

J. Agric. Sci., Tokyo Univ. Agric., 59 (2), 99–113 (2014)

東京農大農学集報, 59 (2), 99–113 (2014)

論	文
Articles	

Study on Corporate Support Initiatives in the Reconstruction of Agriculture following the Great East Japan Earthquake

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(Received November 20, 2013/Accepted April 18, 2014)

Summary : The ultimate goal of this research is to show that corporations—which participate in mutual-help activities—can help achieve faster and more appropriate reconstruction in the area of agriculture by utilizing their capabilities and working in cooperation with those engaged in self-help and public-help activities, and to have them recognized as such. As a preliminary step of the research, this article aims to ascertain the existences of a considerable number of cases of corporate support initiatives in the ongoing post-disaster agricultural reconstruction following the Great East Japan Earthquake and to analyze the characteristics of those initiatives. From this research, the following findings and implications have been obtained : First, the fact that more than 30 cases of corporate support initiatives for agriculture have been found solely based on secondary information. Based on support style, corporate support initiative can be classified into direct support, in which corporations provide support directly to their targeted recipients, and indirect support provided through intermediary agencies such as NPOs. And those defined as direct support can be further classified into those provided on a stand-alone basis and those involving multiple corporations. Corporate support initiatives are diverse in content, ranging from those involving participation in farming operations, the distribution and marketing of farm products, etc. to the provision of business resources such as people, goods, funds, and information. Second, corporate support initiatives can be typologically classified into four patterns based on the attributes of corporations and the underlying ideas of support. It is believed that the utilization of this concept of typology will enable more corporations to provide precise and expeditious support in the event of a large-scale natural disaster comparable to the Great East Japan Earthquake. Third, while many corporations provide support directly linked to their business activities, many others separate their support initiatives from their business activities. It is inferred that one reason behind this is the possibility of negative outcome of business-related support initiatives such as having corporate image undermined by being perceived to be engaging in sales promotion under the disguise of reconstruction support—which is a real danger because the line dividing reconstruction support activities and sales activities tends to blur. When different patterns of corporate support initiatives are identified and their respective characteristics and differences are clearly understood, corporations will be able to clearly explain their support stance to their targeted local communities in affected areas as well as to other stakeholders, while those on the receiving side—local governments, businesses, residents, etc.—will be able to have a more precise and accurate understanding of such initiatives. It is believed that all this will help enable corporations to provide expeditious and effective support.

Key words : the Great East Japan Earthquake, mutual-help, reconstruction of agriculture, corporate support

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Introduction

The Great East Japan Earthquake of March 11, 2011 had an enormous impact on agriculture in the Tohoku Region, which suffered not only the direct physical damage by the quake and subsequent tsunami but also from radioactive contamination and the spread of harmful rumors. A report compiled by the Reconstruction Design Council in response to the Great East Japan Earthquake^{*1} notes that among the three basic disaster management concepts of self help, mutual help, and public help, mutual help is particularly important as a guiding principle for post-disaster reconstruction. In reviving agriculture in the region, the current social environment is in favor of going beyond the conventional framework of post-disaster reconstruction to utilize the capabilities of corporations and non-profit organizations (NPOs) as a form of mutual help. Meanwhile, as a result of step-by-step changes in the relevant laws and regulations since 2003, more companies are going into the farming business today. Against this backdrop, and in light of the enactment of the Business and Agriculture Collaboration Promotion Act in 2008, it is fair to say that the Great East Japan Earthquake occurred just at a time when the distance between agriculture and businesses was fast narrowing. This has created an environment where corporations are readily recognized by society as an actor in agriculture reconstruction efforts and some companies have been actually engaged in such efforts. Also in rebuilding Japan's agriculture and making it more resilient to natural calamities, corporations are counted on for their abundant business resources and ability to take action.

However, the reconstruction from the March 2011 earthquake is the first-ever case of corporate involvement in the rebuilding of agriculture and not all corporate initiatives have been smooth going. Indeed, corporate support activities often caused confusion and were met with bewilderment. In order to better prepare for similar occasions in the future, it is necessary to systematize and theorize those initiatives undertaken in the ongoing agricultural reconstruction efforts.

The ultimate goal of this research is to show that corporations—which are a participant in mutual-help activities—can help achieve faster and more appropriate reconstruction in the area of agriculture by utilizing their capabilities and working in cooperation with those engaged in self-help and public-help activities, and to have them recognized as such. As a preliminary step of the research, this article aims to ascertain the existence of a considerable number of cases of corporate support initiatives in the ongoing post-disaster agricultural

reconstruction following the Great East Japan Earthquake and to analyze the characteristics of those initiatives.

Relevant Policy and Research Developments

(I) Developments in policies and research on the relationship between agriculture and businesses

In Japan, corporations had been prohibited from engaging in farming operations for many years under the Agricultural Land Act. However, a scheme popularly referred to as “special zone for farmland leasing,”^{*2} a type of the Special Zones for Structural Reform launched in April 2003, paved the way for corporate farming on leased farmland in designated areas. This was followed by the introduction of a new, enhanced farmland lease program in September 2005 to allow specified corporations to engage in farming operations in the same manner throughout the country. Then, in December 2009, the Agricultural Land Act was amended to enable corporations to enter into farmland lease agreements directly with landowners. As such, the past 10 years witnessed a significant progress in the establishment of laws and regulations for facilitating corporate entry into the farming business.

As to research on corporate entry into the farming business, some case studies were initiated in or around the spring of 2004, including SHIBUYA¹⁾ focusing on cases of construction companies and TAKEUCHI²⁾ on those of food companies. The scope of research has since expanded. For instance, KAMIYAMA³⁾ warns against rubber stamping the “nationalization” or “generalization” of special zones for farmland leasing. On the other hand, KANEKO⁴⁾ perceives corporate entry into the farming business in a positive light, noting that the time has come where not only farmers but also other players—i.e., industrial manufacturers, retailers, and service companies—should think together about the future of agriculture. Furthermore, drawing on a number of case examples, MUROYA⁵⁾ highlights the need for measures that take into consideration the significance of turning agriculture into higher-value-added business by utilizing the power of corporations and the nature of farmland as social common capital. Whereas all of those research works are based on individual case examples, SHIBUYA⁶⁾ made an attempt to identify the overall trends in corporate farming operations and corporate managers' attitude based on findings from a survey of 70 construction companies which expanded into the farming business, and has shown that local construction companies now have their place in the diversifying portfolio of farm operators. Meanwhile, YAMAMOTO *et al.*⁷⁾ have shown that the impact on the local agricultural sector can be

magnified by promoting cooperation between corporations and local farmers, suggesting the active utilization of corporations as a tool of government policy.

As such, extensive research efforts have been made to empirically examine corporate entry into the farming business and the number of corporations launching farming operations has been on the rise all the while. According to the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF), a total of 436 corporations entered into the farming business under the farmland lease scheme over the period of approximately 6.7 years from the lifting of the ban in 2003 to the December 2009 amendment of the Agricultural Land Act (or average 65 new entrants per year), which compares to a total of 1,261 corporations over the subsequent period of approximately 3.5 years through June 2013 (or average 360 new entrants per year), meaning that the pace of increase after the law amendment is five times faster than before⁸⁾. Furthermore, analysis by the Policy Research Institute of the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (PRIMAFF),⁹⁾ which is based on a statistical analysis of data for years through 2010 including those from the Census of Agriculture and Forestry as well as on findings from a field survey, found a unique feature of structural changes in Japan's agriculture in recent years. Noting that some of the rural areas where *local operators* of farmland are virtually nonexistent have successfully form *a new breed of operators* by inviting private-sector corporations and other players from outside, PRIMAFF points to the necessity of expanding the scope of actors in local agriculture to include corporations and others.

A sequence of policies were implemented to **strengthen** the relationship between farmers and corporations from non-farming sectors, as seen in the enactment of the Business and Agriculture Collaboration Promotion Act^{*3} in 2008 to promote collaboration between farmers and commercial or industrial enterprises, followed by the so-called Sixth-order Industry Act^{*4} in 2010 with an aim to amalgamate the primary industry with the secondary and tertiary industries to create a "senary" or "sixth-order" industry. Furthermore, as a vehicle to support collaborative projects undertaken by self-motivated agricultural, forestry, or fisheries operators and local business operators, a growth facilitation fund for agricultural, forestry, and fisheries industries^{*5} was established in 2013 by the government and other sponsors. As such, in addition to the gradual easing of restrictions on corporate entry into the farming business that began 10 years ago, a series of policy measures aimed at strengthening the relationship between farmers and businesses were **introduced** in succession over the past five years. Thus, the

Great East Japan Earthquake can be defined as a **disaster** that occurred at a time when the barriers between agriculture and business were being rapidly lowered.

(2) Research on post-disaster agricultural reconstruction

As an example of research on post-disaster agricultural reconstruction, PRIMAFF compiled a survey report¹⁰⁾ on cases of reconstruction from major natural disasters in the past including the volcanic eruption of Mt. Unzen-Fugen and the Southwest off Hokkaido Earthquake. The preface of this report notes that while significant research findings have been made in such scientific fields as geography, architectonics, and urban design, almost no tangible findings have been made in agricultural economics or rural sociology. As a finding from the survey specifically conducted for this research, the report states as follows: "In addition to subsidies from the central government, support activities financed by local reconstruction fund facilities, a pool of funds comprising those appropriated from prefectural government budgets and money donated by the general public, etc., contributed to the securing of farming workforce and the smooth resumption of farming operations in areas affected by the eruption of Mt. Unzen-Fugen and the Niigata Chuetsu Earthquake." It further notes: "While support measures provided by the central and prefectural governments are appreciated, there were always areas left unattended and the agility and responsiveness of local reconstruction fund facilities are highly appreciated in this regard." In other words, PRIMAFF's report suggests the necessity of support that is both agile and responsive, the very features of mutual help, because public help—though important—has its limitations.

As to research on agricultural reconstruction following the Great East Japan Earthquake, comprehensive discussions have been made in annual meetings of academic societies in agriculture-related social science—i.e., the Agricultural Economic Society of Japan (AFSJ), the Food System Research Association of Japan (FSRAJ), the Agricultural Economic Society of Tohoku (AEST), and the Farm Management Society of Japan (FMSJ)—as well as in special sessions and symposiums on post-disaster reconstruction. As a general trend, research efforts in fiscal 2011 were geared primarily to evaluating and reporting on the quake's impact on agriculture and fisheries and identifying challenges ahead, whereas the focus of research has been shifted to reconstruction from fiscal 2012 onward. In FMSJ's special session in 2011, KAWASHIMA¹¹⁾ underlined the need to find out how the productivity of local agriculture, forestry, and fisheries

could recover and what management factors would define the course of recovery. In response to this proposal, FMSJ's special session in 2012 focused on mutual help as a means to fill the shortcomings of public help and self help to discuss various initiatives and roles in the ongoing reconstruction process. More specifically, presentations were made on mutual help initiatives undertaken by various types of actors—such as voluntary organizations for farmer-to-farmer help, corporations, NPOs, agricultural corporations formed by farmers—to lay a foundation for discussion. In particular, SANO¹²⁾, who has been engaging in reconstruction activities in collaboration with local farmers as an employee of Kagome Co., Ltd., a leading food company, pointed out that the logic of business and that of farming differ greatly in purpose and how to strike a harmony between the two different logics is a major challenge. Meanwhile, MONMA,¹³⁾ who is the leader of a Tokyo University of Agriculture team providing intensive support for agricultural reconstruction in Soma, Fukushima Prefecture, underlines the importance of collaboration among local residents (i.e., actors in the self-help initiatives), NPOs and universities (i.e., actors in the mutual-help initiatives), and local and central governments (i.e., actors in the public-help initiatives) in solving problems. Needless to say, corporations are an actor in the mutual-help initiatives. Monma further notes as follows: “In considering agriculture reconstruction, it is necessary to involve new types of organizations and provide new sets of values, as seen in corporate involvement in agricultural reconstruction, targeted intensive support for specific players such as agricultural corporations, participation of groups of researchers specializing in reconstruction, reconstruction support by volunteers—quite different from those initiatives based on either public interests or private interests, namely, conventional values pursued by farmers and administration.” Among the points made, “corporate involvement in agricultural reconstruction” is in tune with the main theme of this article.

Here, it is necessary to refer to a special zone for fisheries reconstruction, which has been advocated for and brought into realization by Miyagi Prefecture as a post-disaster reconstruction scheme in the area of fisheries, though not in the area of agriculture. In April 2013, following request from the local communities, the Miyagi Prefectural Government paved the way for a local limited liability company set up by oyster farmers and Sendai-Suisan Co., Ltd. to obtain fishing rights without becoming a member of any fisheries cooperative thereby to operate oyster farming in the Momonoura district in the coastal city of Ishinomaki, Miyagi Prefecture starting from October 2013. This is an attempt to

accelerate reconstruction by introducing private-sector capital, new technologies, and sixth-order industry know-how into the disaster-hit primary sector. Though different in their fields, agriculture and fisheries have many things in common; both of them belong to the primary industry, suffer from the aging and shortage of workforce, and have been deeply impacted by the disaster. Corporate initiatives to help reconstruction efforts have been observed in the area of fisheries.

The study of reconstruction of agriculture in foreign territory is conducted, too. Tomura reports the rape project in the Narodichi district of Ukraine as an agriculture reconstruction aid from Chernobyl disaster¹⁴⁾. This report focuses on an action to push forward agriculture reproduction by a method of new agriculture called the production of energy crops. Japanese NPO supports this action.

Research Method

(1) Collecting case examples of corporate initiatives to support agricultural reconstruction

Following the March 2011 earthquake, various reconstruction efforts in the area of agriculture have attracted media attention. Importantly, cases of support initiatives led by corporations and NPOs have been seen as mutual-help initiatives, along with cases of self-help and public-help initiatives. This research is an empirical study of post-disaster reconstruction efforts, namely, support activities undertaken in disaster-affected areas. As a method to carry out the first stage of the research, we have collected and analyzed as many cases of support initiatives as possible.

Specifically, we collected cases of corporate support initiatives for agricultural reconstructions from the collection of cases compiled by the Reconstruction Agency, by searching an online database of news articles (Nikkei Telecom 21), through Internet searches. In our Internet searches, we focused primarily on corporate press releases to gather and confirm information. We have examined those cases and classified them based on some elements. The cases were gathered mostly in June and July 2013 with supplementary information collected through September 2013.

(2) Interview surveys of local governments and corporations supporting agricultural reconstruction

As another method, we conducted interview surveys of individuals involved in support initiatives for agricultural reconstruction—i.e., officials of the Iwate, Miyagi, and Fukushima prefectural governments and employees of corporations supporting agricultural reconstruction—in order to grasp and evaluate corporate

support initiatives for agricultural reconstruction in detail from diversified standpoints. In interviews with government officials, we asked how they, as a recipient of support, define reconstruction support initiatives by companies in the overall picture including differences with support from the central government support as public help. We also asked how they find and evaluate corporate stance and attitudes in providing support, readiness to collaborate with the prefectural government, effects brought by corporate support initiatives, and so forth. Interviews were conducted twice for each person, first in May through June 2013 and then in August 2013.

As discussed above, we had already collected information on the content of support provided by corporations. Thus, in interviews with corporations, we asked for confirmation of such information and focused our questions on such issues as the underlying ideas, background, and effects of their support initiatives. Those interviews were conducted in July through August 2013.

Findings from Case Analysis and Observations Thereof

(1) Cases of corporate support initiatives for agricultural Reconstruction

After examining a total of about 50 cases of the collected corporate support initiatives, we selected 31 cases objectively definable as reconstruction support. Cases of supportive consumption, such as organizing a farm fresh fair inside a company to sell farm products from disaster-affected areas and purchasing ingredients used at canteens from those areas, have been excluded as minor initiatives although they have elements of reconstruction support. The selected cases have been organized into a list based on the type of industry, linkage with agriculture, support style, involvement of collaborators (other companies, NPOs, etc.), type of support, and outline of support initiatives (see Table 1).

Whether or not a corporation has any linkage with agriculture has been determined based on whether business undertaken by the corporation belongs to the food value chain from farm to table. As large-scale companies are extremely diversified in their business, we considered the entire scope of business including non-core business activities^{*6}. The support style concerns whether support is given directly to its targeted recipients or indirectly through NPOs or other companies. Among those providing direct support, some corporations are doing so on a stand-alone basis and others in collaboration with other companies. In the table, we put “stand-alone” and “collaborative” to indicate the former and the latter respectively. Meanwhile, we put “via agency” to indicate those corporations providing indirect

support as they do so via NPOs or other companies.

From the perspective of the type of support, we classified the cases into the following seven categories: 1) those in which the supporting corporation engages in farming as an operator; 2) those in which the supporting corporation engages in the distribution and marketing of farm products, for instance, by purchasing them as raw materials and/or products; 3) those in which the supporting corporation provides human resources such as sending its employees as management staff; 4) those in which the supporting corporation provides its products to affected farmers, etc.; 5) those in which the supporting corporation provides donations or other financial support to farmers, etc.; 6) those in which the supporting corporation provides cultivation know-how and other specialized technologies through business consulting, etc.; and 7) others. The development of human resources for agriculture can be cited as an example of “others.”

We have also indicated whether supporting corporations are utilizing their core business functions in providing support as well as whether they are engaged in the business of support recipients.

(2) Typological classification of corporate support initiatives and characteristics of each type

Support initiatives listed in Table 1 have been planned and implemented by respective corporations based on their own ideas. Thus, none of them are identical with each other.

However, in order to capture the overall trend of such initiatives and identify their characteristics, it will be effective to classify those cases typologically by applying certain conditions, identify characteristics for respective patterns, and consider the background thereof.

Thus, we have typologically classified each of the 31 cases listed in Table 1 based on the following three criteria: 1) whether the supporting corporation is considered to be agriculture-related judging from the linkage between its business activities and agriculture; 2) whether the supporting corporation provides support directly to targeted recipients or indirectly through NPOs, government agencies, etc.; 3) whether the support is a single-company initiative or a multi-company initiative based on the number of companies involved. We call cases of agriculture-related corporations providing direct support as a single-company initiative Pattern I, cases of agriculture-related corporations providing direct support as a multi-company initiative Pattern II, and cases of agriculture-related corporations providing indirect support as Pattern III. All of the cases falling in Pattern III are single-company initiatives. Furthermore,

Table 1 List of Corporate Support Initiatives for Agricultural Reconstruction from the Great East Japan Earthquake (1/2)

Pattern	No.	Name of company	Type of industry	Linkage to agriculture	Support style	Stand-alone, collaborative, or via agency	Collaborators and agents (other corporations, NPOs, etc.)
Pattern I	1	Toyota Tsusho Corporation	Trading company	○	Direct	Stand-alone	
	2	Saizeriya Co., Ltd.	Restaurant operator	○	Direct	Stand-alone	—
	3	Zao Green Farm Y.K.	Farming corporation	○	Direct	Stand-alone	—
	4	Granpa Co., Ltd.	Plant factory development	○	Direct	Stand-alone	—
	5	Watami Co., Ltd.	Restaurant operator	○	Direct	Stand-alone	
	6	Kagome Co., Ltd. (A)	Food manufacturer	○	Direct	Stand-alone	
	7	Lawson, Inc.	Retailer	○	Direct	Stand-alone	—
	8	Nanbu Bijin	Brewing	○	Direct	Stand-alone	—
	9	Furusato Farm	Consulting	○	Direct	Stand-alone	
	10	Three F Co., Ltd.	Retailer	○	Direct	Stand-alone	—
	11	Butai Farm	Farming corporation	○	Direct	Stand-alone	—
	12	Kagome Co., Ltd. (B)	Food manufacturer	○	Direct	Stand-alone	—
	13	Kagome Co., Ltd. (C)	Food manufacturer	○	Direct	Stand-alone	
Pattern II	14	Taishoboseki Industries, Ltd.	Spinning	○	Direct	Collaborative	—
	15	Radishbo-ya Co., Ltd.	Food distributor	○	Direct	Collaborative	Q'sai Co., Ltd., etc.
	16	East Japan Railway Co.	Transportation	○	Direct	Collaborative	Subsidiaries, prefectural governments
	17	Seven & i Holdings Co., Ltd.	Retailer	○	Direct	Collaborative	A number of food companies, etc.
	18	Oisix Inc.	Food distributor	○	Direct	Collaborative	Eat, and Energize the East
19	Kagome Co., Ltd. (D)	Food manufacturer	○	Direct	Collaborative	CALBEE, Inc., ROHTO Pharmaceutical Co., Ltd.	
Pattern III	20	Kubota Corporation	Farm equipment manufacturer	○	Indirect	Via agency	Kouya Agriservices Ltd.
	21	Yanmar Co., Ltd.	Farm equipment manufacturer	○	Indirect	Via agency	Fuji Television Network, Inc.
	22	Groupe Danone	Food manufacturer	○	Indirect	Via agency	(N) FAR-Net
	23	Kirin Brewery Co., Ltd. (A)	Food manufacturer	○	Indirect	Via agency	Japan Philanthropic Association
	24	Kirin Brewery Co., Ltd. (B)	Food manufacturer	○	Indirect	Via agency	Japan Philanthropic Association
	25	Ajinomoto Frozen Foods Co., Inc.	Food manufacturer	○	Indirect	Via agency	3 NPOs
	26	Syngenta Japan K.K.	Pesticides, seeds, etc.	○	Indirect	Via agency	(N) Noshoko Renkei Support Center
	27	Yamato Holdings Co., Ltd.	Transportation	○	Indirect	Via agency	Local public bodies
Pattern IV	28	GE Japan Ltd.	Electric equipment manufacturer	×	Direct	Collaborative	Mirai, Inc.
	29	NEC Corporation	Electric equipment manufacturer	×	Direct	Collaborative	MY FARM, Inc., NTT DOCOMO, Inc.
	30	Kameyama Iron Factory Inc.	Metal product manufacturer	×	Direct	Collaborative	Consortium of companies, universities, and the government
	31	NTT DOCOMO, Inc.	Telecommunication	×	Direct	Collaborative	AMITA Institute for Sustainable Economies Co., Ltd.

Table 1 List of Corporate Support Initiatives for Agricultural Reconstruction from the Great East Japan Earthquake (2/2)

Pattern	No.	Type of support						Utilization of core business functions	Participation in recipients' business	Outline of support initiatives	Target of support initiatives
		Farming operations	Distribution and marketing	Human resources	Products	Financial support	Technological support				
Pattern I	1	○	○					○	○	Growing bell peppers in Ohira Village utilizing waste heat from factories	region(job creation)
	2	○						○	○	Launch of tomato production at affected areas for use for its products	region(job creation)
	3	○						○	○	Acceptance of farmers from affected areas in Natori as employees to grow qing geng cai (Chinese cabbage)	farmer
	4	○						○	○	Set-up and operation of a dome-shaped plant factory in Rikuzentakata	region(job creation)
	5		○	○		○		○	○	Investment in, acceptance of an executive position of, and purchases of products from a mushroom company in Rikuzentakata	farmer
	6		○					○	○	Cultivation of land for contract farming of tomatoes for processing in Iwate and Miyagi Prefectures	farmer
	7		○					○	○	Development and marketing of pastries using peach jam made from peaches grown in Fukushima Prefecture	farmer
	8		○					○	○	Development and production of liqueur using yuzu, a type of citrus, grown in Rikuzentakata	farmer
	9		○					○	○	Marketing of <i>Omakase Yasai Sets</i> (Farmer's Choice Vegetables) from disaster-affected areas	farmer
	10					○				Donations for farmers in Soma, Fukushima Prefecture, a supply source of rice	farmer
	11						○	○	○	Support to agricultural corporations engaging in large-scale greenhouse farming in disaster-affected areas	farmer
	12						○	○		Support to help develop business plans for large-scale greenhouse farming	farmer / region
	13						○	○		Measuring the effects of radiation on tomatoes grown in Fukushima Prefecture for processing purposes	farmer
Pattern II	14		○					○	○	Growing and commercialization of salt-tolerant cotton in Sendai, etc.	farmer
	15		○					○	○	Helping affected farmers relocate and find farming work in another place and purchasing farm products	farmer
	16		○					○	○	Organizing farmers' markets at railway stations in the Tokyo metropolitan area to sell farm products from affected areas	farmer
	17		○					○	○	Selling agricultural and other products from Tohoku at events held in its stores	farmer
	18		○							Matching of farmers, etc. in affected areas with companies supporting reconstruction	farmer
	19			○		○				Set-up of a scholarship foundation to help children orphaned by the disaster	farmer
Pattern III	20				○	○		○		Technical support for the demonstration test of salt-removing technologies	farmer
	21				○			○		Lending the company's farm equipment for use Fuji Television's Tanbo+Menka (Rice fields + Cotton) project	farmer
	22					○	○	○		Support for affected dairy farmers to open a jointly-operated dairy farm	farmer
	23					○		○		Supporting agriculture training programs held in Tohoku University and Marunouchi, Tokyo	farmer
	24					○				Subsidies for purchases of farm equipment to help farmers in three affected prefectures to resume operations	farmer
	25					○				Donating part of sales revenues to three NPOs engaging in agricultural reconstruction	farmer
	26					○				Donation of materials and greenhouses for tomato cultivation in Miyagi Prefecture	farmer
	27					○				Donating part of sales revenue to help restore people's livelihoods and reconstruct agriculture and fisheries	farmer
Pattern IV	28					○		○	○	Demonstration test of plant factories in Tagajo	city / region
	29					○		○	○	Offering salt-removal and censor technologies to help restore farmland	farmer
	30					○		○		Helping strawberry farms in Yamamoto, Miyagi Prefecture, with new technologies	farmer
	31					○		○		Supporting the production and distribution of rice and medical herbs	farmer

cases of non-agriculture-related corporations providing direct support as a multi-company initiative are referred to as Pattern IV.

All of the Pattern I corporations are agriculture-related and provide direct support on a stand-alone basis. As they are agriculture-related, these corporations have association with farmers and other members of farming communities in ordinary times, and thus, they are able to provide effective support without any intermediary agencies. They typically provide technical support and/or help with distribution and marketing of farm products by utilizing their business resources.

Like the Pattern I corporations, those classified into Pattern II are agriculture-related and have association with members of the farming community through their business activities. Thus, they are able to provide support on a stand-alone basis. However, by collaborating with other companies, they can engage in a broader scope of support activities. Most of those corporations provide support in the form of distribution and **marketing**, the type of support in which it is relatively easy to involve other companies.

Pattern III corporations are also agriculture-related, have association with members of farming communities in ordinary times, and are able to provide direct support. However, they are trying to concentrate on genuine support by setting aside their business interest and keeping distance from the recipients of their support. Characteristically, those corporations provide support via an agency such as NPOs and mostly in the form of financial support. Using the funds provided by supporting corporations, NPOs or other parties selected as an agency operate non-profit support programs to help the reconstruction of affected rural communities.

Pattern IV corporations are distinctive in that they provide direct support in the area of agriculture despite having no business association with agriculture. In doing so, however, those corporations collaborate with other companies with expertise in agriculture, as they have little association with members of farming communities.

A notable characteristic of corporations classified into this pattern is that they aim to provide the kind of support that would lead to the development of a new form of agriculture by utilizing their business resources—mainly technological seeds—in the area of agriculture. All of the cases classified into this pattern are demonstration tests in nature and the content of support is technology in all cases.

(3) Sub-summary

We have been able to list a total of 31 cases of reconstruction support initiatives by 27 corporations in the

area of agriculture, a situation that is quite different from those observed following major natural disasters that had occurred before the Great East Japan Earthquake. This difference is partly attributable to the sheer magnitude of the damage caused by the March 2011 earthquake but it also reflects significant changes in the social and economic environment in recent years, i.e., strengthening relationships between agriculture and business as seen in corporate entry into the farming business and collaborations between farmers and business operators. With such relationships likely to expand further in the coming years, corporate support initiatives for agricultural reconstruction are expected to become common practice in the future.

By typologically classifying cases of support initiatives into four patterns as shown previously, we have been able to identify certain trends in the content of corporate support initiatives and underlying intentions. Such classification can serve as a guideline for corporations in self-evaluating their support activities in the light of their business attributes (whether agriculture-related or not) and policy concerning support style (direct support or indirect support), which in turn would enable more expeditious and effective implementation of corporate support initiatives for agricultural reconstruction in the event of a similar natural disaster in the future. It can also help local communities to understand corporate support offers more quickly and precisely even amid confusion in the aftermath of a major disaster, whereby corporate support initiatives for agricultural reconstruction would be accepted more readily. This would make it easier to fill the gap between public help provided by the central and local governments and self help by farmers, facilitating the utilization of the power of mutual help called corporations for the reconstruction of agriculture.

Findings from Interview Surveys and Observations Thereof

(1) Findings from an interview survey of corporate officials

For the purpose of our interview survey, we selected four corporations out of those listed in Table 1. In selecting corporations for interview, we basically avoided selection bias across different patterns. Pattern IV corporations were excluded as they are significantly different in nature. Meanwhile, we selected two Pattern III corporations because of their characteristics of providing support via agencies. Shown in Table 2 is an outline of the findings from our interviews with individuals responsible for agricultural reconstruction support initiatives at the respective corporations.

Table 2 Findings from interviews with corporate officials

	Company A: East Japan Railway Co. <Pattern II>	Company B: Kagome Co., Ltd. <Pattern I>	Company C: Groupe Danone <Pattern III>	Company D: Yamato HD Co., Ltd. <Pattern III>
Outline of support initiatives	- Farmers' markets at major railway stations in the Tokyo metropolitan area to promote sales of products from affected prefectures including Iwate, Miyagi, and Fukushima Prefectures	1) Technical support to a greenhouse park project in Miyagi Prefecture 2) Expansion of contract farming of tomatoes in Iwate and Miyagi Prefectures 3) Measurement of radioactivity in tomatoes grown in Fukushima Prefecture 4) Set-up of a scholarship foundation	- Support for affected dairy farmers to open a jointly-operated dairy farm in Fukushima Prefecture	- Donating part of sales revenue to help restore people's livelihoods and reconstruct agriculture, forestry, and fisheries in Iwate, Miyagi, and Fukushima Prefectures
Underlying ideas and purposes	- The development of the affected areas is directly linked to the development of the company's business as it operates in Tohoku as well as in the Tokyo metropolitan area. - When the region develops with the reconstruction of agriculture, more people will live there and the number of passengers traveling on our trains will increase.	- In order for companies to grow and develop, it is necessary to contribute to the communities they serve and help the regions to get revitalized and remain robust.	- The company considers its support as a long-term "investment" because it believes that the development of the entire value chain of the industry to which it belongs will help ensure the continuity of the company.	- The support is meant to be a "return of favor" to Tohoku, which has helped the sponsoring company to develop and foster temperature-controlled parcel delivery services over the past 30 years. The company did not think about any economic benefits at the time of launching its support initiative.
Background of support initiatives	- Since before the earthquake, we have been organizing farmers' markets as part of our "Rediscover the Region Project," which is aimed at creating new flows of goods and expand the so-called "ekinaka (inside-station)" business. - Farmers' markets for reconstruction have been organized by utilizing this existing business scheme.	1) The representative of an agricultural corporation in an affected area came to seek advice from an employee of the company, which prompted the company to take action. 2) Matching of the need to make up for a decrease in supply from Fukushima with the request from affected communities to establish themselves as tomato growing areas	- Under the framework of reconstruction support scheme financed by its foreign parent, the company, a Japanese subsidiary, drew up the business design of a pilot farm with an eye on the launch of joint large-scale dairy farming operations, and proposed it to dairy farmers' cooperative in Fukushima Prefecture.	- The sponsoring company believes that it takes more than what can be covered by individual donations to reconstruct agriculture, fisheries, and people's livelihoods in affected areas. - Priority is on agility and transparency, which cannot be expected from government subsidies. - The company obtained the Ministry of Finance's approval for treating its donations as "designated donations," i.e., counting the entire amount as losses, for taxation purposes.
Effects of support initiatives	■Alleviation of damage caused by harmful rumors ■Securing marketing channels	★Improvement of corporate image ★Sense of pride and joy for employees (Needless to say, the company's initiatives have had tangible effects on the reconstruction of affected areas.)	■Facilitation of affected dairy farmers' return to work ■Securing new farming workforce ■Enlargement in the size of dairy farms ★Higher motivation of employees ★On-site training for employees	(Unexpected effects) ★Greater sense of pride for employees ★Greater brand power supported by high commendation from all quarters ★Increase in the number of delivery service customers

Note: In the "Effects of support initiatives" section, the square mark (■) indicates effects on agricultural reconstruction in affected areas whereas the star mark (★) indicates those on the supporting company.

The four corporations are presented from left to right in the order of the degree to which they expect return for their business as indicated in the section titled “underlying ideas and purposes.” However, it should be noted that such return is ancillary in nature as all of those corporations seek to support affected farmers and help reconstruct agriculture as their primary goal.

In the case of Company A, which operates in the Tohoku region, there is a direct link between its core business and reconstruction support because the reconstruction of agriculture will lead to the development of the region and hence an increased use of its railway services.

Company B believes that the development of companies is predicated on the presence of robust local communities. Based on this belief, the company has been providing technical support to a greenhouse park project and seeking to expand contract farming of tomatoes. For Company B, Fukushima Prefecture has been a major source of tomatoes for processing since before the quake. Thus, the development of the region’s agriculture is inextricably linked with the development of the company.

Meanwhile, in the case of Company C, although it is directing its support to the dairy farming industry, a supply source of raw materials for its products, the company does not use raw milk from the support recipients for its products. As a matter of policy, the company has been providing support, mainly in the form of financial support, in areas related to its business but without linking such support directly to its business. This is based on the company’s belief that a broad range of industries related to its business must be revitalized in order to ensure the company’s continuity into the future, whereby the company defines the provision of its funds for reconstruction as an activity with an intention, drawing a clear line from mere donations. More specifically, the company places priority to having its support recipients integrated into the economic system to function as a viable player and thus, from the viewpoint of Company C, the support is an ultra-long-term “investment” that will have an indirect positive impact on the company.

Company D has been providing support at an enormous cost that cuts into its sales as a “return of favor” to the agricultural and fisheries industries in Tohoku, which have been loyal customers to one of the company’s key services, i.e., door-to-door delivery services for farm and marine products. At the time of launching the support initiative, the company did not think about linking the initiative to its business or deriving any economic benefits in return for support. However, the support initiative has had some unexpected

return, for instance, in the form of a greater sense of pride among its employees and greater brand power or an increase in the number of customers using its door-to-door delivery services.

(2) Findings from interviews with government officials

An outline of the findings from interviews with officials responsible for agricultural reconstruction at the prefectural governments of Iwate, Miyagi, and Fukushima is shown in Table 3. Now that reconstruction work financed by the national budget is in full swing, they say it is meaningless to compare swiftness or other aspects of corporate support initiatives with those of support provided by the central government as they are completely different in the amount of money involved and roles expected. Rather, what they are concerned about is how to avoid possible conflicts or overlapping of the two. Furthermore, in the cases of corporate support initiatives, corporations basically do what they can do and are thus quite different in nature from reconstruction support by the central government, which is implemented in accordance with the needs of affected areas. Thus, there is a general perception on the part of local governments that they are not supposed to insist on their needs in receiving corporate support. As such, from the viewpoint of prefectural governments, corporate support initiatives are optional support that is made available separately from support provided by the central government, whereby their complementarity with central government support is not a factor for consideration.

Regarding corporate stance and attitudes in providing support, it was pointed out that corporate support initiatives have two elements—i.e., the element of pure support and the element of sales promotion—and it is difficult to draw a clear line between the two. However, none of the interviewees were negative on the idea of corporations seeking some sort of return on their support. Rather, such two-dimensional nature of corporate support is seen in a positive light as they believe that, while corporations can implement unique support initiatives by proactively implementing them into their business activities, such initiatives are expected to have long-lasting effects to support the development of farmers as compared to the temporary effects of donations. At the same time, however, they acknowledged the need to discern the true intention of corporations, as they have received many questionable support offers, those that are labeled “support” but which are no more than sales promotion in anticipation of reconstruction demand in substance, involving little burden on the part of corporations.

Table 3 Main views expressed by government officials and observations thereof

	Views expressed by government officials	Observations
Corporate support as defined by recipients	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○As corporate support (mutual help) and public help are completely different in their size and expected roles, the question is how to avoid possible conflicts or overlapping of the two ○Companies provide support under their own initiatives. It would be nice if such support happens to match the needs we have on the part of recipients. However, if not, there is no point insisting on our needs. So, it is good enough for corporations to clearly specify what they can do. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ●From the viewpoint of local governments, support from the central government (public help) and support from corporations (mutual help) are two different things and, at the moment, there seems not to be any complementary relationship between the two. ●Corporate support is optional in nature and would be helpful and a blessing if available but it is not something to be counted on.
Corporate stance and attitudes in providing support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○Corporate support initiatives are two-dimensional, having the element of pure support and the element of sales promotion, and it is difficult to draw the line between the two. ○Given the nature of corporate support, it is only natural for corporations to expect return and we are not negative on that. ○Corporate initiatives directly linked with business are unique to respective corporations and beneficial to farmers. Indeed, we see significant advantage in such support when we look to the future beyond reconstruction. ○However, there have been many questionable offers that are no more than sales promotion in affected areas involving little burden on the part of corporations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ●Corporate support initiatives include those directly linked with sales promotion and those not. ●Corporate support initiatives directly linked with sales promotion are generally perceived to have positive effects on affected areas but some such initiatives are designed to bring benefits only to the side of corporations.
Collaboration with local governments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○From the viewpoint of administrators, the greater the element of pure support, the easier is it for us to act as an intermediary. ○Conversely, the greater the element of sales promotion, the more difficult is it for us to collaborate because it concerns the question of government credibility. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ●In the case of pure support initiatives, it is relatively easy for local governments to collaborate with supporting corporations. ●The question is how local governments should handle cases of corporate support initiatives directly linked with sales promotion, in terms of collaboration and dealing with supporting corporations.

With all those factors taken into consideration, they said that collaboration with corporations—an element considered important for corporate support initiatives for agricultural reconstruction—is relatively easy when such initiatives are more like pure support in nature as local governments can readily act as an intermediary in such cases. However, when corporate support initiatives are more like sales promotion, they said, local governments have no choice but take a cautious stance on collaboration with corporations because it concerns the question of government credibility.

(3) Characteristics of corporate support initiatives observed from typological classification

Based on characteristics extracted by typologically classifying corporate support initiatives and findings from the interview surveys of corporate and government

officials, we can identify some key points of discussion concerning corporate support initiatives for agricultural reconstruction. Here, we exclude cases of non-agriculture-related companies classified into Pattern IV because all of their initiatives are demonstration tests and those corporations differ from actors in other cases. Those cases falling in the remaining Patterns I through III can be broadly divided into two groups, namely, those providing support with a direct linkage to their core business (Patterns I and II) and those providing support without any linkage to their core business (Pattern III). It has been found that the difference between those two groups is attributable to the underlying ideas and purposes on the part of supporting corporations and leads to different responses of local governments on the receiving side. We have compared and analyzed the two groups of support initiatives concerning their difference

Table 4 Characteristics analysis by type of nature of support

	Support directly linked to core business (Patterns I and II)	Support not linked to core business (Pattern III)
Advantage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By integrating support initiatives into business activities, corporations can provide support unique to themselves. • This approach does not involve huge costs and is a viable option for many agriculture-related companies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corporations can provide support to a broad spectrum of individuals and organizations, not limited to those in the area of their business. • There is no risk for support initiatives to be taken as sales promotion under the disguise of support.
Disadvantage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Even initiatives intended for support purposes may be regarded as sales promotion for the development of own business. • The scope of support initiatives is limited to that of business. • It may become necessary to raise funds, for instance, by introducing projects financed by the central government. • This approach is difficult to implement unless supporting corporations have association with agriculture in ordinary times. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (In the case of agriculture-related companies), expertise and capabilities in core business areas cannot be utilized to the fullest extent. • Support tends to take the form of financial support, resulting in significant financial burden on corporations. • In order to ensure the effective use of funds provided, it may become necessary to continue follow up activities.

in nature (Table 4).

In the case of corporate support directly linked to core business, corporations will be able to provide, by integrating their initiatives into their business activities, the kind of support that cannot be implemented under reconstruction projects financed by the central government. Furthermore, since such an approach usually does not involve huge costs, a broad array of players—ranging from large corporations to small and medium-sized enterprises—can take this approach so long as they are in agricultural-related business. On the negative side, however, even initiatives intended for support purposes may be taken as sales promotion for the development of their business and the scope of support initiatives is limited to that of their business activities. In contrast, in the case of support not linked to core business, corporate initiatives tend to take the form of financial support and it is possible to reach out to a broad spectrum of individuals and organizations, regardless of the area of business undertaken by supporting corporations. Also, there is little risk for supporting corporations to end up undermining their corporate image with their support initiatives by being perceived as engaging in sales promotion under the guise of support. However, in the case of agriculture-related corporations, they will not be able to effectively utilize unique expertise and capabilities accumulated through business activities. Other disadvantages of financial support include the tendency to involve significant financial burden on the part of supporting corporations

and the necessity of follow-up activities. As such, both groups have their advantages and disadvantages and it is hard to say which is superior. Also as can be seen in the findings from our interviews with corporate officials, it is difficult to determine whether corporate support initiatives are separated from core business. While there are cases of initiatives that have been implemented in anticipation of positive effects on business but have yet to generate their intended results, there are also cases of initiatives that are supposedly separate from business but have brought positive effects to business. Thus, based on what has been found from our research to this point, we limit ourselves to pointing out that there is a “tendency” as shown in Table 4 but we believe it is a significant achievement that we have been able to identify such a trend.

Conclusion

In the first stage of our research, the following findings and implications have been obtained:

First, the fact that more than 30 cases of corporate support initiatives for agriculture in the ongoing post-disaster reconstruction efforts have been found solely based on secondary information shows that the theme of our research is fairly reasonable as a new area to be studied. Based on support style, corporate support initiative can be classified into direct support, in which corporations provide support directly to their targeted recipients, and indirect support provided through intermediary agencies such as NPOs. And those defined

as direct support can be further classified into those provided on a stand-alone basis and those involving multiple corporations.

Corporate support initiatives are diverse in content, ranging from those involving participation in farming operations, the distribution and marketing of farm products, etc. to the provision of business resources such as people, goods, funds, and information.

Second, as a means to analyze characteristics of corporations supporting agricultural reconstruction, corporate support initiatives can be typologically classified into four patterns based on the attributes of corporations and the underlying ideas of support. And it has been implied that each corporation implements its support initiative based on its rational judgment. It is believed that the utilization of this concept of typology will enable more corporations to provide precise and expeditious support in the event of a large-scale natural disaster comparable to the Great East Japan Earthquake.

Third, one unique feature of agricultural reconstruction support by corporations is their ability to provide support directly linked to their business activities. However, while many corporations provide such support, many others separate their support initiatives from their business activities. It is inferred that one reason behind this is the possibility of negative outcome of business-related support initiatives such as having corporate image undermined by being perceived to be engaging in sales promotion under the guise of reconstruction support—which is a real danger because the line dividing reconstruction support activities and sales activities tends to blur.

When different patterns of corporate support initiatives are identified and their respective characteristics and differences are clearly understood, corporations will be able to clearly explain their support stance to their targeted local communities in affected areas as well as to other stakeholders, while those on the receiving side—local governments, businesses, residents, etc.—will be able to have a more precise and accurate understanding of such initiatives. It is believed that all this will help enable corporations to provide expeditious and effective support. Furthermore, once they are recognized as full-fledged actors in the reconstruction of agriculture, they will be more readily accepted as contributors to agriculture in ordinary times.

Our research to this point has yielded a series of useful findings as shown above. However, we have yet to clarify the whole picture of corporate support for agricultural reconstruction including the mindsets of supporting corporations and local communities on the receiving side. We will continue to work to find the entire picture by

shedding light from various angles such as corporations, local communities, and local governments. At the same time, we will seek to analyze the relationship between the characteristics of corporate support and business resources available, find the mechanism of collaborative and intermediary functions, and explore effective ways to utilize corporate support initiatives including collaboration with public-help and self-help initiatives.

Notes

- *1 “Towards Reconstruction: Hope beyond the Disaster,” put forward on June 25, 2011 by the Reconstruction Design Council in response to the Great East Japan Earthquake, points to the particular importance of mutual help among the three basic concepts of disaster management (i.e., public help, mutual help, and self help), stating as follows: “Developing a new framework for comprehensive support and participation based on ‘mutual help’ will provide a foundation for the future of Japanese society.”
- *2 “Special zone for farmland leasing,” a popular name, refers to a special measure officially titled “Permission of Entry of Joint-stock Companies, etc. into Farming Operations via Farmland Leasing.” Corporations were to operate farms by borrowing—not owning—farmland. The mechanism for leasing farmland, often referred to as “farmland leasing system,” was a two-step scheme under which farmland owners leased their farmland to the local government or other designated public agencies, which in turn subleased the farmland to corporations.
- *3 The official title of the law is the Act on Promotion of Business Activities by Collaboration between Small and Medium Sized Enterprise Operators and Operators of Agriculture, Forestry and Fishery (Act No. 38 of 2008).
- *4 The official title of the law is the Act on New Business Start-ups, etc. by Operators of Agriculture, Forestry and Fishery and the Promotion of Use of Local Agricultural and Marine Products (Act No. 67 of 2010).
- *5 The growth facilitation fund has been established for the purpose of turning agriculture, forestry, and fisheries into growth industries so as to secure steady income for farmers, forest workers, and fishermen and to create jobs in farming, mountainous, and fishing villages. Specifically, it invests in, lends money to, and/or provides management support to business activities led by agricultural, forestry, and fisheries operators and aimed to explore new fields of business.
- *6 For instance, judging from its name, East Japan Railway Co. is a “railway company” and seemingly unrelated to the distribution of farm products. However, as part of its business diversification, it has been hosting farmers’ markets at railway stations since before the March 2011 earthquake. In this regard, the company is considered to be engaged in the retail marketing of agriculture products. Also, as Yamato Transport Co., Ltd. is actively engaged in the transportation of agricultural products through ordinary door-to-door parcel delivery services and temperature-controlled parcel delivery services, it is considered to be part of the value chain for farm fresh products. Thus, we defined the company as having linkage with agriculture.
- *7 In terms of monetary value, the central government’s reconstruction budget in the areas of agriculture, forestry,

and fisheries in fiscal 2013 and 2014 totaled approximately 3.5 trillion yen. This includes public works projects (hardware support) such as the reconstruction of fishing ports and farmland. As an example of other individual projects (software support) in the area of agriculture, the central government allocated 5.2 billion yen in fiscal 2013 budget alone to help affected farmers to restart farming, one of the centerpiece support programs. In comparison, Yamato Welfare Foundation, which is deemed to be a leading support provider in the private sector, offered about 14.3 billion yen over the two years. From these observations, we can say that large-scale corporate support initiatives are fairly comparable to individual government programs in size.

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東日本大震災からの農業復興における 企業による支援に関する研究

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(平成 25 年 11 月 20 日受付/平成 26 年 4 月 18 日受理)

要約：本研究は、共助の一員である企業が公助、自助の活動と連携しつつ、農業復興を支援する主体と認知されることを目標としている。本論文はこの研究の初期的な取り組みとして、東日本大震災からの農業復興における企業の支援事例の相当程度の存在を確認するとともに、その特性解析を行うことを目的としている。

その結果、第一に、農業分野の震災復興において企業支援の事例が2次情報からのみでも30以上確認された。支援形態として、当該企業による直接支援とNPO法人などを介した間接支援があること、さらに直接支援には企業単独のものと複数社が連携しているものがあることがわかった。支援内容も農業経営、流通販売など事業に参画するものや、人・物・金・情報などの経営資源の提供など多様な内容であることもわかった。第二に、支援する側の企業の特性や考え方から企業の支援活動は4つのパターンに類型化することができた。こうした類型化の考え方を活用することで、今後東日本大震災級の大規模災害が発生した際に、より多くの企業が迅速かつ確かな支援を行うことが可能となると考えられる。第三に、企業による農業復興支援の特性として、企業活動と直結させている企業とあえて切り離している企業があることがわかった。これは、復興活動と営業活動との境界があいまいになりがちであるため、復興支援に名を借りた営業活動と受け取られることで企業イメージダウンなどのマイナス面の可能性も秘めていることなどが背景にあると推察された。

企業による農業復興支援のパターンや特性が明らかになることで、企業は支援の姿勢をより明確化して地域側やステークホルダーに説明するとともに、行政や地域側では企業支援をよりの確に理解できるようになり、迅速かつ効果的な支援を生み出しやすくなると思われる。

キーワード：東日本大震災、共助、農業復興、企業支援