

Recent Change of Social Care Giving System And Community Development in Japan

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Abstract

Aging in Japan now brings about a change of care giving system. With introducing a new social insurance system to the social welfare system for our old age, we are in the face of difficult problems, such as clarification or relocation and reconsideration of volunteer and voluntary association in Japan including our block residents' association. Also the activities of NPO and private enterprises must be noteworthy. After/with the policy change of our community integration, this new system might form a base for a kind of "Little government" mediated only by personal contract without any social solidarity.

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Aging in Japan

We are now changing our social care giving system for the elderly and the handicapped in Japan. The new system is called "KOUTEKI - KAIGO-HOKEN" in Japanese, public insurance system for social needs of care giving. It has been prepared since 1995 and will start from April 2000. The act of its system was brought into existence in National Diet last December, partly being compared with German system.

Aging in Japan is so rapidly and rising as if like no ceiling. The proportion of over 65 years old people to the total population is now over 16% on an average, but it is estimated to reach over 30% in 2025. On the one hand the birth rate is bent on decreasing, on the other hand the span of human life is widening. Total population of Japan is speculated to decrease from 1 billion

and 20 million now to at most 60 million in 2090*¹. We should meet with the difficulty of reproduction of society itself near future without any efficient social policies or concrete measures*² to promote our birth and childcare condition.

We are having now a few local governments of which aging proportion is over 50% in rural area (*see table 1*). Even in big cities like Tokyo, Osaka, Nagoya, Kyoto and so on, most of their central area shows high aging proportion (over 20%), where we can see so called one of the “Inner city problems” *³. Being symbolized by these phenomena, our aging problems or the problems occurred by aging are now or to be one of the highest concern taken by whole nation, as well as the national economical crises now in Japan. So both central government as top and communities as bottom now force almost all-local governments as real agencies (we have over 3,200 local governments in Japan) to make each plan of care giving activities and its supply system coped with upcoming total needs. Who and how or where to care is the main matters of discussing and planning in relation to each financial affairs.

Social Welfare Planning in Japan

All of our local governments had already researched the care needs of their residents and communities, and then made a care plan for aged or handicapped people and their care needs without exception by 1993. It was named “Gold-plan” that is a general term of “10 years planning for promoting the Social Welfare and Health for Elderly” presented 1989 by the Ministry of

* 1 This forecasting is calculated in 1991 under the condition that the present birth rate would not change until 2090. According to other optimistic forecasting, our total population in 2090 will be about 1 billion. But ongoing decline tendency of the birth rate might accelerate our population decreasing.

* 2 Though we had made a plan named “Angel Plan” aiming at the ascent of birth rate linking together with “Gold Plan”, it has been inefficacious as a matter of fact until now. “Gold Plan” will be interpreted next paragraph.

* 3 We have many areas where the nighttime population of the elderly reaches to over 50% in some overview.

Welfare and Health of Japan. All cities (town, province) had to make each plan following its instruction.

“Gold-plan” has attracted a national wide and sometimes an international concern in connection with the problems of the local autonomy to the central and it’s resources of each local government. While we have had many arguments latently on the problems of the local autonomy in Japan since 1970’s when our community policy was changed to strengthen, the “Gold-plan” helped the arguments forward to being brought up for a real political discussion for the first time. Thereafter the problem of economic and social differentials among local governments has begun to be discussed in its real sense. It might be said that the “Gold-plan” could be first step to pursue the arguments to its logical conclusion in Japan.

Now after 1995, we pondered it over to “New Gold Plan” aiming the former goals of “Gold Plan” about twice up. It was a result summing up the goal of which each local government presented*4.

However, in most local governments a financial affair doesn’t permit its realization, partly because the financial regression of central government*5, of which stance is “much intrude, less money to assist”. “KOUTEKI-KAIGO-HOKEN”, I introduced at the beginning of this report, stands as the very financial supplement to “Gold-plan” and “New Gold Plan”. But it devised the meaning of social care giving into medical service and mental, human-relational, environmental or community-relational service. We have discussed three dimensions in social welfare service in Japan until quite recently, by medical, by technical and by socio-relational. The act of social care giving is relatively going to be limited or centralized to the first dimension, by medical and its related. The service we have called social welfare service is partly going to be excluded from our next care-giving system. We are afraid that

*4 Nevertheless, it is said at most 25% of local governments that made their Gold-Plan for themselves. The rest 75% depended their work to lay the plan upon many kinds of private research institutes.

*5 While a system of consumption tax was introduced in 1989 in order to make a resource of revenue for promoting our social welfare, the exact expenditure from the resource for it was reported only 6%.

only the factor relatively easy to count shall be the object of payment, for example, time of duration for care giving or fees of medical examination for cure.

We have been discussing the concept of "care" at the Social Welfare Society of Japan. One of the most typical opinion is "Care must be understood more concentrated upon house keeping rather than physical care". Being edged off the room of communicative and social work from care giving, most home-helpers begin to complain of their work as "from work to labor".

Policy Changes of Local Government

We recognize a tendency that our local governments changed their integration policies for their residents or their attitude to their own communities in 1970's after the end of highly economic growth that had occurred since the latter of 1950's. They began to intervene in their communities under the guidance of central government. First step to change they did was to make their residents help each other much more by way of strengthening their conventional association. Second was to make them organize themselves self-helpfully, partly or not, relying upon new kinds of neighborhood association being managed by volunteers and voluntary association. And third was to form a link of the private agencies supplying community service in the chain, as if they were public ones to serve.

What we have to call into question now may be how to draw a line between the public and the private. For example, whose work the garbage collection, street sweeping and home helping and so on is? And how we take partial charge of those works?

*Resident's organization (traditional)

As for the first step, partly inheriting to our feudal tradition, CHONAIKAI/JICHIKAI*⁶, a traditional kind of neighborhood association or resident's

*6 The origin of CHONAIKAI/JICHIKAI is said to be GONINGUMI, a resident's unit organized by 5 families in EDO era of Japan, during from 17th to 19th century, which was installed into whole society for the ruin of the shogunate of Tokugawa. In those days, a family was forced to hold joint liability for the failure of the other four families (for example, arrears of taxes).

block association in Japan has been forced to come life again. It had a latent role to keep eyes on residents' acts and opinions mutually to prevent from breeding a kind of counter culture and political power to stand against to the control of state power in community. Sometime it had been judged as one of the driving forces for the World War II at the community level in previous Japan.

Now in late of 1990's, it seems that our national government is looking for promoting and stressing or widening the function of CHONAIKAI/JICHIKAI and directing it to cover the needs of residents, needs of socio-relational care of the elderly and the handicapped in addition. It is said in general that the typical CHONAIKAI/JICHIKAI in Japan has following 12 functions or activities in its association for community*7.

1. Promoting mutual friendship and helping one another.
2. Cooperating with counter-plans for traffic safety, against natural calamities and emergencies in community.
3. Breeding a decent neighborhood and environment for boys and girls, and assisting for organizing and managing the society of child, woman, handicapped and elderly.
4. Maintaining the dust disposing order and draining and fostering to recycle them
5. Zone planning for better living and green tract
6. Facilitating cultural and sports activities
7. Promoting the health of residents
8. Informing activity by publicity
9. Executing religious events(including funeral service)
10. Taking part in some kinds of political activities or coordinating the relationship of groups in community
11. Being concerned with administration
12. Construction and administration of a kind of institution for gathering and its maintenance

Some local governments have already started to order their CHONAIKAI /JICHIKAI, for example, to deliver meals to elderly and one who needs it at

*7 Tokai Jichitai Mondai Kenkyujo (Tokai Research Institute on Self-governing Affaires, Minoru Nakata represented) ed. "A new development of CHONAIKAI/JICHIKAI", Nov. 1995. Published by Jichitaikenkyusha p.117~212.

least once a week or every day, sometime collaborating with another voluntary association in each community. But exactly to view, we can find two contrasting movements. One is refusal not to respond to its order as an association; the other is also refusal apparently but actually serving meal voluntarily to return its original responsibility to the government of itself. The latter movement, mainly at urban area and big cities, hundreds or thousands of voluntary association and its members inside or across their communities are activating standing against to the policy. We cannot help seeing a gap between the intention of the policy making side and of the acting side actually. Analyzing the gap must lead us to a problem "What is volunteer?" in Japan.

The stance of central government to those movements is somehow relatively neutral or going to be neutral. It is like this, No matter who might serve, we will pay a half of the cost and local governments must pay half of the rest if you serve over 20 dishes every day. This ordinance was presented in 1993 from the Ministry of Health and Welfare of Japan.

Up to now the proportion of CHONAIKAI/JICHIKAI serving meals (lunch) at most once a month to the elderly that gather at their meeting houses is estimated to reach over 50%*8, but with no financial assistance of central and local government. According to another statistics, local governments that is carrying out or going to do the meal service every day, with public financial assistance, is also estimated to reach over 50%. We can see so many social relational forms between local governments and each association that we couldn't point out an explicit or unified tendency and any characteristics.

***New kinds of neighborhood association**

As for the second step, what we have to put into question is the meaning of "new" in calling new kinds of neighborhood association in Japan, and also the size and its membership. They are sometimes fruits of social education activities led by a section of local governments. Otherwise they are another

*8 Among them we can find many associations that are managed by only volunteers who are mostly reluctant to the administrative.

appearance of NPO activities and/or membership at community.

Some civil servants of local governments are acting vigorously to hold meetings and organize various voluntary circles so that they could enlighten and promote their own identification to their communities. They might be evaluated in their contributions to keep breeding new and humane resources of community. However, it must be noticed in Japan that the contributions are generally not in our political context ascending to central government but in social one working only at narrow area like community or local administrative area. The most gates to promotion are closed for them.

In referring to the activities of NPO here, we would like to point out the overlapping of NPO's membership with the new kind of neighborhood association.

Restrictedly to say, they are different from the traditional association in following few points. First, in the membership, they act more voluntarily and not inside but across their communities, second in the relationship of each group both horizontal and vertical, it must be judged uncertain or disconnected.

On the Council of Social Welfare in Japan

Even the Council of Social Welfare (CSW) does not always organize all of them^{*9}. The Council of social welfare in Japan is now organized half forcibly as a subcontract organ of each local government at almost all-administrative areas. And it is classified to three levels upgrading just parallel to administrative organs and areas; first at province or town or city, second at prefecture and last at nation (*see figure 1*). The number of the first level council is over 3,300, roughly as same as the number of local government.

The National Council of Social Welfare, the head of the council, was established in 1950 by the order of GHQ (General Headquarters) to bring up

*9 One of the reasons is in the relationship between the CSW and the social education movements. While the former is related to the Ministry of Health and Welfare, the latter is under the Ministry of Education. We can't see any appearance of collaborative works by both Ministries at community level.

and coordinate voluntary association and volunteer activities, but it had not worked sufficiently until 1970's. You may appreciate this organization a shadow government that is playing an important part to our community life in Japan in fact. So its way of forming connections with residents and communities, as well as with each level of government, is complicated but must be considered crucial. Because it is understood, in general, partly as private association and partly as public one. The constituents of this association are legally representatives of various kinds of voluntary groups or associations in a community, including ones of CHONAIKAI/JICHIKAI, but exactly to say the persons who are dispatched from each administrative organ hold its real leadership.

Recently, so to say the fourth level of CSW is increasing and spreading. It is called "Small Area Council of Social Welfare, being established mainly in big cities under the City CSW and sometimes even in middle size cities. While we take it standing at the same level as the Town or Province CSW, there seems to be a little different from the third level Council in its way of residents' participation and contribution to its community (*see table 2*). More spontaneous activities, both personal and collective, are organized into the CSW, so that the distinctive line to draw between the public and the private might be disappearing.

Exactly to say, we have to point out that a currency is emerging. A kind of community development like the continual establishment of third or fourth level of CSW is now going on. And what we see in the process may be taken as public at community level on the one hand, and as private at upper levels or in administrative sense on the other hand.

Appearance of another agencies

We have to point out some different types of agencies to care-give. In the next KAIGO-HOKEN system, NPO*¹⁰ such as groups of Consumer Livelihood Cooperative Association in mainly urban area and the Agricultural Cooperative Association in rural area are getting to be one of the most powerful agents to care-give. They have of their own educational means to present a license of home-helper and aim at being one of the biggest agencies.

Private enterprises are also going to be counted as important agencies to care-give. Now we are being swallowed up by the big wave of easing many restrictions on our various kinds of activities, whether they are community-based activities or commercial-based ones. The Act of NPO was already brought into existence this April and shall come into effect this December. Now our National Diet is discussing whether a private enterprise can be a legal agent to present social welfare service or not. An answer for it will be appeared in the affirmative way. Some biggest and famous enterprises, for example, SONY, DAIEI, TOYOTA and so on, as well as life insurance companies, are going to engage in welfare business, not only in the business corresponding to livelihood in general, but also to institutional and home care service in particular.

We will be situated in a selective and multi-dimensional relationship in choosing the supplier on one hand, but also situated in such a simple one, as only personal contracting must connect care giving and receiving on the other hand. Other to say, our social assistant relationship will be free to choose but

* 10 We have not yet an explicit definition of NPO in Japan. Usually following four points are adopted in defying it.

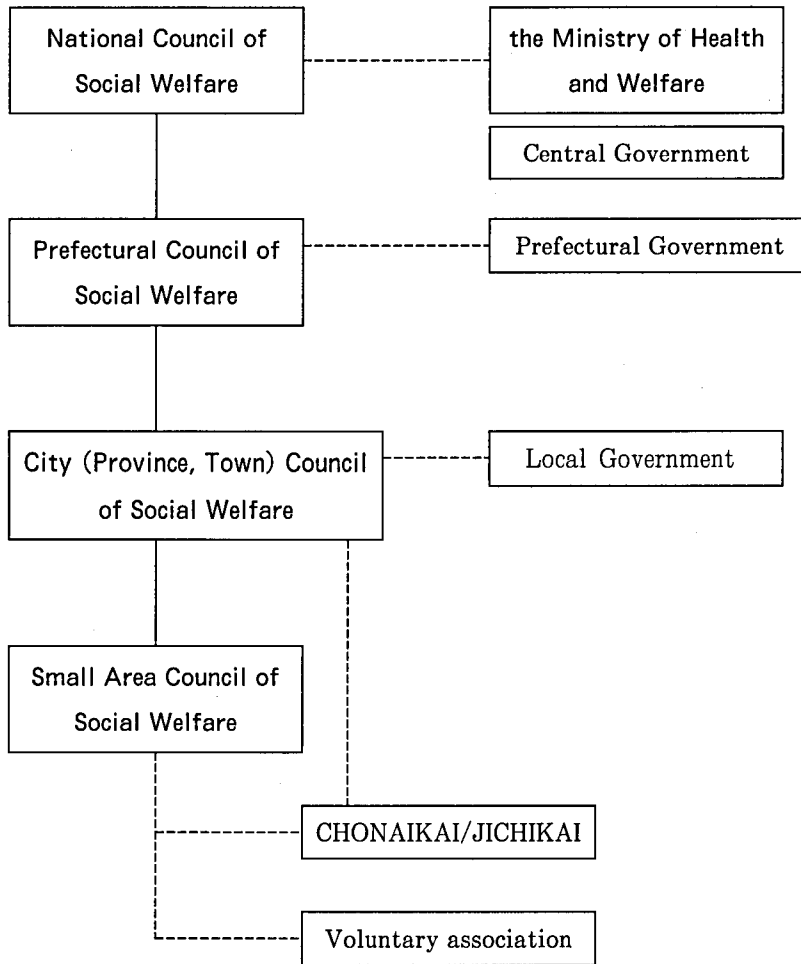
- 1) Non-profit making; no distribution of the surplus profit among the members.
- 2) Creativity of economic value; producing some economic value for society openly.
- 3) Non-governmental; being not under the control of government in the management and financial affairs.
- 4) Voluntarism; voluntary activities of the members. From these four check points both Consumer Livelihood Cooperative Association and the Agricultural Cooperative Association might be excluded from the NPO to be exact. CHONAIKAI/JICHIKAI is sometimes counted as one of NPO, in case it has an office for work.

currently mediated by maybe only money. The thought and system of placement that has formed our foundation or principal of social welfare in Japan is now disappearing, as not a matter of right and wrong but of fact.

The funds of the KOUTEKI-KAIGO-HOKEN shall be raised half by paying of all persons over 40 about ¥2,500(\$21.7) a month, and the other half defrayed out of the National Treasury. We have to keep paying this premium until the end of our lives, and we can apply and receive the service after reaching to 65 years old. One who fails to pay shall/may be punished in such ways, as the right of application for this system is inhibited, or raising of the charge in receiving the service. We have many issues to be discussed further. For example, in this system, all that apply can not always receive the service he/she needs. After being examined his/her condition medically, only 40% of applicants would be judged eligible for payment from the insurance. In addition, most handicapped less than 65 years old is edged out from the payment except a several cases.

Any way we can't put the next ways of promoting the welfare of the people into order in the existing circumstances. We should take all sorts of social security schemes, especially pension system, into consideration so that they could work consistently with residents movements and community organization.

**Figure 1. Construction of the Council of Social Welfare (CSW)
In relation to administrative organs in Japan**



**Table 1. The Numbers of Local Governments classified
by the rate of its aging population over 65 (1990-2025)**

	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025
Total	3,233	3,233	3,233	3,233	3,233	3,233	3,233	3,233
-10%	302	123	30	14	14	14	13	20
10-14%	792	515	369	179	84	52	49	43
15-19%	1,309	866	623	641	464	200	139	119
20-24%	609	1,006	892	764	831	680	473	446
25-29%	176	478	723	790	836	856	801	710
30-34%	38	172	376	482	562	728	734	682
35-39%	6	64	144	225	264	402	532	572
40-44%	1	8	55	88	111	182	284	336
45-49%	0	1	18	33	43	76	116	169
50%-	0	0	3	17	24	43	92	136

* Total numbers of local governments is counted by under the supposition that its present administrative area would not change.

* This estimated data is quoted from "An estimated population by the site of local governments", *Tokei Joho Kenkyu Center (Statistic Information Study Center)*

Table 2. Activities of the Council of Social Welfare (1995)

(from a document processed by Kenji Shibata, '97)

A. Activities assisted and fostered by the Council of Social Welfare

Contents of Activities	Number of CSW
*Networking at small area (#)	1,308
*Holding a round table of residents at small area (#)	1,177
*Organizing a society of living alone elderly	700
*Organizing a society of the bed-confined elderly	514
*Organizing a society of dementia elderly	344
*Organizing a society of (family who has) physically handicapped child/person	1,798
*Organizing a society of (family who has) mentally handicapped child/person	1,770
*Organizing a society of (family who has) mental disordered	972
*Organizing a society of fatherless family	2,066
*Organizing a society of motherless family	211
*Organizing a society of (family who has) other clients	255

"Small area" means mostly the range of an elementary school that contains several CHONAIKAI/JICHIKAI.

B. Activities of the Council of Social Work with participation of residents

Contents of Activities	Number of CSW
*Meal (delivery) services	2,280
*Watching and urgent information	1,715
*Assistance of house keeping	1,074
*Care giving	870
*Bathing service	749
*Transporting service	748
*Meeting for rehabilitation	695
*Management of small workshop for the handicapped	659
*Guide help service	520
*Day- service for the dementia	269
*Grouping for the breeders of infants	232
*Assist for friends making	215