

Good Practices on Economic Empowerment of Women in Post-Disaster Reconstruction in Tohoku and the Asia-Pacific

APEC Policy Partnership on Women and the Economy (PPWE)



**Asia-Pacific
Economic Cooperation**

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1. Objectives

This report aims to:

- 1) Present good practices in the promotion of economic empowerment of women in the post-disaster situations through entrepreneurship development in Japan and the Asia Pacific region;
- 2) Discuss from a gender perspective what contributed to the successful achievements of the projects.

2. Background

Global Context

Large-scale natural disasters are on the increase across the globe. The Asia-Pacific region is particularly disaster-prone and socio-economic impacts of natural disasters have become a major issue.

It has become evident that natural disasters affect men and women differently due to gender inequality, gender norms and gender-based division of labor in society and economy. It is also pointed out that natural disasters have a more direct and adverse impact on women and girls. Drawing on the knowledge and experience from the past incidents, the international community has incorporated gender equality perspectives into the disaster-related policy frameworks such as the Hyogo Framework adopted at the second UN World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction held in 2005 in Kobe, Japan. In addition, under the leadership of the Government of Japan, the UN Commission on the Status of Women adopted the resolution entitled 'Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women in Natural Disasters' at its 58th session in March 2014, which underlines the importance of responding to particular vulnerability of women and girls and promoting their full participation in decision-making in all of the stages of disaster prevention, response, and reconstruction.

Economic empowerment of women is recognized as one of the key and strategic approaches in post-disaster recovery and reconstruction as women play a vital role in rehabilitating the household and the community. Natural disasters are indeed an unfortunate and tragic event. However, assistance that is gender-sensitive and that focuses on women's economic empowerment can transform their lives and contribute to building resilient communities and economies.

In this context, the CSW resolution specifically calls for:

‘promoting and involving women in designing income-generating activities and employment opportunities for women affected by natural disasters, particularly rural women, including by supporting community-based businesses’.

Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) sees economic empowerment of women in post-disaster reconstruction as one of the common agenda in the region, as outlined in the Ministerial Statement of the 2014 APEC Women and the Economy Forum:

‘Encourage and promote women, affected by natural disasters, particularly indigenous and rural women, to contribute to response and reconstruction through entrepreneurship and innovation’.

In light of these ongoing global and regional discussions and commitments, this report intends to highlight good practices aimed at empowering women economically, particularly through entrepreneurship and innovation, and draw lessons for collective learning.

Japan’s Experience

On March 11 2011, a 9.0 magnitude earthquake hit the north-east coast of Japan, causing massive tsunami. According to the National Police Agency of Japan, the confirmed death-toll is 15,889 as of December 2014. Iwate, Miyagi, and Fukushima prefectures were the most severely affected.

The Basic Act on Reconstruction was passed in June 2011, stressing the need for reflecting the “views of a diverse range of Japanese nationals, including women, children and disabled persons”. Basic Guidelines for Reconstruction put in place in July 2011 also outlines promotion of women’s participation in all platforms and organization of reconstruction, from the perspective of a gender equal society”. To date, however, women’s participation in the decision-making process has not been adequate: There was only one woman out of 15 members on the national Reconstruction Design Council put in place immediately after the Earthquake; Reconstruction Promotion Committee established in February 2012, there were 4 women out of 15 members; at the municipality level, percentage of women sitting in the recovery and reconstruction committees in the affected areas was only 11%.

Although the Basic Law and Basic Guidelines outline the principle of ensuring women’s participation and gender perspectives in all relief and reconstruction efforts, they were not

translated into actual resource allocation, programming, and implementation. Assistance to women and girls has been primarily provided by local women's centers, women's NGOs, and international NGOs in the areas of reproductive health, violence, employment, and entrepreneurship. Some of the good practices in women's economic empowerment shall be highlighted in this report.

(For more information, refer to the 'Disaster Prevention and Reconstruction from a Gender Equal Society Perspective – Lessons from the Great East Japan Earthquake' from the White Paper on Gender Equality 2012 published by Cabinet Office.

http://www.gender.go.jp/english_contents/about_danjo/whitepaper/pdf/ewp2012.pdf)

3. Good Practices

A) Criteria

Generally, economic empowerment is understood as follows:

- ✓ Acquire the skills and resources to engage in income generation activities, such as employment and entrepreneurship;
- ✓ Have the ability to make and act on decisions over resources and profits.

This report, in principle, takes on the above definition as the goals of economic empowerment but it primarily pays attention to the first goal, which relates to skills and resources necessary for economic empowerment given the special circumstances and conditions of the disaster-affected areas in Japan and the Asia-Pacific region that are mostly rural:

- ✓ Deeply penetrated patriarchal values and gender-based division of labor where women are not seen as independent economic agents or equal decision makers;
- ✓ Breakdown of communities and families due to natural disaster and absence of usual social and physical infrastructures;
- ✓ Still in the process of recovery and reconstruction and thus longer-term outcome, such as shift in power relations and gender norms, are not yet ready to be measured.

This report therefore intends to examine readiness of women for engaging in economic activities, measured by skills acquired and the extent to which women were able to establish

business or find employment. Criteria for the identification of good practices were set as follows:

What were achieved:

- ① Capacity-building – women acquired skills and resources necessary for engaging in economic activities;
- ② Entrepreneurship/employment -women established business practice or acquired source of income;
- ③ Social and economic impact on local communities – economic and/or social impact made on the local community, which can potentially lead to building a resilient community:
 - ✓ Participation and involvement of local women
 - ✓ Identification of local products and traditional artisan
 - ✓ Rebuilding of local identity

How they were achieved:

- ④ Partnerships –partnerships, regardless of planned or unplanned, that contributed to achieving results;
- ⑤ Innovation – innovative approaches, tools, technologies, networks that worked effectively in producing results.

Numerous projects have been collected and examined against the above criteria.

(For more information, refer to the “Reconstruction from the Viewpoint of Gender Equality” published by Gender Equality Division, Reconstruction Agency.

http://reconstruction.go.jp/topics/main-cat1/sub-cat1-16/jirei_e.pdf)

B) Description

Japan – Iwate Prefecture

Project Number and Title	1. Support to Women’s Entrepreneurship in Disaster Affected Areas (See also a personal story of a beneficiary woman: ‘Herbal Blend of Sea Breeze: New trend in making from a town of fishery’ p.19)
Context	Established in 2005 for empowerment of women and men, Participation Planning IWATE (NPO) is the organization designated by Morioka City Women’s Center for its operation since 2006. It started a women’s entrepreneurship project named Mederujuku funded by Microsoft and the Ministry of Welfare and Labor in 2008~11. When the Great East Japan Earthquake hit the area in 2011, the local economy was devastated. Utilizing its experience in Morioka, it started an additional Mederujuku in the hardest-hit coastal region of Iwate prefecture in 2012 with the support of Oxfam Japan, an international NGO.
Description	<p>Aim of the Project is to prepare women to become entrepreneur or employee to achieve their economic independence.</p> <p>Workshop-programs: (*each for 6 months; *participants may take either a. or b. or both)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Introductory Course on Entrepreneurship, June 2011~ * b. Introductory Course on IT, August 2011~ * c. Introductory PC mini-Seminar, 2012 d. Follow-up Course on demand for further consultation e. Boosting Forum: presentations of concrete plans for starting business by participants at the end of the Mederujuku. <p>The instructor for the above a., d., and e. was a well-experienced male business consultant in the disaster-hit region. After he started interaction with women participants, he quickly recognized the need for gender-based approach to make his instruction more effective, and developed his own methodology. It included encouragement to develop self-confidence; stock-taking of one’s skills, experience, and networks, which these women accumulated in life and work but</p>

	<p>unrecognized as resources; training to strengthen logical thinking skills and drafting/verbalizing/elaborating business ideas and plans, taking into account women's responsibility for care work and allowing extra time to make decisions on entrepreneur career.</p> <p>The instructor for program b. was a female computer specialist from a private company, while program c. was managed and taught by the project staff. The content of lessons was not only the ordinary ABC of PC skills but also contained basic skills for information collection and production of tools required for job application and office work to prepare for employment.</p>
Capacity-building	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Participants were made aware of their personal needs, existing resources (such as skills, experience, personal network, and public support programs), motives for starting business; 2) Participants developed self-esteem and confidence through meeting other women of various backgrounds who were motivated toward the same goal; 3) Participants gained knowledge and skills necessary for finding access to and utilizing resources, particularly institutional mechanism; 4) Participant who made a giant stride to start working became a decision-maker on managing one's life course; 5) The follow-up course was a powerful support for those who were ready to make their dreams come true.
Entrepreneurship/ Employment	<p>Some of the participants who aimed at entrepreneurship reached the point of starting a small business and some others cleared legal process for production of commodity to be followed by marketing. Those who were considering employment became more conscious of the need to attain the stronger will and advanced skills in order to find a job or even shifting toward entrepreneurship.</p>
Impact on local communities	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Those who started a small business became tax payers, employers of local residents, and off the welfare-recipient track; 2) The new women entrepreneurs often created community and

	<p>social spaces for neighborhood residents, particularly the elderly, and friends where they could share a sense of belonging and forward-looking outlook on life, such as in the case of a snack-restaurant and tea-house/café.</p>
Partnerships	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Participation Planning Iwate received financial support from a private company at the first stage of Mederujuku project; 2) It was supported by a central government aid program for the second stage of project; 3) An international NGO supported PPI financially and program development and management for the development of an effective women's entrepreneurship support project. 4) Outside instructors were united with in-house staff in supporting the participants.
Innovation	<p>Unlike the entrepreneurship projects for women implemented by government and domestic NPOs, holistic approach was taken to support women for achieving economic independence, such as,</p> <p>①providing workshops on entrepreneurship and technical skills necessary for sustainable paid work simultaneously with follow-up services; ②outside instructors as well as in-house staff were gender-sensitive and stayed side by side with participants on a catered-manner to meet their individual needs.</p>

Picture



Japan – Iwate Prefecture

Project Number and Title	2. Magokoro Bento
Context	The Great East Japan Earthquake hit the coastal town of Otsuchi hard and most of the inhabited areas were wiped out by the tsunami. Almost half of its 15,000 population lost their houses and were accommodated at evacuation shelters until public temporary housing was ready in August 2011. Women worked voluntarily to cook and serve hot meals at shelters. With the support from the Tono Magokoro Net (NPO based in Tohno, Iwate), Magokoro Bento Uzusawa, a micro enterprise, formally in the form of a general incorporated association, serving box lunch and catering, was founded by a group of such women who wished to continue serving local people going through hard transition and keep a sense of community bonding around home-style cooking.
Description	A micro food enterprise delivering box lunch, providing catering service, and running a community café for take-out and eat in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Run by women who were trained in business skills; ✓ Hires local women and old people that were affected by tsunami; ✓ Runs a community café for people to get together and chat over meals; ✓ Provides grocery delivery services for the elderly living at temporary housing; ✓ Delivers nutritious Bento (box meal) to the elderly at temporary housing and checks on their wellbeing on a daily basis.
Capacity-building	✓ Local women learned basic business skills such as cost rate calculation, instructed by women are experienced in running food business
Entrepreneurship/ Employment	✓ Business is on track and it employs 11 staff members on a continuous basis
Impact on local communities	✓ Local women are now earning income by doing what they used to do for free – cooking.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Local people, from children to the elderly, are provided with a space for community bonding; ✓ Contributing to the well-being of the elderly at temporary housing by providing nutritious meals and conducting face-to-face communication; ✓ Contributing to revitalizing local agriculture by purchasing from local producers and farmers ✓ Serving food to engineers and construction workers who are in the community temporarily for post- disaster reconstruction works.
Partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Local women received full support from Tono Magokoro Net, a non-profit organization established in July 2011 in Tono, Iwate to assist in recovery and reconstruction from the Great East Japan Earthquake, coordinating donations, technical assistance, and volunteers from private corporations and non-profit organizations all over Japan. Tono Magokoro Net helped setting up business, building and running the venue (i.e. community space), and provided entrepreneurial support. ✓ Local and out-of-town private enterprises and non-profit organizations provided diverse support. Yano Foods provided ingredient and a venue. Otafuku Sauce provided ingredient and technical assistance. Sojitz Corporation provided vehicles. Kanagawa Disaster Volunteer Network and Campaign for Palestinian Children provided equipment. Volunteers were dispatched by Tohoku Care, The Cube Style, and Tono Magokoro Net.
Innovation	Women's unpaid work has been transformed into a business
URL	Magokoro Bento: http://magokorohiroba-usuzawa.jimdo.com/

Picture



Japan – Iwate Prefecture

Project Number and Title	3. Support to single mothers to get ready for employment
Context	<p>Single mothers were one of the most vulnerable groups affected by the Great East Japan Earthquake. Those who lost husbands became single mothers. Those who had already been heading their households single-handedly lost their houses, cars, and/or jobs. They experienced social stigma for being a single mother and were faced with multi-faceted constraints. Comprehensive support was needed to rebuild family and livelihood.</p> <p>Inclu (meaning 'inclusive') Iwate was founded with funding and capacity-building support from Oxfam Japan as the first, non-governmental support organization for single-headed households in Iwate, involving a group of local experts and practitioners in social welfare, law, education, and childcare, who have long experience in assisting people in need.</p>
Description	<p>Inclu Iwate was established with the assistance of Oxfam Japan in the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Initial funding to cover operational and project costs; ✓ Training in planning, strategizing, developing projects, and reporting; ✓ Third-party evaluation on the pilot initiative for assisting single mothers to become ready for employment; ✓ Provision of policy advocacy opportunities in Tokyo to highlight the findings and outcomes of the projects for supporting single mothers. <p>Inclu Iwate carried out a pilot initiative to help single mothers become ready for job hunting by running 'Inc-Room' for 6 months where trainees received hands-on, tailor-made training on IT skills and job hunting/interview skills. In addition, all trainees were assigned a 'personal supporter', who helped re-establish their life (e.g. housing, financing, etc.).</p>

Capacity-building	<p>The program provided holistic support in skills training, child care, and rebuilding of households affected by disaster:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Successfully built capacities in basic IT skills and helped develop career prospects ✓ Acquired family budget management skills for better planning ✓ Helped single mothers regain self-esteem and build confidence in managing work and life in their own way. ✓ Networking skills to connect with fellow women who have similar experiences and challenges, building solidarity to help each other <p>Trainees gained 'work experience' by assisting with Inclu Iwate's administrative work, using newly acquired IT skills</p>
Entrepreneurship/ Employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Those who were in despair at the beginning of the program became mentally and technically ready for employment
Impact on local communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ First-ever practical employment program was provided to single-mothers in the area
Partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Oxfam Japan provided hands-on training for founding staff members on institution-building, planning, accountability, and management
Innovation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Holistic, comprehensive approach, as opposed to pin-point ad-hoc programs focusing on IT and job interview skills, to support work and life including child care to help single mothers become ready for part-time or full-time work; ✓ Holistic approach of the Inclu Iwate's employment support to single mothers was compiled as Inclu Model. It has received extensive coverage on NHK (Japanese national broadcasting) and Iwate Nippo (local newspaper) as a good practice that should be replicated across Japan. ✓ Incle Model has also been presented to policy makers and government officials as a concrete example of meeting the real needs of single mothers to advance economic empowerment, which is one of the priority policy issues.
URL	Inclu Iwate: http://includate.blog.fc2.com/




Picture



Japan – Miyagi Prefecture

Project Number and Title	4. Yappesu Entrepreneurship Support Fund
Context	<p>Due to the Great East Japan Earthquake, many people in the city of Ishinomaki, particularly those in productive-age cohorts, became unemployed, resulting in the desertion of the city. To counter this, NPO Ishinomaki Revival Support Network, which was transformed from a long-established group of local mothers after the 2011 earthquake. The Network received financial support from the Community Employment Creation Business Fund of the Cabinet Office and initiated a program called Yappesu Entrepreneurship Support Fund to backup women and the young by preparing them to start businesses by providing financial support and technical assistance. The program was carried out by a consortium of the Ishinomaki Revival Support Network and NPO Edge.</p>
Description	<p>The Ishinomaki Revival Support Network and EDGE provided comprehensive Entrepreneurship Support Process:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Preparation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Recruiting entrepreneur candidates; - Reviewing their business scheme/plan; - Exchange of contract with the selected; - Start mentoring support through seminars on marketing, accounting, etc.; - Provision of fund and start their business 2) Follow-up <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ishinomaki Revival Entrepreneurship Seminar - Follow-up support on fund-raising, financial management, revising business scheme, etc.
Capacity-building	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Participants regained hope for livelihood, a practical source of living particularly within their home town; 2) Some participants learned to develop new marketable items and have expanded their markets such as through usage of the

	<p>Internet as well as increasing the number of retail shops.</p> <p>3) A sense of pride by participants based on their contribution to the recovering fishery of long-standing in the area.</p>
Entrepreneurship/ Employment	<p>20 participants (11 female, 9 male) all started businesses as they originally planned. The businesses are diverse, including study classes for those living in the temporary housing, day-service business, transportation service for the aged, restaurants in the coastal region hardest-hit by Tsunami, and community-café.</p>
Impact on local communities	<p>Having little job opportunities in their Tsunami-devastated hometown, the project by two NPOs jointly gave a future oriented outlook on the residents to stay. Though most of the new businesses are small in scale, they have given means of livelihood to the local residents as employers and employees, thus, contributing to decrease local population drain.</p>
Partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Ishinomaki Revival Support Network utilized the national government subsidy, i.e., Community Employment Creation Business Fund of the Cabinet Office. It is one of the government's reconstruction programs and aims to assist in establishing 'social business' entities and developing human resources for 'social business.' Twelve entities were selected by the selection committee organized by the Cabinet Office and received funding for implementing projects in the promotion of community-based entrepreneurship and development of human resources in social business. ✓ The combination of 2 NPOs, Ishinomaki Revival Support Network, which has strong local ties, and Edge, which has skill-expertise for supporting young entrepreneurs, was effective in renewing community development.

<p>Innovation</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) The organizer connected the participants of the project with the people in Kobe, who experienced the Awaji-Hanshin Earthquake 15 years ago, to learn from their experience in recovering from the Great East Japan Earthquake. 2) Encouraged participants to maintain their motivation by providing frequent mentoring and presentation meetings. 3) The comprehensive approach was well managed. The combination of providing funds, skills, and follow-ups was essential for successful outputs. Ordinary public projects tend to be focused on one-shot support of one kind, which in many cases are not effective for sustainable entrepreneurship
<p>URL</p>	<p>http://yappesu.jp/english/</p>
<p>Picture</p>	<div style="text-align: center;">  </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; margin-top: 20px;">   </div>

Japan – Fukushima Prefecture

Project Number and Title	5. Developing a New Agro-business toward Revitalizing Community
Context	<p>In 1990 a number of women interested in environmental issues set up a small group, The People, in Iwaki city, Fukushima Prefecture to recycle used cloths. Having acquired the NPO status in 2004, they expanded their people-centered activities to cope with other community problems in collaboration with public and private sectors. After the Great East Japan Earthquake, they delivered goods and services as emergency assistances while setting up a volunteer center to connect outside volunteer workers to the local needs. Three months later, they shifted their policy to support women at shelters to prepare for a self-sufficient life by organizing those women to start a lunch-box business. Faced with rice fields damaged by sea salt due to the Tsunami, and the rumor on the contamination of agricultural products due to the nuclear plant damage, abandonment of farmland already in process was accelerated in the region. Using a piece of abandoned farmland, The People started the Fukushima Organic Cotton Project, a textile industry using local raw materials and manufactured by local residents, to establish a new type of agri-business.</p>
Description	<p>The aim of the Project is to establish a business model with locally grown cotton to produce cotton dolls by local hands as a marketable product, thus creating a new local, sustainable industry for residents-initiative community revitalization.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Acquisition of abandoned farmland; 2) Production of cotton; 3) Employing local women to produce cotton dolls; 4) Employing local management staff mostly in 20s~30s; 5) Involving local young people for advocacy and sharing a sense of ownership in promoting community reform, e.g., a study tour program for middle- and high-school students to visit Minamata

	<p>city, a well-known city affected by industrial chemical pollution and experienced a crisis of community disorganization decades ago.</p>
Capacity-building	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Some disaster-affected women were able to use their talent and gained experience by being paid for what was usually unpaid work, such as making cotton dolls; 2) The organizer of the Project gained more management skills through associating with women leadership programs; 3) Farmers who lost their hope in farming and abandoned their farmland found a new way of utilizing their land and skill for a purpose different from traditional farming.
Entrepreneurship/ Employment	<p>The organizer, The People, stepped forward from their past community activities to a new field of agri-business. The products they handle seem modest, but their vision is far-sighted.</p>
Impact on local communities	<p>The purpose of the project is focused on community revitalization. The project involved farmland owners and local women as producers and management staffs. The use of abandoned farmland became useful for non-food products and provided more employment opportunities for residents.</p> <p>On the other hand, the plan itself is not strongly sensitive to women's economic empowerment and the role of women as an active agent of community revitalization.</p>
Partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Strategic partnership with Avanti, a leading company in the organic cotton business, to receive hands-on technical assistance and Shinshu University that provided Japanese native cotton seeds. ✓ The project was supported by national and local government programs, and a variety of international and domestic NGOs such as the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - NPO Entrepreneurial Training for Innovative Communities - NPO Japan Platform - Emergency employment measures program of Fukushima

	<p>Prefecture</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Central Community Chest of Japan - Environmental Restoration and Conservation Agency of Japan - Association for Rengein Tanjoji International Cooperation - International Medical Corps
Innovation	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) The project is based on a grand vision of community revitalization and development, by setting up a non-traditional type of industry. 2) The organizer paid attention to the utility of sea-salt affected abandoned farmland, and chose to grow cotton, a non-food product, to make value-added cotton dolls. 3) The product chosen was reasonably priced and not directly disaster-related, so that it is likely to be a sustainable market commodity. 4) The organizer group has developed over the years to become non-gender and non-age-specific in nature, with diverse networks and a flexible mind
URL	http://www.iwaki-j.com/people/

Picture



Japan – Fukushima Prefecture

Project Number and Title	6. Girls Life Labo
Context	<p>Severe accidents at the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Plant impacted lives of young women and adolescent girls in many ways. Their needs and concerns, particularly those related to potential risk to their reproductive health and adverse impact on their life choices in the future, however, were not properly heard or addressed. Young women, unless she is a mother who has access to public support, are considered a forgotten group throughout the emergency, recovery, and reconstruction processes.</p> <p>A 23-year-old woman, who was born and brought up in Fukushima, returned from Tokyo where she had studied and worked, in hopes of helping to rebuild her hometown. She established a non-profit group called Peach Heart to mobilize young women and create a safe space for them to share feelings, identify common issues, and advocate for change. Girls Life Labo was established as a business entity to communicate with the public and the media on what is happening in Fukushima, aiming also at complementing non-profit activities of the Peach Heart by generating income.</p>
Description	<p>Girls Life Labo is a tangible example of outcome of the Community Employment Creation Business Fund of the Cabinet Office, which was granted to 12 entities for promoting community-based entrepreneurship and developing human resources in the social business sector in the disaster affected areas. A founder of the Girls Life Labo received support from the HIT, a general incorporated association and one of the 12 implementation entities of the Community Employment Creation Business Fund and established a joint-stock company in December 2012:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Staffed with 21 women in Fukushima, who are ‘older than 18 years old and not yet moms,’ a wide range of women from students to office workers;

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Disseminates information through strategic media work to communicate with people outside Fukushima on what is happening in Fukushima through the eyes of young women living there; ✓ Mobilizes young women and girls by organizing events at cafés and live music clubs to disseminate essential knowledge and information such as about radiation and reproductive health, and to provide a space for them to share experience and concerns; ✓ Promote product development and marketing – transforming local, traditional handicraft and specialty into stylish products to attract young women across Japan (e.g. pierced earrings of Aizu-momen, traditional dyed cotton fabric in the Aizu Wakamatsu area, etc.); ✓ Mobilized more than 1.2 million yen by presenting a business plan on the ‘READY FOR?’ a crowd funding site on the internet (https://readyfor.jp/projects/f-piece) to cover the cost for designing, producing, and marketing pierced earrings using traditional Aizu dyed cotton fabric; <p>Broadcasting a weekly radio program entitled ‘LaboLabo Radio’ (http://www.girls-life-labo.com/radio.html) on FM station radio station in Koriyama, Fukushima, to disseminate up-to-date information for young women who live in Fukushima, such as about radiation, current status of the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station, and discuss social issues that affect lives of young women such as politics, elections, laws, and reconstruction efforts.</p>
Capacity-building	<p>Founders acquired with the support from the HIT:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ entrepreneurial skills to develop and present business plans and to raise funds; ✓ organizational skills to connect with and mobilize young women and girls in Fukushima, who share similar concerns and needs.
Entrepreneurship/ Employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Established a business entity to secure income for those who engage in social activities on a full-time basis;

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Started business practice, producing, marketing, and selling value-added traditional handicraft and local specialty.
Impact on local communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Local young women have become change agents to be involved in community development and reconstruction of Fukushima; ✓ Local handicraft and specialty have been rediscovered and branded in today's taste in collaboration with young female artisans in Fukushima, promoting marketing vis-à-vis young women across Japan.
Partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Partnership with local FM radio station contributed to raising the profile of the Girls Life Labo and promoting its products and events; ✓ Local craft companies for developing and producing high-quality products; ✓ Collaboration with women's groups such as Women's Network for East Japan Disaster and We/Femix helped to gain an understanding of gender and women's issues.
Innovation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Effective use of Social Networking Services, such as crowd funding service, Facebook, and Twitter, and a community-based radio program for advocacy (e.g. networking, information sharing and communication) and for business (marketing, publicity, and sales of their products and services) ✓ Branding ✓ Combination of non-profit entity and profit entity to ensure sustainability.
URL	http://www.girls-life-labo.com/index.html

Picture



US-Japan Partnership in Tohoku Region

Project Number and Title	7. The TOMODACHI Initiative: TOMODACHI Summer Softbank Leadership Program
Context	<p>The TOMODACHI Initiative is a public-private partnership, born out of support for Japan’s recovery from the Great East Japan Earthquake, that invests in the next generation of Japanese and American leaders through educational and cultural exchanges as well as leadership programs.</p> <p>In the aftermath of the Great East Japan Earthquake of March 11, 2011, the United States military and Japan Self-Defense Forces worked together successfully in Operation Tomodachi to provide immediate humanitarian relief to the Tohoku region. Building upon this cooperation and spirit of friendship, the United States and Japan launched the TOMODACHI Initiative. TOMODACHI is a public-private partnership led by the <u>United States Embassy in Tokyo</u> and the <u>U.S.-Japan Council</u>, a tax-exempt non-profit organization, and is supported by the <u>Government of Japan</u>, corporations, organizations and individuals from the United States and Japan.</p> <p>In 2014, the TOMODACHI Initiative supported 50 programs, providing opportunities to over 1300 young participants. Our vision is to foster a “TOMODACHI generation” of young American and Japanese leaders who are committed to and engaged in strengthening U.S.-Japan relations, appreciate each other’s countries and cultures, and possess the global skills and mindsets needed to contribute to and thrive in a more cooperative, prosperous, and secure world.</p> <p>Since inception in 2011, our focus has been on the tsunami-impacted Tohoku region, and while we have since expanded to include young people from elsewhere in Japan and the United States, Tohoku is still core to our activities. To date, 74% of our Japanese participants have been from Tohoku. Our participants are also predominantly female; to date, approximately 65% percent of our participants have been young women and girls.</p>

Description	<p>The TOMODACHI Summer SoftBank Leadership Program, one of the Strategic Partner programs of the TOMODACHI Initiative, provides Japanese high school students from the areas affected by the Great East Japan Earthquake and tsunami with an opportunity to participate in an intensive three week leadership program that focuses on global leadership development and community service at the University of California, Berkeley.</p> <p>Since 2012, approximately 500 high school students from the Great East Japan Earthquake-affected prefectures of Iwate, Miyagi, and Fukushima have visited and studied at the University of California, Berkeley from July to August as part of this TOMODACHI program. This experiential, intensive three week course exposes young scholars to global leadership development and community service. Roughly 70% of participants are female. The participants explore challenges and solutions to strengthen their communities, while gaining insight and ideas from American educators and experts. They engage with American society and culture through homestays, volunteer activities, and exchanges with U.S. high school students. In addition, this program sends a number of professionals (called “Adult Allies”) from the three prefectures to enable local support for the participants’ activities upon their return.</p> <p>The TOMODACHI Summer SoftBank Leadership program is an excellent example of how young people, and young women in particular, from post-disaster communities, can be empowered through international experiences and leadership training. The TOMOTRA example (detailed below), a travel agency created by high school alumni to bring tourists back to Fukushima, is a convincing example of what can happen when young people, and young women in particular, are given the tools and support to invest in their community.</p>
Capacity-building	<p>The program, based on a framework developed by the Center for Cities and Schools at the University of California, Berkeley:</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - builds young people’s capacity to identify areas where they can contribute actively to making a difference - develops teams of students who bring together different community members to improve the disaster-affected communities through innovative solutions. - teaches students a series of analytical decision-making methods such as SWOT and cost & benefit analysis - develops students’ skills in communication, collaboration, and critical thinking through teamwork and problem-solving workshops - develops sustainable support systems upon return to Japan <p>High school students present their community development projects, and upon returning to Japan, put plans into action.</p>
<p>Entrepreneurship / Employment</p>	<p>One of the many successful outputs initiated as a result of this program, is the alumni-led “TOMOTRA” (TOMODACHI Travel Agency) - a local tour led and organized by high school students with the vision of bringing tourism back to Iwaki, Fukushima. TOMOTRA serves as a success story and learning platform to establish a revenue-generating enterprise and developing the capacity of young people to organize and manage an enterprise with the support of local community members.</p> <p>TOMOTRA was conceived by high school students as their final project of the TOMODACHI Summer SoftBank Program. The young people came up with the idea of organizing the tours, and also sharing local highlights with tourists from Japan and abroad in an effort to counteract the negative media of Fukushima after the nuclear meltdown.</p> <p>Haruna Shiraiwa, one of the participant to the TOMODACHI Summer SoftBank Program, is the one to decide to try to make the own idea a reality, after attending the TOMODACHI program and presenting her entrepreneurial tour idea at the Apple Store in Ginza as part of a</p>

	<p>TOMODACHI alumni program, co-founder. With the help of her TOMODACHI team mates from the summer program and support from the organizers of the TOMODACHI program, she pitched her idea to an audience of 800 professionals from H.I.S. Travel Agency and put her plan to action.</p> <p>Haruna’s philosophy these days is, “try, and see what you can do rather than waiting for others/adults to do it for you.”</p> <p>TOMOTRA is run by high school students from Iwaki, and is led and primarily organized by girls. To date, they have run seven bus tours bringing over 180 tourists from Tokyo to Iwaki, Fukushima, with two more tours planned for March and April. Haruna and her project teammates learned not only about their local history and businesses that sustain the city, they also have learned about teamwork, social media, marketing, videography, recruitment, time management, and professionalism – skills that translate to any job in the future. They have built in a sustainable system of recruitment of high school students, including other TOMODACHI alumni to ensure the project continues to provide an opportunity for young people to learn how to manage and run projects at this level, while introducing people to their hometown. In the process, they have also developed a better understanding of their own community and the attractive qualities of their hometown. Haruna and some of her peers will be graduating from high school in April 2015, so she will be passing the baton to the next generation of high school students to continue the program.</p>
Impact on local communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Using the TOMOTRA example, a travel agency was created by Tohoku high school TOMODACHI program alumni that has contributed to bring tourists back to Fukushima - To date, seven bus tours have run by TOMOTRA bringing over 180 tourists from Tokyo to Iwaki, Fukushima
Partnerships	SoftBank Corporation; HIS Travel; University of California Berkeley, Center for Cities and Schools
Innovation	By helping to develop the capacity of young people to organize and

	<p>manage an enterprise, with the support of local community members, TOMODACHI has been able to foster the establishment of revenue-generating enterprises in post-disaster communities, and invest in the next generation of young leaders in Tohoku..</p>
<p>URL</p>	<p>For more information, please check out these links below:</p> <p>http://usjapantomodachi.org/programs-activities/tomodachi-summer-2012-softbank-leadership-program/</p> <p>http://youth-iwaki.jimdo.com/tomotra/ https://www.facebook.com/tomotravel https://twitter.com/tomotravel</p> <p>Videos below:</p> <p>https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P1AhYB7jJRE https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GV0yE6BI3kc</p> <p>Bio of Haruna Shiraiwa on the TOMODACHI Website: http://usjapantomodachi.org/get-involved/tomodachi-generation-haruna-shiraiwa/</p>

Pictures



Asia-Pacific - China

Project Number and Title	8. Post-earthquake community and livelihood recovery for Qiang ethnic women in Sichuan Province (China)
Context	<p>The 2008 earthquake that struck Sichuan Province, China, killed at least 69,000 people, injured hundreds of thousands, and left 15 million homeless. Women are often the pillars of these earthquake-affected communities, responsible not only for income-generation, but also for the care of the community's children and elderly. The earthquake exacerbated the challenges that these women face, including heightened stress and isolation. To address the distinct needs of these women, the Asia Foundation worked with local partners to meet the immediate needs of rural women, ranging from psychological counseling to housing repair; as well as to provide longer-term assistance to improve women's livelihoods and ensure that their voices are heard throughout the recovery and rebuilding process.</p>
Description	<p>With funding from the Asia Foundation, the project aimed to help homeless and isolated women recover from the Sichuan earthquake in three ethnic-minority communities by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ providing individual counseling; ✓ providing partial support to rebuild houses of the homeless; ✓ increasing the market development capacity of Qiang ethnic embroidery products ✓ developing community recovery and reconstruction plans by involving women; ✓ setting up community-based women's livelihood reconstruction funds. <p>The project benefited over 700 Qiang ethnic women in rebuilding their homes and villages in three villages during the project period, and the women's livelihood reconstruction fund continued to operate beyond the project cycle.</p>
URL	<p>http://asiafoundation.org/in-asia/2009/05/06/from-china-long-term-earthquake-relief-for-sichuan-and-gansu-provinces/</p>

Asia-Pacific - Malaysia



Project Number and Title	9. Building Capacities of Women's Economic Association on Langkawi (Malaysia)
Context	<p>Women's Economic Association on Langkawi is a local organization aimed to help women to run small enterprises in Langkawi, a small outlying island of Malaysia, which was hit hard by the 2004 Indian Ocean Earthquake. The economy of the island has undergone transition from agriculture and fisheries to tourism, which involves local entrepreneurship. Those who were active members of the Association were affected by tsunami with their businesses damaged, livelihood lost, and family income reduced.</p>
Description	<p>In 2005, with support from UNICEF and EMPOWER, the Malaysian organization,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ More than 100 local women, who had owned business such as preparing and selling traditional Malaysian snack of dried anchovies and peanuts, received training in economic and marketing skills; ✓ Training participants from the neighboring communities were able to set up micro-enterprises, contributing to enhancing income of more than 50 households. ✓ Promoted local women's participation and involvement in community development at all levels as equal partners by providing training on gender awareness and leadership skills
URL	http://www2.unicef.org:60090/emerg/index_37876.html

Asia-Pacific - Mexico

Project Number and Title	10. Botanical garden (Traditional medicine with climate change adjustment)
Context	<p>Even though climate disasters are affecting more people around the world, most of them live in developing countries. Last years, both in Mexico and other planet regions, the most intense heat and the lack of rain has affected the productive activities on most marginalized zones that historically have depended on the rain to perform their productive activities.</p> <p>State of Oaxaca, Mexico, has the first national rank in vulnerability to climate change because of its location and the degree of marginalization among its population, 60% of the total population in poverty are women.</p>
Description	<p>Indigenous and rural women in Oaxaca have used their traditional and experiential knowledge to adapt themselves to climate change, mainly in the agricultural, livestock, water and health sectors. They possess a deep knowledge of edible and medicinal plants, biology of many animals and cycles that govern ecosystems and the environment.</p> <p>Another important strength is the organization to carry out productive activities, exchange experiences and networks to commercialize their products. Given the effects and risks of climate change, Oaxaca women organize themselves to look for alternatives and mutually supported to face adverse conditions.</p> <p>Family structures are another fundamental element to develop adapting actions, where all family members are involved.</p> <p>The followings are demonstrative projects that have been developed in Oaxaca to respond to the problems detected.</p> <p>Botanical Garden</p>

	<p>The organization "Indigenous Tianguis EECO", with support of the National Institute of Women (Inmujeres) trained a group of "curanderas" women and their families, in Santo Domingo Tehuantepec, in the design and installation of a botanical garden, with fragrant and medicinal plants, so they can get the raw material they need to elaborate the medicines.</p> <p>They installed a system to capture and storage water with drip irrigation in order to let the plants grow. The medicines are elaborated with these cultivated plants without agrochemical, with first quality products and with the traditional knowledge of their ancient cultures.</p> <p><u>Wild Honey</u></p> <p>In Aguascalientes Mazatan, people had seized honey from wild bees. Because of the shortage of the water and food, bees were stopped making honey in the dry season.</p> <p>But now local women were trained in the proper handling and how to feed the bees during dry season. They learned how harvest the honey and keep swarms, to bottle it and give an appropriate presentation for sale. Now honey is produced under the official rules, sustainable management that prevents the destruction of trees and adapted to climate change.</p> <p><u>Organic Family Orchards</u></p> <p>A group of women in San Mateo del Mar installed home gardens to produce corn and vegetables. But these past few years, planting conditions were affected by global warming.</p> <p>5 family gardens were installed with vegetables and legumes with drip irrigation systems with solar pumps. They were taught how to install and operate the irrigation system. The harvest of orchard is used for family consumption and sale. They contribute to improve family nutrition with diverse and healthy products as well as improving the</p>
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	<p>economy of women.</p> <p><u>Organic Jams</u></p> <p>A group of women from Santa Maria Nativitas Coatlán were cultivated a variety of fruits, but because of the transportation, they cannot sell them by appropriate price.</p> <p>They were trained in the preparation of jams and fruit extracts to preserve production and give added value. They were taught how to use all the different parts of fruits and prepare jams; Bottle it and give an appropriate presentation for sale. Jams are a measure of adaptation to production loss.</p> <p><u>Organic Jamaica</u></p> <p>Villa Hermosa had started to cultivate Jamaica for several years ago. But is being affected by climate change which causes more intense and longer droughts, generating low output and in extreme cases, loss of crops.</p> <p>But after installation of drip irrigation system, even during the dry season they can plant Jamaica. The Irrigation system also prevent rotting crop during the showers season.</p> <p>To achieve the sound management of the irrigation system, two young ikoots of Huazantlán River were trained, looking to the transfer of the technology to the people of their community in their mother tongue. They were taught how to install the irrigation system in the plot and its proper management, and giving service and maintenance.</p>
Capacity-building	<p>Confronting the effects of climate change is a challenge that requires the involvement of all levels of government in coordination with the population to carry out local actions to reduce disaster risks and adapt to new climatic conditions.</p> <p>In that sense, women were trained in the basics of climate change, analyzed major meteorological events that affect them, identifying the</p>

	frequency, regularity and intensity thereof; the way the events affect them in different activities and sectors.
Entrepreneurship/ Employment	Support to local productive activities. The traditional medicine is an ancient knowledge, a legacy from generation to generation that could disappear if it's not promoted or the proper conditions for its maintenance and impulse are not generated.
Impact on local communities	Oaxaca is the third state with more marginalization of the country, and the effects of the climate change concern economic activities which represent the main source of income for these communities.
Partnerships	Federal Government: National Institute of Women (Inmujeres) Civil Society Organizations: Colectivo Tutuma, ECCO A.C.
Innovation	The rainwater capture with drip irrigation is a measure of adjustment to face the extreme climate conditions that guarantees the water supply for the plants growth. The training is facilitated on every stage of the business.
Pictures	 

Asia-Pacific - New Zealand

Project Number and Title	11. Christchurch Women in Construction: "It's a Good Fit"
Context	<p><u>Supply - Underutilised Women in New Zealand</u></p> <p>The labour force participation rate for women has recently hit an all time high at 64.6% in December 2014 and 61% of all qualifications from tertiary institutions are held by women. However our workforce is one where: 1. There is a gender pay gap (9.9%); 2. Occupational segregation in New Zealand is relatively high; 3. Around half of men and women work in occupations where the majority of people are the same gender as them. The occupations that are most in demand for the economy are primarily represented by men: women are underutilised in the New Zealand labour force.</p> <p><u>Demand - Christchurch Post Disaster</u></p> <p>Between September 2010 and December 2012, Christchurch New Zealand was jolted by 4 major earthquakes (magnitude 7.1, 6.2, 6.0 and 6.0). From September 2010 through 2012 over 11,000 aftershocks were experienced by the community. 185 lives were lost in the February 6.2 earthquake and the Central City was significantly damaged to the point it was cordoned off for 2 ½ years while nearly 80% of its buildings were demolished. About 100,000 residential homes were also damaged across the city and surrounding area. The estimated cost to rebuild Christchurch was \$40 billion NZD. This would have a huge impact on New Zealand's economy: it is a small country in size like Japan, but a much smaller population (4 million people).</p> <p>To rebuild the city it was estimated that about 20,000 to 30,000 additional people for the workforce would be required and the biggest skill set needed would be in construction (builders, painters, plumbers, engineers, drainlayers, mobile plant operators, labourers etc). Thinking that was outside "business as usual" was needed in terms of how this labour gap could be filled. In December 2012, Christchurch</p>

	<p>employment was booming, up 5.2% (16,100). All of this increase came from men; women's employment growth had remained flat.</p>
<p><i>Description</i></p>	<p>As a result of the earthquakes, women's labour force participation was disproportionately negatively impacted. "Traditional" employment avenues for women such as retail and administration were affected as their businesses were temporarily or permanently shut down; many women found themselves unemployed or their hours of work reduced. The major employment and economic growth area was in construction as the city readied itself to demolish, repair and rebuild. Early in 2013, the Ministry for Women NZ commissioned a piece of research of 500 unemployed and underemployed women in Christchurch to gauge their views on the opportunities in construction. The research, "Building Back Better", showed that over half of the women surveyed were not opposed to taking up construction jobs but had not considered these jobs as they were viewed as 'jobs for men' and they were not sure how to access them. They felt advertising was directed at men and some women thought they could not meet the physical demands of the jobs. The findings of the research were presented to a forum of construction companies, industry bodies and training organisations. Resulting from this presentation a collaborative working group was formed with the aim of increasing the visibility of women in trades in the Christchurch recovery. Amongst many others, SCIRT (Stronger Christchurch Infrastructure Rebuild Team) was part of this working group.</p> <p>To date the working group has completed the following activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ The Christchurch Women in Construction working forum was established – a collaborative group from different industries and institutions who meet quarterly to work together to raise the visibility of women in construction. (May 2013) ✓ SCIRT established a group for Women in Construction at SCIRT. Women from 'in demand' roles, from different employers, meet monthly to discuss how they can raise the

	<p>visibility of as well as enable women in construction in SCIRT. (August 2013) This group continues to meet monthly.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ The National Association of Women in Construction (NAWIC) sets up a chapter in Christchurch (September 2013) ✓ SCIRT started work to increase it's image library of women working in construction. To start there was only 1 image; now there are many (October 2013). ✓ A photo exhibition of women in construction was held by the National Association of Women in Construction and launched by the Minister for Women (November 2013) ✓ A joint event for local construction employers highlighting other avenues for bridging the labour gap including migrants and women (November 2013) ✓ An employment drive to attract resources for the horizontal rebuild by SCIRT was launched with an intentional inclusion of a woman in its marketing material (November 2013) ✓ SCIRT started to intentionally uses images of women in construction in its operational communication material (work notice flyers, newspaper advertising, traffic updates etc) (November 2013) ✓ Free trades training for Women was made available by Christchurch Polytechnic Institute of Technology (CPIT) and heavily marketed (November 2013) ✓ Inaugural "Top Female Trades Student" awards were held at the Christchurch Tertiary institution (November 2013) ✓ SCIRT measured and reported on the number of women in its workforce in construction roles: the outcome was 10% - this includes engineering professionals. (December 2013). ✓ An inaugural Women in Construction Award event by Hays Recruitment was held which celebrated women in this occupation (March 2014) ✓ School holiday 'taster events' for school girls on what trades
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	<p>jobs involved was held at CPIT. (July 2014)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Two new items (a shirt and high visibility vest) of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for women were produced by NZSafety and SCIRT. Prior to their production, women had to wear men's items. (October 2014) ✓ A handbook for employers that was collaboratively designed and produced by industry and the Ministry for Women: "Attracting Women to Trades" (November 2014) ✓ The handbook and PPE items were launched in central Christchurch by the Minister for Women under the banner of "Women in Construction: It's a Good Fit". (November 2014) ✓ 3 key construction industry leaders in NZ signed up to the UN Women's Empowerment Principles. These are a set of principles for business offering guidance on how to empower women in the workplace, marketplace and community. (November 2014) ✓ Women are profiled in internal communication newsletters and external media publications, one example being "Women in Neon" in the Christchurch Avenues magazine. (February 2015) <p>Throughout all the above activities, the Christchurch Women in Construction forum continued to meet quarterly to share initiatives on how to raise the visibility of women working in construction. By keeping women in construction visible it would challenge the misconception that it was a 'male only' occupation.</p> <p>In February 2015 the forum met to review the impact of what they had achieved. In summary, they found that many small activities by many parties can make a positive impact for change.</p>
<i>Capacity-building</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ The Christchurch Women in Construction forum builds a sense of community and shared purpose across industries and organisations. ✓ The SCIRT Women in Construction (SWIC) group does the

	<p>same across civil construction companies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ The free trades training for women (CPIT) builds practical skills in the areas of painting, building, electrical, plumbing and civil construction ✓ The opportunity made available to women to make a direct impact on rebuilding their city instils pride and increases confidence in the future of the city itself. 															
<p>Entrepreneurship/ Employment</p>	<p>The impact of the activities by the Christchurch Women in Construction forum on training and employment is very positive:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="485 745 1353 1070"> <thead> <tr> <th>MEASURE</th> <th>BEFORE</th> <th>NOW</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Number of women enrolled in Trades Training (CPIT)</td> <td>2011 - 60</td> <td>2014 - 414</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Women employed in construction in Christchurch *</td> <td>2009 - 2,400</td> <td>2014 - 8,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Percentage of Women in Construction in Christchurch*</td> <td>2009 – 9.3</td> <td>2014 - 16</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Number of women in trades roles in SCIRT</td> <td>2013 - 20</td> <td>2014 – 30</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>*Household Labour Force Survey NZ</p> <p>Note that the percentage of women in construction in Christchurch in 2014 exceeded the national average whereas in 2009 it fell behind the average. The percentage of women in the trades workforce in 2013 (joiners/builders, plumbers, electricians) was about 1%. The SCIRT percentage of women in civil trades in December 2014 was 6%.</p>	MEASURE	BEFORE	NOW	Number of women enrolled in Trades Training (CPIT)	2011 - 60	2014 - 414	Women employed in construction in Christchurch *	2009 - 2,400	2014 - 8,000	Percentage of Women in Construction in Christchurch*	2009 – 9.3	2014 - 16	Number of women in trades roles in SCIRT	2013 - 20	2014 – 30
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<p>Impact on local communities</p>	<p>The impact of this work starts in the local community but then has a wider impact on New Zealand. By opening up opportunities to women so that they can participate in the trades workforce, this increases the productivity and competitiveness of the New Zealand economy.</p> <p>Increasing women’s participation in paid employment improves the outcomes for women, their families and their community. When that employment is in a higher paying sector (eg construction) it increases women’s economic independence.</p> <p>By including women in their workforce, businesses have the opportunity to benefit from diversity, increase employee retention and improve their productivity and profit.</p>															

	<p>For the Christchurch community, working on breaking old paradigms (eg “construction is a job for men only”) creates a sense of ‘anything is possible’. This instils a sense of confidence and hope for the future in a city that has been stuck by a disaster.</p> <p>For the women trained and then employed in construction jobs that are rebuilding the city, there is a sense of pride that comes from direct contribution to the cities future. This flows onto the psycho-social impact of involving women in disaster recovery in a practical way.</p>
Partnerships	<p>Collaboration was seen as a strong enabling factor for the successes to date in the February 2015 Impact review by the Christchurch Women in Construction forum.</p> <p>Partners in this work included the New Zealand government (Ministry for Women, Ministry of Business Innovation and Employment, Canterbury Earthquake Recovery Authority), training institutions (Christchurch Polytechnic Institute of Technology, Connexis, Building and Construction Industry Training Organisation), construction industry companies (SCIRT, City Care, Downer, Fulton Hogan, Fletcher, McConnell Dowell, Hawkins, Aurecon) , business and community representative bodies (Christchurch Employers Chamber of Commerce, Ngai Tahu, National Association of Women in Construction) and recruitment companies (Hays Recruitment)</p>
Innovation	<p>Leveraging off the labour shortage situation in Christchurch post the earthquakes to link women into employment that has traditionally been viewed as a ‘men only’ occupation has realised better results than what would occur in a business as usual situation. This required stakeholders and partners to be open to new ways and other perspectives.</p> <p>The positive results have been realised through collaboration between local agencies and central Government, local objectives and ‘big picture’ government objectives (women’s economic empowerment and NZ’s future productivity and prosperity) and put them together.</p> <p>The forums are continually collaborating and sharing new ideas on</p>

how to continue to work on raising the visibility of women in construction. In some cases, this means competing organisations collaborating to make a difference. Norms are being constructively challenged.

Pictures



Asia-Pacific - the Philippines

Project Number and Title	12. Good Practices of Women's Entrepreneurship in Local Communities in the process of disaster reconstruction
Context	✓ <i>Ticog</i> mat weavers and embroiderers of Basey, Samar in the aftermath of Super Typhoon Yolanda
Description	<p><i>Ticog</i> mat weaving and embroidery is a cultural heritage passed down from generation to generation. This industry is dominated by women practically every step of its value chain. The task of producing one embroidered <i>ticog</i> mat may be perceived as back breaking since it can only be done sitting on the floor or ground but its market value is commensurate with the labor put into each mat.</p> <p>In the destruction brought by Typhoon Yolanda, there is no other option for these women and the major consolidators but to rise above the disaster to feed the family of its workers.</p>
Capacity-building	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Organizing the group of 500 women in Basey, Samar and matching them with donors; ✓ Conduct of matching between 22 men and 16 women weavers in Sta, Rita for supply of raw materials with one major consolidator in Basey, Samar; ✓ Conduct of product development to develop new designs and functions of <i>ticog</i> mats as it conform to the market trend; ✓ Extend loan assistance to the 3 main consolidators in Basey, Samar to a total amount of ₱3M; ✓ Conduct of entrepreneurial, business development and business planning training/workshops for the 655 weavers/embroiderers/sewers under the Small and Medium Enterprise Roving Academy (SMERA) Program; ✓ Sponsorship of the participation of 3 consolidators in an international and domestic fair which allowed increased access and share of both markets.
Entrepreneurship/	The livelihood interventions extended to the <i>ticog</i> industry of Samar

Employment

enhanced the entrepreneurial mindset of its stakeholders while strengthening the key role of the 3 major consolidators who have access to the export and domestic markets.


The program allowed the development of workers of the industry in various stages of the value chain, namely:

Stage	Number of workers		
	Men	Women	Total
Raw material production (Basey, Marabut, Sta. Rita)	34	139	173
Mat weaving, embroidery, sewing		500	500
Consolidation/marketing		3	3
TOTAL	34	642	676

Generation of commitment from stakeholders - through the Small and Medium Enterprise Roving Academy (SMERA) a training facility, stakeholders get to understand the importance of their role in the industry. Their commitment to do their part will sustain the viability of the industry which will redound to increase in income. Before Yolanda, each mat weaver receives P1,000 to 2,000 per month. After the introduction of the program, each mat weaver now earns between P4,000 to 5,000 per month.

1. The increase significant increase in income of the weavers is a result of the following:
 - a. The domestic and export markets showed significant increase in business negotiations as a result of its participation in various marketing events. This also increased acceptability the ticog mat by importers who visit the trade shows.
 - b. The interventions extended by various NGOs after Typhoon Yolanda through provision of raw materials increased production from the weavers as a response to the increasing demand for ticog mats.

	<p>2. SMERA (SME Roving Academy) conduct a combination of several modules to develop an entrepreneurial mindset thereby expanding their knowledge on each participant's role to keep the industry economically dynamic:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Entrepreneurship b. Stress debriefing c. Business Development d. Business Planning e. Developing an Entrepreneurial Mindset f. BEST Game (Business Expense and Savings Training) <p>Access to global market. The 3 manufacturer-consolidators who are keeping the industry alive participate in domestic and international exhibits. Aside from participating in the National Trade Fair, these manufacturer/consolidators also join the Manila FAME through the OTOP Marketplace. In fact, Delza's Native Products, one of the consolidators, is one of 15 exhibitors selected to exhibit in the Philippine Solo Exhibition at the ASEAN Japan Hall this 17-19 February 2015 organized by the ASEAN-Japan Centre in Tokyo, Japan.</p>
Impact on local communities	<p>The recovery and reconstruction of the <i>ticog</i> industry after Typhoon Yolanda revitalized the economic activities in 3 municipalities of Samar, namely: Basey, Marabut and Sta. Rita. The introduction of new designs and increased market access is translated into increased production which in turn translate into increased income for its workers.</p>
Partnerships	<p>The partners towards recovery of the <i>ticog</i> industry are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. ABS-CBN 2. LGUs of Basey, Sta. Rita and Marabut 3. Asia Foundation 4. Philippine-Australia Community Assistance Program (PACAP)

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Small Business Corporation (SBC) 6. Katungod han Samareño Foundation, Inc. (KSFI) 7. Department of Agriculture (DA)
<p>Innovation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New product designs and functions; • Generation of commitment from stakeholders in every stage of the value chain; • Development of the resource base particularly of <i>ticog</i>
<p>Pictures</p>	 <p>The top photograph shows two women sitting on the floor, working on a large, colorful, patterned mat made of dried plant fibers. The middle photograph shows two women working on a large, colorful, patterned mat made of dried plant fibers. The bottom photograph shows five finished, colorful, patterned cylindrical products, likely made from the same material, displayed in a row.</p>

Asia-Pacific - the Philippines

Project Number and Title	13. Emergency relief to early recovery and rehabilitation for Typhoon Haiyan Cash-for-work program
Context	<p>Typhoon Haiyan (known locally as Yolanda) struck the Philippines on November 8, 2013. Haiyan has been tagged the most powerful storm to make landfall in recorded history with sustained winds of 270 kph, gusts of up to 312 kph, and a storm surge as high as 7 meters (21 feet). The typhoon has devastated areas in 9 regions of the Philippines. Official government reports recoded that at least 6,300 people perished; 14 million people affected; and more than one million houses damaged. Nearly 6 million children have been affected and 4.1 million people were displaced. Damage to infrastructure was huge—hospitals and health centres, water systems, electricity, roads and bridges, markets and schools—affecting the delivery of basic services and many lost a means of earning a living.</p>
Description	<p>Plan International assisted the families to secure essential cash through unconditional cash transfers and cash-for-work programmes. The cash supported families to meet their basic needs and helped rebuild the local economy as well as basic community structures/infrastructures.</p> <p>So far, the program has reached:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ 43,315 woman and adolescent girls joined cash-for-work by participating in efforts to clear debris, clean schools, drainage, repair shelters, water and sanitation facilities, and construction of small community infrastructures. Some work also focused on clearing or replanting of mangrove areas or construction of sea walls to protect the communities from storm surges. ✓ 6,503 woman and adolescent girls joined conditional cash assistance. ✓ 2,995 woman and adolescent girls were provided agricultural inputs to restore their livelihoods.
URL	http://plan-international.org/

Picture



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Asia-Pacific - Thailand

<p>Project Number and Title</p>	<p>14. Women entrepreneurship in local communities in the process of post-disaster reconstruction: Case study on Ban Chong Fern, Tambon (local government unit) Koh Mark, Prayoon District, Pattalong Province.</p>
<p>Context</p>	<p>Ban Chong Fern is a coastal community located at Tambon Koh Mark Pak Prayood District, Pattalung Province. It is a small fishing community comprises of 221 families. Majority of them earn their living from fishing at Sonkla Lake. About 1/3 of villagers have small piece of land about 1-2 hectares growing rubber which serve as supplementary occupation and income. However, some villagers neither have boat or land. Their survival come from selling labour to their neighbors in fishing or farming.</p> <p>In November 2010, a tropical depression and cyclone directly hit Ban Chong Fern and affected 124 families in total (or 434 people). Three (3) houses were totally destroyed and many were partially damaged. It halted the local economy since villagers could not go out fishing as most of their fishing boats were destroyed together with boat engines, fishing gears and fishing cages. Also, large hectares of rubber plantation had been uprooted.</p> <p>Like many places hit by disasters, women are affected by disaster differently than men. This was also true for the women in Ban Chong Fern. As fishing tools, plantations and houses were damaged; women suffered from loss of income and had to work harder such as caring for their children as schools were also closed. This prevented women from mobility. Post-disaster stress symptoms were visible among women.</p> <p>In addition, gender inequality in social, economic and political spheres result in vast differences between men and women in emergency situation. Women tend to be excluded in decision-making processes</p>

	<p>on how to use of relief assets, relief and recovery work and relief goods, employment in disaster planning, relief and recovery programs and other areas of concern in disaster situation.</p>
Description	<p>Women leaders wanting to secure price and increase income from fish products initiated a community fish market in Bang Chon Fern. This initiative has been done by women pre-disaster situation. The case study demonstrated how women-led activity is important for community recovery in post-disaster situation. It is considered a good practice as women made use of a crisis situation and turned it into an opportunity to rebuild and improve the local economy by controlling and improving the price of fish products which is the main livelihood and source of income of the community. The case demonstrated how strong women leaders cope with crisis situation and use it in reuniting community members to work collectively in rebuilding their community, sustain community welfare, stabilize food supply and address long-term livelihood and employment opportunities.</p> <p>The work of women fishers in Ban Chong Fern not only addressed welfare needs after the cyclone but also responded to food and livelihood recovery and laid out foundation for long-term food and livelihood security.</p> <p>The community fish market initiative helped them to remove family income risk from uncontrolled selling price brought by dependency relationship with middlemen. Moreover, since the women groups have taken holistic approach in undertaking activities, it has led to secure not only the present but long-term food and community livelihoods.</p>
Capacity-building	<p>Building on existing strengths and make them even better</p> <p>Before the disaster, the community had already organized themselves to address problems in accessing financial loans from banks for their economic development as small-scale fishing is considered an</p>

informal economy and therefore “risky”. For women fishers who are not registered as head of the family as per census, getting a loan is much harder. Ms Supaporn Pannarai who is the leader of Ban Chong Fern and also president of the Association of Women Fishers in Southern region organized the community members to initiate a community-based savings group. After a number of years of running this savings activity, the fund has become a source for the community where members can borrow money from.

Information gathering

After the disaster, the organisation Rak Thalay Thai (Thai Sea Watch) together with SDF (Sustainable Development Foundation) encouraged women leader Ms Suparorn Pannaray to conduct an inventory of the damage done by the cyclone and the subsequent economic loss.

Like other fishing communities located along coastlines, losing of boats and fishing gears caused the community food and livelihood insecurity. This had caused worry among women and increased their burden as they are expected to provide food for the family. Many of them sell their labor by taking other jobs inside or outside their community.

Organizing women to take entrepreneurial activity to address food and livelihood security

The community fish market was a women-led cooperative initiated before the disaster. This was made possible after series of discussions among community members. Those who were interested pooled their money together to buy “share” to be used as an investment to buy fish products from members or non-members. In organizing and implementing this initiative, it was necessary to have regular meeting to report results, discuss and address issues as they

	<p>emerged as well as to plan for improvement. Human resource development and building capacity of the group to have a good and organized recording of their daily expense and income, as well as good accounting and finance report are essential. Thus, it is necessary to have organizational systems and structures in place. This will not only to create trust among members but will help as well in addressing business challenges.</p> <p>People-centered sustainable development</p> <p>Although, the community fish market activity is an economic activity, the capacity-building organized for the community has focused on holistic approach and people-centered sustainable development. The concept of sustainable fishery and habitat conservation was introduced and developed as a group vision. In organizing women for entrepreneurial activity in Ban Chong Fern, SDF also included discussions on Sonkla Lake conservation and rehabilitation activities, such as making conservation no-take zones and agreed on not using prohibited and inappropriate fishing gears for fishing.</p> <p>The capacity building was not solely focused on economic gains by having more control of price for their fishery products but also on values and attitude on self-reliance, ethics in managing their business, the need for conservation, etc. The activity has been considered as a way for community members to realize that they should take control of their path to development. It focused on changing the attitude of dependency relationship between man and woman, be aware of their rights and to play an active role in socio-economic and environmental development to address present livelihood and income problems, leading to long-term sustainable development.</p> <p>Networking and policy advocacy engagement</p> <p>Effort has been made to establish the women fishers network around</p>
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	<p>Sonkla Lake which later was registered as a member of the Association of Fisherfolks of Songkla Lake and The Association of Federation of Fisherfolks of Thailand. In the process, women played an active part in public education and policy advocacy for the rights of small-scale fishers and women rights.</p> <p>Community-based Disaster Management. Another capacity building, which the women also took a lead on, was on community-based disaster management. At present this community has its own plan on risk reduction and disaster management, which they have developed with the Tambon administrative organization and related government agencies.</p> <p>At present the Community fish Market at Ban Chong Fern became a standard for good practice and a learning place for other small-scale women fishers in Thailand. Moreover, the community is also a good case study to demonstrate joint fishery and coastal resource management involving various stakeholders.</p> <p>As a result, the Ministry of Human Security and Social Development commended Ms. Supaporn Pannarai as one of the outstanding women of Thailand. She also received awards for being an advocate for environment protection.</p>
Entrepreneurship/ Employment	Alternative Fishery Market
Impact on local communities	<p>-Community resilience for climate change adaptation and secure food and livelihoods. This community has now a developed community disaster management plans with trained community volunteers on community disaster management in the context of climate change. The working committee is composed of both men and women, which is different from the past where men dominated most</p>

	<p>community communities.</p> <p>-Recovery and secured community livelihood and employment.</p> <p>The work that the women group initiated after the disaster resulted in securing livelihood for the family members. This made community members able to secure their livelihood and employment as boats and fishing gears were repaired. It should be noted here that security in food and livelihood emerged not only because of the repair of boats and fishing gears but also because the village saw the value of conservation activities along with sustainable use of resources.</p> <p>Gained more bargaining power and secured employment. This project had created employment opportunity for five (5) women who were employed by the cooperative. These women did not have a secured and permanent job before.</p> <p>More importantly, the activity of the women's group where they took over the buying power that used to be under the control of middlemen led to secure present and long-term income and livelihood not only in Ban Chong Fren but in other fishing communities nearby. They also integrated conservation and rehabilitation activities in their working approaches to employment and livelihood security.</p> <p>At present they have 128 members.</p> <p>Each member gained 30 % increase in income. They also receive profit share every year. Moreover, they also have welfare benefits for members such as compensation fund in case of disaster. Some</p>
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	<p>funds are also allocated for conservation and rehabilitation activities.</p> <p>Increased women participation in community activities such as sustainable fishery and conservation and rehabilitation of Songkla Lake. The community agreed to designate conservation zones where any fishing activity is not allowed in order to have spawning areas and save juvenile species. They have agreed not to allow destructive fishing gears and have influenced government agencies and their plan to support coastal resource protection and conservation activities.</p>
Partnerships	<p>-Rak Thalay Thai Association was part of the coordination in close collaboration with SDF on community organizing and capacity building, networking and policy advocacy on the rights of small-scale fishery with gender focus, together with Thailand Association of the Federation of Fisherfolks.</p> <p>-Siam Cement Foundation provided financial support to Ban Chong Fern after the disaster to develop community boat repairing garage and also to repair houses.</p> <p>-Green Net through blue brand program provided technical support on sustainable fishery production standard and for developing direct link between producers and consumers</p> <p>-The Office of Women’s Affairs and Family Development (OWF) under the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security helped in promoting and supporting women fishers in policy advocacy on women rights and community-based disaster management with gender focus as well as on women economic development activities.</p> <p>-Department of Environmental Quality Promotion (DEQP), Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental helped in promoting</p>

	<p>and supporting in strengthening women fishers at Ban Chong Fern which later developed as The Association of Women Fishers of Southern Regions.</p> <p>-Sustainable Development Foundation (SDF) SDF has collectively worked with the Association of Women Fishers and Rak Thalay Thai Associations since 2005. SDF role has been on capacity development and public policy advocacy on the rights of small-scale fishers and women rights.</p>
Innovation	<p>Community fishing market</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The community fishing market has turned dependency relationship of small-scale fishers from solely relying on middlemen to an independent cooperative with bargaining power. It has resulted to increased income for small-scale fishers. -Demonstrated the capacity of women in managing community activity in an effective manner when their roles are appreciated and opportunities are opened for them to access capacity development as well as to financial support. -Strengthen women groups and women leaders capacity. Moreover, women not only developed self-esteem but their role has increased and valued among community members. This has led to a more systematic and meaningful participation in community activities organized by either local administrative organization, government and other non-governmental organizations working in the community. -Increased knowledge and skills in organization development especially on the aspect of collective decision making, community activity planning, accounting and financial management. <p>Holistic approach in food security, employment and livelihood.</p> <p>Secured employment go hand-in-hand with Songkla Lake conservation and rehabilitation activities.</p>

Pictures



4. Personal Stories after the Great East Japan Earthquake

The Great East Japan Earthquake impacted lives of so many women in Japan in different ways. There is no doubt that the disaster was a tragic event that brought unspeakable experience and a huge sense of loss. Many are still struggling to recover from the loss. Some, however, have managed to turn unfortunate experience into something different as they started taking new roles in the household and community after the disaster. Here are stories of two courageous women who were empowered in the recovery process. Ms. Fujiko Furudate and Ms. Megumi Hikichi's cases have been chosen because their experiences:

1. Are an example of 'economic empowerment of women in the post-disaster reconstruction (particularly) through entrepreneurship and innovation', which is outlined as common agenda in the Ministerial Statement of the 2014 APEC Women and the Economy Forum;
2. Demonstrate how economic empowerment not only transform individual lives but also rehabilitate the household and the community by, for example, re-discovering local specialty and creating local employment.

Herbal Blend of Sea Breeze: New Trend in Making from a Town of Fishery Story of Fujiko Furudate

(Beneficiary of the Support to Women's Entrepreneurship in Disaster Affected Areas implemented by Participation Planning Iwate, described in p7)

Miyako is an old city along the coast in Iwate. It is known for the scenic Jodoga-hama beach, which means a beach in Pure Land where Buddha lives. On March 11, 2011, Miyako was hit by the devastating tsunami caused by the Great East Japan Earthquake, resulting in 400 deaths and damaging heavily the town's main source of income - commercial fishing and food processing. Though the impact of the earthquake was severely focused in the houses and harbors of the coastal areas, the inland experienced relatively little effects of the Tsunami.



Fujiko Furudate, 55, lives three kilometers from the beach in an area with a fine airiness of mountain breezes flowing through its peaceful landscape. Her house and the family farm were not affected by the tsunami. Taking advantage of the constant breeze going through her farm, Fujiko grows organic herbs, such as chamomile, mint, and lemon balm. They are handpicked, dried and turned into aromatic herbal tea. Fujiko applied for patent and registered her farm as the Herbal Garden of Sea Breeze. This is exactly what she wanted to do for years.

Fujiko married the oldest son of a farming family 25 years ago. Ever since, she has played perfectly the multiple roles she was expected to play – Yome to the family, meaning daughter-in-law who is expected to devote her life to serve parents-in-law and other family members in the household, wife, and mother of the three children. On a typical day, she would wake up at 4 am to help her mother-in-law harvest corns, boiling them and going



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around town to sell them. She would cook meals for the entire family while working full time in town as a care worker to help make the ends meet when education cost for the children rose as they grew older. Fujiko spent most of her time and energy to serve the family but she never gave up her aspiration to grow and study about herbs. “I learned about herbs at one of the community classes for the young Yomes in

the area. I was attracted by the profound, deep world of herbs and felt passionate about them” she looks back. She managed to get permission from her mother-in-law to get a small space of her own in the family farm and planted herbs. She would harvest herbs and dry them carefully. She did the drying work during midnight after she finishes all the house chores and everyone goes to bed. “Sometimes, I was working on herbs almost half asleep,” she laughs, “but I never wanted to give up”.

Fujiko started serving her herbal tea to the children’s teachers, as she knew it was good for reducing stress. Soon after, reputation spread in town words-of-mouth: the City of Miyako started serving Fujiko’s tea at the Miyako station to welcome incoming tourists; she was asked to sell the tea at the local farmer’s market. Fujiko’s husband, a manager at the fisheries cooperation union, who was first hesitant about boasting his wife’s tea, started

supporting her in his own way, for example by offering his colleagues and friends sampling of the tea.

On 11 March 2011, Fujiko was in Tokyo to attend her son's college graduation, together with her older children. Her husband could not make it because of the important meeting he had in Miyako. Still, Fujiko was excited. Having finished her child-rearing obligations including tuition payments, she felt like a new phase in her life was about to start. That is when the soil of Tokyo was shaken hard. Stranded in Tokyo, Fujiko and her three children were glued to TV, watching over and over the shocking images of the devastating tsunami that overtook the harbors and fishing boats of Miyako. When the phone call finally got through, she learned from her mother-in-law that the house and the farm were not affected thanks to the remote distance from the seashore but her husband had not returned home. At first, Fujiko thought he would be working round the clock to respond to emergency. It took a few weeks for her to discover her husband was killed by the tsunami. It took months to learn why. Apparently, her husband came down to the port immediately after the earthquake to save fry, which is an important source of income for the fishery industry in Miyako.

Now that the head of the household is gone, should they continue to run a family farm, or should they sell the land? In the midst of the post-disaster crisis, real estate agents with plans to construct restoration housings approached her in hopes of buying her land. All of a sudden, she had lots of decisions to make. Months passed and it became clear to her that she wanted



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to keep the farm and start doing what she had long wanted to do – a herbal garden and production of herbal tea. That is when she was suggested by the entrepreneurship support center to participate in the two-day introductory workshop for women who were interested in entrepreneurship to be held in Miyako by the Morioka Women's Center in October 2013. She signed up immediately and attended the workshop. Fujiko presented her business idea and offered sampling of her herbal tea, which received rave reviews by fellow participants and the staff members of the Morioka Women's Center. Mr. Seki, the experienced

entrepreneurship instructor gave her concrete advice on how to mobilize local resources and networks to make her business idea a reality.

Coincidentally, it was at this timing that her mother-in-law decided to retire from farming after she broke her leg and the corns were sabotaged and devoured by badgers. It was as if all of the pieces were, by a twist of fate, falling into the right places. Fujiko started taking actions quickly, following faithfully the advice she had received from Mr. Seki. Not only the professional advice, she received constant moral support from the Morioka Women's Center. In January 2014, Fujiko registered her business and named it the 'Herbal Garden of Sea Breeze'. Fujiko's achievement and her flavorful herbal tea have been getting media attention as a symbol of recovery and new specialty of the Miyako City.



In October 2014, Fujiko was on the panel at the Diet's Members' Building in Tokyo, together with Natsuyo Mizuno, a staff member of the Morioka Women's Centre in charge of the Mederu-juku, and Mr. Seki, the instructor, to talk about her experience as a successful case of women's empowerment in the post-disaster phase. The room was filled with parliamentarians, government officials, business people, and journalists. "In the future, I would like to create a café in my herbal garden so that the people who will have moved into the reconstruction housing can recreate community bonding that they had once lost because of the tsunami, but my immediate goal is to improve the package design and sell them in the market in Tokyo," Fujiko told the audience. Aroma of the blended herbs filled the room, making everyone smile. The next day, Fujiko had business appointments with commercial vendors in Tokyo. It won't take long before Miyako City is associated with the Herbal Tea of Sea Breeze, in addition to Jodoga-hama and fresh fish.

A New Role Model for the Next Generation of Watari Women

Story of Megumi Hikichi

Exceeding the products of numerous well-established local brands, Fuguro, a product by WATALIS, was selected by Mitsukoshi Sendai, the prestigious department store, as one of its prominent gift selections. Despite this notable success, in actuality, WATALIS was established not even two years ago. Though the Fuguro utilizes old kimono fabrics, it is credited for its innovative designs and styles. In other words, they aim to integrate old, antiquated materials into the modern lifestyle by reviving them with a more modern aesthetic sense. Rather than “recycling” materials in the conventional sense, WATALIS embraces “upcycling”, recycling with the supplementation of an added value to the material, as its concept.



Megumi Hikichi was the one to start it all. Her business idea was spoken highly of, and received a number of grants and awards, creating enough momentum to successfully start the business. However, Megumi had no experience in business. Worse, Megumi was a follower of traditional concepts of society that resulted in her lack of confidence in starting the business. She was not the one to walk out of line. Even though she felt that change was needed, Megumi was preoccupied with a notion that “those who go after dreams are people that have extraordinary talent and money to begin with.” This conception of society strongly engrained in her through her upbringing in Watari town was all the more magnified by the simple fact that she never witnessed anybody around her “succeed” either. Even her university education and employment experience simply prepared her to follow her parents’ steps to live a safe, normative life. Having worked briefly at a private company after graduating university, she returned to her hometown to become a local government worker. There, she was positioned to promote gender equality, being exposed to the concept of gender by participating in lecture- and councils- meetings on the matter. While Megumi was on leave of absence for half a year, she attended classes in Tokyo to learn about psychology. Through this, she gained the ability to objectively view the society in which she lived in – a society where it was expected of women to live standard, steady lives, working either as

local government workers or teachers, getting married, and having children. She realized that this was the value shared by only among a group of people including her parents, and that it wasn't the whole picture of life. Megumi started contemplating what she really wanted to do and how to change her life style.

Upon her return to work, she took a new assignment, which turned out to be timely for her to think about how women should live – she became in charge of planning and organizing a kimono exhibition at the community resource center. Megumi interviewed professors specializing in local folklore and a number of senior women in town and farms. Despite her fixed conception that kimonos are used only for



ceremonial occasions, she found out that kimonos were “garments attached to personal memories.” In the past, an every farm household Yome (the wife of household successor) was expected to devote her entire life to serve her in-laws, being detached from her native family. Kimonos were very important objects that kept in shape the memories of each and every Yome's mother, who should have sewed and made the kimonos for her daughter to take with her upon marriage. Not only that, kimonos turned out to be a valuable learning device for these women, since sewing school was a normally acceptable training institution for girls. Sewing schools were by definition “women's schools” that supported the very lives of women, through teaching them sewing, Japanese kimono making, Western dressmaking, some other necessary occupational skills, and even how to live as an independent person. Furthermore, these schools provided jobs for widows as instructors. Megumi discovered that it was not only a school for unpaid handwork, but it was also for women's economic empowerment.

It was then that the earthquake and tsunami happened. Watari was hit hard by tsunami and lost more than 300 lives. As a local government worker, Megumi worked round the clock to manage provision of relief goods at a school gymnasium. In addition, she dedicated herself as a volunteer to coordinate relief efforts such as study support and mental care. Once

things settled down after the earthquake, Megumi picked up where she left off on in the kimono research and came across the existence of Fuguro (meaning a bag in the local dialect), which was very practical, meaningful in its resemblance of feelings of appreciation and ceremonial purposes, and deep in its intricate connections between the different designs and its symbolic meanings. “How could all of this cultural meaning of the Fuguro be communicated beyond ‘exhibition’ and be a part of today’s living, today’s people?” she thought. She started out by selling Fuguro at a Tohoku recovery bazaar market in Aoyama, Tokyo, which turned out to be very successful. This experience has become a turning point for Megumi to explore new opportunities. She left the local government office.

At first, she did not think about starting a business. Megumi was more determined to acknowledge the senior women who could not throw away their kimonos, and consequently build a place to transmit cultural traditions to today’s society by promoting Fuguro. Having known about government subsidies, she applied for a number of grants and managed to receive financial support from a variety of entities, including the Cabinet Office (Community Employment Creation Business Fund of the Cabinet Office through NPO ETIC, one of the implementers of the Fund), Ministry of Economy, Trade, and Industry (under its project to promote creation of social business in the disaster affected areas), Welfare and Medical Agency (grants for social welfare projects), and British Chamber of Commerce (Back to Business Fund for Tohoku) to name a few.

In addition to the handicraft business, she was able to create a space to transmit cultural traditions to today’s society, and even more, build a new community where women can come together and support each other, much like the sewing schools she heard of. Not only did the project work to stimulate the local and broader Japanese society, it even proved attractive to foreign guests in Japan as well.



Consequently, and perhaps more importantly, this project much again like the sewing schools, created an employment opportunity for local women. Take Ms. Musha, for instance. She was a

typical young woman to accept local expectations of women to live standard lives as a mother of two elementary school boys and a normal housewife. Even though she wanted to



work, there were no employment opportunities for women like her in her neighborhood.

Subsequently, much like other women in her area, she didn't have the urge to commute to Sendai, and thus she had no option other than to work at home. One day, she heard about Watalis and decided to participate in the project. Many senior

women occupied the provisional office she visited, with little number of mothers her own age. After participating in the Watalis workshops and briefly working on the sidelines, Ms. Musha now handles office work, managing applications for subsidies and grants, writing reports, and other office tasks. She even received self-help seminars from Megumi to gain the ability to publicly speak. She saves her salary now to partially support her family by alleviating the economic strains of the house loan and tuition fees for her children. By her working, her children and husband are now much more capable of taking care of themselves, and her cohabiting mother-in-law has become more supportive. In short, by creating employment for women like Ms. Musha, Watalis undoubtedly changed the lives of women in the community for the better.

While maintaining a respect for the traditional value sets of women in the locality, Megumi is successful in the practice of introducing modern, newer values of today's women to the local residents who tend to believe in the status quo. Though Megumi never witnessed challengers, she is now the one making challenges. She is now the one inspiring and encouraging women in her community to aspire for what may seem impossible. Throughout the earthquake, Megumi integrated the past into the present.

5. Lessons-Learned from the good practices

Impacts at Different Levels

Findings from the good practices indicate that successful projects make impacts at three different levels:

Individual women:

- ✓ Psychological recovery from traumatic experience
- ✓ Motivation for rebuilding livelihood and starting a new life
- ✓ Attaining skills and resources
- ✓ Creating source of income
- ✓ Entrepreneurship in the areas of care work that women used to do without pay – acquiring a new role
- ✓ Participation in community development

Household:

- ✓ Attaining source of household income
- ✓ Enlarging life choices of family members, including children

Local community/economy:

- ✓ Provision of employment opportunities for local people
- ✓ Establishment of small enterprises that provide services to enhance the well-being of the elderly and other community members
- ✓ Transformation of unpaid care work (care for the elderly, cooking, etc.) into paid work
- ✓ Increased consumption of local goods and services, benefiting local producers and suppliers (e.g. fresh produce, rice, fish, handicraft, etc.)
- ✓ Increased access to the out-of-Tohoku market, selling and promoting local specialty with added value, for example, to target young women who had little access to such products.

Strategic Factors to Success

The good practices have also helped identify common strategies (those intended and those not intended) that have contributed to the success of the projects. These strategic factors should be taken into account when planning and strategizing for the promotion of women's economic empowerment in post-natural disaster situations.

a. Comprehensive Approach ~Gender responsiveness~

- ① Time-wise

There are many projects that just focus on giving one-shot assistance such as entrepreneurial workshops and/or provision of start-up funds for businesses. In many cases, however, such simple assistances can prove to be ineffective, as there are many women who have suffered from traumatic experiences or have not been encouraged to make decisions and take action because of the gender norms. Thus, effective support prior to and after the technical assistance in entrepreneurship development is needed.

Some projects strategically incorporate the need for pre-entrepreneurial support, such as the provision of mental counseling, personal support, and peer-learning to help women recover from a traumatic experience and restore self-esteem to ensure that they are ready to take a step forward.

Some projects also provide follow-up support, both mental and technical, to make the transition smooth and ensure sustainability of their economic activities.

② Attention to Work and Life

Successful projects pay attention to the multiple tasks women carry out inside and outside the house. In many cases, women take responsibilities in providing care for the family members and thus need to balance unpaid care work and paid work. The projects that focus only on technical assistance for entrepreneurship development do not capture the real needs of women in order to start and sustain their own business or employment. It is also crucial to identify and respond to individual needs as each one of them is in a different stage of life and have different capacities.

b. Strategic Partnerships and Local Ownership

① Strategic Partnerships

All projects discussed in this report build on strategic partnerships between local and external entities. Local organizations are experienced and knowledgeable about cultural norms and local contexts whereas external organizations, such as national governments, NGOs, and private corporations, can bring in resources such as expertise, funding, networks, goods and services. Mobilization of local groups and local women's centers allows external entities to reach out to local women to better identify their needs, which is crucial in making the project work. Some projects started by assisting local women and/or local stakeholders organize themselves as a group and built capacities so as to ensure they become change agents and catalysts in the community for promoting women's economic empowerment.

② Local Ownership

It is also important to consciously respect local ownership. Involving local women's groups and women's centers in all stages of the project from planning and implementing, to the follow-up is a good way to cultivate a sense of local ownership, which will be the key for sustainability of the project impact. Many projects deliberately incorporated a capacity-building component for local groups and individuals in hopes of creating a cadre of leaders, experts, field workers with necessary knowledge, skills, and networks to promote women's entrepreneurship, and further, women's participation in decision-making in the community.

Sustainability: A big challenge

Sustainability remains a critical challenge for many women entrepreneurs and their enterprises. Assurances from the government and NGOs, including those discussed in this report, have primarily focused on the initial stage of entrepreneurship, such as provision of capacity-building and start-up funds. Many women may have successfully launched their businesses but keeping it on track and making profit is the hardest part. Many projects provide follow-up services, such as continuous business consultation and organizational capacity building for local women's groups.

Assessing from the interviews with the beneficiaries (i.e. women entrepreneurs) and those who are involved in the projects (e.g. project managers and instructors), the key areas in which women entrepreneurs may need further assistance include:

- ✓ Management skills (including human resource management)
- ✓ Marketing and PR
- ✓ Sophisticated design and packaging
- ✓ Increasing profit
- ✓ Accessing to a larger market

This is where the private sector (i.e. private companies, business consultants etc.) may be able to come in and play a crucial, strategic role by helping women entrepreneurs achieve steady growth.

It is therefore recommended that further discussion and sharing of experience and methodologies take place.

