CHAPTER SIX

Civil Society in Japan through Print and Statistical Data

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JAPAN TODAY FACES the highly practical questions of how to foster civil society and change the nature of governance in a tangible way. The body of literature published in Japan addressing these questions is growing, and it is the purpose of this chapter to introduce specific titles while also offering a brief review of the basic statistical data pertaining to the nonprofit sector.*

I have focused as much as possible on materials with a practical and empirical approach, rather than on theoretical works. Specifically, I have concentrated on materials relating to the private nonprofit sector, which is expected to play the key role in Japan's civil society of the future (indeed, the term *shibiru sosaetī* often denotes the sector itself). In this way, we can begin to make out the contours, as seen in Japan, of the great groundswell which Lester M. Salamon, in "The Rise of the Nonprofit Sector" (1994), called the "associational revolution," and for which Jessica Mathews coined the term "power shift" in her 1997 article of the same name.

The list of publications in this chapter is by no means exhaustive. I chose those publications that can serve as guides for further exploration

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of a particular field, as well as those that contain important perspectives or basic data not available elsewhere. Priority has been given to difficult-to-obtain unpublished materials, usually referred to as "grey literature" (such as surveys and research reports), rather than to publications available in general bookstores, and wherever possible I have cited the most up-to-date sources (mainly those published since the mid-1990s). Where related information has been published on the World Wide Web, the URL is included in the bibliography entry.

Most of the publications introduced here are written in Japanese. English-language translations of the titles are given in the body of the chapter; the original Japanese-language titles are recorded in the bibliography under the authors' names. A supplementary list of URLs for those organizations mentioned with Websites follows the bibliography.

For convenience, I have divided the discussion into seven topics. Because publications differ greatly in their approach, however, their contents do not always fit neatly under one heading. In particular, there is much confusion over such terminology as "private nonprofit sector," "nonprofit organization (NPO)," "nongovernmental organization (NGO)," "citizens' activity group," and "volunteer group"; the boundaries of these terms in the Japanese context are very unclear, and the variations in usage can be said to reflect the diversity of authors' viewpoints. A further problem is that, owing to the lack of exact Japanese equivalents for English expressions such as "civil society," "governance," or "philanthropy," there may be considerable differences in nuance when the available Japanese terms are used. Accordingly, in reading this chapter, it should be understood that the section headings are intended merely for the sake of convenience, and that the contents overlap and interrelate in a complex way.

There is not a large body of work in Japan that directly addresses the relationship between civil society and governance. This book may be seen as one step in this direction. Before discussing titles falling under the aforementioned seven topics, I would like to suggest some books that are of value in considering the relationship between civil society and governance in the Japanese context: *The End of Americanism: Toward Rediscovering the Spirit of Civic Liberalism* (Saeki 1993); *Japan's Foreign Relations Strategy: Creating a Post–Cold War Vision* (Funabashi 1993); *Local Self-Government and Devolution in Japan* (Matsushita 1996); *Liberalism in Modern Japan* (Saeki 1996); *The Pathology of Modern Democracy: How Should We View Postwar Japan?* (Saeki 1997a.); *Who*

Is "the Citizen"?: Reexamining Postwar Democracy (Saeki 1997b); *The Age of Relativization* (Sakamoto 1997); *"Asian-Style Leadership" and the Formation of the State* (Iokibe 1998); and *What Are "Asian Values"?* (Aoki and Saeki 1998).

An Overview of Civil Society

It is not easy to gain an overview or to grasp the actual state of Japan's private nonprofit sector. Reliable comprehensive studies and statistics remain limited in number, as the concept of civil society itself is new, it is viewed and defined in various ways, and there is a lack of existing data that can be applied. In recent years, however, efforts to obtain an overall picture have begun to make rapid progress.

The first real advance toward mapping Japan's civil society took the form of two surveys of public-interest corporations by the Sasakawa Peace Foundation. The results of the first were published in two volumes, *Public-Interest Corporations in Japan* (Sasakawa Peace Foundation 1992) and *Japan's Foundations and Associations as Seen in a Questionnaire Survey of Public-Interest Corporations* (Hayashi and Katayama 1995). The findings of the first survey formed the basis of the second, whose results were analyzed in *The Reality of Public-Interest Corporations* (Hayashi and Iriyama 1997), while the full statistics were published in *Nonprofit Corporations in Japan Today* (Hayashi 1997).

Although restricted in scope to incorporated foundations and associations, these studies were a landmark event—a private-sector effort to survey the scene despite the dearth of public information. Moreover, they made valuable contributions by pointing out the very broad range of entities that are grouped together as public-interest corporations, establishing that these entities can be divided into two types, those created by private-sector initiative and those which supplement the work of government agencies, and analyzing the properties and problems specific to each type.

According to Hayashi and Iriyama, there are about 18,000 corporations of the private-sector initiative type. Their main types of work are as follows: public education, 61.9 percent; research, 45.0 percent; promoting goodwill, 45.6 percent; grant-making and awards, 42.0 percent. They are active in diverse fields, with the category "other activities" ranking alongside education, welfare, and environmental and wildlife protection. Although highly independent (membership dues

and investment income are their principal revenue sources), they tend to be small in scale, with 44.1 percent having annual revenues of less than ¥30 million.

Approximately 7,000 corporations supplement the work of government agencies. Their main types of work are public education, 45.8 percent; operation of facilities and equipment, 43.7 percent; and implementation of projects, 37.7 percent. To a great extent they depend on local governments for their revenues, with 60.6 percent receiving promotional budget allocations, subsidies, and donations, and 50.6 percent carrying out government contracts. The typical corporation of this type is medium-sized, with annual revenues of ¥100 to ¥300 million.

As an overall trend, the studies note that while corporations with revenues of ¥500 million or more represent only about 13 percent of the total number, they account for about 75 percent of total revenues. In particular, those with revenues of ¥10 billion or more, which make up only about 1 percent of the total, have enormous influence, but their activities are not made public.

Of equal significance as this groundbreaking research is another private-sector study, *An Overview of the Private Public-Interest Sector* (Minkan Kōeki Sekutā Kenkyūjo 1997). As the title suggests, this study sought to cover the private public-interest sector to the broadest possible extent, defining it as that sector whose activities (a) are undertaken from an autonomous and independent standpoint, (b) are not profit-seeking, (c) aim for the betterment of society, and (d) are conducted by private-sector organizations.

After discussing this concept, the report divides the sector into the following types of organizations: Civil Code corporations (incorporated foundations and associations), private school corporations, social welfare corporations, medical corporations, religious corporations, consumer cooperatives, other nonprofit corporations, unincorporated associations, and private overseas cooperation groups. For each category, it sets out information including the relevant legislation, classification, history, tax status, scale, state of information disclosure, and basic data. Next, it examines the sector's financial support, providing an outline, summary of operations, and basic data under each of the following headings: individual donations; corporate donations; charitable trusts; private grant-making bodies; government-affiliated grant-making bodies (special public corporations of the financial assistance type; auxiliary agencies responsible for publicly operated racing sports

and lotteries; community chests; and international volunteer savings deposits); local government grants; and volunteer activities. Lastly, the report points to the need for greater freedom of information as a step toward clarifying the overall situation.

As indicated by the words "preliminary study" in its subtitle, the report presents as full a picture of the system and its workings as could be compiled at the time, while including the available information sources and basic data. It thus not only lays the groundwork for further research but, in view of the slow pace of information disclosure, will also be valuable as a concise guide for those seeking an overview of the private public-interest sector.

As if following the lead of the private sector, the national government gradually began to make information available in the mid-1990s. Before this time, the Prime Minister's Office had conducted surveys of public-interest corporations, starting in 1986, but had not published the results. Even directories had been scarce: The first to be made public was the *Directory of Public-Interest Corporations* (Management Office of Minister's Secretariat 1993). At the ministry level, directories or other data on the corporate bodies under their jurisdiction were issued by only eight ministries (Transport; International Trade and Industry; Health and Welfare; Posts and Telecommunications; Education; Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries; Construction; and Labor).

The first white paper devoted to public-interest corporations was *1997 White Paper on Public-Interest Corporations* (Prime Minister's Office 1998). This marks the first release of government materials giving an overall view of the incorporated associations and foundations established under Article 34 of the Civil Code ("Article 34 corporations"). Amid the movement toward administrative reform, one factor underlying publication of the white paper was the mounting criticism of such practices as the profit-making activities of public-interest corporations and the sale of dormant corporations. More importantly, the rising interest of the Japanese general public in the nonprofit sector was undoubtedly a key factor.

The white paper bases its concept of a public-interest corporation on three criteria: (a) it conducts works for the public good; (b) it is not profit-seeking; (c) it has the permission of the competent authorities. There follows an outline of the system (definition of public-interest corporations, legislation, guidance and oversight, accounting procedures, and taxation) and a discussion of their administrative history, recent

policies, and the present situation. A reference section containing various agreements among government authorities concerning public-interest corporations and statistics is also included.

According to the white paper, as of October 1, 1996, there was a national total of 12,618 incorporated associations and 13,471 incorporated foundations, for a combined total of 26,089. Of these, 6,815 were under the jurisdiction of the national government and 19,366 were under prefectural jurisdiction. In fiscal 1995, their annual revenues totaled ¥24.3507 trillion and expenditures totaled ¥21.6961 trillion (4.4 percent of GDP, or the equivalent of 12.4 percent of gross general government expenditure; the figure includes ¥15.1404 trillion for direct expenditures for projects). Their total work force of 524,000 (0.8 percent of total industrial employment) was larger than that of the banking industry and comparable to that of the life insurance industry. While 0.5 percent of the corporations date from before World War II, about 70 percent were established since 1965.

Their purposes of establishment fall into the following fields: general living standards, 52.1 percent; education and research, 39.7 percent; industry, 28.2 percent; government and administration, 11.7 percent. The types of work they perform are promotion and encouragement, 47.8 percent; guidance and development, 57.5 percent; research, 43.8 percent; public education and public affairs, 30.1 percent; operation of facilities, 25.3 percent; inspections and examinations, 3.5 percent; exchanges, 9.8 percent; mutual aid, 3.7 percent; others, 7.6 percent. Among the incorporated foundations, 32.1 percent had endowments of at least ¥100 million but less than ¥1 billion, while 7.0 percent had endowments of ¥1 billion or more, and 60.9 percent had endowments of less than ¥100 million. The national government granted subsidies totaling about ¥246.0 billion to 411 corporations and made contract payments totaling about ¥145.0 billion to 592 corporations. The prefectural governments granted subsidies totaling about ¥337.4 billion to approximately 4,800 corporations and made contract payments totaling about ¥514.0 billion to an estimated 3,200 corporations. The report also notes the high proportion of former and seconded government officials among the full-time executive directors of public-interest corporations: 24.6 percent in those under national government jurisdiction, and 24.5 percent in those under prefectural jurisdiction.

While one cannot help feeling that it should have appeared earlier,

the report is valuable not only for its official status as a white paper but also for the amount of statistical data it makes available for the first time. It can thus be regarded as a basic resource for studying the administration of public-interest corporations.

A study by the Social Policy Bureau (1998a) of the Economic Planning Agency examines private nonprofit organizations as a whole under the title *The Economic Scale of Japan's NPOs*. In addition to the public-interest corporations covered by the white paper, it also deals with private school corporations, social welfare corporations, religious corporations, relief and rehabilitation corporations, labor unions, chambers of industry and commerce, political parties and organizations, community groups, and medical corporations, together with the citizens' activity groups that are studied in the *Citizens' Activities Report* (Social Policy Bureau 1997b), which will be discussed in detail in the third section of the chapter.

The Economic Scale of Japan's NPOs provides macroeconomic estimates of the added value and output of private nonprofit organizations, and attempts to assign a monetary value to volunteer activities. The first study of its kind, it discusses (a) the range of private nonprofit groups covered; (b) methods and results in the estimation of the scale of activities on a funds basis; (c) methods and results in the assignment of a monetary value to volunteer activities; and (d) future issues. Four criteria are used to define private nonprofit groups: their non-profit-seeking nature, creation of economic value, nongovernmental nature, and voluntary nature. The study thus differs in scope from both the System of National Accounts (SNA) and the Johns Hopkins Comparative Nonprofit Sector Project, which will be discussed in the following section.

According to the report, private nonprofit groups have a total economic scale of about ¥15 trillion (3.1 percent of GDP) in terms of added value and about ¥27 trillion (2.9 percent of GDP) in terms of output. When general medical corporations are excluded, the total added value amounts to about ¥11 trillion (2.3 percent of GDP) and total output to about ¥20 trillion (2.2. percent of GDP). By subsector, the total added value breaks down as follows: general medical corporations, 25 percent; medical care, 21 percent; education, 28 percent; social insurance and social welfare, 13 percent; religion, 5 percent; others, 8 percent.

Further, citizens' activity groups as defined in the *Citizens' Activities Report* have an added value of about ¥30 billion and an output of about

¥120 billion. The monetary value assigned to the voluntary activities of these groups, based on questionnaire surveys, amounts to about ¥650 billion.

While these findings do not go beyond the level of estimates, reflecting the lack of existing data and a social consensus as to definitions, the study is nevertheless worthy of attention in that it provides one model of economic scale.

It should also be noted that a system of special public-interest-promoting corporations, which introduced tax incentives for donations, was launched in 1988. For corporations whose activities meet one of 34 requirements for eligibility (as of April 1, 1997), preferential tax treatment lasting in principle for two years was authorized, subject to administrative discretion. A total of 17,026 corporations have received this authorization (Ministry of Finance data as of April 1, 1996). However, when we exclude 26 special corporations, 1,125 private school corporations, 14,832 social welfare corporations, 163 relief and rehabilitation corporations, and 58 specified Civil Code corporations, we find that only 822 "Article 34 corporations," or just over 3 percent of the total number of such corporations, have been granted preferential tax treatment under this system. A list of special public-interest-promoting corporations can be found in *List of Special Public-Interest-Promoting Corporations* (Japan Association of Charitable Organizations, annual).

For the terminology regarding public-interest corporations, the *Public-Interest Corporation Glossary* (Japan Association of Charitable Organizations 1992) provides a handy guide, while *Taxation of Public-Interest Corporations* (Japan Association of Charitable Organizations 1995) is a useful reference on their tax status. Another valuable work is the *Bibliography Relating to Public-Interest Corporations* (Japan Association of Charitable Organizations 1988); this is a compendium of related publications from before World War II to 1988. It also contains an index to the contents of the association's monthly journal, *Public-Interest Corporations*, from 1972 to 1988. This journal continues to be an important resource, carrying a wealth of information in every issue. For an overview of the taxation of public-interest corporations, a further useful reference is *An Agenda for the Taxation of Philanthropy* (Research Group on Taxation of Public-Interest Corporations and Charitable Trusts 1990).

We can expect to see a growing volume of commercial publications on the private nonprofit sector in the future. A first-rate summary is provided by *What Are NPOs?* (Dentsū Institute for Human Studies

1996). There are also a number of more specialized works focusing on a particular field, such as *NPOs and the New Cooperatives* (Japan Institute of Cooperative Research 1996); *Theory and Practice of the Nonprofit and Cooperative Sectors* (Tomizawa and Kawaguchi 1997); *The Nonprofit Economy: The Economics of NPOs and Philanthropy* (Yamauchi 1997); and *The Potential of a New Social Sector: NPOs and Labor Unions* (Hayashi and JTUC–RIALS 1997).

Basic Course on NPOs (Yamaoka 1997) identifies issues in the future development of Japan's civil society in relation to NPOs. This volume was the first project of the Japan NPO Center, established in November 1996. It is divided into chapters on the significance and present state of NPOs, NPOs in relation to voluntarism, corporate philanthropy, grantmaking foundations, and local government, and the laws and taxation as they affect NPOs; it also includes a bibliography. In addition to publishing the periodical *NPO Plaza*, the Japan NPO Center is due to publish a second volume of *Basic Course on NPOs* and an NPO yearbook.

The Law to Promote Specified Nonprofit Activities, or the NPO Law, was promulgated in March 1998 and took effect in December 1998.* For a practical explanation of the new law in a question-and-answer format, see *The Work of NPOs and Volunteers: Legal, Accounting, and Taxation Issues* (NPO-Borantia Kenkyūkai 1998). This deals with the issues under debate, the interpretation of the law, and its practical implications, and contains the full text of the law and supplementary resolution together with an index.

With the establishment of the Non-Profit Policy Association, implementation of the SCOPE (Study Center on Philanthropy) project to promote academic studies on philanthropy, and the scheduled launching of the Japan NPO Research Association in 1999, research on the private nonprofit sector is expected to become increasingly active in the future.

The Private Nonprofit Sector in Asia Pacific

An in-depth international comparison of the private nonprofit sector is provided by the Comparative Nonprofit Sector Project, which was carried out jointly by the Institute for Policy Studies, Johns Hopkins

*See <http://www.epa.go.jp/98/c/19980319c-npo.html> for the full text in Japanese. For an unofficial English translation, see the *Civil Society Monitor* (Japan Center for International Exchange 1998b) and <http://www.jcie.or.jp>.

University, in the United States and the Japan Center for International Exchange (JCIE). The project compared the nonprofit sector's activities and their economic effects in 12 countries between 1990 and 1995. The results generated a series of publications from the Johns Hopkins University Institute for Policy Studies: "In Search of the Nonprofit Sector: The Question of Definitions" (Salamon and Anheier 1992); *The Emerging Sector: The Nonprofit Sector in Comparative Perspective—An Overview* (Salamon and Anheier 1996a); and "Social Origins of Civil Society: Explaining the Nonprofit Sector Cross-Nationally" (Salamon and Anheier 1996b). The results were published in final form as *Defining the Nonprofit Sector: A Cross-National Analysis* (Salamon and Anheier 1997).

The project marked the first attempt to define the nonprofit sector in Japan and determine its economic scale. A chapter of *Defining the Nonprofit Sector* ("Japan," by Amenomori Takeyoshi) was devoted to the findings, which were later published in full as *The Nonprofit Sector in Japan* (Yamamoto 1998). The six chapters of this volume cover the history, legal background, scale, relationship with the state, and current issues of the nonprofit sector in Japan, together with the data sources and methods for estimating the size of the sector. It represents the first attempt to gain an overview of Japan's nonprofit sector from the viewpoint of its members, and also is the first such comprehensive English-language study in book form.

Japan had, however, been included in a number of earlier international comparisons of the private nonprofit sector. The main titles are *Philanthropy and the Dynamics of Change in East and Southeast Asia* (Baron 1991); *Evolving Patterns of Asia-Pacific Philanthropy* (Jung 1994); and *The Nonprofit Sector in the Global Community: Voices from Many Nations* (McCarthy, Hodgkinson, and Sumariwalla and Associates 1992).

Whereas these works are collections of papers on individual countries, *Emerging Civil Society in the Asia Pacific Community* (Yamamoto 1995) is an integrated study of the present state of civil society and the private nonprofit sector in Asia Pacific, carried out with the cooperation of each country in the region. The first such comprehensive study, this massive volume of some 700 pages examines the status and issues of NGOs, policy research institutions, and philanthropy in 15 countries and regions of Asia Pacific on a country-by-country basis. The integrative summary on NGOs in 15 countries and regions of Asia, North America,

and Oceania has since been updated and published in Japanese as *NGOs in Asia Pacific* (Japan Center for International Exchange [JCIE] 1998a).

NPOs in Asia (GAP 1997) could be called a companion volume to *NGOs in Asia Pacific*. It describes the present situation of nonprofit organizations (mainly foundations) engaged in international activities in ten countries or regions of Asia, excluding Japan.

Citizens' Public-Interest Activity Groups and Volunteer Groups

In Japan, the term "NPO" denotes "citizens' activity group," and often refers to voluntarily established groups not included in the legal framework that governs public-interest corporations—in other words, those groups that are the object of the new NPO Law. Citizens' activity groups are in fact only one type of nonprofit organization in the original sense of the term, but in Japanese usage "NPO" often takes on this more restricted meaning. This is partly due to the influence of the NPO Law, which was enacted without clarifying the relationship of public-interest corporations and citizens' activity groups.

"Volunteer group" is another very loosely defined term, sometimes equated with "NPO" in the sense of a group formed through the voluntary initiative of citizens. Yet volunteer groups—that is, groups in which volunteers participate—are also just one type of NPO, in which professional staff should play a central role. There is much food for thought regarding these points in "Special Feature: Volunteers and NPOs" (Osaka Volunteer Association 1998). In addition to the journal in which this article appears, *Volunteer Activity Studies*, the Osaka Volunteer Association publishes many materials related to voluntarism.

While the concept is still surrounded by much confusion, public attention has been focused on those groups commonly known as NPOs in Japan, that is, citizens' public-interest activity groups (including volunteer groups), as a result of the active role played by volunteers in the Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake, together with the campaign for enactment of the NPO Law. A pioneering study in this area was *Study on the Consolidation of Infrastructure for Citizens' Public-Interest Activities* (National Institute for Research Advancement [NIRA] 1994). This study defined citizens' public-interest activities as one area of private nonprofit activities, especially those independent public-interest activities carried on with the autonomous participation and support of

many citizens. It examined the social significance of citizens' public-interest activities while analyzing their history, present system, support structure, contents and state of activities, issues, and comparable systems overseas. The study recommended (a) improvement of the support structure; (b) expansion of financial support and encouragement of donations; (c) review of the existing public-interest corporation system and establishment of a new nonprofit corporation system; and (d) enactment of a basic law governing private-sector activities in the public interest.

In the second stage of this research, further results were published as *The Proper Form of Legislation and the System for Promotion of Citizens' Public-Interest Activities* (NIRA 1996b). This report discusses the need for incorporation of citizens' public-interest activities and the appropriate corporation system, then goes on to propose a number of concrete revisions to existing laws and the general outline of a special law. As basic conditions, the proposed system is designed to (a) cover a broad range of fields by doing away with the existing compartmentalization, in which many government departments exercise jurisdiction separately; (b) bring incorporation under a set of legal standards not subject to administrative discretion; (c) use public disclosure, not government supervision, to ensure that activities are non-profit-seeking; (d) treat incorporated and unincorporated associations equally for taxation purposes, but establish separate preferential measures according to such criteria as the social significance of an organization's activities and the extent of its public disclosure of information.

Also published in the same year was the *Comprehensive Study on Support Measures for Volunteers* (NIRA 1996a). This study by legal scholars defines volunteer groups as those which fulfill the criteria of spontaneity, absence of financial compensation (nonprofit nature), and social contribution (objectives in the public interest). After comparing the relevant laws in several other countries, the authors make a series of recommendations. These include setting up a new corporation system to simplify the acquisition of corporate status; having an independent third-party institution screen applications; making corporate status public through corporate registration; placing activities and accounts under the supervision of the competent authorities; and introducing preferential tax measures for those authorized corporations that benefit the public interest to a particularly high degree.

Researchers who were themselves involved in voluntary activities

incorporated the views of those in the field into *Nonprofit Groups and the Social Infrastructure* (Japan Networkers Conference 1995). Their report reviews the present state of activities, the problems involved, the availability of support and related issues, and the situation in the United States, and recommends the creation of a support system consisting of a "civil society development framework" and a "civil society development fund." Other publications by the Japan Networkers Conference include *What Are NPOs?* (1992).

There are many other surveys dealing with the situation of NPOs in Japan. To name just a few: *Research on the Consolidation of Infrastructure for Citizens' Public-Interest Activities* (Nara Machizukuri Center 1993); "Discussion of Volunteer Activities in Japan" (Life Design Institute 1994); *Report of a Fact-Finding Survey of Support for Citizens' Activities* (NLI Research Institute 1994); *Research on the Form of Assistance for Development of Citizens' Activities* (STB Research Institute 1994); *Study of Social Participation Activity Groups* (Zenkoku Yoka Gyōsei Kenkyū Kyōgikai 1994); *Study of the System to Promote Social Participation* (Institute for Social Development Research 1995); *Fact-Finding Study of the Activities of Support Groups (NPOs, NGOs) for Foreign Residents of Japan* (Kansai Inter-Disciplinary Studies, Inc. 1995); *Fact-Finding Survey of Citizens' Public-Interest Groups* (STB Research Institute 1996b; commissioned by the Economic Planning Agency); *The Outlook for NPOs to Build a Flexible, Mature Society* (STB Research Institute 1996a).

A number of factors were behind this flood of studies appearing in the early to mid-1990s, and especially between 1993 and 1996. Among them were the deep-rooted campaign for an NPO law by citizens' public-interest groups, changes in attitude among the agencies concerned, and a renewed recognition of the role of NPOs, accelerated by the January 1995 earthquake disaster. Some advocates of an NPO law made appeals in plain language such as *Courage to You: NPOs for Creating One's Own Life* (Grassroots Democracy Group and NPO Promotion Policy Commission 1997). Also active in the campaign were political parties such as the New Party Sakigake, which issued *The Citizens' Activities Corporation Law of Sakigake* (1995). In 1994, activists across the board united to form the Coalition for Legislation to Support Citizens' Organizations (known as C's). The debate over the NPO Law can be followed in a series of publications by C's, including *Commentary on the NPO Bill: Background and Issues* (1996a), *The Law to*

Promote Citizens' Activities: Draft Incorporation System and Discussion Materials (1996b), and *Understanding the "Citizens' Activities Promotion Bill"* (1997). The coalition has also published a handbook for groups aiming to incorporate under the new law, *NPO Incorporation Handbook* (1998b).

If NPOs are to expand, there must be a system to provide them with the backing and support of society. In this regard, two helpful references are *The Support System for the Nonprofit Sector* (C's 1998a), which takes a particular support system in the United States as a practical example, and *Study of Regional Support for Citizens' Activities, Part 3: The Support Sector in Japan* (Study Group on Regional Support for Citizens' Activities 1998). The latter is based on the experience gained in creating the Community Support Center Kobe, and also draws on a fact-finding survey of 1,093 citizens' activity groups in Nara, Hiroshima, Miyagi, and Hyogo prefectures, the results of which can be found in *Study of Regional Support for Citizens' Activities, Part 2: Citizens' Activities and Support Centers in Japan* (Study Group on Regional Support for Citizens' Activities 1997). The 1998 report provides a very concrete account of regional support in general, activities in Kobe, the process of establishing the support center, its programs and plans for stepping up activities, and the ideal form of the center. Similar support centers are now being set up in many parts of Japan, and they are also starting to form a network.

Another major topic of discussion has been the relationship between the community or local authority, on the one hand, and NPOs or volunteer activities on the other. One substantive study in this area is *Research on the Role and Potential of Private Nonprofit Organizations (NPOs) in the Community* (21st Century Hyogo Project Association 1995). The authors examine NPOs' role and productivity in a pluralistic society, viewing their functions in terms of the individual's relationship with society, and offer proposals for the creation and promotion of NPOs in the local community. Also included are the results of an opinion poll of community residents on volunteer activities, and a questionnaire survey on community development and the work of community-based mutual help organizations.

A study focusing on support by local authorities for volunteer activities is *Fiscal 1995 Study on the Proper Form of Social Support Measures for Volunteer Activities* (National Volunteer Activity Promotion Centre 1996). This volume presents the results of a fact-finding survey

of 334 local authorities, an opinion survey of 185 experts, and hearings conducted by five agencies. It sets forth basic principles for local authorities as they work with and support volunteers and NPOs, and makes a number of proposals regarding the ideal form and operation of a support system. The discussion is organized under such topics as accommodating plurality and diversity, taking a long-term view, indirect support, the importance of the decision-making process for support measures, providing infrastructure and an enabling environment, the cost burden, and drawing up a charter. The findings of a questionnaire sent to 150 experts on the proper form of social support measures for NPO activities are also presented.

A further related study is *Administration and Voluntarism in the Age of Hollowing-Out of the Regions* (Ogasawara 1996).

Local authorities have conducted their own fact-finding surveys of NPOs. One very substantial study of this type is *The Administration and NPOs: Concerning NPOs in Tokyo* (Bureau of Policy and Information, Tokyo Metropolitan Government 1996). The bureau sent a questionnaire to 1,507 citizens' activity groups based in Tokyo and received 670 responses. The analysis of the data shows that 552 of these groups (82 percent) were unincorporated associations, 45 percent were established within the last 10 years, the majority (64 percent) were "locally oriented" groups active in such areas as "the community and human relations," "the living environment," and "community welfare," and only 30 percent had full-time paid staff. With regard to their financial scale, 49 percent of the unincorporated associations had annual revenues of not more than ¥500,000; in contrast, 92 percent of the public-interest corporations had annual revenues of ¥10 million or more. In light of these findings, the study calls for a more positive evaluation of the functions of NPOs and proposes concrete steps for forming partnerships between NPOs and the administration.

The Tokyo Volunteer Center of the Tokyo Council of Social Welfare has conducted a study on expanding the support provided by government-directed service agencies to include citizens' activities. Both the present situation and a vision for the future are discussed in *Report of the Committee on the Form of Promotion of Volunteer Activities in Tokyo* (Tokyo Volunteer Center 1997). The report emphasizes the importance of a realistic outlook, background support, equal relationships, coordination and teamwork, and maintaining human networks. A second report by the Tokyo Volunteer Center, *Report of the Committee on the Form*

of Support of Volunteer Activities (1998), focuses on support for citizens' activities. This interesting report, which deals with referral services and networking, consultation services, gathering and providing information, research, training, and public education, gives an idea of the exploratory efforts being made by agencies in an intermediate position between the administration and citizens' groups.

Citizens' Activities Report, cited in the first section of this chapter, was the first comprehensive survey of citizens' activity groups by the national government. Conducted by the Social Policy Bureau of the Economic Planning Agency (EPA) (1997b), the survey defines citizens' activity groups as nonprofit groups engaged in social activities on an ongoing, voluntary basis, excluding public-interest corporations (such as incorporated associations and foundations). A questionnaire was sent to a random sample of 10,000 such groups out of the national total of 85,786, and 4,152 responses were received. The report presents the statistical results and analyzes them under five headings: the state of activities, finances, organization, city size, and whether groups have ever felt the need to incorporate.

The fields of activity were found to be as follows: social welfare, 37.4 percent; community, 16.9 percent; education, culture, and sports, 16.8 percent; environment, 10.0 percent; health care, 4.7 percent; international exchange and cooperation, 4.6 percent; others, 5.7 percent. The following forms of activity were reported: friendship and exchange, 57.8 percent; training, study, and guidance, 43.5 percent; provision of services, 31.6 percent; public education campaigns, 26.5 percent; publication of newsletters, etc., 21.5 percent. Almost half of the groups had been launched since 1986. The activities of 67.6 percent were located within a ward or municipality, while only 7.3 percent were active outside their home prefecture (including other countries). Groups with annual expenditures under ¥100,000 made up 21.2 percent of the total, and those with annual expenditures under ¥300,000 accounted for 34.5 percent. Fewer than 7 percent of the groups had their own office, while 23.0 percent had full-time paid staff. Over 80 percent felt that government support was necessary, and slightly more than 10 percent had felt the need to incorporate.

As mentioned earlier, when citizens' activity groups as defined above were included in macroeconomic measurements, their added value was estimated at ¥30 billion, their output at ¥120 billion, and the monetary value of their voluntary activities at ¥650 billion.

Further studies by the Social Policy Bureau include *Citizens' Activities Seen through Citizens' Eyes* (1998d), and *Toward Open NPOs: For the Effective Transmission of Information* (1998b).

Citizens' Activities Seen through Citizens' Eyes is based on two surveys, one of members of the general public and one of people involved in civic activities. Among its findings were the following points: there are widely varying interpretations of "citizens' activities"; about 20 percent of the general public currently participate in such activities, while about 80 percent of those not yet participating wish to do so in the future; those who participate are actively involved with their local community, and their reasons for participating are equally divided between an emphasis on society (e.g., "creating a better community") and an emphasis on self-improvement (e.g., "fully utilizing my abilities"). The study offers proposals with a view to developing initiators with leadership qualities and expanding the pool of participants.

Toward Open NPOs is a fact-finding study of citizens' activity groups that addresses their policies related to accountability and how they circulate information about their work. While nearly 80 percent of the groups surveyed felt a need to pass on information, fewer than 20 percent thought they were doing enough. In particular, information channels to nonmembers were poorly developed; shortages of staff, funds, technology, and know-how were cited as problems. The study pointed to a number of ongoing issues with regard to accountability, including the need for objective decision-making criteria and ensuring the reliability of information released to the public. It proposed providing a "guide to communicating information on citizens' activities" in order to promote the accumulation and sharing of a minimum level of knowledge and technical expertise common to all groups, together with a stronger "information center function" to offer support and serve as an intermediary in the circulation of information.

A further study by the Social Policy Bureau, commissioned to the Marketing Intelligence Corporation, is *Study on the Status and Problems of Remunerated Projects by Citizens' Activity Groups* (1998c). A remunerated project is defined as any project conducted by a citizens' activity group which receives financial compensation from the beneficiary. Such compensation includes revenues from business activities, payments under government contracts, government subsidies, and private and other grants. Compensation for remunerated projects was found to make up 45.2 percent of the total revenues of the groups

surveyed. Government subsidies comprised the largest proportion, at 25 percent, while revenues from business activities and payment for government contracts accounted for a combined figure of 12.5 percent. Most remunerated projects were found to be "projects based on the purpose of establishment"; only 5.6 percent were "projects to generate funds for activities." In two-thirds of all cases, payments for remunerated projects were less than ¥1 million; the payment levels corresponded to direct costs incurred, such as transportation expenses, and only about 10 percent of the groups surveyed stated that they had surplus money to cover indirect expenses. Thus, the study concludes, remunerated projects cannot be said to make a significant contribution to the strength and stability of the financial base of these groups, and they are not in competition with either the private for-profit sector or the public sector; rather, the relationship is one in which cooperation can be expected.

As training material, the Social Policy Bureau of the EPA has published *For Leaders of Citizens' Activities* (1997a). *White Paper on the National Life*, published annually by the EPA, is another important source of information.

The *White Paper on Voluntarism* (Japan Youth Volunteers Association 1997) is also of interest. The 1996–1997 edition, which looks at trends in voluntarism since the Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake, presents an analysis suggesting that the number of persons wishing to volunteer may not have increased after the earthquake, together with a discussion of social trends, extracts from recent studies of volunteer activities, and a list of organizations. Further references include: *Volunteer Handbook: 3,000 Volunteer Groups, NGOs, and Civic Groups, '95* (Masukomi Jōhō Sentā 1995); *Introductory Guide to Voluntarism* (PHP Institute 1995); and *The Age of Voluntarism: NPOs Will Change Society* (Tanaka 1998). For a detailed discussion of volunteer activities in the aftermath of the 1995 earthquake, see *The Volunteer Revolution: Reflecting the Experience of the Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake in Citizens' Activities* (Honma and Deguchi 1996).

There have been a number of nationwide opinion surveys on aspects of voluntarism. These are discussed in: *Opinion Poll on Lifelong Learning and Volunteer Activities* (Prime Minister's Office 1993); *Attitude Survey on Community Chests and Volunteer Activities* (Central Community Chest of Japan 1995); "Detailed Report of National Opinion Poll: Anxiety about the 'Nontransparent Age'; NGO Opinion Poll"

(Asahi Shimbun 1997); and "Women in Their Thirties Positive Toward NGOs and NPOs: From the Asahi Shimbun National Opinion Poll" (Numajiri 1997).

Citizens' Groups for International Cooperation

The term "NGO" was originally used in Article 71 of the United Nations Charter. Since the organizations it denotes are presumed to be nonprofit as well as nongovernmental, it is almost equivalent in concept to "NPO" in the proper sense, that is, "a private, nonprofit organization." In Japan, however, since the first groups to adopt the term "NGO" were primarily involved in international cooperation or exchange, it tends to be used with the more restricted meaning of "a group active in international relations," or, even more specifically, "a civic group active in international development cooperation." (They are thus distinguished from civic groups active mainly within Japan, which are called "NPOs" in the narrow sense.)

NGOs that fit the definition "citizens' organizations for international cooperation" and that are mainly active in such fields as development, the environment, human rights, or peace are listed in the *NGO Directory* (JANIC, biennial). In addition to detailed entries on the NGOs, this very useful volume introduces related private organizations of various types and also has contact information for government offices, a bibliography, a directory listed by prefecture, a general index, and indexes of projects arranged by field or type and by country of location. The latest edition (1998) has entries for 368 organizations. Of these, 217 were founded before October 1995, have substantial project budgets (over ¥3 million for NGOs of the development cooperation type, or over ¥1 million for NGOs of the education and proposal type, or over ¥500,000 for NGOs of the network type), and derive at least 25 percent of their funds from their own revenue sources. These 217 organizations have revenues totaling approximately ¥19.6 billion, are active in over 100 countries altogether, and have a total of about 340,000 members and over 3,000 active volunteers, while 120 of their number employ a total of 1,239 paid staff. However, 191 (88.0 percent) are unincorporated associations, and although the average revenue of the 217 organizations is about ¥90.36 million, in practice about 44 percent carry out their activities on an annual budget of ¥20 million or less.

A companion volume, also published biennially by the Japanese NGO Center for International Cooperation (JANIC), analyzes the situation of these NGOs in greater detail. *NGO Data Book* is organized under such headings as origin and aims of activities, project characteristics, countries and regions of activity, bases in Japan, citizen participation, finances, organization, and staff. It also contains a chronology of trends among Japanese NGOs and a comparison with the data in the previous edition, thus serving as an invaluable resource for an overview of NGOs in the field of international cooperation.

Environmental NGOs are the subject of *Comprehensive List of Environmental NGOs* (Japan Environment Corporation [JEC] 1998). The fiscal 1998 edition updates that of fiscal 1995 and provides data on 4,227 groups. The Japan Environment Corporation also commissioned a study from the Japan Environment Association that analyzes the state of 510 of these groups, including 371 unincorporated associations; this was published as *Questionnaire Survey on the Actual Operation of Environmental NGOs* (JEC 1996).

The total amount of self-funded development aid provided by Japanese NGOs is quite difficult to determine, but figures for the previous fiscal year are published annually in *Japan's Official Development Assistance: White Paper on ODA* (Economic Cooperation Bureau, Ministry of Foreign Affairs). They cover those NGOs that meet the definition "private public-interest groups active in social and economic development cooperation in developing nations," and are based on a survey conducted for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs by the Association for Promotion of International Cooperation (APIC), which is published as *Survey of Results of Development Aid by Japan's NGOs* (APIC, annual). The latest edition (fiscal 1997) gives the following findings for a total of 306 NGOs: funding assistance, ¥7.94194 billion; technical assistance, ¥2.05752 billion; material assistance, ¥935.37 million; development education, ¥837.15 million; total, ¥16.99052 billion. The scale of aid breaks down as follows: less than ¥10 million, 203 NGOs (66.3 percent); ¥10 to ¥50 million, 71 NGOs (23.2 percent); ¥50 to ¥100 million, 13 NGOs (4.2 percent); over ¥100 million, 19 NGOs (6.2 percent). The average sum per NGO is ¥55.26 million, but in reality a mere 19 NGOs (6.2 percent) account for 83 percent of the total volume of aid.

Survey of the Support System for Japan's NGOs (APIC 1995) summarizes support programs and results in each of the following categories: the national government and quasi-governmental agencies,

regional public bodies, private grant-making groups, companies, and international agencies. It also presents the findings of a survey on how NGOs themselves view this support system, together with the issues and future outlook. APIC continues to carry out surveys relating to NGOs. Another study in this connection is *Study for the Formulation of a Basic Concept for the Promotion of Volunteer Activities Which Make an International Contribution* (Research Institute for Hi-life 1996). This volume covers the present state of volunteer activities that make an international contribution, as well as the present state of support by the national government, affiliated agencies, and prefectural governments. The latest information on funding assistance by NGOs from public fund sources can be found in the "Government Agency Information" section of the monthly journal of the Japan Association of Charitable Organizations, *Public-Interest Corporations*.

In recent years, local governments have assigned a rapidly growing role to cooperation in their international programs. An interesting study of these changes, with actual examples of activities in Asia, is *Japan and Asia Linked at the Local Level* (CLAIR 1998). The report suggests the efforts being made at the regional level to keep pace with new developments, and the possibility of cooperation among local authorities, NGOs, and NPOs.

Another area in which studies have begun is the linking of Japanese ODA funds to the work of international NGOs or NGOs based in the recipient country, rather than in Japan. One such study, with an environmental focus, is *Beyond Grass-roots Grant Assistance: New Adventures of ODA and NGO Cooperation* (Foundation for Advanced Studies on International Development 1998).

There are numerous reports on the overseas activities of Japanese NGOs. Materials concerning ODA and NGOs can be accessed at APIC's home page, which also provides many links to NGOs.

Philanthropy, Private Grant-Making Foundations, and Charitable Trusts

There are surprisingly few works on the social role of philanthropy in Japan. Especially in recent years, the tendency has been to discuss the subject within the broader framework of the private nonprofit sector as a whole (see the first section of this chapter). However, as sources of funding are likely to become a major focus of future debate on the

nonprofit sector in Japan, the nature of philanthropy is a topic that deserves more attention than it has yet received.

A pioneering work on the history of philanthropy in Japan is *Foundations in Japan* (Hayashi and Yamaoka 1984). More recent studies include *Philanthropy and Society: The Issues Involved in Japan* (Hayashi and Yamaoka 1993), which deals with contemporary issues as well as the historical background, and *Philanthropy: The Social Contribution of Companies and Individuals* (Deguchi 1993), which is based on a comparison with the United States.

Foundations as a Social Phenomenon (Iriyama 1992) breaks new ground as a theoretical study by an author who is actually involved in the management of a private grant-making foundation, and offers many valuable insights into the nature of foundations' work.

A full picture of the activities of private grant-making foundations can be obtained from *Directory of Grant-making Foundations: Guide to Private-Sector Grants*, which has been published biennially since 1988 by the Japan Foundation Center (JFC). (It was preceded by *Directory of Foundations of the Grant-making Type*, 1985 edition, which was published by the Japan Association of Charitable Organizations to mark the inception of the Foundation Library Center of Japan, the forerunner of JFC.)

The 1998 edition of the *Directory of Grant-making Foundations* lists a total of 736 organizations—698 incorporated foundations or similar bodies, and 38 other organizations that have grant-making programs, including special public corporations, charitable trusts, and foreign legal persons. Each entry consists of an organizational and financial profile, details of regular publications, and details of grant programs (types of program, funding criteria, eligibility, application period, number of grants, range of grant amounts, etc.). The 698 foundations listed in the current directory represent a striking increase over the 213 that appeared ten years ago in the first edition.

JFC also publishes the *Directory of Grant-making Foundations: Calls for Grant Applications* in April each year. This contains guidelines for grant, scholarship, and award applications to each grant-making foundation; the 1998 edition has entries for 186 foundations. Details of grant awards are then published each October in *Directory of Grant-making Foundations: Grant Awards*; the most recent edition (1997) lists 148 foundations and 7,300 grants. JFC also puts out a series of occasional publications in English, *Directory of Grant-making Foundations in Japan*.

In the past, each edition of this directory was accompanied by an analysis of grant-making trends in the form of *Special Issue of the Directory of Grant-making Foundations: The Present State of Grant-making Bodies in Japan*, but this has been discontinued; instead, a brief analysis is provided in the center's periodical, *JFC Views*.

Under the system of charitable trusts, the first of which was launched in 1977, assets are placed in trust by an individual or legal person for a given purpose that serves the public good, and are managed in order to realize that purpose by the trust bank which acts as trustee. According to the home page of the Trust Companies Association of Japan, as of March 31, 1997, there were 513 charitable trusts with a total asset value of ¥53.5 billion; they were responsible for 49,590 grants with a total value of ¥15.8 billion. Jurisdiction over 174 of the trusts lay with the national government, while 339 were under prefectural jurisdiction; in other words, regionally based trusts outnumbered nationally based trusts by a ratio of two to one. About 40 percent of all trusts had assets of less than ¥30 million. The purposes of the trusts broke down as follows: scholarships, 29 percent; research grants in the natural sciences, 17 percent; promotion of education, 16 percent; international cooperation and exchange, 12 percent; arts and culture, 7 percent; social welfare, 6 percent; improvement of the urban environment, 5 percent.

Corporate Philanthropy

Corporate donation figures, which come under the donation framework of the taxation system, can be obtained from the annual publication *Report on Results of Company Sampling Surveys* (National Tax Administration Agency). Nevertheless, it is not easy to determine the state of corporate philanthropy. The only available basic reference is the *White Paper on Philanthropy* (Keidanren 1992 and 1996). This white paper, which has been published in only two editions, is based on the "Survey of the Results of Philanthropic and International Cultural Exchange Activities," which consists of an annual expenditure survey and a triennial opinion survey conducted by Keidanren (Japan Federation of Economic Organizations) with regard to its member companies and the corporate members of its One Percent Club.

According to the 1996 edition, the 404 companies surveyed reported a total expenditure on philanthropic activities of ¥154.2 billion, or an average of ¥382.00 million per company (3.25 percent of ordinary

income). The expenditure breaks down into donations, averaging ¥281.00 million per company, and own projects, averaging ¥115.00 million per company. Expenditure related to the Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake averaged ¥34.00 million per company. The average rate of utilization of the tax-deductible limit amount was about 49 percent. A system to support social contributions by employees existed in 257 companies. In the opinion survey, about 40 percent of the 391 companies that responded stated as a self-evaluation that they actively engage in philanthropy. The reason for contributions cited by most respondents (about 86 percent) was "responsibility as a corporate citizen." Ninety-one companies had a department or section dedicated to social contributions, and 54 maintained an annual budget for their spending on such programs.

In addition to the detailed survey results, the white paper gives an account of Keidanren's own philanthropic activities. It reviews the work of the Committee on Corporate Philanthropy (237 member companies), the One Percent Club (268 corporate and 998 individual members), the Council for Better Corporate Citizenship (CBCC), the Keidanren Nature Conservation Fund (41 grants worth about ¥350 million), fund-raising from the business community (48 items, totaling ¥6.6 billion), scholarships, and other programs. It also presents and analyzes the results of a questionnaire on corporate relief work following the Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake, and lists the philanthropic activities of individual companies in fiscal 1993.

Keidanren has also published the *Handbook of Corporate Philanthropy* (1994). This is a concise introduction for companies, written by staff in charge of corporate philanthropic programs. It explains how companies view philanthropy, the systems used, donations, company projects, employee participation, and fields of activity, and also contains a question-and-answer section, case studies, a glossary, and a list of agencies. As a field guide that forms a companion volume to the *White Paper on Philanthropy*, it offers interesting insights into the attitudes of Japanese companies to philanthropy in actual practice.

The Association for Corporate Support of the Arts has published the *White Paper on Corporate Support of the Arts* annually since 1991. The latest edition (1997) reports the findings of a fact-finding survey to which 325 companies responded, as follows: 230 (70.8 percent) were active in support of the arts; the total value of their support was ¥17.55527 billion and the average per company was ¥99.75 million.

About 32 percent of the companies had a specialized department, about 60 percent allocated funds in their budget, and donations and sponsorship were about equally prominent as forms of funding. The average number of projects per company was six; financial support for concerts, exhibitions, and stage productions played the central role. In addition to reporting on this annual survey, the *White Paper on Corporate Support of the Arts* also lists support activities by company, national and local government support for the arts, support activities of corporate foundations, related press articles, and the year's events. Each edition carries a special feature on a different topic.

Corporate foundations are the subject of a publication by the Japan Association of Charitable Organizations, *Japanese Corporate Foundations*. This was issued in 1988 and 1992, but there is no more recent edition. In addition to a directory of foundations, each volume contains an analysis of trends.

A publication focusing on forms of corporate philanthropy that have close ties with the local community is the *Fukuoka White Paper on Philanthropy* (Fukuoka Industrial Promotion Council and Fukuoka City Council of Social Welfare 1996).

While there are many books that deal with the philanthropic activities of companies, they tend to mention the subject in relation to corporate governance, or to take an anecdotal approach. Only a few studies provide a complete overview of the field. The most comprehensive is *Japanese Corporate Philanthropy* (London 1991), which has also been published in Japanese. Other titles include: *Corporate Citizenship: Corporate Philosophy for the 21st Century* (Tabuchi 1990); *Philanthropy Blossoms: Asking the True Value of Japanese Corporations* (Shimada 1993); and a collection of case studies, *Introduction to Philanthropy* (Takahashi 1997). On Japanese corporate philanthropy overseas, titles include: *Travels in American Philanthropy: The Social Contribution Activities of Japanese Companies* (Shikata 1992) and *Survey of Philanthropic Activities of Japanese Companies in the United States* (Japan External Trade Organization 1993, 1995), as well as a large number of cross-national comparative studies.

Policy Research Institutions (Think Tanks)

A major problem with regard to the development of civil society in Japan is the existing structure in which the drafting of policy is monopolized

by the administrative branch at the national and local levels. While it hardly needs to be said that politicians themselves must increase their capacity to develop policy, it is equally vital to ensure that society as a whole has a mechanism for broad policy debate and the presentation of an array of policy options.

In considering this need, we must ask whether independent policy research institutions exist in the private sector. In the United States, especially, these are also known as "think tanks," but the Japanese term *shinku tanku* generally refers to government-affiliated institutions (in light of their funding and staffing, a better description might be "government-controlled"), or else to commercial affiliates sensitive to a parent company's interest. In fact, it must be said that "think tanks" in the sense of independent, private, nonprofit policy research institutions are almost nonexistent in Japan.

With this important proviso, materials on policy research institutions have been included here since those that are truly private and independent are key players in the development of civil society in Japan. The term "think tank," though not strictly equivalent, is used below as a translation of *shinku tanku*.

An overview of think tanks in Japan is provided by *Almanac of Think Tanks in Japan* (NIRA, annual). This presents the results of research by Japanese think tanks in four parts: "Introduction of Research Results," "List of Topics by Field," "NIRA's Research Results," and "Trends among Think Tanks."

The latest edition (1997) lists a total of 243 institutions (108 joint-stock companies, 109 incorporated foundations, and 26 incorporated associations). About 50 percent are located in Tokyo or adjacent prefectures. Of their 24,428 employees, 83.4 percent are employees of joint-stock companies. Research positions are held by 30.6 percent of the total employees, but 24.8 percent of these are seconded from a parent company or government agency, and as many as 54.2 percent of the institutions have research staff seconded to them. The 126 foreign researchers account for a mere 1.7 percent of the total, and are employed in only 15.3 percent of the institutions. The majority of the institutions were small to medium in size, with 43.6 percent having up to nine researchers and 70.4 percent having up to 19. But there was also a clear polarization in terms of size, with 13.1 percent having at least 50 researchers, 6.5 percent having at least 100, and 1.6 percent having at least

300. The think tanks with 50 or more researchers were nearly all joint-stock companies; very few public-interest corporations were numbered among them.

Total revenues amounted to approximately ¥404.6 billion, of which some ¥127.9 billion was generated by research. The income from profit-making activities of think tanks organized as joint-stock companies accounted for 80.1 percent of total revenues and 79.6 percent of revenues from research. The ten top-ranking companies earned 54.0 percent of all research revenues. Contracts from business corporations generated 51.4 percent of research revenues. Contracts from the government or special public corporations accounted for 39.9 percent, while the combined total of contracts from private research institutions, private grant-making bodies, and overseas clients accounted for less than 10 percent.

Almost half the total of 6,892 research projects fell into three fields: "utilization of the national land," 18.1 percent; "the economy," 14.8 percent; and "industry," 14.7 percent. "International issues" made up just 5.0 percent and "politics and government" a mere 4.1 percent of the total. There were only 34 joint research projects with overseas partners, and in only about 20 percent of the total number of cases were the results available to the public. According to the 1996 edition, when the research institutions were asked about their own future direction, the most frequent answer was "strengthening independent policy-drafting functions," a response that can be seen as reflecting their low level of independence under present conditions.

The triennial *Directory of Think Tanks in Japan* (NIRA) summarizes the organization of institutions of this type; the latest edition (1996) covers 413 think tanks. Also, the 1996 edition of the annual *Guide to Members of the Japan Association of Independent Research Institutes (JAIRI)* gives an outline of 51 member institutions, their current and future research topics, and related information.

Japanese universities conduct only a very limited amount of what could be called policy research. The results can be accessed on the science information databases of the National Center for Science Information Systems (NACSIS-IR), but this service is not available to the general public. As for policy research by government agencies, partial results have begun to be published on the home pages of some agencies, but with limited public disclosure it remains impossible to grasp the

overall picture. The results of policy research by think tanks can be obtained only by approaching them directly (some publish results on their Websites) or using a library such as that of the National Institute for Research Advancement.

Against this background, the need for independent policy research institutions in the private sector has long been pointed out, for example, by Takenaka and Ishii in *The Japan-U.S. Economic Debate: The Age of "Excuses" Is Over* (1988). Since the early 1990s, these calls have clearly been gathering momentum. The lead was taken by a project supported by the Sasakawa Peace Foundation, "Think Tanks in Japan: Exploring New Options." This gave rise to the proposals published in *A Japanese Think Tank: Exploring Alternative Models* (Struyk, Ueno, and Suzuki 1993).

An event that had a major impact was the "Global Think Tank Forum" held in 1995 at the initiative of, among others, the Japan Shipbuilding Industry Foundation (Nippon Foundation). The results were published as *The Creation of Policy-making: Think Tanks in Civil Society* (Shimokōbe 1996).

The interest in private policy research institutions has not waned; indeed, amid a growing distrust of the bureaucratic system, it is now stronger than ever. Yet, in reality, there are many obstacles on the road to creating and strengthening private policy research institutions that are independent, nonprofit, nongovernmental entities. Perhaps the situation can best be summed up by saying that there is a new awareness of policy research institutions and think tanks as a key element of the private nonprofit sector, and of the importance of recognizing their need for NPO status.

Further, the role of independent policy research institutions is growing in importance not only in Japan but also internationally. Such a role is often played by international NPOs which specialize in the environment or disarmament, for example. Another increasingly significant area is the "track two" intellectual exchange or dialogue that occurs when independent policy research institutions establish a joint policy agenda and discuss topics that cannot be handled at the government level (track one), or topics with a medium- to long-range time frame. References concerning such trends include: *Survey of the Present Status of Japan-U.S. Intellectual Exchange* (JCIE 1991); "The Role of the Private Sector in International Exchange" (Yamamoto 1995a); "The Role of the Private Sector Is Growing" (Yamamoto

1995b); "Experience-Based Theory of Intellectual Exchange: From the Shimoda Conference to 'Track Two'" (Yamamoto 1996); *Cultural Internationalism and World Order* (Iriye 1997); and "Applying Track Two to China-Japan-U.S. Relations" (Wada 1998).

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<http://www.apic.or.jp>, <http://www.apic.or.jp/plaza>

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Council of Local Authorities for International Relations (CLAIR)
<http://www.clair.nippon-net.ne.jp>

C's (Coalition for Legislation to Support Citizens' Organizations)
<http://www.vcom.or.jp/project/c-s>

JANIC (Japanese NGO Center for International Cooperation)
<http://www2.coi.te-Tokyo.co.jp/~janic>

Japan Center for International Exchange
<http://www.jcie.or.jp>

Japan Environment Association
<http://www.eic.or.jp/jea>

Japan Environment Corporation
<http://www.eic.or.jp/jec>

Japan Youth Volunteers Association
<http://www2.coi.te-Tokyo.co.jp/~jyva/jyva>

Nara Machizukuri Center, Inc.
<http://www1.meshnet.or.jp/~naramati>

National Volunteer Activity Promotion Centre, Japanese Council of Social Welfare
<http://www.wnn.or.jp/wnn-v/kyougikai/index.html>

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<http://www.nli-research.co.jp>

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<http://www1.mesh.ne.jp/~sic/npa>

Osaka Volunteer Association
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