

# *Japanese Civil Society at a Crossroad*

*CIVICUS Civil Society Index Report for Japan*

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*CIVICUS Civil Society Index  
An International Action-research Project  
Coordinated by CIVICUS, World Alliance for Citizen Participation*

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March 2011

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## FOREWORD

In 2008, Japan joined CIVICUS Civil Society Index (CSI) project for the first time. I am grateful that we can share the first Japanese CSI diamond with all interested practitioners, researchers, and stakeholders. It has been 10 years since Law to Promote Specified Nonprofit Activities (NPO Law) was enacted in 1998. The NPO Law dramatically eased grass roots organisation to obtain corporate status as Specified Nonprofit Corporations (SNACs), and today there are more than 40,000 SNACs conducting all kinds of activities. Although civil society organisations (CSOs) have been in existence since the 7th century in Japan, the introduction of the NPO Law is a ground breaking event for the country. SNACs are recognised as the first nonprofit corporations that require civic supervision and engagement while the government supervision is kept in minimum. The introduction of the NPO Law also contributed in spreading the recognition of civil society sector among the general public with the frequent use of terms such as ‘volunteer’ or ‘NPO’ in the media.

With the birth of SNACs, both researchers and practitioners have believed in the possibility of civil society to grow into the most influential sector in society to solve mounted problems that Japanese society have been facing such as economic uncertainty and elderly society. Ten years on, SNACs has grown in numbers, however, there are questions over their quality, effectiveness, and civil participation. Also, many SNACs face difficulties such as financial and human resource management. Nevertheless, there are movements within the civil society to overcome these problems and to improve its overall quality to advance the sector. Fortunately, the political climate towards CSOs today is favourable ever to encourage them to play more roles in the society, and the government has started a detailed discussion for a taxation system and legal framework to better function of the sector.

Civil society is a large sector, and its boundaries with other sectors are unclear. This report is striving to capture the snap shot of civil society in Japan between 2008 and 2010 as holistically as possible. However, with funding limitation and research methodological limitation, the CSI diamond could not cover all aspects of the civil society. Therefore, the main text was written in order to complement the limitation of the diamond. I sincerely hope that this report will be read and utilised by many researchers and practitioners to progress Japanese civil society. Additionally, as a comparative study, I believe that this report should benefit not only Japanese CSOs but also researchers or practitioners outside of Japan. In Japan, there are numerous numbers of published works and surveys focusing on civil society. Nevertheless, many of them are only written in Japanese, and therefore non-Japanese speakers would have difficulties reading them and gaining deeper understanding of Japanese civil society. This report utilised these works in order to deliver as much information as possible about Japanese civil society, and increase understanding of Japanese civil society among non-Japanese speakers.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to thank CIVICUS and everyone who engaged in this project. I hope that we can continuously work together to progress civil society in Japan and beyond.

March 2011

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Civil Society Index Project is managed and coordinated by the member of National Coordinating Organisation (NCO), Naoto Yamauchi as director, Naoko Okuyama as researcher and Midori Matsushima as coordinator .

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# LIST OF ACRONYMS

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## *A*

AC · Advisory Committee

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## *B*

BCI · Basic Capabilities Index

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## *C*

CENPRI · Center for Nonprofit  
Research and Information

CSI · Civil Society Index

CSO · Civil Society Organisation

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## *I*

INGO · International Non Governmental  
Organisation

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## *J*

JANIC · Japan NGO Center for  
International Cooperation

JFRA · Japan Fundraising Association

JGSS · Japanese General Social Surveys

JHCNP · Johns Hopkins Comparative

Nonprofit Sector Project

JIGS · Japan Interest Group Survey

JRI · Japan Research Institute

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## *N*

NCO · National Cordination Organisation

NPO law · Law to Promote Specified  
Nonprofit Activities

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## *R*

RIETI · Research Institute of Economy,  
Trade, and Industry

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## *S*

SNAC · Specified Nonprofit Activities  
Corporation

STULA · Survey on Time Use and Leisure  
Activities

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## *W*

WVS · World Values Survey

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Civil Society Index (CSI) diamond project is an action research project by civil society and for civil society. It has been developed by CIVICUS: World Alliance for Citizen Participation for over a decade. The purpose of the project is not only to understand the current state of civil society in a country but also to strengthen that civil society. The CSI diamond project is designed to enhance the capacity building for civil society through the project implementation, and to capture the state of civil society holistically within each country's context. The CSI project in Japan was conducted by the Center for Nonprofit Research and Information at Osaka School of International Public Policy, Osaka University (CENPRI) between 2008 and 2010. Three surveys were used to construct the CSI diamond: A World Values Survey (WVS) to capture individuals' social and political engagement, an Organisational Survey to understand the state of civil society organisations, an External Survey to explore the external stakeholders' perspectives towards civil society. In addition to those surveys, literature survey, focus group discussions and country tailored case studies were conducted to make a deeper analysis from both qualitative and quantitative point of views.

The concept of civil society in Japan was only introduced in recent years despite its existence since early history. In 1998, the Law to Promote Specified Nonprofit Activities (NPO law), the first law to promote civic activities with minimum government intervention, was enacted. A decade passed since the establishment of the NPO Law, Japanese civil society sector is standing at the cross road: whether it can become an influential sector to make society better, or it will not be able to meet the growing expectation. The purpose of this report is to present the snapshot of such Japanese civil society. Although the quantitative indicators of the CSI diamond could not capture every aspects of the Japanese civil society and the results of some dimensions were pointed differently from the reality produced in focus group discussions, both quantitative and qualitative survey together managed to present the current state of civil society in Japan. The visual display of the diamond was generated based on 67 quantitative data gathered from a World Values Survey (WVS), an Organisational Survey, and an External Survey. Those data were aggregated into the five dimensions below:

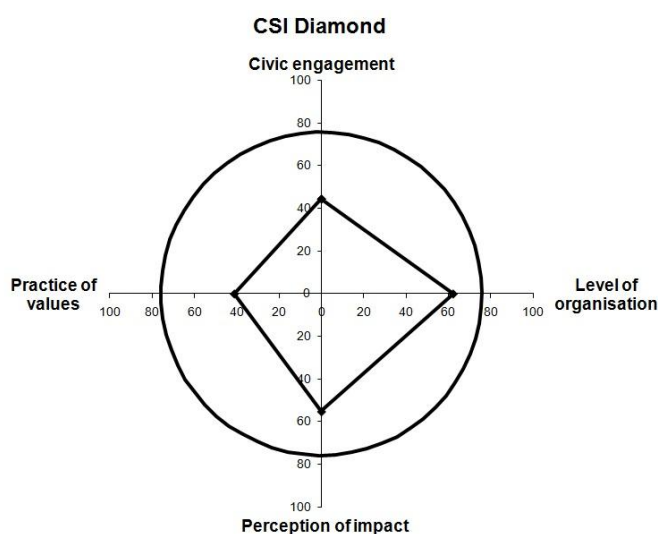
**Civic Engagement:** Individual's extent, depth and the diversity of social/ political engagement

**Level of Organisations:** The degree of organisational development of CSOs

**Practice of Values:** The extent which civil society practices some core values

**Perceived Impact:** The extent which civil society impact the social and policy making arena, according to internal and external perception

**External Environment:** The social, political and economic environment existing in society



The comparison of score for each dimension with other countries participated in the CSI project phase II revealed that Japanese civil society has high perceived impact, well established organisation, and favourable environment for civil society. On the other hand, as weaknesses, it is found that Japanese CSOs do not perform well in practicing core values. Qualitative survey also confirms that Practice of Value dimension is a serious concern for Japanese civil society such as poor working conditions for the employees, or low awareness towards environment conservation. Despite the higher score, Level of Organisation dimension requires attentions on organisation's financial instability and the lack of sustainable human resources in accordance to qualitative survey and secondary data. The extent and the depth of civic engagement are similar to the other countries according to the diamond. However, looking into the details, it is revealed that political engagement is significantly low in Japan. As for Perceived Impact dimension, quantitative survey to explore both internal and external perception agreed that civil society has an impact to create more humane society, yet there are underdeveloped evaluation systems for civil society in Japan which needs to be improved. Although External Environment dimension scored remarkably high, there are concerns such as low level of trust that should influence the level of association. Additionally, this dimension was pointed out as missing important issues such as civil society education and taxation system.

Today, movements are already occurring within civil society such as improving working conditions or introducing evaluation system. However, civil society needs more understanding and participation from the general public. Therefore, it is recommended that firstly to encourage citizens to realise the importance of civic engagement through the education system, and to introduce fundraising friendly system such as a taxation system favourable to people who make donations. This will raise civic participation rate, which then will strengthen the level of organisation by contributing to sustainable financial and human resources. This will also enhance civic supervision for CSOs to practice core values, and for evaluate civil society's impact. Hence strengthening external environment will create a virtuous circle for the development of Japanese civil society. Those improvements cannot be made by civil society alone, and the joint efforts of civil society and external stakeholders are essential.

Although this study strived to capture Japanese civil society as holistically and as correctly as possible, there are some limitations to be mentioned such as sample bias, lack of developed theoretical background, uncovered issues, and imperfect measurement. Furthermore, giving autonomy for participating countries to define civil society is equal to a lack of universal definition of civil society. This makes the international comparisons extremely challenging. Those limitations need to be understood in order to give a fair assessment for Japanese civil society.

# I. THE CIVIL SOCIETY INDEX PROJECT AND APPROACH

Civil society is playing an increasingly important role in governance and development around the world. In most countries, however, knowledge about the state and structure of civil society is limited. Moreover, opportunities for civil society stakeholders to come together to collectively discuss, reflect and act on the strengths, weaknesses, challenges and opportunities also remain limited.

The Civil Society Index (CSI), a participatory action-research project assessing the state of civil society in countries around the world, contributes to redressing these limitations. It aims at creating a knowledge base and momentum for civil society strengthening. The CSI is initiated and implemented by, and for, civil society organizations at the country level, in partnership with CIVICUS *World Alliance for Citizen Participation* (CIVICUS). The CSI implementation actively involves and disseminates its findings to a broad range of stakeholders including civil society, government, the media, donors, academics, and the public at large.

The following key steps in the CSI implementation take place at the country level:

1. **Assessment**: the CSI uses an innovative mix of participatory research methods, data sources, and case studies to comprehensively assess the state of civil society using five dimensions: Civic Engagement, Level of Organization, Practice of Values, Perception of Impact and the Environmental Context
2. **Collective Reflection**: implementation involves structured dialogue among diverse civil society stakeholders that enables the identification of civil society's specific strengths and weaknesses
3. **Joint Action**: the actors involved use a participatory and consultative process to develop and implement a concrete action agenda to strengthen civil society in a country.

The following four sections provide a background of the CSI, its key principles and approaches, as well as a snapshot of the methodology used in the generation of this report in Japan and its limitations.

## I.1. PROJECT BACKGROUND

The CSI first emerged as a concept over a decade ago as a follow-up to the 1997 *New Civic Atlas* publication by CIVICUS, which contains profiles of civil society in 60 countries around the world (Heinrich and Naidoo, 2001). The first version of the CSI methodology, developed by CIVICUS with the help of Helmut Anheier, was unveiled in 1999. An initial pilot of the tool was carried out in 2000 in 13 countries.<sup>1</sup> The pilot implementation process and results were evaluated followed by a revision of the methodology. Subsequently, CIVICUS successfully implemented the first complete phase of the CSI between 2003 and 2006 in 53 countries worldwide. This implementation directly involved more than 7,000 civil society stakeholders (Heinrich 2008).

Intent on continuing to improve the research-action orientation of the tool, CIVICUS worked

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<sup>1</sup> The pilot countries were Belarus, Canada, Croatia, Estonia, Indonesia, Mexico, New Zealand, Pakistan, Romania, South Africa, Ukraine, Uruguay, and Wales.

with the Centre for Social Investment at the University of Heidelberg, as well as with partners and other stakeholders, to rigorously evaluate and revise the CSI methodology for a second time before the start of this current phase of CSI. With this new and streamlined methodology in place, CIVICUS launched the new phase of the CSI in 2008 and selected its country partners, including both previous and new implementers, from all over the globe to participate in the project. Table 1 below includes a list of implementing countries in the current phase of the CSI.

TABLE I. List of CSI implementing countries 2008-2009<sup>2</sup>

1. Albania	14. Ghana	28. Niger
2. Argentina	15. Italy	29. Philippines
3. Armenia	16. Japan	30. Russia
4. Bahrain	17. Jordan	31. Serbia
5. Belarus	18. Kazakhstan	32. Slovenia
6. Bulgaria	19. Kosovo	33. South Korea
7. Burkina Faso	20. Lebanon	34. Sudan
8. Chile	21. Liberia	35. Togo
9. Croatia	22. Macedonia	36. Turkey
10. Cyprus	23. Madagascar	37. Uganda
11. Djibouti	24. Mali	38. Ukraine
12. Democratic Republic of Congo	25. Malta	39. Uruguay
13. Georgia	26. Mexico	40. Venezuela
	27. Nicaragua	41. Zambia

## I.2. PROJECT APPROACH

The current CSI project approach continues to combine assessment and evidence with reflections and actions. This approach provides an important reference point for all work carried out within the framework of the CSI. As such, the CSI does not produce knowledge for its own sake but instead seeks to directly apply the knowledge generated to stimulate strategies that enhance the effectiveness and role of civil society. With this in mind, the CSI's fundamental methodological bedrocks which have greatly influenced the implementation process of this report include the following:<sup>3</sup>

***Inclusiveness:*** The CSI framework strives to incorporate a variety of theoretical viewpoints, as well as being inclusive in terms of civil society indicators, actors and processes included in the project.

***Universality:*** Since the CSI is a global project, its methodology seeks to accommodate national variations in contexts and concepts within its framework.

***Comparability:*** The CSI aims not to rank, but instead to comparatively measure different aspects of civil society worldwide. The possibility for comparisons exists both between different countries or regions within one phase of CSI implementation and between phases.

<sup>2</sup> Note that this list was accurate as of the publication of this Analytical Country Report, but may have changed slightly since the publication, due to countries being added or dropped during the implementation cycle.

<sup>3</sup> For in-depth explanations of these principles, please see Mati, Silva and Anderson (2010), Assessing and Strengthening Civil Society Worldwide: An updated programme description of the CIVICUS Civil Society Index Phase 2008-2010. CIVICUS, Johannesburg.

**Versatility:** The CSI is specifically designed to achieve an appropriate balance between international comparability and national flexibility in the implementation of the project.

**Dialogue:** One of the key elements of the CSI is its participatory approach, involving a wide range of stakeholders who collectively own and run the project in their respective countries.

**Capacity Development:** Country partners are firstly trained on the CSI methodology during a three day regional workshop. After the training, partners are supported through the implementation cycle by the CSI team at CIVICUS. Partners participating in the project also gain substantial skills in research, training and facilitation in implementing the CSI in-country.

**Networking:** The participatory and inclusive nature of the different CSI tools (e.g. focus groups, the Advisory Committee, the National Workshops) should create new spaces where very diverse actors can discover synergies and forge new alliances, including at a cross-sectoral level. Some countries in the last phase have also participated in regional conferences to discuss the CSI findings as well as cross-national civil society issues.

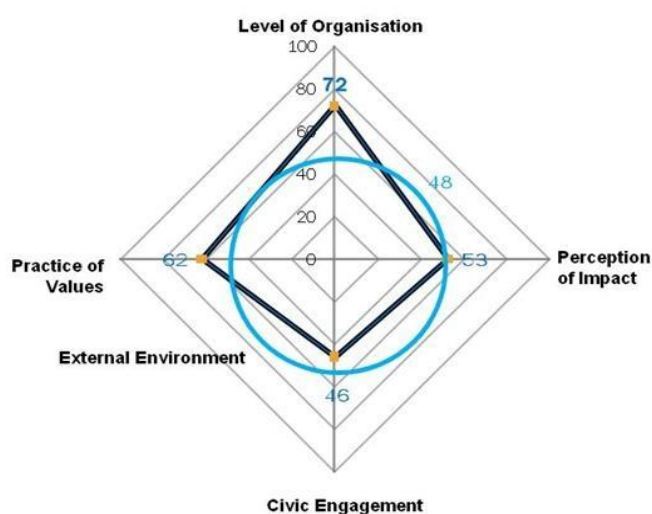
**Change:** The principal aim of the CSI is to generate information that is of practical use to civil society practitioners and other primary stakeholders. Therefore, the CSI framework seeks to identify aspects of civil society that can be changed and to generate information and knowledge relevant to action-oriented goals.

With the above mentioned foundations, the CSI methodology uses a combination of participatory and scientific research methods to generate an assessment of the state of civil society at the national level. The CSI measures the following core dimensions:

- (1) Civic Engagement
- (2) Level of Organisation
- (3) Practice of Values
- (4) Perceived Impact
- (5) External Environment

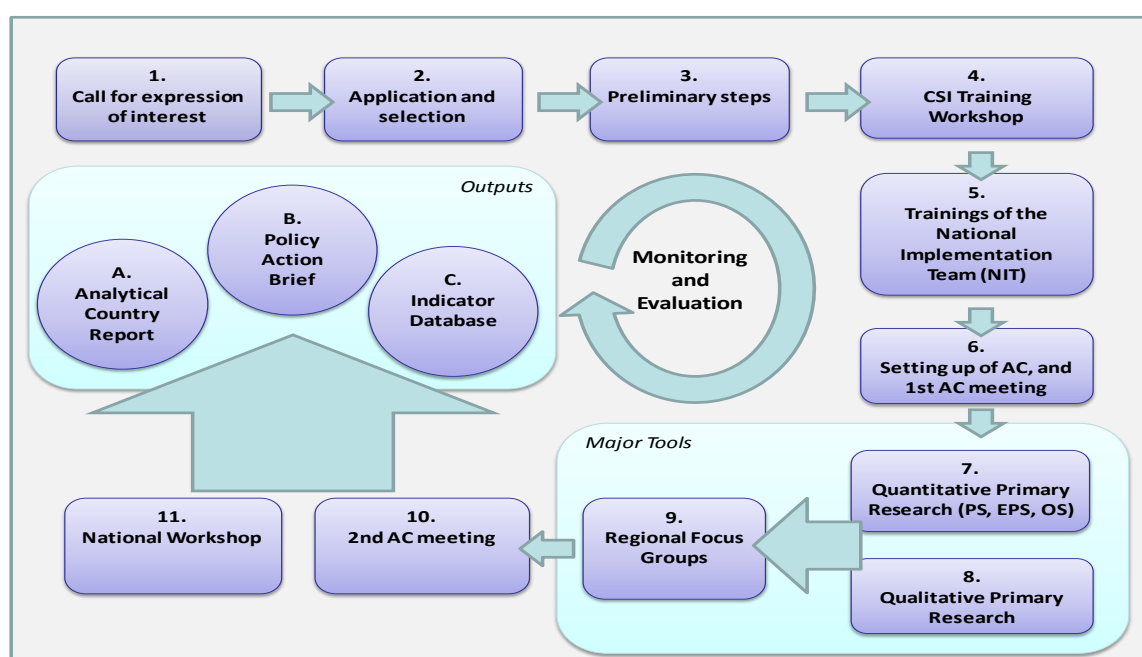
These dimensions are illustrated visually through the Civil Society Diamond (see Figure I.2. below), which is one of the most essential and well-known components of the CSI project. To form the Civil Society Diamond, 67 quantitative indicators are aggregated into 28 sub-dimensions which are then assembled into the five final dimensions along a 0-100 percentage scale. The Diamond's size seeks to portray an empirical picture of the state of civil society, the conditions that support or inhibit civil society's development, as well as the consequences of civil society's activities for society at large. The context or environment is represented visually by a circle around the axes of the Civil Society Diamond, and is not regarded as part of the state of civil society but rather as something external that still remains a crucial element for its wellbeing.

FIGURE I.2. The Civil Society Index Diamond



### I.3. CSI IMPLEMENTATION

There are several key CSI programme implementation activities as well as several structures involved, as summarized by the figure below:<sup>4</sup>



The major tools and elements of the CSI implementation at the national level include:

- Multiple surveys, including: (i) a **Population Survey** (Japan used alternative option of WVS), gathering the views of citizens on civil society and gauging their involvement in groups and associations; (ii) an **Organisational Survey** measuring the meso-level of civil society and defining characteristics of CSOs; and (iii) an **External Perceptions Survey** aiming at measuring the perception that stakeholders, experts and policy makers in key sectors have of civil society's impact

<sup>4</sup> For a detailed discussion on each of these steps in the process, please see Mati et al (cited in footnote 3).



- Tailored **case studies** which focus on issues of importance to specific civil society in country context.
- Advisory Committee(AC) meetings made up of civil society experts to advise on the project and its implementation at the country level
- Regional and thematic focus groups where civil society stakeholders reflect and share views on civil society's role in society

Following this in-depth research and the extensive collection of information, the findings are presented and debated at a National Workshop, which brings together a large group of civil society and non-civil society stakeholders and allows interested parties to discuss and develop strategies for addressing identified priority issues.

This Analytical Country Report is one of the major outputs of the CSI implementation process in Japan, and presents highlights from the research conducted, including summaries of civil society's strengths and weaknesses as well as recommendations for strengthening civil society in the country.

## **I.4. LIMITATION OF THIS STUDY**

Although this study has endeavoured to provide comprehensive assessment of the state of Japanese civil society, there are several limitations to be recognised in reading this report.

Firstly, there are sample selection biases and the sample size is rather small to make generalisation for some indicators created based on an Organisational Survey and an External Survey. CIVICUS recommended face to face interviews for an Organisational Survey and an External Perception Survey. However, with the budget and time constraints, questionnaires were sent by post in Japan instead. As for an Organisational Survey, there were 85 respondents, accounting for 25% of distributed questionnaires. As for the legal status of organisations, 75% of respondents are SNACs. SNACs are one of corporation types among other nonprofit corporations. This is a newly established corporation type, characterised by civic organisations operating under citizen supervision. It must be noted that this high percentage of response from SNACs certainly affects the shape of the diamond as it mostly reflects the characteristic of SNACs rather than whole civil society sector. Level of Organisation dimension is particularly influenced by this sample bias. Especially lack of financial and human resources and lack of transparency are regarded as the problems that SNACs face. As for an External Perception Survey, there were 27 respondents, and it affects the Perceived Impact dimension. In addition to the small sample size, most questions asked in the External Perception Survey are subjective. Hence, it is difficult to conclude that the score calculated based on 27 respondents' answer is definitely representing the external perspective of the whole country. Also, the ones who answered the questions do have some degrees of understanding on civil society, which also means that the external perception of the people who are totally unfamiliar with civil society has not been reflected in the score.

Secondly, the diamond does not have theoretical framework, hence the indicators are not weighted at all.<sup>5</sup> At the present, 67 quantitative indicators of 0-100 percentage scale are simply aggregated into 28 sub-dimensions by taking the averages. Those 28 sub-dimensions are categorised into 5 dimensions, and the averages of categorised sub-dimensions become the final scores.

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<sup>5</sup> This is also mentioned as a tension of the methodology for the CSI project in general by Hoelscher (2010) at the ISTR 9th International Conference.



Thirdly, there are some important issues not included in the CSI diamond indicator. Issues particularly needed to be notified for Japan's case are: Civic Engagement dimension does not include the measurement of individual and corporate donations. Environment dimension does not evaluate CSOs' partnership with the government and for-profit corporations, and legal frameworks for civil society.

Fourthly, since autonomy is given to decide what sort of organisations will be regarded as CSOs under country specific context, international comparative study is extremely difficult. The definition of civil society provided by CIVICUS is rather vague: "*the arena, outside of the family, the state, and the market, which is created by individual and collective actions, organisations and institutions to advance shared interests*" (CIVICUS 2008: 16). This can include various organisations such as terrorism groups because the definition does not specify "interest" to be public interest. This definition can also include range of organisation from uncountable number of grassroots organisations without any legal status to long-established large not-for profit corporations. Depending on the country's own categorization of civil society, the shape of the diamond would change easily.

These limitations must be kept in mind when reading this report. The limitation of visual presentation (the diamond) of civil society was complemented with the secondary data and qualitative survey in this report. Therefore readers are recommended to read the detailed contents of the report rather than simply looking at the shape of the diamond.

## II. CIVIL SOCIETY IN JAPAN

One of the characteristics of Japanese civil society is the late establishment of the concept of civil society despite its long existence (Tsujinaka, 2009:7). Tsujinaka (2009:4) states that the concept of civil society in Japan is not the same concept used in the West. According to Yamaguchi (2004:25-26), the word "civilians" was first used in the 1870s by Yukichi Fukuzawa to describe the middle class people living in urban areas. However, from the late 19th century to 1945, the discussion of civil society is rarely seen, and Japanese translation of civil society (*shiminshakai*) only appeared after WW II (Garon, 2003:43). During the post war era, the word was frequently used by the liberal leftists in the discussion on global concerns raised in the post socialist world. Nonetheless, it was only after 1995, the Hanshin Awaji Great Earth quake (1995), that the general public finally became familiar with the concept of "civil society" (Tsujinaka 2009:6).

Today, there is a growing hope towards civil society to solve amounted problems that modern Japanese society faces. The economic scale of nonprofit sector has been increasing significantly, and in 2004, the output value reached over JPY40 trillion which is nearly double the amount of that in 1990 (Mitsubishi UFJ Research & Consulting, 2008:52). Nevertheless, there are concerns towards CSOs' sustainability and effectiveness.

### II.1. CONCEPT OF CIVIL SOCIETY

As mentioned above, the concept of civil society in Japan differs from the West. To conceptualise and operationalise civil society for the CSI project, the National Coordination Organisation (NCO) conducted literature surveys, and Advisory Committee (AC) meetings.

Prior to the CSI project in Japan, there have been two major international comparative civil

society studies in addition to great amount of various civil society researches since 1995 in particular: The Johns Hopkins Comparative Nonprofit Sector Project (JHCNP), and Japan Interest Group Survey (JIGS). The JHCNP tries to capture civil society by limiting the scope to the nonprofit sector only. In the research operation, civil society is defined as consisting of entities that each must fit all of the following criteria (Salamon *et al.* 2004:9-10):(1) *It is an organisation*,(2) *Its purpose is not-for-profit and it therefore does not distribute profits*,(3) *It is independent from the government*, (4) *It is self-governing*, (5) *It is voluntary*.

On the other hand, JIGS strived to cover organisations except the government, for-profit organisations, and family. Prior to the JIGS, Tsujinaka (2009:8) identifies three characteristics of the concept of Japanese civil society. Firstly, Japanese civil society is equal to the moral principles, and therefore this concept is an alternative ideal society challenging to the nation-state. Secondly, Japanese civil society is seen as weak and underdeveloped when the civil society is defined within the context of the western culture, which tends to focus more on advocacy groups. On the other hand, Japanese civil society has a rich social capital cultivated through the traditional associations or formal/informal networks. Thirdly, many comparative studies are western centred, hence previous studies have not being able to capture Japanese civil society holistically. Based on the third perspective, the JIGS defined civil society as “*the function (activities) and space, which non-governmental actors work for public benefit/goods*” (translated by the author) (Tsujinaka, 2009:8).

In the CSI project, types of CSOs included in the survey are suggested by CIVICUS, and modification was made by the AC members. Based on the types of CSOs suggested by CIVICUS, the AC members discussed and decided to include all of the suggested CSOs, except burial societies and political parties. This is because burial societies only exists in a small part of Japan and political parties are usually more close to the government and can thus not be considered as civil society according to the CIVICUS definition(see TABLE II.1. for types of CSOs included in this study).

TABLE II.1. Types of CSOs Included in the Study

- |   |
|---|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Farmer/Fisherman group or cooperative</li> <li>2. Traders or Business Association</li> <li>3. Professional Association (doctors, teachers, etc.)</li> <li>4. Trade Union or Labour Union</li> <li>5. Neighbourhood/ Village committee</li> <li>6. Religious or Spiritual group</li> <li>7. Political group, movement or party</li> <li>8. Cultural group or association (e.g. arts, music, theatre, film)</li> <li>9. Co-operative, credit or savings group</li> <li>10. Education group (e.g. parent-teacher association, school committee)</li> <li>11. Health group / Social service association (e.g. association for the disabled)</li> <li>12. Sports association</li> <li>13. Youth group</li> <li>14. Women's group</li> <li>15. NGO / civic group / human rights organisation<br/>(e.g. Rotary Club, Red Cross, Amnesty International)</li> <li>16. Ethnic-based community group</li> <li>17. Environmental or conservational organisation</li> <li>18. Hobby organisation (e.g. stamp collecting club)</li> </ol> |
|---|

## II.2. HISTORY OF CIVIL SOCIETY

Japan has a long and rich history of civil society activities that dates back to its early history, yet the recognition of the sector is very recent among the general public. Although some argues that there were virtually no civil society in pre-war Japan (Garon 2003:43), there were many proofs that Japan had developed associations from pre-war era (see Fukuda, 2006). The former point of view is probably due to the late establishment of the concept of civil society in Japan as Tsujinaka (2009:4) points out. According to Imada (2006:3), there were already public benefit corporations in the 7th century Japan. Until the Edo era (around 1600), religion have greatly contributed to the development of the civil society. From the Edo era and onwards, civic activities led by religious figures have decreased due to government oppressions; yet, civic activities in general have continued (Imada 2006: 3-5). The Edo era is also known for the development of social welfare, civic education, and the emergence of neighbourhood organisations. Social welfare efforts focused on poverty and disaster relief. During the Edo era, there were frequent fires in the city, which then brought about disaster relief activities or fire prevention activities by the public (Ouchi 2006: 3). Education was also dramatically developed by CSOs in the Edo era with notable examples being schools such as *Gansuido* and *Kaitokudo*. They were funded by donations and membership fees from civilians in Osaka city. Those who attended in such private educational institutions were actively involved in establishing Universities later in history (Imada 2006: 6-11). Neighbourhood organisations called *Yui*, *Kou*, *Za* and *Ren* were also developed during the Edo era. These associations have continued to exist until the present, particularly in the rural areas of Japan (Imada, 2006:11-16, see Fukuda, 2006).

In 1868, during the Meiji Restoration, Japan began its transformation into a modern society. A legal framework for public benefit corporations was put in place for the first time in 1868 as Article 34. Nevertheless, a public benefit corporation could only be established with the authorisation of the government, and the authorisation process was not clear. Additionally, when an application for such establishment was rejected, the organisation was not allowed to raise an objection. Hence, public benefit corporations were not totally independent from the government (Imada 2006:20). In 1889, the first constitution guaranteeing freedom of speech was signed in Japan. However, the country experienced two very distinctive eras after 1918 until the end of the war. The dramatic development of CSOs came about under the rapid democratisation between 1918 and 1931, and experienced deterioration during World War II (Garon 2003: 51).

In 1947, the Japanese Constitution was introduced guaranteeing universal freedom of association and speech. Tsujinaka (2009:12-13) divides the history of Japanese civil society into four phases after the war: 1945-1957, 1958-1975, 1976-1996, and 1997 onwards. The first phase saw a massive increase in CSOs: labour unions, employers associations, and corporations in particular. In the late 1950s, many had merged or scaled down in terms of membership number. In the second phase, number of economic or professional associations increased rapidly. At the same time, many advocacy organisations were also established. During the third phase, government public spending decreased under the administrative reform. In the 1980s, the conservative movement led to social movements fostering more collaboration with the government. Thus, the recognition of civil society by the central government began to change. Although most CSOs by then were driven by economic interest or professional associations, the CSOs' field of activities were diversified in response to various social concerns arising at the time. The last phase, from 1997 to today, is characterised with the drastic increase in the number of Specified Nonprofit Activities

Corporations (SNACs) after the enactment of the NPO law in 1998. However, the membership of overall CSOs has decreased during this phase.

The event that influenced modern Japanese civil society was the Great Hanshin Awaji earthquake occurred in 1995 that took 6,434 people's lives and injured 43,792 people (Fire and Disaster Management Agency, 2006). Approximately 1.3 million volunteers had joined the relief operations (Hyogo-ken chijkoushitsu shoubousaika, 1997:304) and the event is noted as the Volunteer Revolution (see Honma and Deguchi, 1996). As much as the event showed great civic power, this event also made it apparent that the country has out-dated laws and systems for civic activities. The legally established CSOs which with tax benefit did not play much role to help the situation. On the other hand, grassroots organisations without any legal status have contributed greatly to improve the situation (Honma, 1996:2). In 1998, the NPO law was enacted making it easier for small grassroots organisations to gain legal status in response to the demand from the public after the earthquake.<sup>6</sup> The earthquake and the introduction of the law had a great impact on the public; the media began to use civil society related terms such as 'volunteer' or 'NPO' very frequently, and it led to an increase in the recognition of the civil society sector (Yamauchi, 2003:24). Since the introduction of the NPO law, SNACs has rapidly increased and reached at nearly 40,000 by the end of 2009 (Cabinet Office, 2009a). This is more than the number of long established CSOs such as social welfare organisations, private school corporations, and relief and rehabilitation corporations (Ministry of Finance, 2010).<sup>7</sup>

The rapid establishment of SNACs also has a distinctive aspect of the emergence of CSOs managed by the public. Prior to the establishment of SNACs, all civil society organisations needed to gain permission to operate and were supervised by the government through a complicated process. SNACs today could be authorised by the national or prefectural agencies through simple applications. In addition, the Cabinet office (2009b) clarifies that the NPO law respects the autonomy of SNACs and SNACs should be supervised by the civilians through information disclosure. Hence, the government has minimum intervention unlike other CSOs.

What will be the future of Japanese civil society? Tsujinaka (2003:115) describes the patterns of growth of Japanese civil society as "*gradual transition from developmentalism to pluralistic maturity*". Tsujinaka (2009:19) also believes that the mixture of the traditional and modern form of CSOs will activate civil society. Yamauchi (2006:342) addresses the state of civil society as the period of transition from evaluating the number of organisations to evaluating the quality of organisation. Today, the expectation towards civil society is greater than ever, and the evaluation is somewhat in favour of civil society. However, civil society also faces great amount of problems such as financial instability and lack of human capital. In order to grow stronger, CSOs are required to make a self-effort to create progressive civil society as well as to gain more understanding and more support from other sectors.

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<sup>6</sup> Incorporating SNACs gives the grass roots organisations rights to open bank accounts, rent offices, subscribe for telephone lines, or have contracts with the government and businesses under the name of the organisation.

<sup>7</sup> The number of social welfare corporations was 18,625, the number of private school corporations was 1,226, and the number of relief and rehabilitation corporations was 164 at the latest statistics surveyed between 31 March 2009 and 1 April 2010 (Ministry of Finance, 2010). Although the timing of the survey differs, the number of SNACs does not decrease in such a short period of time, and the number of other CSOs does not change largely in few years.

## II.3. MAPPING OF CIVIL SOCIETY

This section presents the van-diagram of the society in Japan in order to see the relationship between civil society and other sectors, which are constructed based on the discussions in the AC meeting. This section also tries to draw one simplified map of rather complicated civil society to provide an overview of the sector in the country.

FIGURE II.3.1. shows the relationships between civil society and other sectors within Japanese society. As mentioned in the previous section, Japanese society has been ruled by a strong state, and the concept of civil society was established recently (the size of each circle of sectors shows the power of each sector: bigger is stronger). The advocacy role of civil society is weaker than the service provider role in the country (type of arrows from civil society to other sectors present its differences in strengths: in black bold means stronger roles, and in dot means weaker roles). Also, civil society organisations are very much depending on subsidies from the government as well as corporate donations rather than volunteers and donation from the public (dot arrow from family to civil society means small scale of donations from the public to civil society).

Additionally, the distance between the name of each corporation and other sector in the map shows the closeness of their relationship. Some types of CSOs such as (ex) public benefit corporations<sup>8</sup> and social public promotion corporations, are heavily intervened by the government (see Salamon et al. 2000, Salamon et al. 2004, Pekkanen 2004, Pekkanen 2000, Tsujinaka et al. 2009). Neighbourhood organisations are ingrained into Japanese society. Specified Nonprofit Activities Corporations (SNACs) are regarded as to have greater autonomy and relatively free from the government intervention. As a recent trend, the growth of social enterprises pointed out in the AC meeting which is located in the fuzzy boundaries between civil society and market.

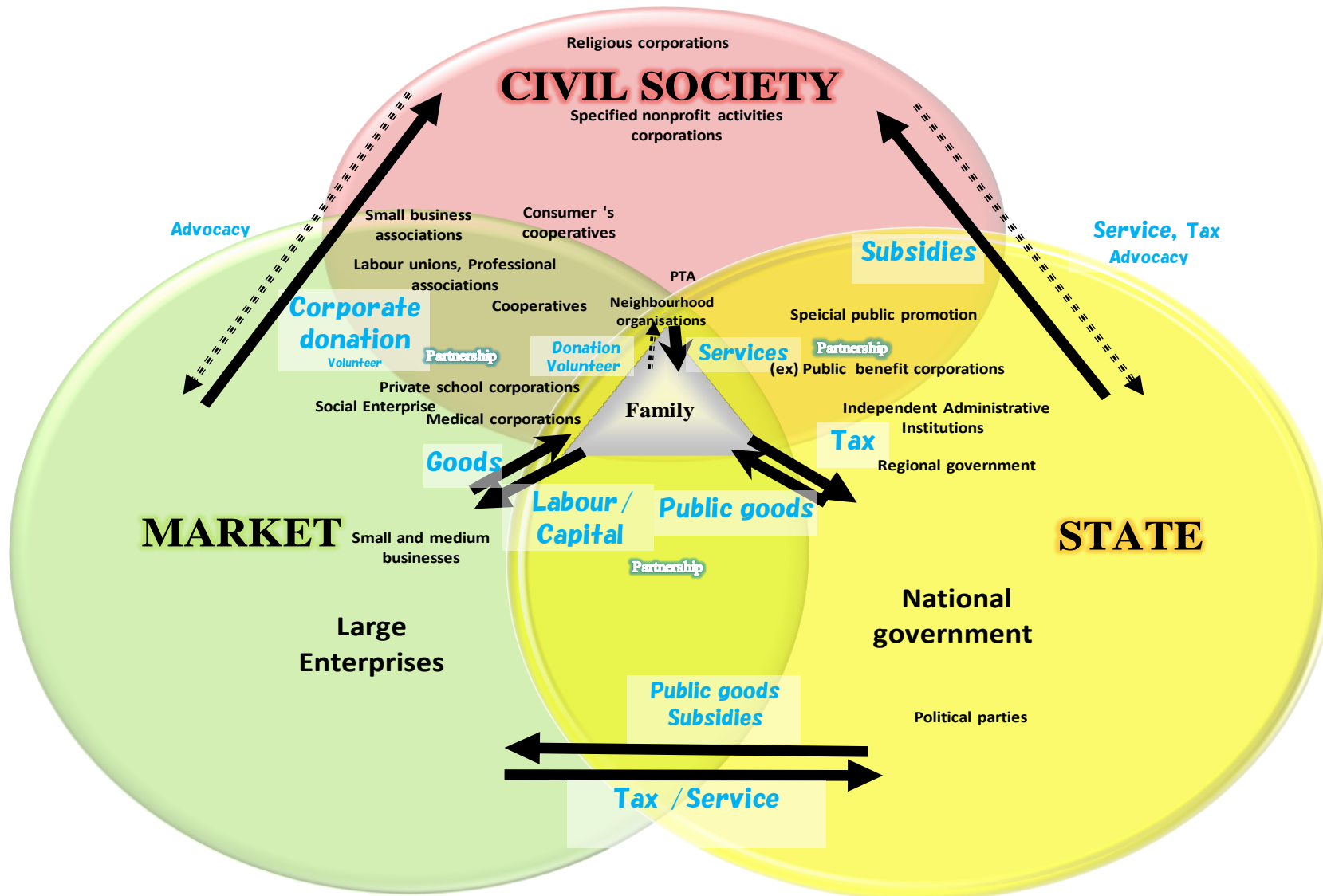
One of the distinctive characteristics of Japanese civil society is the particularly low trust towards religious corporations (therefore in the map, the name of religious corporations is located furthest from other sector and the edge of civil society). In the AC meeting, it was even discussed whether it is appropriate or not to include religious corporations into civil society organisations. In particular, the dreadful attack by Aum Shinrikyo (one of religious corporations) in 1995 that killed 12 people and injured 5,000 people has been clearly memorised by the public, which causes negative image towards religious corporations (see Hardacre 2003).

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<sup>8</sup> On 1st December 2008, the reform of public benefit corporations were taken place, which divided public benefit corporations into general incorporated associations/foundations and public benefit associations/foundations. However, it is assumed the duration after the introduction is not long enough to change the old system, this figure shows general incorporated associations/foundations and public benefit associations/foundations together as (ex) public benefit corporations.

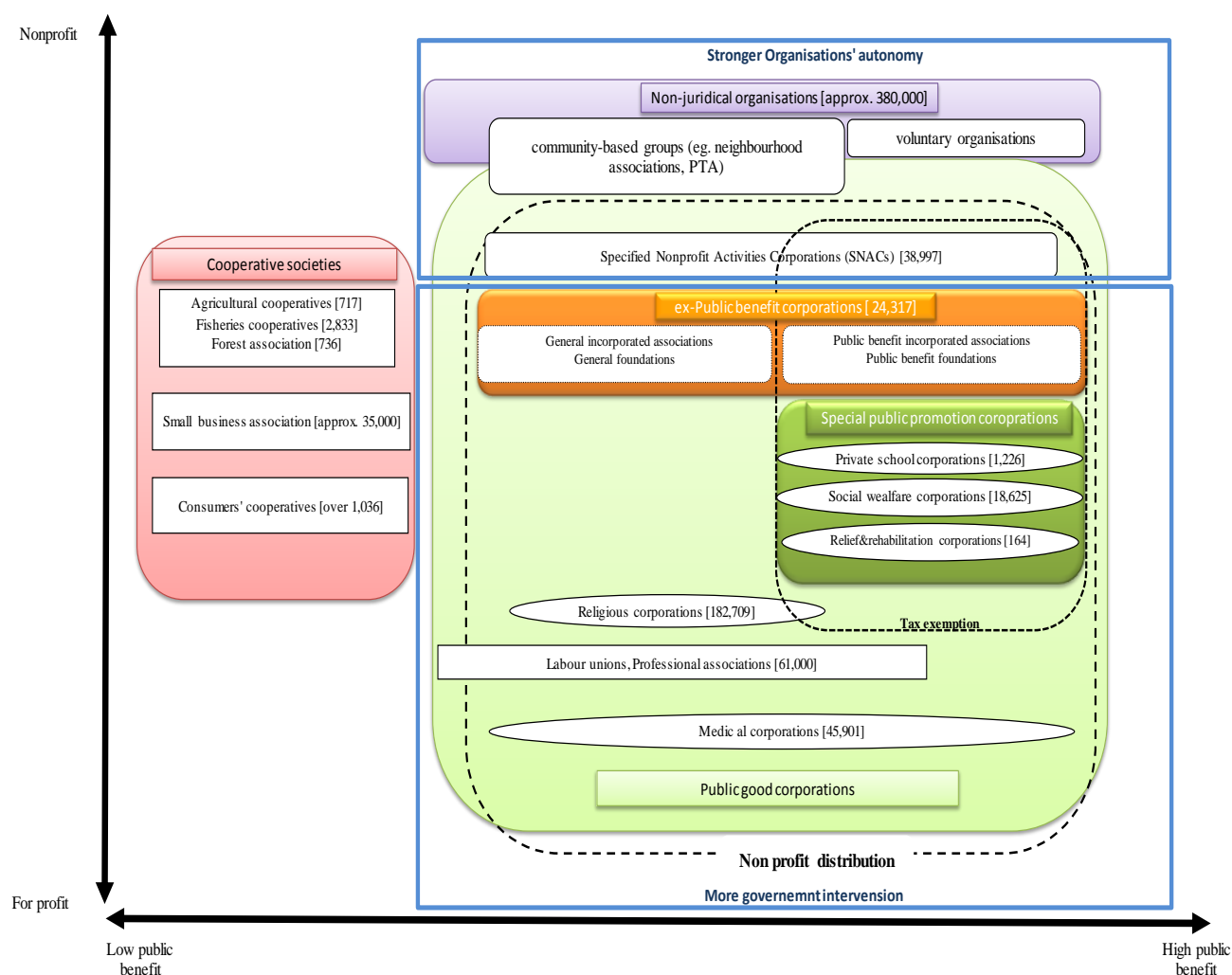


FIGURE II.3.1. Japanese Civil Society



The mapping of civil society is created based on the legal framework (FIGURE II.3.2). Based on the legal status, cooperative societies are allowed to have profit distribution yet other corporations are not allowed to do so. Although religious corporation is the largest in the number of organisations (the number in the parentheses provide the number of organisations), as mentioned above, this does not necessarily mean they are influential in the society. Today, the number of overall CSOs is decreasing, yet the number of SNACs alone is increasing rapidly. Additionally, when the media uses the term related to civil society such as NPO, NGO, and volunteers, the report is predominantly about SNACs or sometimes about non-juridical organisations (see Watari and Nakano, 2010). Hence, SNACs might be more recognized by the public despite they are less in numbers. When measuring the economic impact, however, SNACs has the smallest amount of output value after labour unions (Mitsubishi UFJ Research & Consulting, 2008:58). However, the impact and the influence of each corporation and group would differ depending on the measurement being used at the current state of Japanese civil society.

FIGURE II.3.2. Mapping of Japanese Civil Society (see Annex7 for the data source of the number of each corporations)



### III. ANALYSIS OF CIVIL SOCIETY IN JAPAN

This section presents and discusses findings from the CSI project conducted in Japan. Table III below shows the score for each dimension of the Japanese CSI diamond. As mentioned in Section I, Civic Engagement is mostly measured by using WVS. The scores for the Level of Organisation, and Practice of Values dimension are calculated based on the Organisational Survey constructed by CIVICUS. Perception of Impact dimension uses the External Survey in addition to the Organisational Survey. External Environment is calculated based on several secondary data provided.

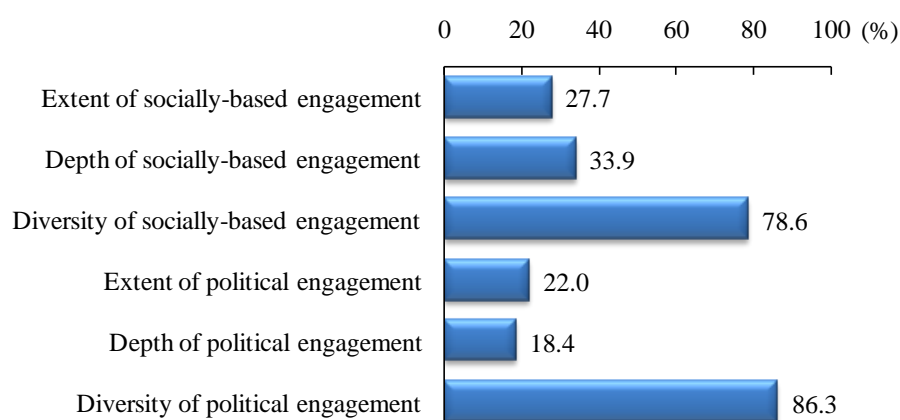
TABLE III. Score for each dimension of Japanese CSI diamond

Dimension	Score
1) Dimension: Civic Engagement	44.5
2) Dimension: Level of Organisation	62.3
3) Dimension: Practice of Values	41.3
4) Dimension: Perception of Impact	55.2
5) Contextual Dimension: Environment	75.8

#### III.1. CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

Civic Engagement is the measurement striving to capture the extent and depth of individual engagement in social and political initiatives (CIVICUS 2008: 22). This dimension looks at the extent, the depth and the diversity of social/political membership, social/political volunteering, community engagement, and individual activism. To measure Civic Engagement, the data from the WVS 2000 and 2005 were used. The overall score for this dimension is 44.5%. Figure III.1 indicates that the overall score for this dimension is lifted up by the high score of the diversity of both social and political membership (78.6% and 86.3%). Diversity here means different social groups which are participating in social and political activities. On the other hand, scores of extent and depth of political engagement are low.

FIGURE III.1. Sub-dimension scores for Civic Engagement





### **III.1.1. Extent of socially-based engagement**

By examining memberships and voluntarism for a variety of organisations, this sub-dimension captures the percentage of people who have participated in socially based activities in a year. The aggregated score of three measurements for this sub-dimension is 27.7%, which is lower than the reality produced in the focus group discussions. The main argument was that none of the measurements include neighbourhood organisations, which has the highest membership and volunteer participation in Japan.

Firstly, the survey discovered that 26.6% of Japanese citizens are members in at least one of the following CSOs: sports/recreation associations, art/music/educational groups, consumer organisations, and religious organisations. The membership rate for consumer organisations and religious organisations are particularly low at 0.7% and 4.4%, respectively. Although sports/recreation associations, and art/music/educational groups have a relatively higher membership rate at 18.3% and 10.1%, respectively, this is significantly lower than local community associations. Neighbourhood organisations often conduct a wide range of activities including political volunteering to support election processes, maintaining local community residential environment, and supporting local public service provision. They exist in all 47 prefectures in Japan, and there are 294,359 local community associations in 1,728 municipalities in the 2008 survey (Tsujinaka et al., 2009:44). Average percentage of membership is 81.4%, which is greatly higher than any associations categorized as socially based CSOs in this sub-dimension.

Secondly, the index of social volunteering looks at the volunteering rate for those who do volunteer work for at least one organisation focusing social welfare, religious, cultural activities, youth work, sports/recreation, and health related organisations. As a breakdown, those are 5.4%, 3.2%, 3.9%, 4.1%, 6.5%, and 3.3%, respectively. Nonetheless, the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communication (2006) reported that 26.2% participated in social volunteering based upon results gathered from the 2006 Survey on Time Use and Leisure Activities (STULA). In comparison to the WVS 2000, the participation rate is significantly higher. This discrepancy stems from differences in the questions geared towards volunteer work in the two questionnaires. The WVS does not include volunteering for the community, which has the highest participation rate of 12.0% in the STULA 2006. Because volunteering for the community is the most common type of volunteering, it needs to be noted that the score for this dimension might change when the volunteering participation rate for the community is included.

### **III.1.2. Depth of socially-based engagement**

This sub-dimension illustrates how deeply people are involved with social activities. The overall score for this dimension is 33.9%, which is higher than the extent of socially-based engagement. This dimension consists of the depth of socially-based engagement, socially-based volunteering, and community engagement. Each indicator scored 17.1%, 26.2%, and 58.4% respectively. There is an apparent contradiction between socially-based engagement and socially-based volunteering. The score for the depth of socially based engagement (17.1%) is lower than the extent (26.6%), while the depth of socially based volunteering (26.2%) is higher than the extent (13.4%).

The depth of socially-based engagement is measured by the percentage of active members who participate in more than one organisation. Therefore, the aforementioned contradiction is due to the fact that more people are members of socially-based CSOs; yet, they are less likely

to be a member of more than one organisation. On the other hand, there are less people who do volunteer work, but for those who do volunteer, they are more likely to do so with more than organisation.

### **III.1.3. Diversity within socially-based engagement**

This sub-dimension addresses the representation of the population who are engaged in socially-based activities both from extent and depth point of views. This is measured by the percentage of women and rural residents in the organisations. This sub-dimension seeks to determine how representative civil society is of the greater population, examining whether or not they including people from a variety of socio-economic backgrounds, races, ethnicities, and geographical regions. Japan's case does not include ethnicity or indigenous people due to data limitation.

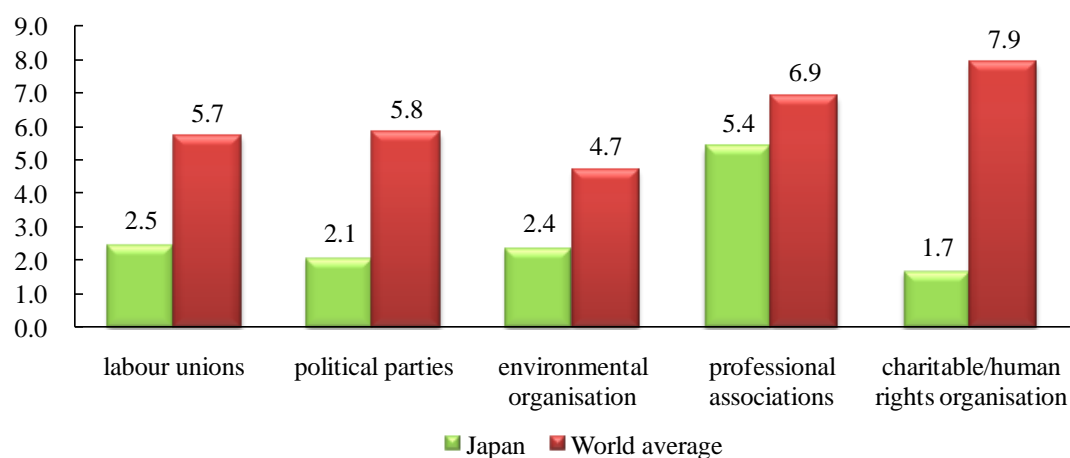
In Japan, the survey discovered that female participation in civic activities is almost as high as men with a score of 99.3% as for gender diversity representation (score 100% means perfect diversity and 0% means no diversity). In addition, there are minimal regional disparities in the extent of civic participation, which recorded 81.7% for remote area representations. Nonetheless, socio-economic status seems to have some relationship with civic engagement. In Japan, the diversity of social class representation is 51.7% where 100% means perfectly equal representation. The same pattern was observed in the depth of civic engagement with no differences in gender representation (100%), and low differences in the place of residence (70.4%), yet there are some differences when looking at people's socio-economic status (68.5%).

### **III.1.4. Extent of political engagement**

This sub-dimension focuses on political civic engagement. The overall score of this sub-dimension is 22.0%. This is lower than socially-based engagement, which is not a phenomenon only observed in Japan. Similar trend has been observed in many other parts of the world (World Value Survey database, 2010). Nonetheless, the percentage of people engaged with political related activities is lower than many other countries participated in WVS 2000 and 2005 (World Value Survey database, 2010).

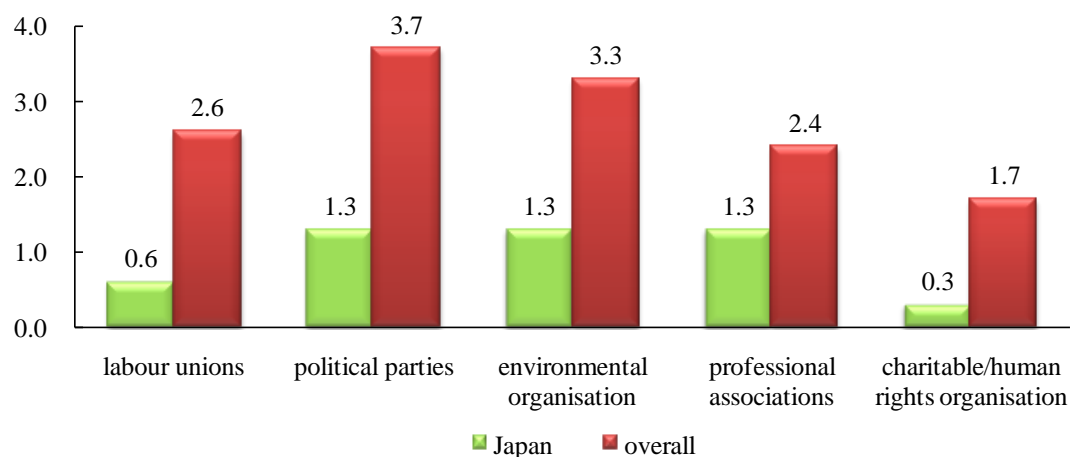
Extent of political engagement is measured by the percentage of the population that are active members for at least one political organisation. Political organisations include labour unions, political parties, environmental organisations, professional associations, and humanitarian or charitable organisations. The survey discovered that the membership rate for political organisations is 2.5%, 2.1%, 2.4%, 5.4% and 1.7%, respectively. In comparison to the overall score of the membership rate for any organisation gathered from WVS data, the membership rate in Japan is lower than the average, and the membership rates for humanitarian or charitable organisations are also particularly low as observed in FIGURE III.1.4.1 below. The low membership rate for political organisation is also reported in the Japanese General Social Surveys (JGSS) 2006 with only 5.1% of respondents are members of political related organisations (JGSS Research Center 2006:159).

FIGURE III.1.4.1. Membership rate for political organisations (Japan & WVS participating countries) (N=48) Source: WVS 2005



Extent of political volunteering is even lower than political membership. This was measured by the percentage of people who have claimed to be a volunteer for the at least one political organisation. Volunteers for charitable/human rights organisations are the smallest in the percentage (0.3%). As observed in FIGURE III.1.4.2, in most cases, Japan has less than half the percentage of the overall score which involves with political volunteering.

Figure III.1.4.2. Volunteers for political organisations (Japan & WVS participating countries) (N=48) Source: WVS 2000



Individual activism is measured by the percentage of the population that has undertaken at least one form of political activism in the past five years. Political activism includes signing a petition, joining in boycotts, or attending peaceful demonstrations. In Japan, 26.3% of people stated having signed a petition between 2000 and 2005, which is only just above half of the world overall score. The number of people who join boycotts and attend peaceful demonstrations is even smaller than for signing a petition, at 5.0%, and 2.9%, respectively. In particular, it is observed that the percentage of people who attend peaceful demonstrations is minimal in Japan. Because this was a question asked in 2005, a significant number of people in the world had possibly joined in the demonstration for Iraq War. However, only 2.9% of Japanese population answered that they would have attended a peaceful demonstration. This illustrates the severely low degree of individual activism in Japan today.

### **III.1.5. Depth of political engagement**

This sub-dimension looks at how deeply people are involved with political activities. This consists of depth of political engagement, and depth of political volunteering that are measured by the percentage of people involved in more than one political organisation as a member or as a volunteer among the people who are the members of at least one political organisation. The survey results suggest that a very small number of people are deeply involved in political organisations in Japan, only 20.3% of people are active in more than one political organisation, and 20.5% of people are actively involved in more than one political organisation. These numbers are significantly low considering that only 10.8% of the population are members of at least one political organisation, and only 5.7% of the population are active volunteers of at least one political organisation.

This sub-dimension also includes an indicator of the depth of individual activism which is measured by the percentage of people involved in more than one form of political action. Our findings show that only 14.4% of people are involved in political actions. Looking at the voter turnout trends, Japan has experienced a drop in voting rate between 1990 and 2005 (Akarui Senkyo Suishin Kyokai, 2010). Therefore, at the time of the WVS survey in 2005, it is assumed that the political climate in Japan was not particularly conducive to activism. The voter turnout rate, however, increased in the recent years (Akarui Senkyo Suishin Kyokai, 2010). Hence, the individual activism today might be more prosperous from that in 2005. However, it is undeniable that individual involvement in political action in the country is significantly low.

### **III.1.6. Diversity of political engagement**

This sub-dimension analyses the distribution of gender, socio-economic background and geographical distribution of those involve in political activities, examined through extent and depth. The analysis shows that distributions in regional representation is perfectly equal as both the extent and the depth reached 100% in their representation score. Unlike social activities, women are underrepresented in political participation in terms of both extent and depth. Particularly for the depth of political engagement, the representation score is only 44.7%.

## **Conclusion**

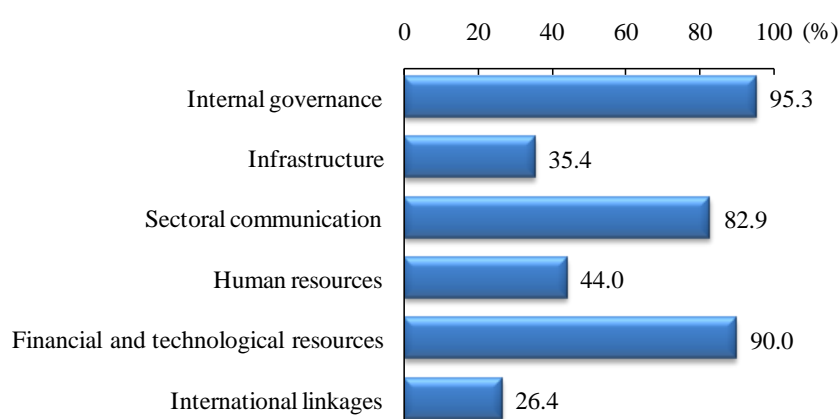
The analysis of the indicators for Civic Engagement revealed weak levels and depth of both social and political engagement in Japan in comparison to other countries. However, extent and depth of social engagement may not be as low when the measurement includes people's engagement in neighbourhood associations. As for political engagement, this is low in terms of both the extent and the depth even in comparison to the social engagement within the country. In particular, there are great gender differences in the political engagement and volunteering, and the survey shows a low interest of women towards politics.

## **III.2. LEVEL OF ORGANISATION**

Level of Organisation dimension measures the degree of organisational development in civil society (CIVICUS 2008:23). In the Japanese diamond, this dimension scored the highest (62.3%). However in the focus group discussions in Sendai and Hiroshima, the participants, in particular CSO workers, took this result as a surprise. Although this very much depends on the type of corporation, the reaction gathered in the focus group discussion is a crucial signal as to how CSOs are feeling about themselves.

This dimension has 6 sub-dimensions: 1) internal governance, 2) infrastructure, 3) sectoral communication, 4) human resources, 5) financial and technological resources, and 6) international linkages. Internal governance, sectoral communication, and financial and technological resources score relatively high at 95.3%, 82.9%, and 90.0%, respectively. On the other hand, infrastructure, human resources, and international linkages score relatively low at 35.4%, 44.0%, and 26.4% respectively. Therefore, according to this survey, Japanese CSOs have good internal governance, frequent sectoral communication, and sustained financial and technological resources. On the other hand, only 35.4% of them are formal members of some federation, umbrella group, or support network, and less than half of them are regarded as having sustainable human resources. Also, international linkages measured by the ratio of International Non-Governmental Organisations (INGOs) in the country to INGOs in the world, are not strong.

FIGURE III.2. Sub-dimension scores for Level of Organisation



### III.2.1. Internal governance

The internal governance is a dimension to illustrate how well CSOs are managed, calculated as a percentage of CSOs that have board of directors or formal steering committee. The result shows that 95.3% of CSOs have either board of directors or formal steering committee. The high score for internal governance is no surprise because organisations have to have more than 3 boards of directors in accordance to NPO Law to obtain the legal status of CSOs. However, other data source indicates that nearly 80% of organisation without legal status (N=3,179) answered that they have board members, and the rest of 20% did not answer the question. Hence, even without legal status, CSOs seem to have board of directors (Cabinet Office, 2009: 50). Also, Cabinet Office (2006:20) revealed that 74.7% of SNACs (N=1,010) thought that the board is functioning well. All those data together, CSOs are believed to have fairly well established internal governance.

### III.2.2. Infrastructure

Infrastructure is measured by the percentage of CSOs who are formal members of any federation, umbrella group, or support network. The survey discovered that 35.4% of CSOs are formal member of federations, umbrella groups, or support networks. In total, 45 organisations are listed as federation, umbrella group, or support network, and some organisations are named by several CSOs. Among those federations, 6 organisations works at the international level, 22 organisations have national networks, 4 organisations are active at the regional level, and 13 organisations works at the provincial level. Although the number of

CSOs which has such infrastructure seems low, over half of CSOs which have the infrastructure are the members of more than 2 federations, umbrella group or support networks. It is assumed that CSOs with a certain extent of association tend to have strong and wide networks, whereas CSOs without any associational relations are likely to have no supporting network at all.

Because the number of respondents is only 85, it is difficult to make generalisations. Yet one notable finding is that all labour unions in Organisational Survey are members of federation. The obvious differences from the other CSOs are that the labour unions have longer history and are well established. On the other hand, other CSOs included in the survey are mostly SNACs or grassroots organisations which either have been established recently or still do not have firm management system in place. In Japan, intermediary organisations often play an important role to provide support for SNACs or grassroots organisations. Because there is no formal registration required for intermediary organisations, the number of organisations cannot be specified. Iwata (2010:126) indicates that there are approximately 300 intermediary organisations in 2009 based on several data source. Therefore, although there is a large number of organisations which work to create support networks, they have not been utilized fully by other CSOs.

### **III.2.3. Sectoral communication**

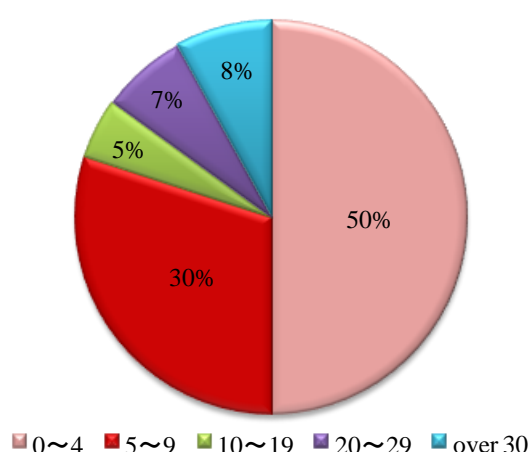
This dimension tries to investigate how often CSOs communicate with each other within the sector through two indicators: percentage of organisations that have held meetings with other organisations working on similar issues within the past 3 months, and percentage of organisations that have exchanged information such as documents, reports, or data with another organisation. Scores for those indicators are 81.7% and 84.0%, which demonstrate a high volume of communications and the relatively good climate for the cooperation within the sector. In the focus group discussions in Hiroshima, among 18 participated SNACs, 7 SNACs regarded their strong and wide networks as their strength, and 3 SNACs reflect their networks as weaknesses. The discussion also revealed that the importance of networks with different sector such as the government or for-profit organisations. From Hiroshima's group, communication with the local government is considered as important because SNACs often act as service providers to complement services provided by the local government. Hence, the cooperation with the local government makes their work more efficiently and effectively.

### **III.2.4. Human resources**

Sustainability of human resources is measured by the percentage of organisations in which volunteers compose less than 25% of the organisation's average staff base. The survey revealed that only 44% of CSOs have sustainable human resources. Lack of human resources has been one of the greatest concerns of the civil society, particularly in the case of SNACs. The Cabinet Office (2009c:39) reported that approximately 40% of SNACs have only 1 to 4 staff, 23.6% have 5 to 9 staff, and 19.8% have 10 to 19 staff (N=1,200). In the Organisational Survey, half of the CSOs reported to have less than 5 staff, and about 45% of them reported to have no staff at all. There are 2 cases where there is one staff in the organisation, yet volunteers composed less than 25% simply because there are no volunteers. Additionally, 8 cases are reported to have sustainable human resources when there are less than 5 staff members in the organisation. The question is if these cases should be regarded as having sustainable human resources. Therefore, the score for this dimension "44.0%" seems to be an overestimation of human resources sustainability.



FIGURE III.2.1. Number of employees of CSOs (Organisational Survey)



### III.2.5. Financial and technological resources

This sub-dimension looks at financial and technological base for CSOs. Indicators for this dimension scores high at 83.5% for financial sustainability and 96.5% for technological resources.<sup>9</sup> However, careful interpretation is needed for the indicator of financial sustainability.

Financial sustainability receives a high score. Nevertheless, the method of measurement of the index of financial resources needs to be reviewed. At present, sustainability of financial resources is measured based upon the changes between income and expenditure for 2 years, but it does not consider the size of the budget. For instances, if an organisation has no income in 2007 and in 2008, the income of the organisation does not change. Similarly, if an organisation has no spending in 2007 and 2008, the amount of spending does not change. The two cases above have no change in the balance of their budget, and their situations are regarded as sustainable. Therefore, this measurement does not necessarily describe how strong the financial bases are for some organizations. In reality, the problem of financial management of SNACs is frequently reported.

According to the NPO Comprehensive Financial Database (NPO-CFDB), the average total income is JPY 150.8 million (approximately US \$170 thousands<sup>10</sup>) and the medium is JPY 268.6 thousands (approximately US\$30 thousands). Therefore, most SNACs are very small in their financial budget and only few SNACs have a significantly large amount of income. In fact, there are approximately 15% of SNACs reported their income to be 0. In 2007, the average wage of 20 to 24 years old was JPY251 thousands (approximately US\$ 2,831) (National Tax Agency 2007). Therefore, about half of SNACs cannot even employ one young, full-time worker which is normally least costly. Moreover, the annual financial balance between income and spending of many SNACs illustrates a severely poor financial situation. There was over 60% of SNACs recoded to having zero profit or negative balance in 2003. Less than 20% of SNACs have profits exceeding JPY 100 thousands in a year

<sup>9</sup> Technological resources scored the highest among all sub-dimensions in the Level of Organisation dimension; however, this was an almost expected result. Technological resources are measured by the percentage of organisations with a telephone line, fax machine, computer, and internet connection. The World Bank (2009) reported that in Japan, internet users per 100 was 75, and mobile and fixed telephone subscribers per 100 was 124 in 2008 meaning that (some people have more than one fixed phones). Thus, it is unusual not to have those technological resources in this country.

<sup>10</sup> Calculated by the exchange rate USD = 88.66 JPY (exchange rate as of 30<sup>th</sup> June 2010) <http://fms.treas.gov/intn.html#rates>. All the calculation here in after is done in accordance to this exchange rate.

(approximately US\$ 1,128). Because most SNACs do not hold a large amount of assets, organisations normally invest in their current activities by using the profit of the previous year. However, if there are only small amount of SNACs are profitable, it is difficult to foresee the sustainable growth of SNACs. Additionally, in the two regional focus group discussions, financial instability was determined to be problematic by almost all CSOs. At the focus group discussions in Hiroshima, among 18 SNACs participated, 12 claimed that their greatest challenge is financial sustainability. Those 12 SNACs were working in various fields, in other words, financial sustainability is a common concern among different types of CSOs. Similar to the focus group discussion in Sendai, they also revealed the difficulties of fundraising. Therefore, findings from other data source and focus group discussions depict a different picture from the Organisational Survey results.

### **III.2.6. International linkages**

International linkages are measured by using the ratio of international non-governmental organisations (INGOs) in the country over the total number of INGOs worldwide.<sup>11</sup> According to the Union of International Associations (2009), the total number of INGOs worldwide was 13,799, and Japan has 3,642 INGOs registered as INGOs by the Union of International Associations. In comparison to other countries that implemented the CSI project, international linkages scored relatively high in Japan with the overall average being 15.10%. However, in comparison to Italy as another OECD country (40.80 %), it is significantly low (CIVICUS database). In practice, the history of Japanese INGOs is significantly shorter than Western countries, and their weak level of organisation is often being criticized. While the international charity work started in the late 18th century in the West, Japanese international charity work did not began until the early 20th century (Shigeta 2005:31). The establishment of INGOs were also later than the West: the boom of INGOs' establishment of Japan happened in the 1980s (Ito, 1998:76-82) while the number of western INGOs grew drastically between the 1950s and the 1960s (Shigeta 2005:36). Based on in-depth interviews of INGOs in Japan, Mekata (2004:220-229) discovered that Japanese citizens have low awareness towards development issues and there is a lack of human capital to promote international linkages. These are issues to be improved to strengthen international linkages.

Some positive notes are found in other data source. According to the Cabinet Office (2010), 7,858 SNACs reported to be working in the field of international cooperation on 30th June 2010. In addition, Taki (2009:7) reported widely practiced international development work by grassroots organisations without corporation status. Activities are ranging from promoting education and health to cultural exchange. The scale of their activities is not large, however, their activities do promote and strengthen international linkages. Also there are CSOs conducting seminars of international development to increase awareness among Japanese people. These activities need to be encouraged and sustained because civic understanding is essential to promote international linkages.

### **Conclusion**

The Level of Organisation dimension shows a higher score than the other indicators of the diamond except External Environment. Nevertheless, CSOs in Japan do not regard themselves as having a higher level of organisations. In particular, as mentioned above, focus group discussions revealed how severe financial situations are for CSOs. Human resource is

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<sup>11</sup> Center for Nonprofit Research and Information and CIVICUS: World Alliance For Citizen Participation would like to thank the Union of International Associations for their collaboration with the CSI project in providing this data." Union of International Association's *Yearbook of International Organisations* 2008/2009.

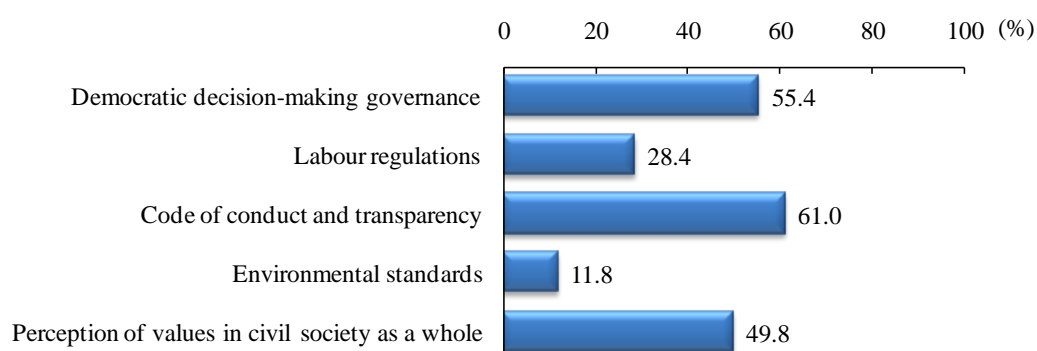


also a serious concern considering the fact that many CSOs simply do not have enough workers. Therefore, this dimension has presented contradicting results since focus group discussions and secondary data has shown challenges that CSOs face, particularly weak financial resource base and lack of human resources. Also, CSOs are encouraged to utilise federations and umbrella organisations for building a stronger network. Moreover, strengthening international linkages is recommended.

### III.3. PRACTICE OF VALUES

This dimension is trying to capture the extent civil society practices some core values (CIVICUS 2008:23). This consists of 5 sub-dimensions: democratic decision-making governance, labour regulations, code of conduct and transparency, environmental standards and perception of values in civil society as a whole. This is also measured through CSO questionnaires. As it is observed in the diamond, this has the lowest score (41.3%) in comparison to other dimensions, and this dimension seems to reflect the weakness of SNACs.

FIGURE III.3. Sub-dimension scores for practice of values



#### III.3.1. Democratic decision-making governance

This sub-dimension describes the level of democratic decision making within CSOs. If the decision is made by elected leaders, elected boards, members and staff, the CSO is recognised to have democratic decision-making governance. On the other hand, the CSO is judged to have less democratic governance if the decision is made by appointed leaders or appointed boards. From the Organisational Survey, it was found that only just over the half of CSOs were governed democratically. Five organisations answered that the decisions were made by appointed leaders. There were no common characteristics such as the number of staffs or types of organisations among those five organisations. Hence it is unclear what factors are encouraging or hindering democratic decision making process. Today, there are growing concerns on non-democratic decision making process in Japan (Cabinet Office 2007:9). Nevertheless, in order to sustain the autonomy of CSOs, forcing democratic governance by law should be carefully considered, and it is strongly recommended for CSOs to maintain their autonomy by making sure they reflect on members' views and priorities.

#### III.3.2. Labour regulations

This is the dimension to see how much CSOs guarantee labour rights. This is measured by looking at the availability of equal employment opportunities, labour union memberships, enforcement of labour rights training, labour standard, and whether these information are available to the public. The overall score is 28.4 % with a significantly low score for members of labour unions (5.5%). None of the indicators for this sub-dimension exceeds 50%. The

highest score is 48.1%, which is for the availability of labour standard policy followed by 37.7% for the availability of equal opportunity. Only 22.2% reported that they provide labour rights trainings.

In fact, there has been a discussion on low salary and long working hours in SNACs. Kato and Hayashi (2010:9-10) compared the overall average salary of workers in SNACs and that of workers in private companies. They found that the latter was 2.3 times more than the former. Additionally, the Research Institute of Economy, Trade, and Industry (RIETI) (2007:19) reported that only 32.9% of SNACs have a written contract for workers. Moreover, only 29.3% of SNACs have insurance for their employees, 24.6% have health insurances, and 7.5% have pension schemes.

In order to improve the situation, a movement within civil society has started in the recent years.. For instance, one of the distinctive intermediary CSOs, Japan NGO Center for International Cooperation (JANIC) had provided study sessions about labour regulations for CSOs between 2005 and 2009 in corporation with *Rissho Kosei-Kai Ichijiki Heiwa Kikin*[Rissho Kosei-Kai Peace Fund]. (JANIC,2010). Local CSOs also began to work on the labour regulation issue such as *Shinjyuku NPO network Kyougikai* [Shinjyuku NPO network association](Tokyo Voluntary Action Center, 2010), COM-SALOON21 (Comsalon21, 2010), Toyama Volunteer Center (Toyama Volunteer Center, 2010), or Oita NPO Volunteer Center (Oita prefecture, 2010). It is extremely important for CSOs to make sure that the labour regulations are in place to sustain their organisation and these activities should be more encouraged and supported by the government and the wider public.

### **III.3.3. Code of conduct and transparency**

This sub-dimension seeks to assess how many CSOs have a publicly available code of conduct for CSO staff and how many CSOs have publicly available financial information. The overall score is 61.0%; however, this score is lifted by the score for transparency that is 79.0%. Organisations which have publicly available code of conduct are only about half, and two third of them claimed to have no intention to publicise a code of conduct in the future. This survey could not reveal the reason why CSOs have no intentions to improve the situation. It would be useful to have a further investigation on this issue to better organisation's practices.

The score for transparency is significantly higher than the score for the “publicly available code of conduct”. The submission of financial reports to the government is the obligation for CSOs with legal status, which does not necessarily mean that CSOs are making an effort to deliver financial information to their members, donors, and other stake holders. In fact, according to the Cabinet Office (2006:23), it was revealed that only 18.5% of organisations disclosed their annual report including their annual financial statement through newsletters or journals distributed to members, and only 23.1% of organisations did so in their home page (multiple answer questions, N=1,010). Additionally, 24.3% of SNACs (N=1,010) are only submitting the financial statement because it is a legal obligation. Furthermore, Baba (2005: 89) says that there is a serious problem of the quality of these reports. For instance, it was discovered that 31.1% (N=471) of submitted annual financial statements had some kinds of misreporting in Aichi prefecture (Baba 2005:89).

To encounter this problem, there are efforts made towards improving accountability and transparency in recent years. For example, an intermediate/advocacy SNAC, Seeds *shimin katsudou wo sasaeru seido wo tsukuru kai* [Seeds, Association for Establishing the Framework to Support Civic Activities], has been conducting Accountability Study Session twice a year since 1995. Based on these discussions, th the SNACs issued “The Standard

NPO Financial Account Report” on the 20th of July 2010. This standardisation is not a legally binding regulation, hence the organisations can choose whether to adopt it or not (Seeds *shimin katsudouwo sasaeru seido wo tsukuru kai*, 2010). However this is a progress towards advancing transparency as there had been no standard at all. It is expected that the standard will be enforced and modified in accordance to practice, and it will be used to promote transparency and accountability.

### **III.3.4. Environmental standards**

This sub-dimension shows how many CSOs are operating their activities through an environmentally sustainable manner. The result of the Organisational Survey suggests only 11.8% has environmental standards made available publicly in Japan. According to CIVICUS database, the average score of 23 countries for this dimension is 35.47% and Japan scored the lowest. In Georgia which the score is the highest for this dimension, 79.20% of CSOs have answered that they have publicly available environmental standards. This illustrates the magnitude of Japan’s low score for this dimension.

### **III.3.5. Perception of values in civil society**

The concept of civil society according to CIVICUS does not only include civil groups that take collective actions for public benefit, but also the groups which use violence to pursue their shared interests. It was difficult to include the latter groups into the Organisational Survey for accessibility reasons. However, this dimension strives to capture civil society including its negative aspects by questioning CSOs to evaluate civil society. This sub-dimension is consisted of 6 indicators: perceived non-violence, perceived internal democracy in CSOs, perceived level of corruption, perceived intolerance, perceived weight of intolerant groups and perceived promotion on non-violence and peace. The overall score for this sub-dimension is 49.2% with particularly poor image of civil society in terms of corruption. Yet, people generally regard CSOs as having significant or moderate role in promoting non-violence and peace in the country. Also, most people believe that there are no or almost no CSOs which are racist, discriminatory, and intolerant within Japanese civil society.

The indicator measuring CSO’s perceived corruption shows that more than 95% of the respondents believe the existence of corrupt practices in Japanese civil society. The connection between the government and public benefit corporations, known as *Amakudari*, is widely recognised by the public as corruption.<sup>12</sup> This is a long standing practice that places large numbers of retired officers from the central government in public benefit corporations with significantly large amount of earnings. According to MHLW (2010), 1,401 employees of the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare gained another job after the retirement in 280 public benefit corporations as of 1st of April 2010. Of those, 8.9% received an annual salary of more than JPY10 million (approximately US\$ 112,790), whereas 4.9% of workers at private companies earns over JPY10 million annually (National Tax Agency 2009).

Additionally, during the short four months period the media survey was conducted by NCO, there were 3 scandals of corruption related to CSOs. These news covered the front pages of major national newspapers, and they were repeatedly reported in the different pages in newspapers for a long period of time. In fact, CSOs related reports found on the front pages

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<sup>12</sup> *Amakudari* was originally a practice of the human resources department of the government. It assigns retired personnel from the ministries to high positions in private or quasi-public sectors. This creates a strong tie between the government and the private sector or quasi-public sectors which then leads to effective management. However this tie sometimes brings about administrative corruption (see Choi, 2007).

were predominantly the scandals of public benefit corporations which gained great amount of profit and used for private purposes of the personnel in charge despite the non-distribution rule of the public benefit corporation (eg. Hamahata, 2009:1, *Kanken zen Rijicho Ouryou Riikken He*, 2009:1). Abuses of the benefit for the CSOs working for the disabled are also revealed in the articles (eg. Hayashida and Kubo, 2009:1, *Kourou Shokuin Kanyoka*, 2009:1). Others reported inappropriate activities of trade unions (eg. *Yami Senjyu Mondai*, 2009:1, Mogi, 2009:1). Because the front page is widely read by the public, those negative images could contribute to the public suspicion towards CSOs for corruption.

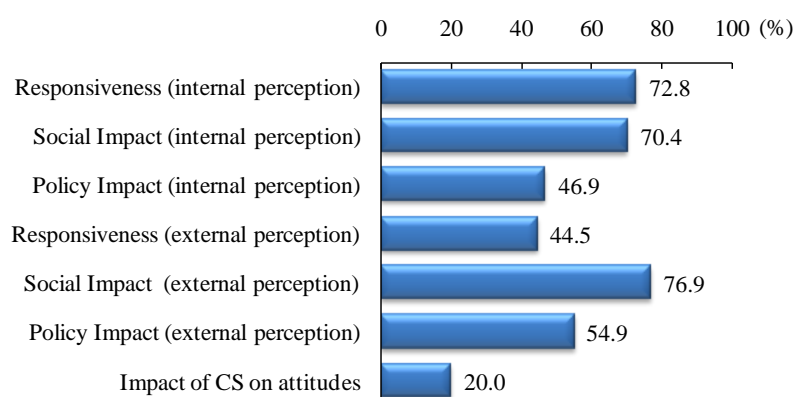
## Conclusion

The overall score for Practice of Values dimension is 41.3%. This is lower than any other dimensions of the diamond. Also, this is the only score that turned out to be lower than the average score among the 23 countries that conducted the CSI project Phase 2 (CIVICUS database). The score is particularly lowered due to the small number of people who are members of labour unions in CSOs and the limited number of CSOs having publicly available environmental standards. However, there are movements within civil society today to improve working conditions and environmentally friendly manners as mentioned above. Hence, in the near future, the score for this dimension might become higher. By all means, better practice is urgently required because the current situation is making it difficult for workers to continue their jobs, and it can cause criticisms towards CSOs thus decrease the support from the general public. This is a critical challenge for Japanese civil society to overcome.

## III.4. PERCEPTION OF IMPACT

Perception of Impact dimension measures the extent to which civil society is able to impact the social and policy arena, according to internal (within civil society) and external (outside of civil society) perception (CIVICUS 2008:24). The Organisational Survey and the External Perception Survey are tools used to measure this dimension. “Internal” resides within civil society, and “external” resides outside of civil society such as the government and the market. Sub-dimensions are: responsiveness (internal/external perception), social impact (internal/external perception), policy impact (internal/external perception), and impact of civil society on general public attitudes. The overall score for this dimension is 55.2%. Details of the the sub-dimensions indicate that there are gaps between how CSOs perceive their impact and how external stake holders regard CSO’s impact.

FIGURE III.4. Sub-dimension scores for Perceived Impact



### **III.4.1./4.4. Responsiveness (internal perception/external perception)**

Responsiveness is measured by asking respondents to comment on the impact of civil society on the country's concerns. In this survey, country's concerns are defined as stable economy, and progress toward a less impersonal and more humane society. These are the two major concerns that Japanese public addressed in the WVS 2005. As an internal perception, 60.3% and 85.3% of people answered that civil society has had a significant or moderate impact in stabilizing the economy, and in progressing toward a less impersonal and more humane society. On the other hand, the external perceptions were 14.8% and 74.1%, respectively.

In this dimension, there are large differences between internal perception and external perception for the impact on a stable economy. In the AC meeting, it was pointed out that this is due to the questions asked on the survey. The question was "In your country, what is the impact of civil society when it comes to stable economy?" Stable economy is a rather vague expression, and can be interpreted differently depending on the respondent. The question lacks indicators describing what a stable economy is and how the impact of civil society for the creation of a stable economy can be measured. Hence, responses answered the question very subjectively. Workers of civil society might believe that they are making an impact towards a stable economy by providing job support or helping homeless people to re-enter the society. On the other hand, those who work in other sectors may not perceive civil society's impacts on a stable economy if they regard stable economy as economic growth which is normally achieved by for-profit corporations. However, with the small number of respondents, it is extremely difficult to conclude that 14.8% is a trustworthy percentage to describe the external perception for this impact.

As for the perception of impact on progress toward a less impersonal and more humane society, internal and external perception scored similar. Nonetheless, "progress toward a less impersonal and more humane society" is also a vague description. Therefore, it has to be noted that the scores for this dimension are very subjective. From past researches, however, it can be expected that CSOs are perceived both subjectively and objectively to play important role for social development. In 2005, when the Cabinet Office conducted the survey on civic activity (N=1,010), 71.5% of SNACs believed to be bridging diverse groups of people with one another. 61.2% of SNACs consider themselves to be providing chances for their members to utilize and develop knowledge and ability through their activities, while 56.8% regarded themselves as providing public goods/services to meet individuals' needs. 41.2% considered themselves to be empowering the people (Cabinet Office 2006:30). These results indicate that CSOs are perceived to have sufficient impact on social issues. The Japan Research Institute (JRI) conducted a research in 2004 on the impact of civil society on social concerns such as falling birth-rate, aging, environmental degradations, crime, the public-spiritedness, and depopulation. Based on statistical analysis, the JRI concluded that civic activity has a positive impact on the issues mentioned above (JRI 2005:7). Hence, those previous surveys suggest that CSOs are contributing to wider means of social development, which should include creating less impersonal and more humane society.

### **III.4.2./4.5. Social impact (internal perception/external perception)**

Perception of social impact also differs between internal perception and external perception. The overall score for the internal perception of social impact is 70.4 %, and the overall score for the external perception of social impact is 76.9%. This suggests that more external stakeholders believe that CSOs activities have significant or moderate social impact on society than CSOs themselves.



The international perception of social impact is examined by how CSOs perceive themselves to have an impact on society in the fields that they believe CSOs should have the most impact, and in the fields they are working on. For the former, 75.6% of CSOs answered that they have significant or moderate impact on the society.<sup>13</sup> For the latter, the Organisational Survey found that about 34.7% of organisations felt that they have not had an impact in their respective fields. Interestingly, CSOs evaluated the impact of their activity lower than the external stakeholders.

As for the external perception, external stakeholders were asked to assess civil society's impact in the fields where they considered civil society to be the most active, and their social impact in general. For the former, 96.0% of the respondents answered that civil society has an impact.<sup>14</sup> As for the external perception of social impact in general, 57.7% of the respondents said that there are high or some impacts. However, these are very subjective responses because the question asks "In general, what kind of impact do you think that civil society as a whole has on the social context?" Given the small number of responses, it is extremely difficult to make any remarks on the social impact on selected concerns. There is also a possibility that the score would be lower if this was asked to the public in general. In 2005, the public opinion poll was conducted to capture the state of NPOs. In the survey, only 39.5% answered that they know the word "NPO" and understand their activity (Cabinet Office 2005). Therefore, in asking general public about social impact of CSOs, it is expected to have the low score for this indicator.

### **III.4.3./4.6. Policy impact (internal perception/external perception)**

Policy impact is the dimension which depicts how CSOs and external stakeholders perceive themselves and how much civil society has an impact on policy making. The results show that general policy impact is perceived to be high, while policy impact on specific fields is perceived to be low by both internal and external stakeholders. The overall scores for policy impact for internal and external perception are 46.9% and 54.9%. This dimension also shows low evaluation by CSOs than external stakeholders towards CSOs' policy impact.

Among 32 CSOs claimed to be involved with policy making in the past 2 years, 2 CSOs answered that they do not know the degree of the civil society's policy impact. 6 CSOs think civil society's policy impact is limited, 14 CSOs believe that there are some impact, and 10 CSOs claims the impact to be large. There is no common characteristic among the CSOs that share the perception of policy impact. This is probably suggesting the lack of objective standard evaluation system in Japan, which is recommended to be introduced.

### **III.4.7. Impact of civil society on attitudes**

This sub-dimension looks at the impact of civil society on attitudes by measuring the differences between members of civil society and non-members of civil society in trust, tolerance, and public -spiritedness. Also, this dimension includes people's trust towards civil society. Due to technical reasons, Japan did not include the dimension of differences in tolerance.<sup>15</sup> The overall score excluding the indicator of tolerance is 20.0%.

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<sup>13</sup> CSOs believe they have the most impact in education (31.9%), support for the poor and marginalised communities (26.1%), and social development (11.8%). CSOs view human relief, health, employment, housing and food as less influential.

<sup>14</sup> Supporting the poor and marginalised communities is thought to be most active field by the majority of respondents (34.0%), followed by health (26.0%), education (12.0%), and humanitarian relief (10.0%). Social development, housing, and employment were thought to be active by only a small number of respondents, 6%, 2%, and 2% respectively. "Food" was not regarded as an active field by any respondents.

<sup>15</sup> In the WVS, the question to assess tolerance, "Could you please mention any that you would not like to have as neighbours?" was not used as Japanese are not accustomed to being asked about what kind of neighbours they consider "undesirable" (see WVS database).

The data suggests that the ones who are members of CSOs have higher level of trust against people in general and higher awareness for public-spiritedness. While there are differences in the attitudes, the trust towards civil society is low in Japan, which needs to be considered seriously. The level of trust towards civil society is measured by the average confidence level towards CSOs including environmental organisations, women's organisations, charitable or humanitarian organisations, churches, labour unions, and political parties. Overall, 16.8% reported having high trust in those CSOs. By looking at the scores by CSO types, it is apparent that Japanese people have significantly low confidence in charitable or humanitarian organisations and churches. In Japan, 29.1% of people answered that they have a great deal of confidence or quite a lot of confidence in the government, 21.4% thought so towards the parliament, and 36.2% felt so towards for-profit large corporations. Hence, trust in civil society is lower than the government, the parliament, and large companies.

Opinion poll also confirms low trust towards SNACs: only 6.5% thinks SNACs are always trustworthy, and 24.0% feels SNACs are trustworthy for most of the time (Cabinet Office, 2005). This is probably rooted in Japanese history for the state had dominated the public sphere for a long time. Even after the recognition of nonprofit sectors, people tend to regard private voluntary organisations are untrustworthy (Schwartz, 2003:5). Additionally, in recent years, the public have been seeing news and television programmes reporting CSOs' corrupt practice. From 2003 in particular, the number of articles and television programmes reporting negative side of CSOs has increased in the media. For instance, between 2004 and 2007, Mainichi Broadcasting System (MBS) broadcasted a series of "Mysterious Fundraising Organisation" programme for more than 30 times reporting about organisations that call themselves as NPOs. The organisation raised several millions yen by publicising their fundraising activities as to save children with incurable illnesses, yet their fund was used for private purposes. This programme won various awards and its impact on the general public could be large (Watari and Nakano, 2010:86). Additionally, as mentioned in the Section II.2., there are increasing numbers of SNACs that are established by simple authorization process with minimal government's intervention. This type of CSO could maintain civic authority but there are times that civic supervision does not work effectively. Therefore, increasing number of SNACs are in danger to become corrupt organisations, which will further decrease the trust towards CSOs among the general public. Although increasing the trust towards CSOs needs great effort and time, considering the situation mentioned above, improving transparency and accountability as well as educating the people to be responsible for CSOs supervision would help to increase the trust towards CSOs.

## Conclusion

The biggest concern for this dimension was the number of sample being rather small. External Perceptions in particular, it is difficult to claim the universality of the result with only 27 respondents. Since the measurements are subjective, a larger sample size would help the validity of the results. Nonetheless, by utilising multi-method suggested by the CIVICUS, it became apparent that CSOs are perceived to have social impact rather than economic impact for social sustainability. Moreover, this dimension made it clear that Japan lacks objective tools for the evaluation. Currently one very active CSO called *Genron NPO* works rigorously to create a strong, rich and independent-minded civil society in Japan. After 2 years of researches and discussions with academics and practitioners, *Genron NPO* launched an advisory committee for the development of an assessment tool to declare a CSO an 'Excellent NPO'. The advisory committee established 33 criteria to be an 'Excellent NPO' in

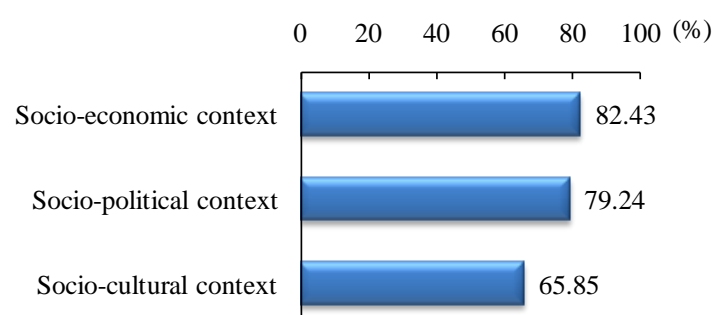
November 2010. The criteria ask CSOs to have excellent quality measurements on three main issues: ‘social innovation’, ‘civic-mindedness’, and ‘sustainable management’ (Genron NPO, 2010). It is expected that this criteria will widely spread in Japanese civil society, and both CSOs and the public will have the bench mark and objective evaluation to ensure the quality of CSOs.

### III.5. ENVIRONMENT

External Environment dimension describes the social, political and economic environment of the society. External environment is important because it affects the development of civil society. For instances, civil society is less likely to develop in a country where freedom of association is not legally permitted. Economic depression may also hinder the development of civil society due to a decrease in donation (CIVICUS 2008: 25). In Japan’s case, the overall score for External Environment dimension is fairly high at 75.84%.

This dimension consists of 3 sub-dimensions: socio-economic context, socio-political context, and socio-cultural context. Socio-economic context scored 82.4%. It assesses basic capabilities like health and education while also evaluates the levels of corruption and inequality in a country. Socio-political context scored 79.2%, which is composed of political rights, rule of law and personal freedoms, associational and organisational rights, experience of legal framework, and state effectiveness. Socio-cultural context is measured by trust, tolerance, and public-spiritedness and it scored 65.8%.

FIGURE III.5. Sub-dimension scores for External Environment



#### III.5.1. Socio-economic context

This sub-dimension captures the socio-economic context of the country by measuring basic capability, corruption and inequality level of the country. Basic Capabilities Index (BCI) is comprised of education and health standards: the percentage of children who reach fifth grade at school, the percentage of children who survive until at least 5 years old (based on mortality statistics), and the percentage of births attended by skilled health personnel. The highest score will be obtained when the country achieves a 100% rate of children completing fifth grade, close to zero mortality rate of less than five years old, and the perfect coverage for healthcare during childbirth (Social Watch 2008). Japan scored 99.2 points for BCI in 2008, which means the country have progressed and satisfied most of all the population’s fundamental capabilities, in other words, is regarded as having an access to the above-mentioned three minimum levels of social and health coverage to progress towards better well-being by the Social Watch.

The corruption index provided by Transparency International Corruption Index 2008



presented a relatively corruption free environment with a score of 7.3 on the scale of 0 (highly corrupt) to 10 (squeaky clean). However, corruption is very much present in the Japanese government despite the general perception of a non-corrupted society (see Van Wolferen, 1990).

Inequality is measured by the Gini coefficient on a scale of 0 to 100, where a value of 0 represents absolute equality, and a value of 100 represents absolute inequality. In the CSI, it was reversed (by calculating 100- Gini coefficient) hence 0 represents absolute inequality and 100 represents absolute equality. In Japan, the score for this was 75.1 in 2007. Although Japan has been considered as a relatively equal society, there is a growing concern on the widening gap of inequality in recent years. In 2003, the Gini coefficient was 24.9, which equates to 76.1 on the CSI's inequality scale. Therefore, there was a 1% increase in inequality between 2003 and 2007.

### III.5.2. Socio-political context

This sub-dimension measures socio-political context by looking at political rights and freedoms, rule of law and personal freedoms, associational and organisational rights, experience of legal framework, and state effectiveness. The overall score is 79.24% with the highest score of political rights and freedoms (92.5%), and the lowest score of experience of legal framework (58.6%).

Firstly, Political rights and freedoms are measured by the Freedom House Political Rights Index (2008). The score of 92.5% describes that Japan has guaranteed freedom in electoral process, political pluralism and participation, and a functioning government. Because the score for Japan shows no significant changes over time since the first evaluation in 2003, Japan is regarded as having guaranteed political rights and freedoms.<sup>16</sup>

Secondly, Rule of law and personal freedoms is measured by the Freedom House Index of Political Rights and Civil Liberties with particular focus on: a) rule of law, b) personal autonomy and individual rights and c) freedom of expression and belief. Japan scored 85.4% which indicates people in Japan have great political rights and civil liberties.<sup>17</sup> Freedom of expression and belief is guaranteed in the constitution. The press is all private and independent, and media usage of individuals and internet access are not restricted. However, the Freedom House (2009) pointed out that *Kisha club* (press clubs) prevents the heterogeneity of news coverage by maintaining strong ties between major media, bureaucrats, and politicians. This is criticised as lowering the level of public communication by detaching the mass media from public sphere (Freeman, 2003:237). Freeman (2003:238-240) points out the consequence of homogeneity of Japanese mass media as the strong reliance on credential facts which create lack of report of unofficial voice or views of groups in the political periphery. Also, strong ties with politicians cause dysfunctional political auditing of mass media. Moreover, “impartiality and non-partisanship (*fuen-futo*)” regulation imposed on

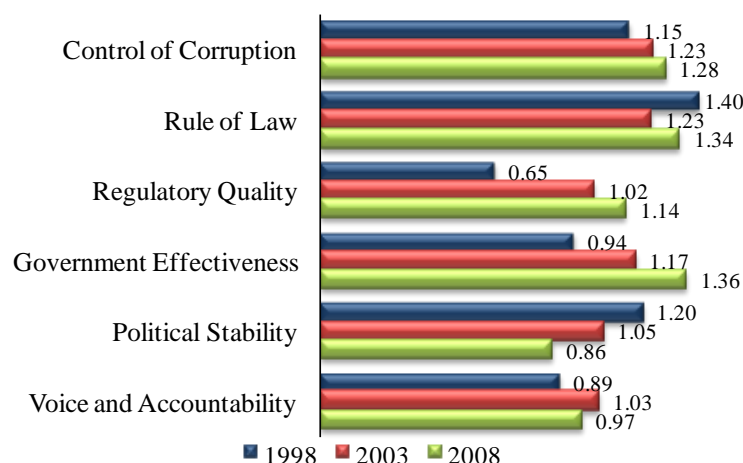
<sup>16</sup> Because the original scale is 0-40, a proportional formula was used to change this to 0-100 [(score x 100)/40], and the measurement shows that the higher the score, the higher the degree of rights and freedoms present in the country. This was measured based on the 3 sub-categories: degree of freedom in: a) electoral process, b) political pluralism and participation, c) functioning of government. The overall score was interpreted as “free” with individual scores at 12 for electoral process, 15 for political pluralism and participation, and 10 for functioning of government. The total score for the political rights and freedom is 37, which shows greater degree of rights and freedom. In Japan's case, the indicator is calculated as: (37x100/40=92.5).

<sup>17</sup> Each score ranges from 0-16 hence overall scores range from 0-48, and the higher the score, the better established rule of law, the greater personal autonomy and individual rights, and the greater freedom of expression and belief. . To adjust scores for the CSI indicator, a proportional formula was used to change this to 0-100 [(score x 100)/48]. The Freedom of House (2008) provides each score at 13, 15, and 13 respectively, and overall score is at 41 (41x100/48=85.4).

Japanese journalism limits agenda-setting function of mass media. Freeman (2003:241-242) also claims that not being a member of *Kisha club* (press clubs) is extremely difficult in Japan as alternative media is regarded as untrustworthy. Japanese homogenised media report then shapes homogenised public opinion. Hence, on the surface, Japan has achieved greater political rights and civil liberties yet it is questionable that the current freedom actually promotes progressive civil society considering the system of the mass media in the country.

Thirdly, Freedom House Index of Civil Liberties shows the high degree of associational and organisational rights in Japan scoring at 83.3%.<sup>18</sup> Despite this high score, nearly half of respondents for the Organisational Survey feel the regulation is either too restrictive or restrictive. Therefore, Japanese CSOs feel that being guaranteed associational and organisational rights is not enough to establish and manage CSOs.

FIGURE III.5.2. Each indicator scores and the changes in Worldwide Governance Indicators  
Source: World Bank (2010) World Governance Indicator



Finally, state effectiveness is measured through Governance Matters 2008, Worldwide Governance Indicators (World Bank 2010) and composed of the six aggregate governance indicators: a) Voice and Accountability, b) Political Stability and Lack of Violence/Terrorism, c) Government Effectiveness, d) Regulatory Quality, e) Rule of Law, and f) Control of Corruption.<sup>19</sup> According to the World Bank (2010), the overall indicator score has been steadily increased. However, there are some concerns in state effectiveness. In 2008, the indicator showed 0.970 for voice and accountability, 0.862 for political stability, 1.358 for government effectiveness, 1.135 for regulatory quality, 1.335 for rule of law, and 1.280 for control for corruption. The higher score indicates better governance ratings in each indicator. Within those indicators, the government plays the least role in voice and accountability and political stability, which implies that particular measures should be taken to improve the government's role in voice and accountability.

<sup>18</sup> The score ranges 0-12, with 0 signalling no freedom of association and 12 signalling high levels of freedom of association. A proportional formula was used to change this to 0-100 [(score x 100)/12]. The original score was 10 (10x100/12=83.3), suggesting Japanese people enjoy freedom of association and organisation.

<sup>19</sup> The original scale for this indicator ranges from -2.5 to 2.4, and 2.5 was added to each score to change the scale to 0-5. A proportional formula was used to change the scale to 0-100 [(score x 100)/5]. Hence, the higher the score, the higher the extent the state is able to fulfil its defined functions.

### III.5.3. Socio-cultural context

This sub-dimension captures the socio-cultural background by measuring trust and public-spiritedness. The score for trust between people is particularly low in this dimension: only 39.1% of people feel that they can trust most people. Public-spiritedness scores high at 92.6%, and the overall score is 65.85%.

CIVICUS (2008:25) views the level of trust between people as a broad measurement of the social psychological climate for association and cooperation. Based on the assumption that the high score of this index describes favourable environment for civil society to develop, this diamond suggests that Japanese civil society has room to develop more. However, the low level of trust may hinder the development of civil society. Although in comparison to other countries, 39.1% is not a particularly low score (World Value Survey database, 2010), there is a serious concern about the declining level of trust in recent years in Japan. Also an empirical analysis conducted by the NCO backed up the CIVICUS's point of view that people with higher generalised trust have higher probability of becoming the member of social and political CSOs. Hence, raising the level of generalised trust among the people is necessary as well as supporting other issues such as strengthening the level of organisation mentioned earlier.

The score for the public-spiritedness is high in Japan (92.6%). This measures how much people believe that it is not justifiable to claim government benefits without eligibility such as to cheat on public transport fare, to commit tax fraud or to receive a bribe. For each measurement, the respondents are asked to choose the degree of acceptance ranging from 0 to 10 (0: justifiable- 10: not justifiable at all). In Japan, mean score for the each measurement was 8.9, 9.4, 9.5, and 9.5, respectively. Although the score for the “cheating government benefit in which you are not entitled” is slightly lower than the others, it is still high. From this result, it can be said that Japanese people have high public-spiritedness.

### Conclusion

Japan has scored significantly higher in this dimension in comparison to the average score of 23 countries that implemented the CSI project. The scores are 75.84% for Japan and 59.5% for the average of participant countries (CIVICUS database). While this dimension is supposed to depict how favourable the society is for civil society, other dimension scores do not differ or sometimes fall below the average in spite of the high score for this dimension. This can be interpreted as Japanese civil society could have developed more given the favourable external environment. It is also suspicious whether External Environment dimension actually capture the environment needed for developing civil society in Japan. For instances, AC members suggested that unfavourable taxation and insufficient education of civil society related issues should be included under this dimension.

For instance, in Japan, the amount of individual donation is significantly smaller than the western countries. On average, each household donate 2,382 yen (approximately US\$ 26.87) per year and it accounts for 0.08% for total households spending in 2009 (Okuyama, 2010:18). This is an issue of civic engagement and of sustainable financing for CSOs. Although it can be argued that people are simply not willing to donate, it can also be argued that unfavourable taxation system for donors is hindering the increase in donation.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> Yamauchi (2010: 137-138) pointed out that Japanese taxation system does not provide enough incentive for people to make a donation because Tax benefit for individual donors is insignificant in Japan. Donations by individuals recognised as having a high degree of public benefit (officially termed ‘specific tax deductible donations’ (*tokuteikifukin*) are deducted up

AC members also raised the issue of education related to civil society. Because Japan has compulsory education up to secondary school (9 years of education) and 97% of children goes to high school (Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, 2010), the score for the sub-dimension is expected to be high. However, the education related to civil society is not yet developed within the school education system. AC members suggested to introduce volunteer activities as the part of the school curriculum and to teach the value of human interaction. Although the curriculum started to include civil society related topics at the higher education level, there are still rooms for improvement. According to the Center for Nonprofit Research & Information (CENPRI) (2008:11), there are 136 universities offers undergraduate courses and 30 graduate schools provide courses on civil society. This accounted for 81.9% of all universities and 18.1% of all post graduate schools. However, many courses are taught in the Tokyo and Osaka metropolitan areas. It is suggested to increase the satellite classes and e-learning system for students in the rural areas. In terms of the type of courses offered, more than 60% of the courses are provided on a lecture basis. 10.5% of the courses are provided as field works, and only 1.9% of the courses are offered as Internships (CENPRI, 2007:13). Therefore, it is recommended to increase field work and internship opportunities and provide students with working experiences.

Education related to civil society is important not only in the formal education system, but also in the lifelong learning. Today, few CSOs run schools for lifelong learning and provide local citizens opportunities to build skills and knowledge throughout their life, as well as to create networks among them such as Kanagawa NPO Daigaku (Kanagawa NPO Daigaku, 2010), Shibuya University Network (Shibuya University Network, 2010), or Dai Nagoya University Network (Dai Nagoya University Network, 2010). It is expected that an increase in those schools for lifelong learning would enhance social inclusion, active citizenship and personal development, which contributes to strengthen civil society.

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to a maximum of 40 % of the individual annual taxable income, or donations less than 5,000 yen (approximately US\$ 56.40) when taxpayers file a tax return. In other words, individual donations are deductible with specified minimum limits (floor) and maximum limits (ceiling) when taxpayers file a tax return. Under such income deduction system, the amount of refunds is the amount of donations multiplied by the marginal tax rate of the income tax. For example, when a person whose marginal tax rate is 20 percent donates 100,000 yen (approximately US\$ 1127.90) annually, only less than 20,000 yen (approximately US\$ 225.58) is refunded. A person whose marginal tax rate is 10 percent is refunded less than 10,000 yen (approximately. US\$ 112.79). Hence, the net burden ratio on taxpayers depends on the marginal tax rate, and it is thus smaller to taxpayers with a higher income class since their marginal tax rate is higher than taxpayers with lower income class. A series of tax reforms has reshaped the system in terms of the relaxation of progressive taxation of individual incomes and the reduction of the income tax rate. As a result, the incentive for individuals to donate is reduced under the current system of donations.

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## **IV. STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES OF CIVIL SOCIETY IN JAPAN**

This section summarises the above findings including both from the CSI diamond and secondary survey into weakness and strengths under each indicator.

### **Civic engagement**

#### *Weaknesses*

- Low level of engagement in political membership ( both extent and depth)
- Low level of engagement in political volunteering ( both extent and depth)
- Low level of political activism

#### *Strengths*

- High rate of membership in local community association
- High level of community engagement.
- Diversity of representation in membership of CSOs

### **Level of organisation**

#### *Weaknesses*

- Weak infrastructure: low membership rate of federations, umbrella groups, support networks
- Unsustainable human resources
- Lack of financial resource base
- Lack of financial sustainability including lack of fundraising ability
- Lack of time and effort to publicise their activities

#### *Strengths*

- Sufficient technological resource base
- Formal internal governance system in place
- Frequent inter-sectoral communication

### **Practice of Values**

#### *Weaknesses*

- Lack of democratic decision making process within civil society
- Lack of publicly available equal opportunity
- Low membership rate for labour unions
- Insufficient labour rights training
- Lack of publicly available code of conduct
- Lack of accountability
- Lack of publicly available environmental standards
- Existence of CSOs which have no intention to publicise labour regulations or environmental standards
- Existence of violent forces in civil society
- High rate of corruption in civil society

### *Strengths*

- Movement within civil society to improve the working conditions at CSOs
- Movement within civil society to make environmental standards public
- High internal democracy
- Recognition of civil society to promote non-violence and peace

### **Perception of Impact**

#### *Weaknesses*

- Low evaluation of civil society's performances on stabilizing the economy
- CSO's lack of confidence to make social/political impacts
- Low level of trust towards CSOs from the general public

### *Strengths*

- Both internal/external recognition of civil society's ability to help creating a less personal and more humane society
- Meeting the community needs
- Very high recognition of civil society to influence selected issues from external stakeholders
- Both internal and external recognition of civil society's impact on policy making in general
- Civil society's influence in increasing public-spiritedness

### **External Environment**

#### *Weaknesses*

- The trend of decreasing the level of trust
- CSOs recognizing the existence of illegitimate government restrictions from their subjective experience

### *Strengths*

- Acceptable score for the Basic Capabilities in the country
- Relatively free from corruption (Corruption index)
- Relatively low income gap
- Guaranteed political freedoms and civic freedoms
- Guaranteed freedom of association
- Guaranteed personal autonomy and individual rights
- Improving overall state of effectiveness
- High public-spiritedness.

## **V. RECOMMENDATIONS**

This section addresses recommendations to strengthen Japanese civil society based on the findings from the CSI project as well as the secondary survey. These recommendations are made for each dimension. Some recommendations are targeted towards civil society, some are suggested for the government and donors, and some require attention from for-profit organisations. Moreover, some challenges should be overcome by all the sectors together.

### **Civic engagement**

- Raising public awareness for civic engagement through education: It is strongly



recommended to introduce civic education into formal school curriculum by the joint action of CSOs and the government. Lifelong education/e-learning of civil society related issues is equally important which can be promoted by the cooperation with the private for-profit sectors.

- Expanding social engagement from the community: It was revealed that Japanese civil society has high civic engagement rate for community based activities from both the CSI diamond and the case studies. This shows strong community solidarity in the society. Hence, there is a potential for expanding volunteer activities from community issues to national issues. This can be done by the cooperation between community based grassroots organisations or neighbourhood organisations and CSOs working on wider issues.

### **Level of Organisation**

- Strengthen the infrastructure: Japanese CSOs has low membership rate of federation, umbrella groups, and support networks. Because there is frequent inter-sectoral communication, it is possible that CSOs do not feel the need for support networks. However, in order to bring about collective actions, it is helpful to have stronger and wider network beyond the sector. Although there is at least one support centre in each province, those are located in the centre of the province. People who live in the remote areas might have difficulties accessing the support centres as well as receiving the benefit from the support centres. Hence, the establishment the support system for CSOs in the remote area would be helpful with subsidies from the government or donor foundations.
- Establishing sustainable financial base: Although the score of the CSI diamond is high, there are issues of financial sustainability in civil society. This is the consequence of low civic participation, lack of fundraising ability and unfavourable taxation system for donors. Therefore, CSOs large depends on government subsidies or outsourced business. Hence, it is important for CSOs to gain fundraising skills and for the government to conduct tax reforms. Additionally, as mentioned earlier, formal/informal civil society related education would contribute to increase civic participation. Today, a newly established SNAC called “Japan Fundraising Association (JFRA)” is making an effort to increase skilled staff for fundraising activities and to provide seminars, study sessions, and places for the information exchange in order to strengthen organisations’ fund management abilities (JFRA 2010). These activities should be supported and expanded in all sectors including the state and the market.
- Building grounds for sustainable human resources: Having sustainable human resources is one of the major challenges for civil society in Japan, particularly SNACs. Low salary and lack of job security causes lack of sustainability. As mentioned above, CSOs have relatively weak financial bases, and they are large dependent on government subsidies and out sourced business. Even if a CSO managed to obtain subsidies or out-sourced business, it often could not cover its labour cost. Additionally, members of CSOs feel that the people in general regard CSO staff as unpaid volunteers. These factors all together make it difficult for CSOs to guarantee paid job posts for workers. Hence, establishing financial base and increasing awareness of the general public is necessary. Besides, the government should provide sufficient labour cost to support the CSOs as a form of outsourcing their civil responsibilities.



## **Practice of values**

- Promoting transparency: Although many Japanese CSOs have reported to have formal internal governance system in their organisations, they recognised the lack of democratic decision making procedure within their organisations. Additionally, many organisations do not publicise equal opportunity and code of conduct. Moreover, financial statement publicised by CSOs frequently contain significant amount of errors. Transparency is extremely important for CSOs to maintain their legitimacy and to raise fund. In order to improve the situation, a system which the general public could access annual reports and evaluate CSOs is needed. To do so, it is necessary to encourage the general public to engage in CSOs' activities through education. Also, activities by some CSOs promoting transparency should be encouraged and supported by other sectors of the society as well as by CSOs.
- Increase awareness within the civil society for labour rights and environment standards: The findings of this paper suggest that improvements need to be made for CSOs to understand the necessity of labour rights and environment standards. The existence of CSOs who do not even think about publicising their labour regulations or environment standards implies a low awareness among CSOs over these issues. In order to increase the awareness within the civil society, seminars and forums for CSOs would be useful. Additionally, the evaluation for CSOs by the general public should be introduced.
- Combating the corruption: There are widely practiced corruptions within civil society in relation to the government. Retired bureaucrats could acquire well paid positions in public benefit corporations. The government must prohibit this practice to combat corruption. Also, there are several other corrupted practices within civil society. Therefore, more public supervision is required.

## **Perception of impact**

- Increase the level of trust towards civil society: The study found low level of trust towards civil society in Japan. If the low level of trust towards civil society persists, the progressive civil society will not be achieved. Therefore, this is a serious issue to be tackled. To do so, it requires for CSOs to improve their transparency. Additionally, further researches are required to identify the reasons for this distrust towards civil society. Then strategic planning to overcome this issue should be constructed.
- Set clear goals and conduct evaluations: The Organisational Survey and the External Survey showed different perceptions towards civil society in Japan. This might be because of the lack of clear goals and a standard evaluation system. Authorities, foundations and research institutes perform sporadic evaluations when they support and fund particular activities of CSOs, and there are no standard, comprehensive and regular evaluations for all CSOs and their operations. External evaluation could be costly so at least standard self-evaluation form should be introduced.

## **External environment**

- Raise the level of generalized trust: Despite the high score for the indicator of External Environment in general, the level of generalized trust is not as high. In fact, there are

concerns of the decrease in the level of trust among the general public. Loosing general trust would have a negative consequence for civil society due to the inactive and uncooperative commitment to and participation in associations. Therefore, increasing the level of generalized trust is necessary and it can be done through educating people of the importance of reciprocity or human integration.

- Reform taxation system: Although this is not included in the CSI diamond, current taxation system in Japan discourages donations. The government should work on reforming the taxation system in favour of the donors.
- Enhance civil society education: Education of civil society is not evaluated in the CSI diamond as an external environment. However, civil society education is suggested as important for the country. This can be done by the government and for-profit corporations. The government should consider introducing civil society education into the formal education system, and for-profit organisations can support CSOs providing civil society education as a part of life-learning within their CSR activities. Investment in this education is valuable because it can supply continuous human capital for civil society as well as people who are willing to support CSOs.

## VI.CONCLUSIONS

The CSI indicator alone neither covers all the issues related to the civil society in Japan nor captures all the realities. However, the primary research, secondary research, and focus group discussions all together endeavoured to reflect Japanese civil society as holistically as possible. As for the indicator of Civic Engagement, the indicator found low participation rate particularly for political activities. On the other hand, it shows high engagement rate for the community based activities. Although measurements differ, previous studies also suggest similar trends. As for the indicator of Level of Organisations, the high score surprised participants of the focus groups. In spite of especially high score for the financial stability, CSO members claimed that their greatest challenge is to gain financial stability. From the focus group discussions and secondary research, it also became apparent that CSOs face the lack of sustainable human resources. As for the indicator of Practice of Values, the weakness of Japanese CSOs became clearer such as the lack of transparency, awareness of labour rights and environment standards. Some CSOs are working on these issues therefore improvements are expected to be made within few years. The indicator of perception of impact is difficult to conclude due to the nature of the questionnaires being very subjective and the small number of samples. However, both external and internal perceptions indicate CSOs' contribution to create less personal and more humane society. The indicator of External Environment captures nation's fundamental receptive capacity of being aware on and addressing social issues and civic actions, but it does not capture directly its institutional maturity and development such as the legislative infrastructure and the taxation system related to civil society. Also this does not observe the partnership of CSOs with other sectors. Therefore, the indicator only shows the fact that Japan is well established economically and socially, yet culturally the country has some concerns as the level of generalized trust is low.

The question remains whether the CSI project itself strengthened the civil society or not. Because there are many researches and many activities in relation to civil society in the country, the project was one of many researches and activities. At the time of the survey, there were comments such as that there were 3 similar questionnaires sent out at the same time, or CSOs thought that they were receiving the same survey questionnaires multiple times.

However, there seems to be a positive effect of the project on the places where we hold regional focus group discussions. In Hiroshima, CSOs shared same challenges and discussed possible solutions based on each other's experiences. In Sendai, there were positive comments such as: they would like to create regional civil society indicators, they would like to have another regional meeting to create more networks, or they learned from the discussion that they should evaluate their activities that they did not think it is necessary prior to the focus group discussions.

With several study workshops we hold, we have received useful comments such as pointing out the lack of logic and theoretical background in construction of the CSI diamond, particularly the issue of not applying the weight for each sub dimensions. In addition, there were suggestions for not placing the indicator of External Environment and other four indicators together because External Environment dimension was not generated based on scores of other dimensions.

The future perspective for Japanese civil society is unclear. Japanese civil society has a long standing history, yet it has been noticed only recently. Today, with the failure of the government providing all necessary services for its people, there have been growing needs and hope for CSOs to play significant roles in providing services. Additionally, in the latest general election in 2009, CSOs has played critical roles of evaluating political parties. This shows that the role of advocacy for civil society is also developing. Although the CSI diamond project has revealed many weaknesses of Japanese civil society, it was found that there have already been CSOs working on those issues. Hence, those movements within civil society show that Japanese civil society is progressing. However, there are still concerns on financial sustainability or lack of human capital. Additionally, there are CSOs which violate the law. Hence, Japanese civil society today is very much standing at a cross road and it is uncertain whether it will develop or it will be stagnated.

# APPENDICES

## ANNEX1. LIST OF ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Name	Organisation	Sector
Reiko Asano	Ohmi Network Centre	CSO
Makoto Imada	Institute for Civil Society Research	CSO
Yu Ishida	Akashi National College of Technology	Academia
Kaori Kuroda	CSO Network Japan	CSO
Masayo Kishida	Partnership Support Centre	CSO
Shiho Kato	Child-line Support Centre	CSO
Nobuko Kawashima	Doshisha University	Academia
Yoshiho Matsunaga	Osaka University of Commerce	Academia
Yuko Nishide	Tohoku University	Academia
Masahiro Okamoto	Kwansei Gakuin University	Academia
Yuka Saito	Seitoku University	Academia
Akira Sawamura	Niigata University	Academia
Kosuke Sato	Japan Research Institute	Business (Think Tank)
Junichi Takaba	Kansai NPO Alliance	CSO
Shunji Taga	National Association of Labour Banks	CSO
Yayoi Tanaka	National Institution for Academic Degrees and University Evaluation	Academia
Takaufumi Tanaka	Tokyo Gakugei University	Academia
Chikara Tsumura	Tokyo Mitsubishi UFJ Trust Bank	Business
Yoji Yamahata	Yomiuri Shimbun	Media

## ANNEX2. SUMMARY OF CASE STUDIES

### Case Study 1. Local community associations

Relevant Dimension: Civic Engagement

Author: Naoko Okuyama (Osaka School of International Public Policy, Osaka University, Research Fellow of the Japan Society for Promotion of Science)

In this study, we attempt to grasp a picture of local community associations in terms of transformation and challenges of civic engagement, as well as institutional frameworks of civil society. Local community associations have functioned as maintaining and building the quality of local communities and their roles and presences are even still influential and significant. Hypotheses set up in this case study are partially examined in literature reviews, studies from survey results and interview with a key person, and local community associations can be still powerful in building local networking, partnership with local governments, service provision, and political participation. However, emergence of new-born NPOs is and socio-demographic changes may force the associations to reconsider their presences, and a mode and shape of civic engagement in Japan may be transformed.

### Case Study 2. Financial Instability of CSOs in Japan

Relevant Dimension: Level of Organisation

Author: Naoto Yamauchi (Osaka School of International Public Policy, Osaka University)

Midori Matsushima (Osaka School of International Public Policy, Osaka University)

In the CSI diamond, the indicator of financial stability scored high at 96.5%, meaning 96.5% of CSOs in the Organisational Survey has sustainable financial base. However, in the regional focus group discussions, participants argued that financial sustainability is the most serious concern to many CSOs (Specified Nonprofit Activities Corporation (SNACs) in particular) in Japan. Hence, this case study was carried out to further clarify financial sustainability of SNACs based on secondary data and focus group discussions as well as to suggest ways to improve the situation in accordance to types of

activities of SNACs. This study demonstrated that the high score of financial sustainability in the CSI diamond has not captured the reality based on the data and findings from focus group discussions. The suggestions being made in this paper are that SNACs working in the field of healthcare/social welfare, education/art/sport, and environment should make an effort to increase individual/corporate contribution, and SNACs should foster international cooperation which could lead to an increase to commercial activities. In addition, SNACs focusing on education/art/sport and environment should be aware of the down-side of government funding, and diversify their income sources.

### **Case Study 3. Accountability of Civil Society Organisations: A case study of nonprofit organisations in Japan**

Relevant Dimension: Practice of Values

Author: Naoko Okuyama (Osaka School of International Public Policy, Osaka University,  
Research Fellow of the Japan Society for Promotion of Science)

This case study focuses on accountability from the perspectives of financial transparency and managerial assessment for nonprofit organisations, particularly SNACs which have unique and challenging issues in terms of managerial quality, growth, and practice of values. In this case study, we discuss this issue to be considered as an institutional challenge, as well as managerial development of nonprofit organizations.

### **Case Study 4. The Image of Civil Society in Media**

Relevant Dimension: Perception of Impact

Author: Naoto Yamauchi (Osaka School of International Public Policy, Osaka University)  
Midori Matsushima (Osaka School of International Public Policy, Osaka University)  
Ayako Nakano (Digital Solution Lab, The Mainichi Newspapers)  
Sawako Watari (Reporter, News Division Mainichi Broadcasting System, Inc.)

Mass media has been recognised as an influential tool to shape public opinions. This case study was conducted to observe the image of civil society being reported in the mass media in Japan based on provided method by CIVICUS. Four months of media survey using four national newspapers revealed that there were civil society related reports every day, and topics varied. Half of the articles appeared as news stories or factual report. There were also notable numbers of reports on civil society activities in the opinion page, which shows that the newspaper coverage goes beyond factual description. In addition, the study showed that there were more positive reports than negative reports in general. However the reports on the front pages were more likely to depict civil society negatively, which may contribute to the negative image of civil society among the public. This case study was the first of its kind to assess the impact of civil society in Japan through daily newspaper observation. In the future, time comparison and international comparative study should be carried out to evaluate the impact and development of civil society in more detail.

### **Case Study 5. The Relationships between Trust and Civic Engagement**

Relevant Dimension: External Environment

Author: Naoto Yamauchi (Osaka School of International Public Policy, Osaka University)  
Midori Matsushima (Osaka School of International Public Policy, Osaka University)

Despite significantly high score for almost all sub-dimensions for External Environment Dimension, one of the sub-dimensions, the indicator of “trust”, scored low. CIVICUS (2008:25) views the level of trust between people as a broad measurement of the social psychological climate for association and cooperation. This case study includes empirical analysis to examine the relationship between trust and civic engagement. We utilized data

from World Values Survey 2005 in Japan based on the hypothesis that there are positive correlation between trust and civic engagement. The result of the analysis proved that people with higher generalised trust are more likely to become a member of both social and political CSOs. This result suggests the importance of creating general trust among the masses in order to strengthen Japanese civil society.

### **ANNEX3. POPULATION SURVEY**

In Japan, the Population Survey was not conducted but the World Values Survey 2000 and 2005 were used instead. This was conducted by Dentsu Inc. in Japan, and data is available online (World Value Survey database Online).

### **ANNEX4. ORGANISATIONAL SURVEY**

Due to budget and time constraints, the Organisational Survey was conducted through questionnaires in Japan. There were 85 respondents, accounting for 25% of distributed questionnaires. The distributions of field of activities are below.

Type of organisations	Number of respondents
Traders or business association	1
Professional association (doctors, teachers, etc)	9
Trade union or labour union	5
Neighbourhood/ village committee	4
Religious or spiritual group	2
Cultural group or association (e.g. arts, music, theatre)	8
Co-operative, credit or savings group	2
Health group / Social service association (e.g. association for the disabled)	13
Youth group	4
Women's group	6
NGO/ civic group/ human rights organisation (e.g. Rotary Club, Red Cross, Amnesty International)	24
Environmental or conservational organisation	5
Other groups	2

As mentioned in the main text, the legal status of organisations were not distributed equally because 75% of the respondents are SNACs which are newly established types of corporation characterised by civic organisations operating under citizen supervision. This high percentage of response from SNACs mostly affects the score for the Level of Organisation dimension.

### **ANNEX5. EXTERNAL PERCEPTION SURVEY**

As for an External Perception Survey, there were 27 respondents, and the small sample size made it difficult to see whether the score for the Perceived Impact dimension is universal or not. Although the NCO strived to diversify the occupational backgrounds of respondents, it has to be noted that ones who participated in the survey know about civil society well or at least have some interest towards civil society. Hence, public opinion can be different from the answer the NCO has received.

Sector	Number of respondents
Executive branch of government	5
Private sector	9
Media	4
Academia	5
International governmental organisation	1
Others	3



## ANNEX6. MATRIX OF THE DIAMOND

Subdimension	Indicator	Name	Scores
<b>1) Dimension: Civic Engagement</b>			<b>44.5</b>
1.1		Extent of socially-based engagement	27.7
	1.1.1	Social membership 1	26.6
	1.1.2	Social volunteering 1	13.4
	1.1.3	Community engagement 1	43.1
1.2		Depth of socially-based engagement	33.9
	1.2.1	Social membership 2	17.1
	1.2.2	Social volunteering 2	26.2
	1.2.3	Community engagement 2	58.4
1.3		Diversity of socially-based engagement	78.6
	1.3.1	Diversity of socially-based engagement	78.6
1.4		Extent of political engagement	22.0
	1.4.1	Political membership 1	10.8
	1.4.2	Political volunteering 1	5.7
	1.4.3	Individual activism 1	49.5
1.5		Depth of political engagement	18.4
	1.5.1	Political membership 2	20.3
	1.5.2	Political volunteering 2	20.5
	1.5.3	Individual activism 2	14.4
1.6		Diversity of political engagement	86.3
	1.6.1	Diversity of political engagement	86.3
<b>2) Dimension: Level of organisation</b>			<b>62.3</b>
2.1		Internal governance	95.3
	2.1.1	Management	95.3
2.2		Infrastructure	35.4
	2.2.1	Support organizations	35.4
2.3		Sectoral communication	82.9
	2.3.1	Peer-to-peer communication 1	81.7
	2.3.2	Peer-to-peer communication 2	84.0
2.4		Human resources	44.0
	2.4.1	Sustainability of HR	44.0
2.5		Financial and technological resources	90.0
	2.5.1	Financial sustainability	83.5
	2.5.2	Technological resources	96.5
2.6		International linkages	26.4
	2.6.1	International linkages	26.4



<b>3) Dimension: Practice of Values</b>			<b>41.3</b>
3.1		Democratic decision-making governance	55.4
	3.1.1	Decision-making	55.4
3.2		Labour regulations	28.4
	3.2.1	Equal opportunities	37.7
	3.2.2	Members of labour unions	5.5
	3.2.3	Labour rights trainings	22.2
	3.2.4	Publicly available policy for labour standards	48.1
3.3		Code of conduct and transparency	61.0
	3.3.1	Publicly available code of conduct	42.9
	3.3.2	Transparency	79.0
3.4		Environmental standards	11.8
	3.4.1	Environmental standards	11.8
3.5		Perception of values in civil society as a whole	49.8
	3.5.1	Perceived non-violence	17.8
	3.5.2	Perceived internal democracy	92.1
	3.5.3	Perceived levels of corruption	2.8
	3.5.4	Perceived intolerance	27.8
	3.5.5	Perceived weight of intolerant groups	73.1
	3.5.6	Perceived promotion on non-violence and peace	85.0
<b>4) Dimension: Perception of Impact</b>			<b>55.2</b>
4.1		Responsiveness (internal perception)	72.8
	4.1.1	Impact on social concern 1	60.3
	4.1.2	Impact on social concern 2	85.3
4.2		Social Impact (internal perception)	70.4
	4.2.1	General social impact	75.6
	4.2.2	Social impact of own organisation	65.3
4.3		Policy Impact (internal perception)	46.9
	4.3.1	General policy impact	77.6
	4.3.2	Policy activity of own organisation	39.5
	4.3.3	Policy impact of own organisation	23.5
4.4		Responsiveness (external perception)	44.5
	4.4.1	Impact on social concern 1	14.8
	4.4.2	Impact on social concern 2	74.1
4.5		Social Impact (external perception)	76.9
	4.5.1	Social impact selected concerns	96.0
	4.5.2	Social impact general	57.7
4.6		Policy Impact (external perception)	54.9
	4.6.1	Policy impact specific fields 1-3	32.0
	4.6.2	Policy impact general	77.8
4.7		Impact of CS on attitudes	20.0
	4.7.1	Difference in trust between civil society members and non-members	18.0
	4.7.3	Difference in public spiritedness between civil society members and non-members	25.2
	4.7.4	Trust in civil society	16.8

5) Contextual Dimension: Environment			75.8
5.1		Socio-economic context	82.4
	5.1.1	Basic Capabilities Index	99.2
	5.1.2	Corruption	73.0
	5.1.3	Inequality	75.1
5.2		Socio-political context	79.2
	5.2.1	Political rights and freedoms	92.5
	5.2.2	Rule of law and personal freedoms	85.4
	5.2.3	Associational and organizational rights	83.3
	5.2.4	Experience of legal framework	58.6
	5.2.5	State effectiveness	76.4
5.3		Socio-cultural context	65.8
	5.3.1	Trust	39.1
	5.3.3	Public spiritedness	92.6

## ANNEX7. THE DATA SOURCE FOR THE MAPPING OF JAPANESE CIVIL SOCIETY

Cooperatives/Groups	Data source	Year of data collected
Agricultural cooperatives	Japan National Agricultural Cooperatives (2010)	2010
Fishers cooperatives	Government Statistics Bureau (2010)	2010
Forest associations	Forestry Agency (2010)	2007
Small business associations	National Federation of Small Business Associations (2010)	2010
Consumer cooperatives	Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare (2010a)	2010
Non-juridical organisations	Tsujinaka et al. (2003:88)	2000-2003
SNACs	Cabinet Office (2010)	2009
(ex) Public benefit corporations	Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications (2009)	2009
Religious corporations	Agency of Cultural Affairs (2009)	2007
Social welfare corporations, private school corporations, relief and rehabilitation corporations	Ministry of Finance (2010)	2009-2010
Labour unions and professional associations	Tsujinaka et al. (2003:15)	2005-2007
Medical corporations	Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare (2009)	2009

Note: Full reference is provided in bibliography

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