, the Government was not proactive in leveraging these tools, with a view to communicate with foreign aid community about the unfolding situation and the Government's position.

Note: It is assumed that media reports grew, the shortage of accurate information and lack of swift messaging by the Government of Japan led to exacerbate aid providing countries' concerns about the disaster-affected communities and how the Government of Japan was handling the situation.

f. Issues in terms of accountability on assistance received from the international community

- The types and amount of assistance received were widely publicised, and the Government of Japan expressed its gratitude to them at various levels. However, it would be difficult for the Government of Japan to deny potential criticism against itself entirely, as it has not fully demonstrated its accountability as a recipient of international aid. This is because the Government has not conducted objective monitoring of the usages of the assistance received as well as an comprehensive evaluation of their outcomes.

(3) In-depth analysis of the causes of the issues identified above

As part of the Government of Japan's response to the GEJE, it received international assistance. However, the Government had not put in place specific standards and concrete frameworks for this purpose adequately before the disaster struck. Those responsible for domestic disaster response lacked understanding of the frameworks and guidelines related to international humanitarian assistance, and tailored training and qualified personnel for accepting incoming international assistance were missing as an institutional gap.

a. Lack of knowledge and cooperation among Japanese disaster response actors about international humanitarian assistance

- In Japan, organisations and experts responding to domestic disasters differ from those responding to disasters occurred in foreign countries. Accordingly, very few officials of the central government and local authorities have sufficient understanding of frameworks related to international humanitarian assistance such as UNDAC, INSARAG, OSOCC¹⁰, and Reception and Departure Centre (RDC) as well as guidelines including the Oslo Guidelines¹¹ and IDRL¹². They lack knowledge of qualifications, capability and equipment of international relief actors including rescue teams, medical teams, and foreign armed forces, as well as experience in collaborating with them. This seems to have made them difficult to make appropriate judgement about which types of international assistance could be utilized most effectively to meet what part of the

9 The Virtual On-Site Operations and Coordination Centre (Virtual OSOCC) is a website managed by OCHA that enables national disaster responders to exchange opinions globally.

10 On-Site Operations and Coordination Centre (OSOCC) is established by an UNDAC team in a disaster-affected area to facilitate coordination among international disaster response teams in consultation with the disaster-response headquarters of the affected country.

11 The Oslo Guidelines govern the use of foreign military and civil defense assets in disaster relief, stipulating basic policies on accepting foreign armed forces in response to natural disasters. They are not legally binding but are widely accepted by international humanitarian organisations, NGOs and others. The Government of Japan also participated in their drafting. The Guidelines define the acceptance of foreign armed forces as a "last resort."

12 International Disaster Response Laws (IDRL.) For more details, see References.

overall needs of disaster affected communities.

- The Government of Japan prioritized accepting “good intentions” of foreign countries as much as possible over considering more proactive utilisation of international assistance in a way that supplements the domestic response efforts. As a result, an approach, that allowed the country to accept international assistance in an effective and efficient while also taking into account associated risks, cost incurred and the time lag, way was missing.
- As an international practice, an aid recipient country is expected to comprehensively grasp, evaluate and communicate the impact of assistance it received. However, the Government of Japan had no institutional set-up or framework to meet such an expectation, and it could not become a model to other countries in terms of fulfilling such accountability.

b. Plans were short of necessary details ensuring their effective implementation

- Acceptance of international assistance is mentioned in Japan’s Basic Disaster Management Plan. Japan also had plans outlining the roles and responsibilities of relevant Ministries as well as general steps to be followed by them. However, they did not include detailed procedures, such as mechanisms for decision-making and inter-Ministerial consultations.
- There was no SOPs¹³, detailing the operational requirements for accepting personnel from their arrivals at airports until their return to home countries, or for accepting relief items including temporary storages, means of transport means, and cost-sharing. There was also no plan detailing who coordinates the international assistance once they arrive on site and how to do it.

c. The present institutional set-ups are not necessarily conducive for accepting international assistance efficiently

- When international assistance is offered in the forms of either rescue or medical teams, it makes sense that the Government notifies its acceptance to the assisting countries after confirming the intention of local authorities with the verification of the assistance needs on the ground. However, when local authorities themselves were severely affected - as was seen in the GEJE - it took long time before such a decision was made as sufficient information was not available. Moreover, it is difficult to determine with whom the responsibility associated with the acceptance of international assistance lies, especially when an unfortunate incident such as discussed above happens.

d. Lack of simulation exercises assuming the acceptance of international assistance

- Although relevant Ministries had an inter-Ministerial agreement for accepting international assistance, they never had simulation exercises with the participation of all the relevant actors. Consequently, inexperienced staff had to respond to the GEJE.
- The SDF had conducted joint military exercises with the U.S. forces for many years, but they had not been designed for disaster response. As a result, the SDF and the U.S. forces had to cooperate without knowing capabilities of each other and clarifying protocols for operational coordination.

¹³ Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs)

2. Recommended actions

(1) Recommended actions

At present, disaster relief from overseas is recognised in the Japanese Basic Disaster Management Plan only as voluntary offers of assistance based on other countries' goodwill. What is behind this is the principle that municipalities bear the primary responsibility in terms of disaster relief and rescue efforts for the affected populations, and that prefectural and national government are expected to supplement the capacity of the municipal authorities by using financial, material and human resources that are mobilised and made available domestically. In fact, there is an argument that it would be too risky for local authorities to take into consideration the incoming international assistance as an essential component of their disaster response plans, as local authorities would not be able to have full control over the assistance provided. However, considering the fact that Japan received numerous offers of international assistance during the GEJE, it is rather realistic to assume that Japan would face a similar situation when a large scale disaster happens again in future – and such a trend could be further reinforced. Moreover, a great majority of the Japanese public supports accepting international assistance during disaster.

Therefore, the Government of Japan should prepare for receiving international assistance “better” by assuming that many countries will again immediately offer various forms of assistance when a large scale natural disaster strikes Japan. Such preparedness measures should include developing a clear set of criteria for receiving the assistance; reviewing the roles and responsibilities between the central government and local authorities; drawing up detailed operational plans; improving legal and institutional arrangements; as well as strengthening communications capacity.

a. Clarification and dissemination of a ‘basic policy’ on receiving international assistance during disasters

- The Government of Japan should establish its ‘basic policy’ by clarifying its own criteria and procedures for receiving – or declining – offers of international assistance. The purpose of developing such a policy is to use international assistance for disaster relief as effectively and efficiently as possible. To this effect, advantages, risks and time lags for transporting relief items should be taken into account.
- When a large scale disaster occurs, the Government of Japan should trigger the ‘basic policy’ so as to accept international assistance as effectively and efficiently as possible. The Government of Japan should also request that foreign countries decide on their offers of assistance by referring to the ‘basic policy.’
- The ‘basic policy’ should be translated into English and other major foreign languages. The ‘basic policy’ should also be posted on the website of the comprehensive disaster-management body, so that the international aid community can access it. The Government of Japan should further announce the establishment of the ‘basic policy’ at international conferences, and make efforts to ensure that it is known by the international community.

Proposed Outline of the 'Basic Policy'

(General Statement)

- The Government of Japan will establish a mechanism with a view to promote diplomatic relations and to supplement domestic response efforts, thereby ensuring that international assistance is utilised as effectively as possible.
- A comprehensive disaster management body of the central government - such as the Emergency Disaster Response Headquarters - will make centralised decisions on whether or not it receives offers of international assistance. Following instructions from the comprehensive disaster management body, the Cabinet Office will coordinate with disaster-affected communities.

(Particular Statement)

- If a disaster overwhelms Japan's own response capacity, the Government of Japan will request international assistance as needed. Even if international assistance is not necessarily required and the Government will not make an explicit request as such, the Government of Japan will still welcome offers of international assistance without declining the offers entirely. The Government of Japan will also communicate its stance clearly that financial assistance is always appreciated and immediately announce its organisational arrangement for receiving financial assistance funds as well as their usage (e.g. cash transfers to the populations and municipalities affected by the disaster).
- The Government of Japan will accept international search and rescue teams if a significant number of buildings and urban infrastructures are collapsed, with the precondition that the Government of Japan will take full responsibilities so as to avoid burdens on affected local authorities. However, the issue of potential liability for compensations associated with the acceptance of international search and rescue teams must be clarified (See below). In other circumstances such as tsunamis, the Government of Japan will inform the international search and rescue teams, in advance, of the possibility that they will be mainly tasked to search victims' remains. The Government of Japan will examine the capacity of the search and rescue teams by using the UN standard system for their capacity assessment as much as possible, and request that the teams should be essentially limited to those classified as 'heavy teams' by INSARAG¹⁴ - i.e. the teams from the U.S., U.K., Germany, France, Switzerland, China, Republic of Korea, Singapore, Australia, and etc. The Government of Japan will further request that the teams, which are not qualified as the heavy class yet particularly willing to deploy, should operate under the supervision of a heavy team. Furthermore, the Government of Japan will make appropriate decisions, bearing in mind that confirming the detailed needs on the ground might lead to missing the appropriate timing for saving lives, but also that unprepared acceptance of the international teams could cause significant burden on the affected local authorities.
- The Government of Japan will consider the possibility to receive foreign armed forces as the last resort if its civilian capacity alone will not be able meet the needs. In this case, the Government of Japan will take into account its diplomatic relations and comply with the Oslo Guidelines and other internationally established rules and

¹⁴ The INSARAG heavy teams are the urban search and rescue (USAR) teams recognised by the UN that they have the capacity and equipment qualified for international deployment. More than 40 teams from around the world have been classified as 'heavy teams.'

standards. The Government will, however, limit the acceptance of foreign armed forces to those that have past experiences of joint exercises with the SDF; have demonstrated relatively high inter-operability; and have a legal foundation to operate in Japan. Following this criteria, the U.S. and Australian forces are considered to be qualified at the moment. Nevertheless, this provision should not apply to the use of military aircraft for transporting relief items and aid personnel to Japan.

- There are no international common standards for the deployment of medical teams, as they operate in different forms ranging from the government-led deployment to the involvement of specialised NGOs. The types and quality of medical services provided vary depending on the nature of teams, and it is difficult to assess their capacities across the board. Therefore, the Government of Japan will only consider the possibility to receive foreign medical teams, only if a shortage of domestic medical resources is evident and the Government has prior information about the capacity of specific medical teams. Moreover, the Government of Japan will request that as a precondition for their acceptance, such medical teams should work under the supervision of a Japanese host medical institution or medical team. However, if any foreign country wishes to send their medical teams to Japan to protect their own citizens, the Government will facilitate the entry of such teams and support their operations as much as possible.
- As for other types of experts from overseas, the Government of Japan will receive them only if they can demonstrate special abilities that are in shortage in Japan. However, even in this case, the experts are conditioned to always collaborate with relevant Japanese organisations.
- The Government of Japan will not be in a position to make decisions on whether or not to accept foreign NGOs. However, the Government of Japan will officially entrust the Japan Platform (JPF) to facilitate their coordination and particularly encourage them to work in partnership with Japanese NGOs.
- With regards to the relief items, the Government of Japan will indicate to foreign governments a set of concrete examples that can improve affected people's life in evacuation centers, yet are not fully procured in Japan or delivered at a required scale or speed. For instance, such items would include, materials to secure evacuee's privacy, lighting equipments, temporary toilets, and tents for storage and for relief workers. Relief goods that can be accepted immediately after a disaster strikes are limited to those urgently needed. However, in principle, food, water, and medicine will not be accepted, considering the time required for their quality checks¹⁵. Furthermore, the Government of Japan will explain to the international aid providers that a surplus of the materials delivered may be stored in Japan and used for other disasters or emergencies in future.
- The Government of Japan will not immediately decline offers of relief items from foreign governments, even if such items are not urgently needed. However, the Government will consider and communicate an appropriate timing when it will be ready for receiving them.
- The Japan Red Cross Society (JRCS) will decide on whether or not to accept assistance from other Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies in consultation with the comprehensive disaster management body of the Government of Japan.

¹⁵ In case of a severe shortage of food and medicine, it will still be more efficient to request specialised international organisations such as WFP and WHO to procure and deliver them.

b. Enhancing the role of the central government for better accepting international assistance

- A comprehensive disaster response body of the central government, or the Emergency Disaster Response Headquarters,¹⁶ should make centralized decisions on accepting the international assistance. This body should be strengthened enough to fulfill the Government's responsibility for facilitating smooth and swift acceptance of incoming international assistance. More specifically, the Government of Japan should make it clear that the central government - i.e. the aforementioned comprehensive disaster response body rather than the affected local authorities - takes ultimate responsibilities¹⁷ on the entire process of accepting international assistance through government channels.¹⁸ Such a process includes the identification of needs; coordination with the countries offering assistance; facilitating the entry and transport of personnel and relief materials to the affected areas; monitoring the assistance provided and relief items distributed on site; and reporting the results back to the donor countries.
- As for the relief items, the Government of Japan should first obtain comprehensive information about the humanitarian situation and the needs of the affected communities, and negotiate with the countries willing to provide assistance on specific items required. This proactive approach is different from the conventional passive approach where the central government starts to confirm local authorities' willingness to accept foreign aid by contacting them individually, only after it received specific offers of assistance from various countries. The Government of Japan should also establish a system, through which it can collectively manage the relief items received; store them at relaying points at the prefecture's level; and distribute them for the affected communities together with the relief items mobilised domestically.
- As the central government manages the incoming international assistance, the Government of Japan should consider amending its Disaster Relief Act in such a way that the central government will be able to bear the necessary costs, including for transporting the foreign relief items from main airports to relaying points, and for their temporary storages. This is because the present legal framework is built on the principle of decentralization, hence not suitable for directly applying it to accepting international aid (which is essentially what the central government should be responsible for).
- Even before amending the Disaster Relief Act, the Government of Japan can and should establish a mechanism of reserved funds for disaster relief efforts led by the central government - as it decided to do during the GEJE. In this context, it is necessary to ensure that the reserved funds are made available to finance the transportation costs of relief items received from overseas. Furthermore, the Government should guarantee that the funds can be accessed across successive fiscal years, allowing the implementation period of at least two to three months building on the GEJE experience.

¹⁶ At present, the Emergency Disaster Response Headquarters can be considered equivalent to the country's comprehensive disaster management body. However, the Study Group discussed the need of a strengthened government entity that is more specialised in disaster response supported by added expertise.

¹⁷ This recommendation will not apply to the acceptance of international assistance based on 'twin-city' type relationships and partnerships between the private-sectors.

¹⁸ The term "ultimate responsibility" does not mean that the Government of Japan will always be directly engaged in all the practical aspects of accepting assistance.

Also the funds should not restrict geographic areas that are applicable for financial support¹⁹.

- A comprehensive disaster response body, or the Emergency Disaster Response Headquarters, will make a centralised decision on whether or not to accept foreign armed forces. The Ministry of Defense (MOD) and SDF will control the operations of foreign armed forces once the Government accept them. The MOD and SDF will further coordinate with relevant ministries, local authorities and other organisations as required.

c. Development of Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) for accepting international assistance

- In order to receive the international assistance swiftly and in a centralised manner, the Government of Japan should develop a common Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) for its working level officials of all the relevant ministries, who assist the work of the comprehensive disaster response body. The relevant actors should also conduct joint exercises once a year. Such an SOP should build on existing international guidelines on disaster relief; clarify and integrate roles and responsibilities of the line ministries involved, and elaborate on a series of steps to be taken from making decisions on whether or not to accept international assistance to supporting the international teams' withdrawals – including temporary measures that will allow flexible application of relevant legal and administrative requirements.
- To accept international rescue, medical and other specialised teams, a comprehensive disaster response body should establish a centralised decision making procedure. Such a procedure should include confirming their arrival dates on the Virtual OSOCC and other tools; establishment of one or more Reception and Departure Centres (RDCs) at main airports; assisting their movements to the disaster affected areas; securing their on-site accommodations; clarifying methods to coordinate with local rescue entities on-site; and supporting the teams' withdrawals. In the procedure, responsible ministries should be indicated per each step. In particular, the procedure related to the search and rescue teams must be developed in compliance with the INSARAG guidelines.
- With regard to the acceptance of the relief items, the SOP should cover the issues of transport inside Japan, storage and distribution, in line with the system proposed in the Item b discussed above. In conjunction with the SOP, common formats for swift data collection and assessing needs per evacuation centres or geographic units ²⁰should be developed. This is in line with the idea of setting common national minimum standards which will be discussed in detail in Part II.

d. Legal preparedness for receiving international assistance

(i) Legal arrangement and clarification for possible accidents associated with relief operations involving international aid workers

¹⁹ The reserved funds should be made more user friendly, covering the costs for temporary storage and organising of relief items at the arriving airports as well as shipment of multiple consignments to the same destinations in one lot. A written manual summarising these conditions should be prepared in advance.

²⁰ UN humanitarian organisations have standard formats for calculating the required amount of water, food, tents and other relief items in accordance with the number of disaster-affected populations, and disaggregated by gender, age and other attributes.

- Relevant laws and regulations should be reviewed and, as required, developed or amended, so that consequential damages caused by the international relief operations and possible accidents involving the international aid workers can be handled appropriately. The law should govern liabilities for damages associated with accepting international assistance including injuries, deaths and property damages caused by the international relief personnel; health related and environmental problems caused by the relief items; and compensation for such injuries, deaths and other damages resulting from rescue and relief operations conducted by the international teams. In principle, the international teams should be treated in the same manner as the Japanese disaster response actors, who will be essentially exempted from legal liabilities for damages caused by their relief operations except for those caused by gross negligence. Regulating these through concluding either bilateral or international agreements are possible alternatives. However, at present, no standardised rule has been established even within the INSARAG framework regulating the deployment of international search and rescue teams.²¹ Therefore, the Government of Japan should actively contribute to the rule-making discussion at the international level in this regard.

(ii) Promotion of legal preparedness supported by developing exceptional provisions and administrative manuals

- Developing exceptional provisions in existing laws, regulations and ministerial ordinances, that are applicable to the disaster response and emergency phase, is effective. This approach is in line with the International Disaster Response Laws (IDRL) concept advocated by the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC). In addition, legal preparedness of a wider definition should be promoted, such as developing administrative manuals and operational guidelines/standards, which, even if not legally binding, the relevant Ministries should still follow on their areas of expertise in response to a disaster.
- Receiving rescue dogs from overseas is a good example where legal preparedness worked effectively during the GEJE. At the time of the Great Hanshin Awaji Earthquake that preceded the GEJE, the Government of Japan was unable to accept international teams coming with rescue dogs immediately. Having learnt the lesson, the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF) revised its ordinance related to quarantining exported and imported dogs, by adding a specific provision that allows the dogs being quarantined can be released temporarily if they are needed for disaster relief (Paragraph 5, Article 4 of the ordinance). The ordinance also stipulated the preconditions to accept the rescue dogs, including their vaccinations against hydrophobia. Thanks to these preparedness measures, the MAFF was able to issue a notice on March 11, 2011 - the very first day of the GEJE - promptly reminding and putting into effect the flexible application of the quarantine rules and informing the countries offering the rescue dogs of the specific conditions for their acceptance. This minimized confusion and allowed two teams accompanying rescue dogs (Singapore and

²¹ The Government of Japan should also take into account various approaches taken by other developed countries in terms of receiving international rescue and medical teams. In particular, a report titled 'International Assistance System' published by the U.S. Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), the U.S. Department of State and the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) in 2010 is noteworthy. Based on lessons learnt from accepting international assistance during the Hurricane Katrina crisis, the report argues that foreign relief personnel should be requested only as a last resort because of potential concerns including compensation and indemnification.

the Republic of Korea) to start operating in Japan from the next the day.

- There would also be a situation where foreign medical practitioners without a Japanese license should be exceptionally allowed to provide medical services in emergencies. In such circumstances, however, it might be difficult to predetermine the exact scope to which the exceptional legal provision should be applied. Therefore, it is important to pre-establish agreements among the relevant Ministries on specific procedures to inform the response actors of the kinds of decisions to be made during the emergencies.²² The key is not solely relying on measures that are narrowly defined as ‘legal preparedness’.
- Developing administrative manuals that contain relevant guidelines and operational standards is considered effective. This will include non-legal and temporary measures such as the budgetary allocation of reserved funds discussed above and redeployment of government officials to the disaster response headquarters. During the GEJE, a large number of government officials were asked to work at the Government’s Emergency Disaster Response Headquarters for an extended period of time. Thus, the relevant ministries were required to apply a flexible system in the selection of their staff and to clarify their rotation policies. In addition, MOFA’s decision to deploy its liaison officers accompanying the international rescue teams helped facilitate their smooth on-site coordination significantly. However, the MOFA officers deployed were not fully familiar with the missions of the rescue teams and their equipment, thus a manual for the liaison officers needs to be developed for their future deployment.

(iii) Use of the international guidelines: IDRL

The Government of Japan should clarify its core responsibilities as the disaster affected country as well as those born by other countries providing international assistance. The Government should articulate a set of guiding principles defining its institutional framework for disaster relief, and strengthen its domestic laws and regulations, policies and procedures for accepting incoming international assistance. Furthermore, the Government should ensure minimum legal convenience extended to the assisting countries and organisations in a comprehensive manner. To this effect, the Government should utilise the IDRL guidelines and prepare to communicate on the acceptance of international assistance to the countries and organisations offering assistance without delay. It is important to note, however, that the IDRL Guidelines have been mainly designed for assisting developing countries to promote their legal preparedness, thus they may contain provisions that are not necessarily suitable for a developed country. In this regard, the guidelines could be further developed and refined building on Japan’s experience.

e. Concluding partnership agreements

- In order to avoid legal problems such as those caused by the accidents and damages resulting from relief operations, the Government of Japan should put in place legal arrangements with countries that are likely to offer assistance.

²² With regard to the provision of medical services by foreign doctors, the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare issued an official notice on March 14, 2011, as an opinion of the Ministry’s division responsible for this matter. According to the notice, non-compliance with the law for providing a minimum and necessary medical service for the disaster affected populations can be justified on the grounds of the Article 35 of the Japanese Criminal Law.

- With regard to the acceptance of foreign armed forces, the Government of Japan should strengthen its partnerships by developing status-of-forces agreements on the operation of foreign armed forces and cooperative agreements with the neighbouring countries as well as conducting joint exercises. An option could be to conclude such an agreement with Australia. In terms of the armed forces of other neighbouring countries, the Government of Japan should confirm their disaster response capabilities, and aim to conclude Memorandum of Understandings, if appropriate. As for the assistance of the U.S. and Australian forces - which Japan is likely to receive - the Government of Japan should confirm their disaster response capacities including equipment, technologies, and levels of expertise and develop a coordination mechanism for the military to military cooperation.
- In order to facilitate more general cooperation for disaster management, the Government of Japan should aim to conclude agreements of mutual cooperation through its existing frameworks with EU, ASEAN, the U.S., and Australia well as the trilateral cooperation among Japan, China and the Republic of Korea²³.

f. Securing and developing human resources

- A system to pool qualified talents outside the Government structure should be developed in order to deploy qualified personnel who could support the acceptance of international assistance during the disaster. The potential candidates would include members of the Japan Disaster Relief team (JDR), JICA staff, current and former Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers (JOCVs), former staff members of international organisations, and former staff members of international NGOs. The registered members will be dispatched to the affected areas or mobilised to support the comprehensive disaster management body, the Japan Platform or other disaster response organisations and assist the acceptance of international assistance in the event of a large-scale disaster.
- The disaster response headquarters of the central, prefectural and municipal governments should establish coordination and information-sharing mechanisms where various actors meet. Such actors include Japanese civilian agencies (i.e. governmental organisations, medical teams, private companies, NGOs, and etc.), international civilian organisations, the SDF, and foreign armed forces – all sharing a common operational environment in the disaster affected areas. This could be a Japanese version of the cluster system, potentially involving civilian-military coordination centres.²⁴
- The Government of Japan should develop human resources who are capable of taking initiatives and ensure effective coordination - such as officials of the municipal governments and other support staff on surge. The Government should also develop related manuals that the appropriate staff can use, and swiftly dispatch them to the disaster affected communities.

²³ These memoranda should aim to prioritise assistance from the countries concerned and do not intend to exclude assistance from other countries.

²⁴ In the cluster system, one organisation is normally designated as the lead agency on each specific sector such as food, water and sanitation, shelter and non-food items. This way, effective coordination among the UN humanitarian agencies and international NGOs is ensured by determining sharing a common situational awareness and information on the priority needs per clusters.

g. Fulfilling accountability

- The Government of Japan, or its comprehensive disaster management body, should be fully responsible for monitoring the utilisation of the international assistance received in terms of human, material and financial contributions. To ensure accountability, the Government of Japan should also report the results back to the international community by using standard reporting formats, including on the matching with needs, efficiency, and feedback from the beneficiaries.
- For this purpose, the Government should also establish a system staffed by those tasked with the monitoring, and develop standard formats for reporting and evaluation.

h. Timely dissemination and clear communication of the relevant information From the onset of a disaster, the Government of Japan should disseminate information concerning damages, domestic response efforts, and specific needs for international assistance in English and in a timely manner - at least daily in the initial phase. Accordingly, the Government should establish an emergency communications system before a disaster strikes.

- The Government should also strive to make full use of communication tools for humanitarian assistance such as Virtual OSOCC, and exchange information with the humanitarian community through informal channels as well.

(2) Concrete outcomes and situations to be realised by implementing the recommended actions

- By clarifying its basic policy for accepting international assistance and effectively communicating with the international community based on it, the Government of Japan will be able to create an environment where foreign countries will be able to make swift decisions on their assistance. This will help facilitate the incoming international assistance better targeted to meet the needs of the affected communities to a certain degree.
- Strengthening the role of the central Government in accepting international assistance will lead to a more coherent system, in which those who makes the decision to accept international assistance will also accept full responsibility for the results. Moreover, promoting legal preparedness will help the relevant actors handle risks associated with accepting the international assistance and thereby facilitate the related process more smoothly.
- Development of SOPs and manuals will help organise training more easily. It will also enable disaster responders to share their knowledge and experience and help their succession planning despite staff turnovers. All of these will contribute to effective response.
- Establishing cooperation agreements with countries, that are likely to offer (and for Japan to receive) assistance, will help gather experience of joint exercises during the peace-time. Such agreements will also help avoid potential legal problems and make the swift and efficient acceptance of international assistance possible.

Part II: Application of the existing international norms and standards

2-1. Establishment and application of national minimum standards for future disaster response in Japan, building on existing international norms and standards

1. Background to the recommendations

(1) Objectives and reasons for the recommendations

- The GEJE was an unprecedented large-scale disaster that caused serious and wide spread damages beyond various assumptions, including numerous casualties and displacement for a prolonged period. During the period from the immediate evacuation phase till rehabilitation starts with the construction of temporary houses, lives of many of survivors were threatened and their human dignity were denied (or at the risk of being denied) due to severe physical conditions and psychological difficulties they had to endure in the evacuation centres.
- During such period, a number of problems were identified concerning, for examples, types of food aid and the system of food distributions; lack of privacy and security concerns in the evacuation centres; conditions and quality of water supply and temporary toilets; and health and medical services for the evacuees, including those suffering from chronic diseases. The assistance provided did not sufficiently meet the diverse and different needs reflecting factors such as gender, sexual orientation, age, disability, nationality, mother tongues, family composition and employment status.
- Most of these problems could have been prevented, if pre-determined national minimum standards were in place and preparedness measures were taken by the institutional aid providers, ensuring a systematic response following such standards. On the contrary, aid providers had to react to the evolving situation in an ad-hoc manner, by predominantly focusing on distributing available resources at a point in time - as fair and equal as possible. This is essentially a different approach from securing a minimum set of relief items and basic services delivered for everyone in need and consistently. Moreover, disaster-responders could ensure more comprehensive, systematic, and evidence based assistance, with clear grounds for aid prioritisation, if they utilised a standard format for needs assessments and common methods for their comparison and compilation - again in light of the national minimum standards.
- In fact, so-called international minimum standards had already been established and applied by those involved in disaster relief operations overseas. A background to this is that these international standards had been developed to ensure that emergency relief and humanitarian assistance, mainly for developing countries, are provided effectively and efficiently, and in accordance with international norms related to humanitarian principles. Meanwhile, Japan as an international-assistance donor, has been in a position to request the UN, NGOs and other disaster responders to comply with the international minimum standards when they provide emergency relief and humanitarian assistance outside Japan.
- On the other hand, Japanese Government's present disaster-management systems and institutional measures, including the Disaster Countermeasures Basic Act, do not

necessarily reflect the idea to guarantee minimum standards in terms of assistance for those in need, nor do they articulate the Government's accountability in meeting such standards. While municipalities normally play central roles in disaster response, the first responders at the local level are not familiar with the international minimum standards. It is probably too much to expect from the local aid providers to adopt the international minimum standards to their work rather directly.

- Under such circumstances, Japanese humanitarian practitioners, who should have been fully familiarised with the international norms and standards, appear to have made little attempt to apply them to their aid operations and to adjust them to the contexts of local areas affected by the GEJE. Therefore, bearing in mind the future risk of large scale disasters, disaster management practitioners and institutional aid providers need to debate what should be the minimum standards to be set and applied for Japan in the light of existing international standards. This is essential for ensuring appropriate assistance that takes into account various protection risks and assistance needs of populations affected by a disaster, and for protecting lives and dignity of the most vulnerable populations. Such a comprehensive discussion should take place between those involved in international aid and domestic disaster response.

(2) Issues emerged during the response phase of the GEJE

- Various approaches that are now considered international practices were not adopted. Such approaches include human rights-based approach, gender mainstreaming, the Sphere standards, and tested needs assessment methodologies. Many problems could have been avoided if these had been applied on the ground. In reality, however, neither institutional aid providers nor affected populations had the mindset to take advantage of these standards and tools to the response to the GEJE, in which context socio-cultural elements were also considered to have come into play. However, when the affected populations and local aid providers were explained about these norms and standards after the response operations were over, they were apparently receptive and found them useful.
- No integrated information management system was developed at the pre-disaster phase, which could help capture various needs of the affected populations comprehensively and collect, analyse and disseminate the relevant data systematically. Such a system should include use of standardised formats for needs assessments and deployment of trained personnel who can engage with the affected populations and are equipped with appropriate interview techniques. As a result, this hindered aid prioritisation based on clear evidences at each phase of the disaster cycle; development of assistance plans geared towards achieving common minimum standards of assistance; and swift and flexible response to diverse and ever-changing needs by allocating available resources most efficiently .
- NGOs could not accomplish their roles in terms of protecting the vulnerable populations. The NGOs could potentially contribute to ensure that international minimum standards were met, by complementing local authorities' efforts to assist those who were hard to be reached. However, NGOs' role has not been well recognised or defined in Japan. Given the Japanese Government's solid institutional capacity, it was difficult for the civil society organisations to provide humanitarian assistance together with local authorities

– although such a situation is mostly unlikely in many of the developing countries. The NGO staff had to spend considerable time for explaining their organizational mandates and characters to local authorities and affected communities, as well as for going through administrative procedures, including obtaining permits from both prefectural and municipal authorities. Unlike individual volunteers²⁵, the role of NGOs and NPOs are not clearly defined in the Japanese legal framework related to disaster management. Nevertheless, the services that NGOs actually provided, such as providing ‘child-friendly spaces’ were relatively well received in the end.

- In addition to the protection aspect, the close involvement of affected populations with diverse background in the decision making was not generally achieved. Although the disaster management plans emphasize the vulnerability aspect of children and women, their ‘mainstreaming’- meaning listening to their opinions and reflecting them in the decision making processes - has not been realised.

(3) In-depth analysis of the causes of the above issues

- Then, why were these international standards not applied? First of all, such standards were simply not known to many mainly because most of them were not available in Japanese. Although staff members of international NGOs knew them, they did not either promote them or call for compliance to them. Even a question was raised about their level of awareness about such standards. For example, some Japanese aid workers involved in overseas operations did not hesitate when applying double standards on gender issues, saying that the situation in Japan was exceptional. Considering today’s circumstances around Japanese women and, in particular, the challenges they face in achieving gender equality, the problem seems to be rather deep-rooted. It is also impossible for the whole society to provide sufficient care for handicapped people during emergencies, unless it is prepared to do so in the pre-disaster phase.
- The relationship between domestic disaster management experts and international aid providers is disconnected; hence, they have little chance for mutual learning or personnel exchanges. Accordingly, no process exists that allows application of the international humanitarian standards to domestic response or feeding the domestic experiences into the development of such international standards. In this regard, coordination between MOFA, which should be aware of relevant international standards, and the Cabinet Office (disaster management) during the peace-time was considered insufficient. In addition, useful know-how that the staff members of JICA had acquired through their overseas operations could not be sufficiently utilised, as well. Even within the JRCS, staff members involved in domestic operations would be hesitant or feel uneasy about directly applying the international standards to a developed country like Japan, even though its staffers responsible for international operations would emphasise their importance. This could be due to their perception that such standards have been practically developed for disaster relief operations in developing countries.
- Although the focus should be placed on children and women, there are children of various age groups, and pregnant and lactating mothers, elderly persons, people with disabilities, foreigners and more, each of whom has unique and different needs. Respect

²⁵ The basic disaster prevention plan also includes provisions for volunteering persons as “people who voluntarily offer assistance with good intention” but makes no reference to NGOs/NPOs organised by people with specialised abilities.

for diversity should, therefore, be mainstreamed in the Japanese disaster relief. At the international level, more discussion is needed regarding assistance for and protection of the elderly and people with disabilities. Given that even the Sphere Standards require further discussion on this particular aspect, there is a significant room for Japan to make contributions to further development of the international standards in this domain, based on its experience during the GEJE.

2. Recommended actions

(1) Recommended actions

- A special review committee (hereinafter called the 'Committee') should be established, with a mandate to review the Government's present disaster-response systems from an international perspective. The Committee should thereby design a renewed emergency-response mechanism with a view to ensure sufficient preparedness measures in response to possible large-scale disasters, including the Nankai Trough scenario. The Committee should be composed not only of Government practitioners but also of various experts with knowledge of international standards and working experience in international disaster relief operations. The process and results of their discussion should be made public. The Committee should be an integral part of the disaster-management system coordinated by the Cabinet Office, and recognised as an official body of the Government of Japan. The Committee should also be mandated to serve as a consultative body that facilitates and monitors the implementation of a range of improvement measures listed below.
- The Committee should fully take into account internationally established norms and standards as well as good practices from overseas, and formulate Japan's common minimum standards for disaster response that are compatible with its local characteristics and socio-cultural backgrounds. In this process, the Committee should respect two basic principles in the Sphere Standards: namely that those affected by disaster or conflict have the right to live with dignity and hence to receive assistance; and that all possible measures should be taken to alleviate human suffering from disaster or conflict. Moreover, the minimum standards should include: (i) common methods for needs assessment; and (ii) the types of and methods to provide assistance.
- During the emergency relief and early recovery phases, all institutional aid providers must fully recognize their obligations to abide by the humanitarian principles established as international minimum standards, including humanity, neutrality, impartiality, and operational independence. The minimum standards should also include the 'Do No Harm' principle – i.e. humanitarian organisations should never bring any harm to the disaster-affected populations.
- The Committee should fully understand that people's needs for assistance differ depending on their social and physical, such as gender, age, disability, nationality, mother tongue, family composition and employment situation, and take into account such variables in the common national minimum standards for disaster response.
- The Committee should advise the Government of Japan to take necessary legal and administrative measures to shift from its Government centred assistance for the

vulnerable populations, which tends to be a top-down and 'one size fits all' approach, to a more human rights-based approach that allows the affected populations to participate in the planning and to request necessary assistance by themselves. Accordingly, the Committee should acknowledge that the Government alone can only cover a limited scope of diverse needs, and that mutual relationships for cooperation and associated responsibilities between the Government, NGOs and the local Councils of Social Welfare should be clearly defined. Moreover, the Committee should advise the Government to clearly institutionalise the rights of various disaster-affected persons to participate in the decision-making process and to guarantee their 'rights to be heard.'

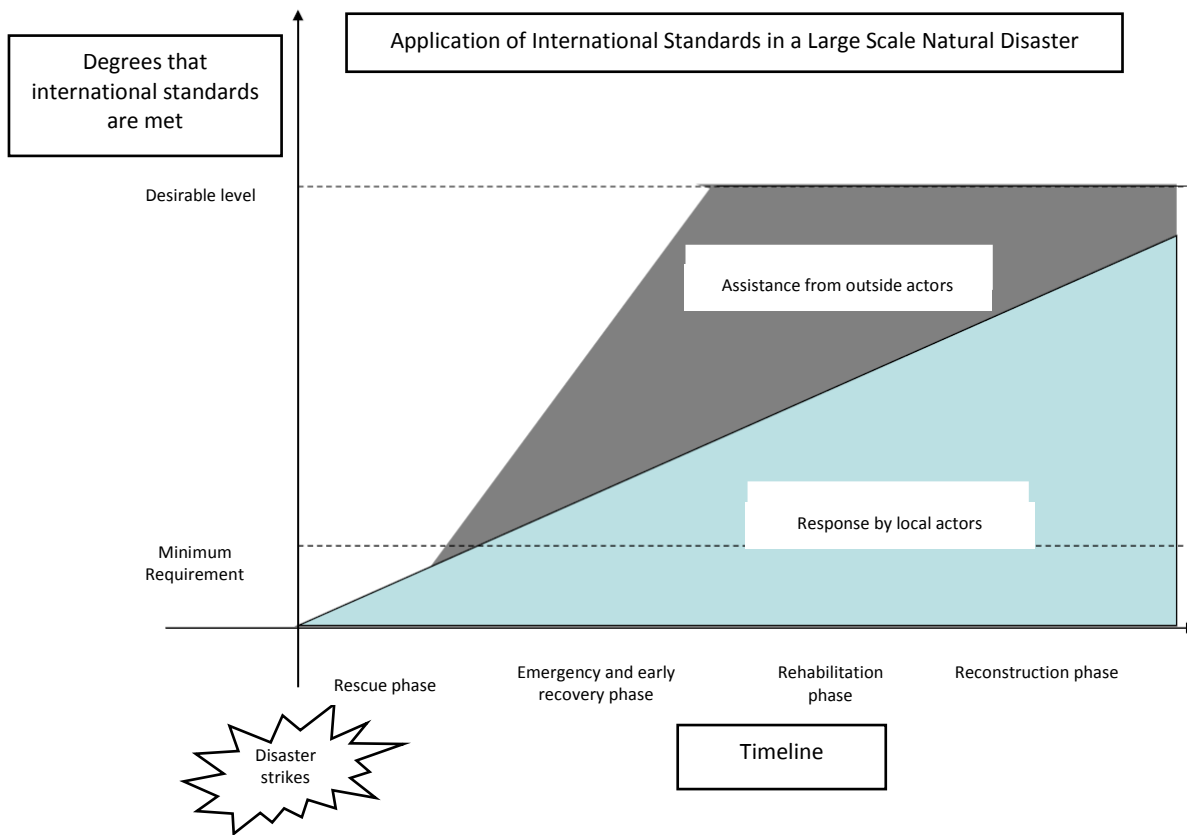
- In May 2013, the Gender Equality Bureau of the Cabinet Office published 'Guidelines for gender considerations in disaster response,' a part of which includes those in line with the Sphere Standards. However, the Guidelines made no direct reference to the established international norms and standards. In order to fully realise the principles already stated in the Guideline and to incorporate more specific improvement measures - such as methodologies of needs assessments –further discussions on this particular aspect need to be facilitated by the Committee. The debate should not only approach the gender issue from a protection angle, but also address the issue of gender imbalance among the aid providers and policy-makers including civil servants of local municipalities and the staff of the Cabinet Office working on disaster management issues. Meanwhile, disaster- management plans of the Government and municipalities should clearly state that a gender balance is considered at all levels, such as appointing individual males and females as representatives at each evacuation centres.
- Separate guidelines should be developed for local authorities recognising the role of NGOs, civil society as well as community based organisations more institutionally, so that these organisations can help promote application of the national minimum standards, particularly in the local disaster management planning. Furthermore, municipal authorities should be requested to institutionalise means to effectively address cross-cutting issues, including respecting the rights of children and the elderly, promoting gender sensitive approaches, and ensuring protection of and assistance for the people with disabilities. In this regard, the local authorities should be requested to establish focal points on the cross cutting issues at each relevant departments and divisions and to consider staff exchange, especially between the divisions responsible for disaster management and gender equality.
- On the other hand, NGOs and civil society organisations should bear in mind a leading role that they are expected to play in ensuring appropriate response to the diverse needs of the affected populations and the promotion of human rights-based approaches. To this effect, NGOs should step up their engagement in the relevant policy development processes. In particular, the civil society should monitor policy measures taken by the Government and local authorities, and form organisations to support implementation of such measures in concrete terms. Furthermore, NGOs and civil society organisations should enhance their accountability to the affected populations as aid providers by putting in place effective communication mechanisms with the affected communities, including needs assessments, monitoring, evaluation, and feedback processes. Moreover, they should redouble efforts for promoting the code of conducts based on humanitarian principles, and regulate their activities around a sound peer

review system, in which if necessary, the organisations' commitment to comply with the code of conducts is required as a precondition for participating in the coordinated response.

- The Committee should promote domestic disaster-response actors' understanding of the latest discussions on the international standards for disaster response. As recommended in the Part III discussing human resource development, existing international standards and tools should be taken into consideration when developing and implementing specialised training programme, so that domestic disaster management experts can understand and apply them in the Japanese context.

(2) Concrete outcomes or situations to be realised by implementing the recommended actions

- If the recommended actions are implemented and national minimum standards for disaster response building on existing international standards are established and applied in future large scale natural disasters, effectiveness, efficiency, swiftness and mobility of emergency relief to the affected populations are likely to increase considerably. This will lead to save many more lives, and the dignity of the most vulnerable will be better maintained.
- For this to happen, not only the Government but also NGOs and other related parties should commit themselves to make efforts for close and mutual coordination. Establishing national minimum standards is likely to create some binding force in this direction and help reinforce their mutual accountability.
- In reality, however, there will be an inevitable time-lag before the minimum standards are fully met after the on-set of a disaster. As was seen in the GEJE, if the administrative functions of municipalities are considerably affected by a disaster, affected municipalities may have to rely on assistance by aid providers arriving from outside of the affected areas. The following figure intends to provide conceptual illustration of this constraint.



- Legitimately, the same time-lag can be observed in an international humanitarian setting as well. Therefore, the existing international standards should not be taken as an absolute threshold, but they should rather be considered a set of minimum targets that all of the aid providers should make every effort to achieve as quickly as possible, and that disaster management experts should use as a basis for developing assistance plans. What is important here is to establish a shared understanding that relevant parties will ultimately have to face the consequence of such efforts and should be asked to fulfil their own accountability to that extent. This point should be fully taken into consideration when developing and applying common national minimum standards in future.

2-2. Role of NGOs/NPOs, civil society and actors other than designated public institutions

1. Background to the recommendations

(1) Objectives and reasons for the recommendations

- During the GEJE, not only governmental and public institutions but also NGOs/NPOs, private companies, and individual volunteers played major roles in providing emergency assistance for the affected populations and supporting the disaster-affected communities' recovery. The basic disaster-management plan of the Government distinguishes these actors from the governmental organisations and designated public institutions. They are indeed categorised as "those who offer voluntary assistance out of good intentions." However, lessons learnt from the GEJE show that creating an enabling environment for these actors to fully demonstrate their strengths and expertise is considered to impact on the speed and quality of emergency assistance and recovery support for the affected populations in future disasters significantly.

Among such actors other than the governmental and public institutions, this section will particularly focus on NGOs and NPOs.

- As for the role of the private companies, the Japan Business Federation (Keidanren) provides detailed insights and recommendations in a report titled “Toward a More Resilient Society – Further Actions of the Business Sector and Government.” on the role they played during the GEJE.
- (2) Issues emerged during the response to the GEJE
- In the initial first month, NGOs and NPOs were perceived as akin to individual volunteers. The organisations, that actually entered the disaster affected areas, were required to coordinate with the Volunteer Coordination Office of the Cabinet Office or local disaster-volunteer centres that were tasked to coordinate the individual volunteers.
 - Many Japanese NGOs experienced with emergency relief operations overseas ran activities in the areas affected by the GEJE. However, quite a few of such NGO staff found it more difficult to perform their functions inside Japan rather than outside. One of the biggest reasons was the absence of a mechanism for coordination and information sharing, through which an overview of a variety of assistance provided by both public and private actors should have been established. As a result, NGOs and NPOs were not included in the planning and coordination processes among the disaster responders for assisting the affected populations, which were led by local authorities. In some areas and after a while, public and private actors began to come together, and some NPOs started to apparently play a complementary role in support of local authorities. For example, NPOs distributed heating equipments for the evacuees in temporary shelters, and such an arrangement was made to meet the urgent needs that went beyond what the local authorities were required to cover under the Disaster Relief Act. Such NGO/NPO operations were made possible thanks to the efforts of the dedicated staff members on the ground, especially by building relationships with institutional aid providers on a personal basis. Nevertheless, such coordination efforts did not happen everywhere in the affected communities and did not always yield positive results in terms of responding to the needs of the people in need of assistance. Based on pre-agreements with local councils of social welfare, volunteer centres were established at the level of disaster-affected municipalities. However, as their scope of work varied by localities, the councils were unable to provide overall coordination functions covering all the assistance coming into the communities.
 - Many aid workers pointed out the absence of humanitarian coordinators who were charged with the overall coordination of assistance efforts during the disaster – unlike as often seen in international humanitarian aid operations. As a result, aid workers felt that they could not work together and closely coordinate their activities at the central, prefectural and municipal levels. In other words, they were unable to grasp “3Ws” – namely, a comprehensive picture of who provided, what kinds of assistance and where. There were attempts to consolidate information related to assistance, develop matrixes per disaster affected areas, and share them among the aid providers concerned. However, a limited number of partners supported these initiatives, thus the amount of information collected was relatively small. While the humanitarian situation on the ground evolved rapidly, the relevant data could not be collected or updated in a timely

manner. Consequently, those compiled the information admitted that the extent that the information was shared and utilised for a coordination purpose was rather limited.

- Furthermore, there was no overall coordination system that allowed NGOs and NPOs to cooperate with each other and coordinate their activities on a significant scale. During the initial emergency phase, they found it particularly difficult to coordinate or share information on their activities with a view to avoid overlapped assistance as the situation on the ground unfolded. While many NGOs with experience in international humanitarian operations participated in the response to the GEJE, they had not established relationships with NPOs focusing on disaster relief at the domestic level. Reportedly, there were some cases where the absence of effective partnerships, combined with difficulties in terms of coordination, even caused frictions among NGOs and NPOs. A small number of donors, NGOs, NPOs and other aid providers attempted to hold inter-agency meetings, but the extent of information sharing at the level of Tokyo was rather limited, thus did not result in effective on-site operational coordination or development of common strategies. In some prefectures and municipalities, a limited number of groups coordinated their activities within specific sectors such as education and temporary housing, but even this form of coordination was limited to a few sectors and in certain affected areas.
- The JPF and the Japan NGO Center for International Cooperation (JANIC) worked to serve as contact points to coordinate the acceptance of incoming assistance by international NGOs. However, the information channels of the supply side multiplied and drawing a comprehensive picture of the assistance needs on the ground was difficult. Thus, they found it difficult to match the offers of assistance with the needs of the disaster-affected communities smoothly. If these intermediary organisations are to accept and manage offers of assistance to be made by international NGOs, they presently face many challenges in terms of available human resources, their know-how as well as systematic coordination with other organisations.
- Many private companies assisted the populations affected by the GEJE, involving aid workers and relief items from overseas. The size and impact of the assistance provided by the private sector were particularly notable, playing a crucial role in distributing food and other relief items immediately since the on-set of the disaster. The companies dispatched their employees on a voluntary basis to the disaster affected areas, and provided assistance building on their own core businesses. However, their CSR activities were often not embedded in any of the coordination systems that had been worked out at the level of disaster-affected communities, and this was a challenge in terms of delivering effective assistance. Therefore, , and ways should be explored to leverage their contributions more effectively, given the concerns of the considerable overlap of assistance and wasting of resources during the GEJE, in the absence of a coordination mechanism to capture the overall situation of disaster relief, including with the involvement of these private actors.
- As described in the previous section (Part II, 2-1), NGOs are normally required to comply with international standards that are applied to humanitarian assistance, such as the Sphere standards, Humanitarian Accountability Partnership (HAP), and the Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and NGOs in

Disaster Relief. However, some argue that during the GEJE, knowledge of these norms and standards were not utilised. For example, at the on-set of the disaster, it was only male staff, who were distributing relief items in many of the evacuation centres. This made some disaster-affected women feel uncomfortable when receiving relief items necessary for meeting the specific needs of women. As responders paid little attention to the gender aspects, women's needs were not properly reflected on the relief items provided, and women experienced difficult situations without being able to accessing the necessary assistance at the evacuation centres. NPOs, that are mostly active inside Japan, were not well informed of international standards. On the other hand, many of those involved in international assistance were aware of the standards, but they did not particularly share the sense of responsibility that they should comply with the international standards when operating in Japan as well.

(3) In-depth analysis of the causes of the problems identified above

- There was no coordination and information sharing mechanism that would help grasp a comprehensive picture of assistance provided by both public and private actors. Moreover, NGOs and NPOs were not part of the discussions or coordinated planning processes led by the local authorities.

2. Recommended actions

(1) Recommended actions

a. Establishment of a coordination body for NGO and NPOs involved in disaster response.

- A mechanism to coordinate NGOs and NPOs (hereinafter called an 'NGO/NPO coordination body') should be established during the pre-disaster phase, so that their assistance can be deployed more effectively when a disaster strikes. To this effect, a framework to coordinate with actors other than NGOs/NPOs should be designed; its Secretariat functions need to be supported; and human resources involved in the coordination work needs to be developed.

b. Improved awareness by the Government, local authorities and designated public institutions about the NGO/NPO coordination body

- The above mechanism should be made known to the Government, local authorities and designated public institutions in peacetime. The NGO/NPO coordination body should engage closely with such administrative bodies, including personnel exchange, so that their understanding as the counterpart to the NGO/NPO sector and recognition about the coordination body will be promoted.

c. Incorporation of NGO/NPO operations in local disaster-management plans

- Disaster management plans formulated by prefectures and municipalities should take into consideration the role of the NGO/NPO coordination body, and incorporate its coordinating function in terms of their relationship to the community based coordination activities and participation in coordination meetings. NGOs and NPOs should be encouraged to actively participate in emergency drills based on local disaster management plans. In order to facilitate smooth and efficient humanitarian assistance during disasters, NGOs and NPOs should establish partnerships with local authorities in peacetime.

d. Development of codes of conduct for NGOs/NPOs operations

- Development of a common code of conduct, that are applicable to domestic disaster response operations by NGOs and NPOs and built on international humanitarian standards, should be considered. If necessary, a separate set of common standards, that may go beyond the scope of the existing international standards, should also be considered.

(2) Concrete outcomes and situations to be realized by implementing the recommendations

- If a large scale and wide spread disaster affecting significantly amount of population occurs in Japan, it will be difficult for the Government, local authorities and designated public institutions alone to provide sufficient and granular emergency relief responding to the constantly changing needs of the affected populations. Establishing the status of private and civil society actors complementing the Government response, and recognising their roles as part of coordinated first responders will lead to effective assistance maximising the NGO/NPOs' resources and strengths such as follows:
 - ◇ Swift access to disaster affected communities,
 - ◇ Agility and flexible use of financial and material resources, information and human resources, and
 - ◇ Targeted assistance in terms of types and beneficiaries, that cannot be covered by the public sector due to its existing legal, regulatory and other institutional constraints.
- Nevertheless, the resources of NGOs and NPOs are limited. Through effective coordination, the division of labour between these organisations and the governmental and designated public institutions should be made clear. This will allow efficient response to the humanitarian needs that cannot be met by the assistance provided by the public sector.

Part III: Human Resource Development

1. Background of the recommendations

(1) Objectives and reasons for the recommendations

- Based on the issues emerged during the GEJE response and possible improvements identified for future disasters, key recommendations related to the acceptance of international assistance were presented in Part I. In addition, establishing and operationalising a set of national minimum standards and the role of NGOs and NPOs were discussed in Part II. These recommendations entail improvement of institutional and legal frameworks, development of organisational arrangements, development of detailed plans, dissemination of knowledge and expertise, as well as implementation of disaster response exercises.
- Many of the problems faced during the response to the GEJE resulted from a shortage of qualified human resources capacitated to cope with the disaster situation. Therefore, securing and nurturing disaster response experts is essential for resolving the problems.

(2) Issues emerged in the response to the Great East Japan Earthquake

a. Absence of a centralised system to capture the qualified and deployable disaster response experts and aid providers and to manage the pool of such human resources

- Municipal authorities have their own staff involved in disaster management, but there is no organisation that can centrally control and manage them.
- The total numbers and specialised areas of disaster response experts that the Municipal authorities can mobilise are not known.

b. Expert knowledge and experience vary among the disaster response experts and aid providers (i.e. lack of common standards)

- Even if there are staff members with experience in disaster response, their knowledge and expertise are diverse, and developed on an individual basis.
- In the absence of a national common position and minimum standards on what the disaster managers and response actors need to learn, strengths and weaknesses of individual staff vary significantly.
- Neither a specialist accreditation system nor common standards for capacity assessment exist at a national level.
- Domestic response actors and aid providers are relatively familiar with the disaster response methodologies in Japan. However, their understanding of international coordination systems and standards tend to be limited. They are also expected to be more familiarised with the procedures and other aspects related to the acceptance of international assistance in view of large scale disasters in Japan.

c. The Government's human resource management systems are not conducive for encouraging and supporting the development of specialists in disaster response and relief operations

- Officials of the central, prefectural and municipal governments - including those involved in disaster management - normally rotate every two to three years. This makes it extremely difficult for any officers to accumulate their knowledge and experience even on an individual basis. Moreover, once moved to another position with different responsibilities, the officials are not able to utilise or transfer their accumulated

knowledge experience, as they have to focus on new responsibilities.

- There is no clear and established career path available for officers who are opted for becoming disaster management specialists. Moreover, there are limited opportunities to develop their competencies that are most relevant to disaster response and management.
- d. There is a divide between the domestic disaster response experts and the Japanese international responders, and there is no interaction between the two.
- The exposure of those experienced in the domestic response – either as part of the local authorities or as NGO/NPO staff members – tends to be limited to small and medium sized disasters inside Japan. On the other hand, those involved in international disaster relief operations are experienced with larger scale disasters, yet they do not necessarily understand the unique aspects of disaster response in Japan. Bearing in mind the need for managing the incoming international assistance, disaster managers and practitioners in Japan should be familiarised with the rules and characteristics of both domestic and international disaster relief.
 - Compared to other disaster-prone countries, Japan's response capacity is high, and it can manage most of the disasters with its domestic resources. As a result, Japanese people are not entirely accustomed to receiving international assistance, and nurturing expertise of those, who can operate effectively under such circumstances, has not been contemplated. However, there is an urgent need to develop a group of disaster management professionals, especially in view of future large-scale disasters such as the Nankai Trough scenario, which would involve receiving international assistance.
- e. A lack of common understanding of the necessary capacity and competencies to be learned by the disaster responders
- A comprehensive scope of disaster response capacity as well as required skills and expertise that need to be learned to support the response capacity are unclear. As a result, levels of expertise shared among the disaster response practitioners depend on their personal and individual knowledge and experiences.
 - Specific types of knowledge and experience required for the disaster relief practitioners and managers at the decision making level are neither fully identified nor systematically organised.
 - There is no means to assess professional capacity of disaster response practitioners individually and objectively in the absence of a specialist accreditation system.
- f. Lack of a strategy to share and communicate Japan's disaster response experience with the international community
- Being a disaster prone yet well prepared and developed country, Japan is uniquely positioned. However, Japanese disaster management actors are not as proactive as they should be in terms of sharing and communicating their experience with the rest of the world. This is considered to be related to the divide between the domestic and international actors discussed above as well as language barriers.

- As part of Japan's contribution to the international disaster relief operations, there is no strategy that supports deployment of domestic experts with rich disaster response experience to overseas systematically. This prevents Japan from leveraging one of its major strengths in its contribution to the international efforts. At the same time, very few attempts have been made in terms of learning and applying the methodologies used by the international community to the domestic response.

(3) In-depth analysis of the causes of the issues identified above

- Engagement by the central Government of Japan in the human resource development of disaster-management professionals is weak.
- This is linked to the provision of the Disaster Management Basic Act that defines local authorities as the primary responders. Although it makes reference to the deployment of the government staff from the Prefectural level during disasters, the law does not articulate the engagement of the central Government in terms of human resource development. Despite the fact that this is a key cross cutting issue, the law does not provide details, except for a general clause stating that the central government should make efforts with regards to the development and utilisation of human resources.
- The Government's Central Disaster Management Council established a committee of experts that looked at the human resource development issues and its report was published. The report has a value in the sense that it helped clarify Government's basic stance on this matter and suggested a training programme. However, its actual implementation is still largely left with the local authorities, and engagement by the central Government in this domain is still unclear.
- Similarly, the central Government's engagement in the utilisation of trained and qualified human resources is considered insufficient. Being a disaster prone country itself, Japan can and should share considerable amount of information with the international community, including its experience during the GEJE. Thus, Japan's human resource development strategy should build on this perspective. Noting that international relations are managed more directly at the national level than by the local authorities, the central Government's engagement becomes critical, in order to ensure that the useful information and experience are communicated most effectively.
- The limited engagement of the central Government does not only hinder efforts for developing the specialised expertise per se, but it also means lost opportunities for leveraging the Japanese human resource to make meaningful contributions to the international efforts.

2. Recommended actions

Bearing future large-scale natural disasters in mind, nurturing Japanese practitioners who are well-versed in disaster relief is essential for guaranteeing rapid, coordinated and systematic response, including appropriate management of incoming international assistance, and ensuring quality assistance for the affected populations. The Study Group therefore makes the following recommendations related to promoting the development of human resources, who are equipped with necessary knowledge and skills for disaster response in Japan and capable

of demonstrating their competencies amid natural disasters. The term 'disaster response' in this context refers to a range of activities from the immediate rescue and relief phase to life-saving support and early recovery phase.

(1) Recommended actions

a. Identification of priority areas where human resource development are most needed

- The areas of expertise necessary for facilitating disaster response and relief efforts effectively and smoothly should be identified. Prioritisation of such specialised should be guided by the practical experiences of the GEJE and other disasters – both in Japan and overseas. Accordingly, the Study Group recommends that the following should be prioritised:
 - (i) Data collection and needs assessment/analysis,
 - (ii) Coordination and cooperation with various actors offering assistance on a voluntary basis,
 - (iii) Ensuring smooth flowing of human resource support and relief items (i.e. logistics),
 - (iv) Relief and assistance for disaster affected populations including management of evacuation centres in accordance with norms, standards and other key considerations,
 - (v) Acceptance of international assistance,
 - (vi) Disseminating information to the international community, and
 - (vii) Command, control, and communications across multiple organisations.
- Priority areas for human resource development should be selected in consultation with national and international disaster responders and relief organisations. The Cabinet Office should lead in selection those consulted and ensure that opinions of government officials, especially at the Prefectural and Municipal levels, are duly reflected.
- The special review committee developing the common national minimum standards proposed in Part II should be involved in the selection process as well.
- In addition to looking at some of the basic items that are required for responding to the most common types of disasters, the human resource development programmes should cover a wide range of issues corresponding to various types of damages caused by different kinds of disasters and include specific measures against particular categories of disaster risks.

b. Identified professional categories subject to the human resource development programme

- Two categories of human resources should be developed in the areas identified/prioritised above; i.e. the managers who lead and oversee respective functions necessary for disaster response and the specialists well versed in particular technical fields. In addition and as required, decision-makers such as the heads of local authorities should be included so as to deepen their understanding of disaster management.
- The Cabinet Office and the Disaster Reduction and Human Renovation Institution should offer comprehensive and nationwide training programmes for the officials of local authorities involved in disaster management and corresponding to their professional categories. In addition, tailored and specialist programmes should be offered for relevant

Ministries, as well as Prefectural and Municipal governments

- Professional categories targeted for the human resource development programme are as follows:

(i) Overall disaster management at the strategic level

Central government:

Prime Minister's Office and Line Ministries (leadership and working levels),

Local authorities:

Head and their deputies, directors of disaster management

Designated public institutions, SDF, National Police Agency, the Coast Guard:

Key officials

NGOs, private companies, international and foreign organisations:

Staff members wishing to receive training

(ii) Experts in specialized areas

Officials of the central, prefectural and municipal governments, and staff members of designated public institutions, NGOs, private companies, and international and foreign organisations working in the following areas:

Information management, communications, search and rescue, health care and nursing, operation of evacuation centres, logistics, education, security, public information, CBRN (chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear risks) and other relevant areas.

c. Implementation mechanism of the human resource development programmes

- Leadership for human resource development of disaster response should be centralised and located at the national level, such as at the Cabinet Office of the central Government. For this purpose, the National Human Resource Mobilisation Centre for Disaster Response should be established. The Centre should develop, maintain and manage the human resources in collaboration with MOD/ SDF, academic institutions, local authorities, aid organisations, and JRCs.
- A national curriculum should be developed so as to ensure standardized quality control and to apply common methodologies of disaster response and assistance for the disaster-affected populations. Such a training programme will, in principle, allow coordinated response by the staff members of various disaster responders and relief organisations based on their common understanding of relief operations.
- Training programmes should be conducted for the three types of targeted professional categories indicated above in Section b., following realistic timeframes. For example, five days could be allocated for the specialists; three days for the general disaster managers; and one day for the heads of local authorities.
- Quality control and standardization of the training curriculums should be put in place by reviewing existing relevant training programmes. In order to standardize the training programme, maintain its quality, and to secure the trainees in a sustainable manner, selection methods of the training providers need to be reconsidered.
- The curriculum should be reviewed periodically. Taking into account the existing training for disaster management specialists offered by the Cabinet Office as an example

(<http://www.kisc.meiji.ac.jp/~crisishp/ja/pdf/2013/naikakuhu/pamphlet4.pdf>), other lectures deemed essential - such as those help understand the acceptance of international assistance - should be added.

d. Basic structure of the curriculum and training methodologies

- The curriculum should be framed around the following three categories:
 - (i) Knowledge enhancement (lectures)
 - Acquiring basic knowledge about disaster response
 - (ii) Skills training (lectures and exercises)
 - Performing practical exercises in a standardized environment, aiming to acquire basic skills related to information gathering/management and multi-actor coordination
 - (iii) Competency development (lectures and exercises)
- Nurturing flexibility, judgment, coordination skills, decision making and its execution, leadership and other forms of competencies required to apply when operating under stressful environment The training should cover the basics and practical skills in a systematic manner including : characteristics of natural disasters; domestic disaster preparedness and response mechanisms; relevant key actors; assessments; logistics; information management (i.e. collection, aggregation, analysis and dissemination); coordination; international standards norms, and other key considerations; partnerships with NGOs and NPOs, private sectors and other actors; differences between domestic and international response; and case studies.
- The curriculum should be designed in such a way that allows the trainees to maximise their understanding of relevant knowledge and skills. Theoretical aspects can be taught in a lecture format, whereas technical skills should be trained by using other most appropriate methods, such as role-playing, skill practices, as well as modelled and desk-top simulation exercises.
- The training programmes should be categorised into basic and advanced courses so that the trainees' understanding can be developed systematically. Arrangements necessary for regular follow-up should be integrated into the training programmes aimed at maintaining the trainees' knowledge and experience.
- Training materials and exercise package should be developed by the Cabinet Office and its contracted entities. Development of internet based training tools and materials should also be considered.
- The programme should provide an environment that allows the trainees' self-learning and upgrading their knowledge and experience, such as through on-line tools.
- In addition to the Japanese trainers, external lecturers, who are active in the international arena, should be invited, in order to learn the latest developments at the global level and to incorporate the disaster response experiences in other countries into the training programme. In addition, possibilities of joint exercises and personnel exchanges should be explored.
- The training materials should be developed based on the existing international

standards, yet edited for the use of Japanese professionals. It is important to ensure the trainees' understanding that the key components of training have been promoted and utilised internationally, and that the specific elements of Japanese disaster response mechanism are also taken into consideration.

- Practical exercises should stress the training of trainers (ToTs) based in Japan, so that the quality of training can be maintained, and that the related experiences can be accumulated continuously and systematically.

e. Three types of trainers:

(i) Full-time lecturers

Act as core trainers facilitating knowledge enhancement- and skills training as well as competency development by using standard disaster-response manuals,.

(ii) External lecturers

Supplement the work of the full-time lecturers by providing competency related training based on practical experiences

(iii) Researchers

Develop disaster response training manuals based on relevant researches and lessons learned

f. Functions required to support the human resource development programmes

- In addition to the development and implementation of the training programmes, the following functions need to be established to support the human resource development of disaster responders in the medium and long term:
 - (i) Research
 - Conduct researches on the knowledge, skills and competencies necessary for those involved in disaster response and relief operations. The training organisation should interact with the relevant Ministries, local authorities, designated public institutions, and various foreign and international organisations (including foreign think-tanks), Japanese and international NGOs, private companies, universities, research institutes and etc.
 - Collect and analyse lessons learnt from previous disaster responses in Japan and overseas.
 - Develop national and standardised disaster response manuals, building on the research outcomes and lessons learnt, as well as in light of the existing legal and institutional frameworks. In doing so, coordinate with the national, prefectural and municipal governments and other relevant organisations such as NGOs and the private sector.
 - (ii) Education
 - Knowledge based education following the disaster response manuals
 - Knowledge based education on relevant competencies
 - (iii) Skills training
 - Skills training based on the disaster-response manuals.
 - Skills training on relevant competencies.
 - (iv) Exercises
 - Integrate knowledge, skills and competencies by using simulation exercises assuming various scenarios and operational environments.
 - (v) Evaluation

Evaluate and analyse the training package to improve quality of lectures, skill practices and simulation exercises

(vi) Support services

General administration, accounting, management and maintenance of learning materials and facilities

g. Registration and mobilization of pools of trained professionals

- Establish a 'National Human Resource Mobilisation Centre for Disaster Response' at the level of the central Government as a centralised mechanism to register and train disaster response professionals. Practitioners who would be ready to support receiving and managing incoming international assistance as discussed in Part I should also be secured and registered by this centre.
- Individual professionals, who have completed the training programmes discussed above Section d, should also be registered by the centre and recognised as human resources available at the national level.
- The trainees be classified into the following three categories, and will be allocated and mobilised strategically :
 - (i) Active (appointed and registered compulsory)
Persons currently assigned with tasks related to disaster response
 - (ii) Active back-up (appointed but registered voluntarily)
Persons not currently assigned with any tasks related to disaster response but intending and able to perform such tasks if required, also with the prior consent of the organisations to which they belong
 - (iii) Contingency back-up (designated and registered voluntarily)
Persons who have reached the mandatory retirement age but with considerable knowledge and experience, and intending and able to perform tasks related to disaster response if required.
- The central Government and local authorities should make arrangements to ensure appropriate posting of the trained officials and others with equivalent skills and experiences. The organisations should develop concrete 'career ladders' for the trained and qualified professionals, by clarifying relevant functions to be demonstrated by the experts.
- Certificates should be issued for those who completed the training programmes, together with a 'license document' indicating specialised areas or professional categories. These documents will be used as a basis for proving their acquired skills and competencies. In addition, the registered professionals are required to attend refresher courses on a regular basis to maintain and update their knowledge and skills.
- By assessing damages caused by a disaster, the heads of Prefectural and Municipal governments and their disaster response teams will identify specific areas of expertise where support is required, and take actions to request the central Government to deploy the registered professionals.

- The affected local authorities will respond to the situation in collaboration with the deployed professionals. In order to facilitate smooth integration of the deployed professionals into the existing response mechanisms without delay, the host prefectural and municipal Governments should include and articulate relevant arrangements in their disaster response manuals or SOPs. In this regard, a standard SOP template should be developed by the central Government, with a view to help the local authorities to follow the necessary procedures.
- It is assumed that many of the trained and registered professionals are posted in the relevant parts of the Prefectural and Municipal authorities addressing disaster management issues. Tripartite agreements should be concluded in advance between the Centre, the registered experts and the organisations to which they belong, so that necessary actions are taken to allow temporary deployment of the professionals during an emergency.
- The local authorities should include arrangements for receiving the professionals deployed from the national level in their own disaster management plans and clarify concrete steps to be followed to make this happen in advance. In addition, the local authorities should sensitise their staff about the possibility that support experts would be deployed from other local authorities as well as JRCs and NGOs and ensure that they would be received appropriately and without delay.
- Even if the registered professionals are transferred to other positions not directly related to disaster response, the local authorities should continue to register them as active back-up resources. As part of their human resource management policies, due consideration should be made not to create any gaps in the expertise, especially when the trained officials had to move on and while successors are being trained to back-up.
- The central Government and the local authorities should actively support the career development of the registered professionals, particularly by creating an environment where they can strengthen their expertise and accumulate experiences. An accreditation system should also be put in place.

h. Promoting international cooperation building on the domestic experience in disaster response

- More interactions between those involved in the domestic disaster response and those working for international disaster relief operations should be encouraged, such as through personnel exchanges and organising joint seminars. This will help mutual learning about the different operational environments and maximising their strengths from both sides.
- Arrangements should be made to ensure that professionals experienced with disaster response in Japan are prioritised to attend and speak at international conferences on disaster management and be advised to share their experiences and views with the international community.
- Professionals experienced with domestic disaster response should be deployed to

foreign countries affected by large scale natural disasters and engage in response coordination around UNDAC and etc. Such a deployment in itself will contribute to the international efforts, but also create opportunities for learning about international disaster response systems.

- Working with Japan based organisations promoting international cooperation, opportunities should be explored to utilise the experiences of domestic responders to support disaster management in other countries.
- To support the career development of qualified professionals at the central Government and local authorities, opportunities should be created to help them share experiences and learn at the international level, including staff exchange programmes with disaster management agencies such as OCHA and UNISDR.

Part IV: Discussions on the topics of background of the above recommendations

The Study Group held many sessions to study topics related to the recommendations made to date. Part IV outlines our discussions as background references, which, we hope, will deepen the understanding of the recommendations.

1. International Disaster Response Laws (IDRL)

Since 2001, the IFRC has worked to contribute to domestic legal preparedness by providing guidelines for improving domestic legal, institutional and organisational frameworks on international disaster relief and initial recovery assistance. In 2007, the IFRC and the state parties to the Geneva Convention adopted the “Guidelines for the domestic facilitation and regulation of international disaster relief and initial recovery assistance” was adapted by the 30th International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent.

The guidelines are meant to assist, if not legally bind, governments to strengthen their domestic laws, policies and/or procedures for international disaster response, while stating that they will have no direct impact on existing responsibilities and rights under domestic laws. The guidelines reconfirm the primary roles of authorities and relevant organisations, and recommend that they should give minimum legal facilities to foreign governments and humanitarian assistance organisations that intend and are able to satisfy the minimum standards for coordination, quality and accountability. The guidelines also expect governments to improve the quality and efficiency of international disaster relief and initial recovery assistance for better assistance to disaster-affected regions.

The guidelines mainly cover the following topics²⁶:

Core responsibilities (responsibilities of affected states, assisting states and humanitarian organisations)

- The authorities and responsibilities of affected states with primary responsibility for relief and recovery assistance; compliance of disaster-affected states with national and international laws, responsibility for international standards for the quality of assistance, early warning and preparedness for assisting states and humanitarian organisations

Early warning and preparedness

- Development of procedures to facilitate swift sharing of information about disasters among assisting states and humanitarian organisations (including the United Nations’ Emergency Relief Coordinator) to maximise the effect of international assistance
- Coordinators as contact persons for effective international assistance

²⁶The Guidelines for the Domestic Facilitation and Regulation of International Disaster Relief and Initial Recovery Assistance, the Journal of Humanitarian Studies Vol. 1, 2012, pp. 181-196

- Clear designation of domestic governmental entities with responsibility and authority in related areas.

Initiation and termination of international disaster relief and initial recovery assistance

- The affected state should decide whether or not to request disaster relief and notify promptly.
- The affected state should undertake joint needs assessments with the United Nations and other assisting humanitarian organisations.
- The affected state should provide assisting states and humanitarian organisations with adequate information on domestic laws and regulations of particular relevance to the entry and operation of disaster-relief or initial recovery assistance.
- Prior to deploying military assets, terms and conditions including issues such as the duration of deployment, whether they must be armed or unarmed, the use of their national uniforms, and mechanisms for cooperation with civilian actors are to be agreed by the assisting states involved.
- When an assisting actor wishes to terminate disaster-relief or initial recovery assistance, it should provide appropriate notification.
- The affected state and assisting actor should consult, bearing in mind the impact of such termination on disaster-affected communities.

Eligibility for legal facilities (facilities to assist states)

- It is recommended that states establish criteria for assisting humanitarian organisations seeking eligibility for legal facilities, and make quick decisions and notifications to such organisations.

Legal facilities for entry and operations

- It is recommended that the affected states provide the legal facilities listed below to assisting states and eligible assisting humanitarian organisations:
 - Visas and any necessary work permits renewable within the territory for the period necessary to implement disaster-relief or initial recovery activities
 - Temporary approval of licenses and certifications issued by foreign governments for medical care, engineering, driving and other specialties
 - Exemption from all customs duties, taxes, tariffs or governmental fees
 - Exemption from all exports, transit and import restrictions, and simplification or minimization of documentation requirements (for vehicles, ITC equipment, special instruments, etc.)
 - Registration of vehicles for disaster-relief or initial recovery activities, and temporary approval of number plates
 - Priority access to bandwidth, frequencies and satellite use for telecommunications and data transfer
 - Setting of requirements for imports of medical goods and equipment, and alleviation of

legal and administrative barriers in relation to imports and exports

- Various rights (opening bank accounts, concluding leases, rental agreements and other contracts, acquiring and disposing of property)
- Securing of legal employment contracts and contract terminations of domestic workers
- Legal responsibility for accidents and damage

2. Rights Based Approach

The Rights Based Approach (RBA) is defined as a framework for problem-solving, in which problems faced by a person are understood as situations where the person's rights are not respected or fulfilled. To resolve the problems, this approach aims to clarify who needs to play a role, and what kinds of roles need to be played. To overcome discriminations and to promote realisation of universal rights, the RBA supports empowerment of the right holders as well as capacity building of the duty bears to fulfil their accountability. According to this approach, the aid providers and external factors involved in emergency relief need to provide direct and temporary assistance to address issues that require urgent interventions.

'Protection' is an internationally established approach built on RBA that is applied to humanitarian assistance and disaster relief during emergencies. The Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) defines protection as activities to fully respect all persons' rights in compliance with international humanitarian, human rights, refugee laws, and regardless of age, gender, social, ethnic, nationality, religion and any other backgrounds of the persons concerned. According to the IASC definition, protection not only involves ensuring physical security but also respecting and fulfilling various rights including right to live, freedom from torture and gender-based violence, freedom of movement, right to access humanitarian assistance including food, water, healthcare and education, and property right and right of residence. Accordingly, a wide range of activities implemented by international humanitarian organisations to realize protection constitute the core of international humanitarian action.

A number of protection mandated agencies including UN humanitarian organisations, the International Red Cross Movement and others implement protection activities as part of their own programmes in their specialised areas. Such activities include, for example, registration of refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs), countermeasures against human trafficking, support for tracing and reunifying separated family members, follow-up support for the victims of sexual violence and abuse, training for those managing the IDP camps and the military, and protesting against serious violation of the law and human rights. Protection is also a common issue cross-cutting various support sectors. For instance, making right decisions on the locations of water points and the methods of food distribution is essential for ensuring protection, as women could be

subject to intimidation or violence in these contexts. In addition, every effort needs to be made to promote durable solutions for the affected populations beyond securing their protection on a temporary basis. In order to reduce people's protection risks, efforts also need to be made to prevent and stop human rights violations. If violations have already occurred, interventions are required in terms of responsive actions to mitigate the immediate impacts; remedial actions to restore dignity of the victims; and to support environment-building by improving social, cultural, institutional and legal conditions so that people's rights are more respected.

The roles played by external actors in the RBA can be categorised as follows:

- (i) strengthen the capacity of the local community to respect human rights, and support the right holders claiming their rights;
- (ii) Strengthen mechanisms to protect human rights, and support the duty bearers in their efforts to fulfil their obligations;
- (iii) Provide direct and temporary assistance, depending on the circumstances, and
- (iv) Make efforts to eliminate discriminations and to promote everyone's rights.

In the Istanbul CSO Development Effectiveness Principles, RBA is highlighted as the first and most important principle to be followed by the civil society organisations (CSOs). JANIC has published a guidebook elaborating the Istanbul Principles, and it promotes the dissemination of the principles among Japanese NGOs. The promotion of RBA as well as ensuring appropriate learning opportunities related to it are being discussed at various forums between MOFA and NGOs as well as between JICA and NGOs.

3. Gender

Women's empowerment must constitute a key component when promoting disaster preparedness in the peacetime. However, such an idea shares only a small part of the general policy discourse in Japan. People started to draw sufficient attention to the relationship between disaster management and gender started only after the GEJE. Nevertheless, the discussions geared towards revising local disaster management plans still tend to be centred around how to pay attention to women's needs while they stay in evacuation centres.

The Gender Equality Bureau of the Cabinet Office admitted that from a gender perspective, various problems emerged during the GEJE. The Government noted that women's perspectives were often neglected in the disaster response and preparedness; little consideration was made on the needs of women; and women's involvement in the decision-making process was rather limited. In the follow-up to these lessons learned, the Bureau developed and announced 'Guidelines for Disaster Management and Recovery from a Gender Equality Perspective' on May 31, 2013.

The Sphere Project provides a set of minimum standards which need to be met in emergency relief

operations during natural disasters and conflicts, and the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and NGOs are committed to comply with them. As cross-cutting issues, the Sphere refers to children, gender, HIV/AIDS, the elderly, disability, psychosocial support, disaster risk reduction and the climate change. Of particular note here is that understanding and applying some of the Sphere Standards may provide possible solutions to the gender related problems identified during the GEJE. For example:

- The Humanitarian Charter stipulates the protection principles.
- The core standards of the Sphere underscores the need to collect and report gender and age disaggregated data; ensuring the right gender balance in the team composition when conducting interviews; gender sensitive interview methods; as well as ensuring reflecting the appropriate gender balance when the affected populations express their views.
- The Sphere Project gives more detailed sector specific standards as well:

Water , Sanitation and Hygiene	Making sure that necessary items are available/accessible; giving due considerations not to put excessive burden on women; locations of bathing facilities and toilets; securing appropriate washing and drying spaces; addressing safety/security concerns by installing lighting facilities; and ensuring an appropriate ratio of the toilets between men and women (1:3)
Food Security and Nutrition	Securing women’s access/participation; addressing the needs of pregnant women and lactating mothers; participation in designing kitchen facilities; equal access to livelihood and employment opportunities; and not imposing household responsibilities on women exclusively
Shelter and Non-Food Items	Diverse views are represented in deciding the use of available spaces; securing privacy; distributing extra clothes and sanitary items for those with chronic diseases and disabilities, pregnant women, infants, and the elderly; and addressing specific needs in terms of cooking items, plates and other non-food items
Health	Securing female medical staff; addressing reproductive health needs
Protection	Protection from gender-based violence; response and legal measures; and referring the victims to support/care facilities

Similar points are also raised in the IASC Guidelines on the Protection of the People Affected by Natural Disasters, which the UN humanitarian agencies and other NGO members of IASC have agreed to. The IASC Guidelines articulate the importance of both protecting vulnerable women and women’s participation in decision making.

The Women’s Network for the East Japan Disaster compiled good practices on gender and diversity

issues in light of the international standards discussed above. In the process of compilation, the group identified the following problems:

- SOS signals were not simply picked up, and the needs were neither communicated nor understood.
- Gender disaggregated data were not available.
- Lack of understanding of or indifference to gender equality.
- The responders did not understand the meaning of minimum standards. Given that Japan is a developed country, it was difficult for them to realise the level of response that address the issue of people's dignity sufficiently.
- Misunderstanding or bias by the external actors/aid providers on women's burden or responsibilities in the area of unpaid household work such as cooking.
- The rights of women as aid beneficiaries are not understood. People receiving humanitarian assistance should be aware of the international norms and standards.

<p>Levels of awareness among the aid providers, including those with international experience</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● “In a disaster situation, it does not matter if you are a man or woman.” ● “Children are treated equally, regardless of whether they are boys or girls.” ● “Unlike Afghanistan or any other developing countries, Japan is a developed country with no gender based discrimination. So, there is no need to pay attention to gender issues in Japan.” ● “The Shere Standards are needed in developing countries, but they are not applicable to Japan, where the people's living standard is very high.” ● “The Japanese culture is great, because even in evacuation centres, people clearly distinguish the division of labour between men and women, and they all behave in an orderly manner.” ● The bias and assumption that only women's groups or groups for the handicapped people can do the necessary job for them. At the on-set of an emergency, it is the local community that responds first, and specialised groups could be approached for assistance afterwards.
<p>Level of awareness among the beneficiaries of disaster relief</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● “I thought I must not ask too much or something too selfish, because people are helping us.” ● “I thought that those in charge made the best possible decisions. Under such circumstances, I found it difficult to request more.”

4. Children

(1) Little or no access to disaster information by children themselves

Children are often recognised as those who are protected by adults, and information related to disasters are monopolised by adults. As a result, children cannot understand what is happening and why certain actions need to be taken. This makes children feel uneasy and powerless. Moreover, adults are often not ready to listen to children's opinions, even if children might know more than adults (e.g. the shortest and safest evacuation routes). A situation like this could lead to increased disaster risks.

(2) Lack of understanding about child specific needs

The fact that children have their own needs during disasters, which are different from those of adults, is not well understood. For example, children need safe and secure spaces to learn and play, even when they are in evacuation centres. Another child specific priority is not to discontinue education. However, education is not included even in the Sphere standards.

5. Vulnerable groups, including the elderly and handicapped

The United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR) reports that according to a study on the GEJE conducted by the Japan Disability Form (JDF), the mortality rate of the persons with disabilities was more or less twice as high as that of those without disabilities. NHK's 'welfare network' team also conducted a survey on the mortality rates in the 27 disaster-affected Municipalities of the three Prefectures in Tohoku, and its result supports the same trend. The mortality rate among the total affected population was 1.03%, whereas that of the persons with disabilities was 2.06%. Main lessons learned around assisting the persons with disabilities were related to some of the physical difficulties faced during evacuation as well as limited access to vital information due their visual and hearing disabilities. In addition, a significant number of those with disabilities chose or were forced to stay at home rather than in evacuation centres where people and assistance were concentrated. Moreover, those who did not belong to specific support groups before the disaster were particularly vulnerable, yet the need to protect their personal information and other privacy issues led to restrict the responders' outreach efforts. Furthermore, according to the Government's White Paper on Disaster Management in 2011, 65 % of the total deaths involved the affected populations who were more than 60 years old, whereas the proportion of the same age group in the three disasters affected Prefectures was approximately 31%. These data show the extreme vulnerability of the people with disabilities and the elderly during disasters, thus swift and appropriate response to meet their diverse needs is crucial.

In August 2013, the Cabinet Office (Disaster Management) issued a set of guidelines to support the evacuation of the population who need special care and assistance at the time of a disaster. These

guidelines recommend that an overall approach to the people requiring special care and assistance during their evacuation needs to be clarified; key action items related to this objective are agreed as part of the local disaster management plans; and that further details are fleshed out in the sub-plans supporting the overall planning. The guidelines also prioritize identifying those in need of special care and assistance, creating their name lists, sharing information about them and using such information when they are assisted with evacuation - e.g. transport arrangements and verifying their survival and safety. However, the guidelines do not provide concrete guidance on individual planning, while tasking the municipal governments and social welfare coordinators at the community level to come up with a plan and to conduct training and evacuation drills in partnership with relevant factors such as healthcare and welfare institutions, the private sector and voluntary groups. Furthermore, the guidelines do not recommend a specific set of standards or methodologies in terms of facilitating their evacuation as well as on the kinds of assistance to be provided to meet their needs after they are moved to the evacuation centres.

6. Role of NGOs/NPOs in the domestic disaster response

(1) Strengths of NGOs/NPOs in the domestic disaster response

NGOs and NPOs' actual experience and accomplishments in assisting the affected populations during the GEJE demonstrated their strengths and unique roles that are different from Government entities or designated public institutions. With their strong knowledge and experience, NGOs and NPOs can provide considerable support capacities that complement the efforts of other public aid providers in the following areas:

- Assistance in receiving and managing individual volunteers: As was the case in the GEJE, it is often the local Councils of Social Welfare and their support staff that are tasked to operate the volunteer centres to receive and coordinate non-professional volunteers who show up in the affected areas offering help individually. However, depending on the disaster's types and scales, the local Council's level of preparedness, as well as the number of incoming volunteers, there are situations where the local Councils find it difficult to fully cope by them alone. Under such circumstances, resources of NGOs and NPOs can be utilised to supplement the work of the local Councils with greater capability and flexibility. Additional support by NGOs/NPOs would help address a wide range of practical concerns including registration of the volunteers, planning of their allocations and deployment, matching between assistance needs and available resources as well as managing volunteers' safety and security. The activities can be implemented through collaborations between the Council's support staff and NGO/NPO staff members experienced in the coordination of emergency relief and humanitarian aid.

- Targeted assistance for the affected populations who cannot be reached rapidly or with specific critical needs: Local authorities are allowed to interpret the existing legal provisions related to disaster response when setting their boundaries of beneficiaries and types of assistance. However, until the central Government communicates how the law should be applied more concretely, the local authorities would not be able to trigger certain types of assistance. Moreover, there is always communication time-lag until the decision is communicated down to the ground level and shared among the staff, particularly when they are busy responding to the local emergencies with their extremely stretched capacity. Particularly at the onset of the disasters, there are many critical occasions where NGOs and NPOs can offer help and make time sensitive interventions without waiting for initiatives to be taken by the public institutions.

(2) Role of NGOs/NPOs in disaster response

Before the GEJE, the existence of NGOs/NPOs and the unique role that they could play in assisting the affected populations were not fully recognised by the public institutions - especially by the local authorities. In the Disaster Management Basic Act, references are made to 'other relevant parties' or neighbourhood and solidarity based voluntary organisations. Although it is assumed that NGOs and NPOs are included in these categories, the specific areas and degree of contribution that NGOs/NPOs can make are largely different from what individual volunteers can offer. In the current set-up, therefore, potential capability of the NGOs and NPOs are not fully explored, and the impact of their contributions in the response could be well underestimated.

Individual volunteers showing up in the affected areas tend to operate in an ad hoc manner. Therefore, their general tasks matched with the needs - such as moving relief items or clearing mud and cleaning at the household level - usually do not require much of the specialist skills. On the other hand, NGOs and NPOs are groups of trained staff who accumulated experience and can demonstrate their expertise. Therefore, NGOs/NPOs can commit themselves to implement their designed activities with necessary inputs and in coordination with other organisations. The NPOs/NGOs can be considered supportive resources as they aim to secure qualified staff and conduct training to ensure quality of their programmes at a certain level. Therefore, the central, prefectural and municipal governments should value the competencies that NGOs/NPOs have; clearly recognise and articulate the role of NGOs/NPOs in their disaster management plans; and utilise their capacity in the actual disaster response.

In response to the GEJE, NGOs distributed NFI kits for temporary houses such as bedding and cooking items, or provided some cash support to cover these needs. However, some argue that the public institutions could have better covered the needs by interpreting the Disaster

Management Basic Act differently, and that NGOs/NPOs should have focused on other types of assistance requiring different expertise and response to more diverse and critical needs of the affected populations that they are better at addressing. In order to ensure rapid response and efficient assistance based on a clear division of labour, NGOs and NPOs should learn more about the Disaster Management Basic Act. At the same time, the public institutions should consider apply disaster response related laws to NGO/NPO activities before a disaster strikes. Furthermore, media should be advised to make a clear distinction between the individual volunteers and those working with NPOs/NGOs; reflect on their roles and evaluate the impact of their programmes; and address questions related to the accountability of NGOs/NPOs.

(3) Coordination among NGOs/NPOs

A coordination system - that does not solely rely on informal and ad-hoc personal relationships - is needed, in order for NGOs and NPOs to maximise their capabilities to respond to a large scale disaster with sufficiently wide geographic coverage. Given that the operational environment of humanitarian assistance in Japan differs significantly from that of other countries, it is questionable if transplanting the coordination mechanisms and resources used in the international context directly to Japan would work effectively. In other words, a unique Japanese system needs to be developed by well taking into consideration the Japanese disaster response system and the wide range of organisations involved in it. Lessons learned by JPF, JANIC and other intermediary organizations created during the GEJE shows that NGOs and NPOs need to agree on a system to collectively respond to and communicate on an emergency situation; establish a coordination body equipped with necessary resources; and sensitise about these among the NGOs and NPOs during the peacetime.

To strengthen their coordination capacities, NGOs and NPOs should secure human resources with relevant knowhow and experience. In particular, systematic and continued collection of information around 3Ws (Who, does what and where) is essential for creating an enabling environment for coordination. Thus, the coordination body needs to examine the most efficient information management methods and prioritise to develop a system that allows real time data collection, monitoring and analysis on needs and response.

During the GEJE, intermediary organisations were expected to play a significant role in terms of responding to the offers of international assistance and handling the foreign aid organisations. However, such coordination required the intermediary organizations to pre-establish networks not only with the domestic responders but also with different parts of the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs, UN and other international organisations, foreign donors and international NGOs, and to put in place a mechanism to ensure swift and smooth

communications with them in advance. To fully respond to a disaster as intermediary organisations, they need to incorporate these responsibilities in their work planning; develop response capacity including human resources; and improve their management systems.

In addition, it is important to secure dedicated staff that can focus on coordination work, because requesting NGO and NPO programme staff to participate in coordination meetings would mean considerable burdens for them on the ground. It is therefore necessary for these organisations to recognise that coordination is an essential element of relief activities, and to invest in securing and developing staff with coordination related knowledge and skills during the peacetime. If securing such coordination staff is financially difficult, an option could be to register and retain the trained and qualified staff and mobilise them when faced with emergencies. In other words, NGOs and NPOs should consider the necessity and means to retain human resources before a disaster strikes. In this context, former JOCVs could be a useful pool of talents as well.

(4) Broader coordination mechanisms involving diverse actors including NGOs/NPOs

In order to respond to a large scale disaster in Japan effectively, the central, prefectural and municipal governments, designated public institutions, and other actors should understand the role of NGOs and NPOs and the need to cooperate closely with them. It is also important to pre-establish a mechanism with the involvement of all the relevant actors. To this effect, the coordination body for NGOs/NPOs discussed above should take part in the framework of broader coordination and represent the views of NGOs and NPOs.

Firstly, the role of NGO/NPO coordination body should be clearly defined in the Disaster Management Basic Act and relevant disaster management basic plans. This will enable the NGO/NPO coordination body to engage with the government and other public institutions in their official capacity. Furthermore, NGO and NPO members should participate in government led meetings for disaster preparedness at the central, prefectural and municipal levels. Such pre-engagement will ensure that NGOs and NPOs can discuss coordinated response with the disaster response headquarters at central, prefectural and municipal levels in concrete terms, followed by pre-disaster exercises to test the necessary coordination arrangements.

In the response to the GEJE, NGOs and NPOs were requested to coordinate among themselves with the disaster volunteer centers at the prefectural and municipal levels, and with the volunteer coordination office of the Cabinet Office at the national level. However, coordination of NGOs and NPOs with considerable amount of resources and operational capacities require a significantly higher level of capacity than what is required for handling individual volunteers. It would be practically impossible for a staff at a volunteer center to

coordinate both the NGOs/NPOs and the individuals in parallel. Thus, it would be more reasonable to establish a body that can coordinate among NGOs and NPOs, separately from the volunteer centres. Alternatively, a mechanism needs to be developed to inject necessary human resources that support the community based relief activities and work in close partnership with the NGO/NPO coordination body as needed.

For example, in Ishinomaki, a clear division of labour was agreed between the local Council of Social Welfare and the Ishinomaki Disaster Recovery Assistance Council in a relatively early phase of the disaster response. Whereas the former focused on the management of individual volunteers, the latter worked on the coordination and information management of programmes run by NGOs/NPOs. The experience in Ishinomaki, which resulted in an effective assistance and recovery efforts joined by both the NGO/NPO community and the government authorities, is a good practice that should be considered when designing a future model of coordination.

(5) Code of conduct for the assistance programmes implemented by NGOs/NPOs

To date, whether the international standards such as the Sphere standards, that have been primarily developed to support humanitarian assistance in the developing countries, can be directly applied to the disaster response in Japan has not been thoroughly examined. However, as discussed in the Section 1 of Part I (Establishment and application of national minimum standards for future disaster response in Japan, building on exiting international norms and standards), the NGO/NPO coordination body should promote that NGOs and NPOs should comply with these normative standards when they are involved in relief operations.

Nevertheless, faced with many emergency situations both in and outside Japan, NGOs and NPOs may have to recruit a significant number of new staff and dispatch them quickly, often before being able to fully sensitise them with the norms and standards. Few Japanese NGOs and NPOs have established solid financial bases, and most of them struggle with retaining staff members as part of their preparedness for future disaster response. In other words, many of them usually operate with a minimum number of staff, while there is not much room left for supporting the staff themselves to accumulate knowledge on the international standards, including training. Therefore, ensuring compliance with the norms and standards cannot be left with the NGOs and NPOs alone; they require additional support in terms of developing guidance materials, providing training, and establishing a monitoring mechanism and accountability framework.

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Appendix

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* As described in the Preface, the Great East Japan Earthquake and International Humanitarian Assistance Study was conducted by participants' voluntary efforts. The recommendations were compiled by their individual opinions and do not represent the views of their organisations.

* Besides the above participants, officers from the Cabinet Office of the Government of Japan and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs participated as observers.

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The contents such as articles in this Journal do not necessary represent the official views of the Japanese Red Cross Society and the Japanese Red Cross Academy as well as the Japanese Red Cross Institute for Humanitarian Studies.

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