

## **Urgent Proposals on Framework for Great East Japan Earthquake Recovery**

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Numerous proposals have been made on recovery after the recent great disaster, and some of them take long-term perspective of a new Japan to establish an integrated organization such as a Disaster Recovery Agency or offer ideas about possible sources of funding and financing. The specific proposals developed under such broad concepts however largely remained independent of each other since there is lack of a concrete framework on how to coordinate and crystallize the different perspectives and viewpoints into a consistent proposal.

Keeping this point in view, we submit our urgent proposals with broad framework as noted below.

We plan to subsequently submit more specific elements of our proposal elaborating our ideas on key issues under the discussion.

### **1. Foreword: The government must state the following messages**

1. The government aims to implement recovery policies that will lift the spirits of the people living in grief and despair, as well as those living as refugees, and turn their thoughts toward hope and the future of the region.
2. The government aims to develop the disaster-affected areas as a leading region to realize the future vision of energetic nation despite a decreasing population.
3. The government once again starts discussing planning for wider-regional blocks in preparation for major earthquake disasters in the future.

### **2. Proposal on the framework for recovery: The government must declare the following basic policies**

Objectives of the basic policy declaration

- (1) To indicate policies for fundamental matters that must be dealt with urgently
- (2) To indicate the basic principles which are necessary to build consensus on recovery policies among the people and within the government.

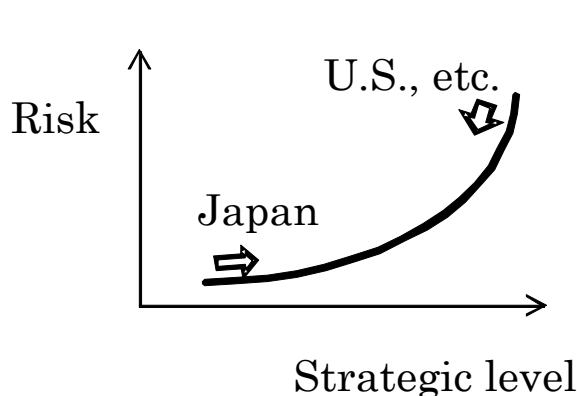
### Basic policy 1: Shift from typical Japanese decision-making style

#### (1) Overcoming weakness at the strategic level

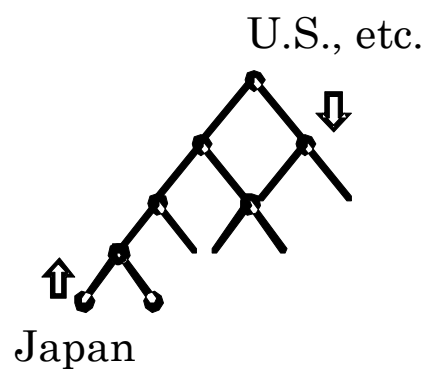
In Japan, most policies are formulated by conceiving ideas from a low-risk and low-strategy position and then gradually extending ideas to high-strategy direction. While formulating policies for developing the regions in need of recovery, the style of conceiving ideas from a high-strategy position and extending ideas to a practical level must be employed.

#### (2) Transformation of policy process of the overall system

In Japan, the common policy process involves just compilation and coordination of fragmented policies formulated by different ministries and agencies. For regions in need of recovery, a broad policy strategy should be set first considering the desirable form of the region from the perspective of the local area over the long-term. Sectoral policies should then be formulated by each ministry or agency following the broad strategy.



Graph 1: Strategic policy development  
Japan: From low-risk present state toward strategic idea  
U.S., etc.: From strategic ideas toward practical level



Graph 2: Flow of governmental decision-making  
Japan: From the bottom up  
U.S., etc.: From the top down

### Basic policy 2: Decision-making based on the comprehension of wide-range of accurate information

The comprehension of information had previously aligned with decision-making as shown in Figure 1 and 2. This time, however, top-down decision-making adopted at the initiative of the ruling political partly caused confusion in grasping the information. Also there is a gap between regional preferences and decision-making by the government mainly due to the technical problems in the transmission of information caused by the enormous disaster.

While devising and implementing recovery policy, the following improvements must be made.

(1) Through government structures, gather information on a wide range of fields (including the opinions of the private sector) and utilize the information.

(2) Further utilize the bureaucratic system to explore ideas for alternative policies and conduct analysis to examine their impacts

(3) Reconfirm general rules for decision-making and time management for politicians in the government ministries and agencies

- Prevent mistakes in decision-making, lack of information comprehension and delays in decision-making, etc.

- Ensure coordination ability inside and outside the ministries and agencies

- Revitalize and utilize human resources available in the government organizations

(4) Dispatch personnel to assist governors and city, town and village mayors, and utilize them to grasp the local preferences.

Utilize the network of field staff already dispatched by the Tohoku Regional Bureau of the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism., etc.

### **Basic policy 3: Framework for division of roles and coordination among central government, local governments, private sector and residents**

(1) Lay out tasks and actions expected for each organization for one month, three months and six months periods (including a framework for accepting other tasks to be possibly proposed later)

(2) Clearly exhibit the coordination structure in the government

- The ministries and agencies submit various policies to their ministers in consideration of (1) above after categorizing them as

- a. those that should be decided by the prime minister's office

- b. those that should be coordinated with other ministries and agencies

- c. those that should be individually executed by each ministry and agency.

- Each minister weighs the pros and cons of the policies and categories above and immediately makes decisions on a. and b. at Cabinet meetings.

- As for proposals by various special committees and councils, the Disaster Recovery Agency examines on each proposal, and the prime minister's office and Cabinet meetings make decisions based on the Agency's findings.

(3) Constitute the Disaster Recovery Agency

- Empower it with authority so it can efficiently coordinate diverse requests by political

parties, ministries and agencies.

**Basic policy 4: State -sector specific basic policy urgently**

(1) Basic policy on the recovery of residents' living environment

- To realize a safe and desirable living environment, lay out incentive measures for reorganization particularly focusing on the restructuring of settlements and land use and promote coordination with local governments and residents in consideration of location and other requirements.
- Clearly indicate goals on a time-line basis as below so residents have prospects of reconstructing their lives.

Provide temporary and public housing to maintain privacy in life--by a given month

Determine land use and start constructing private housing--by a given month

Complete public housing and housing units for sale--by a given year/month

(2) Basic policy on disaster prevention system

- As for small settlements, urgently discuss reorganization depending on conditions of location, such as securing residence at a high altitude and integration of multiple settlements, with municipalities and residents.
- If the reconstruction of cities providing wide-area livelihood services including medical, welfare, educational and commercial services must be done at a low altitude location, make provisions for a disaster prevention system combining hard and soft measures and desirable reorganization of land use.

(3) Basic policy on revitalization of agricultural and fishery industries

- If it is difficult for private management to reconstruct farmland, farm equipment, fishing vessels and culture facilities, encourage organizational management such as incorporation and arrange incentive measures for the previous private managers.
- To realize early recovery and maintain future competitiveness, implement intensive measures for the rehabilitation of farmland and fishery ports in the order of priority.

(4) Basic policy on fiscal and monetary policies

- Revise the Private Finance Initiative (PFI) bill to use private capital as a source of financing for the recovery.
- Urgently call for proposals on reconstruction contracts from industries through Nippon Keidanren and other organizations using the PFI schemes.
- Indicate the difference between the financial strength of the local bodies affected by

this disaster and that of Hyogo Prefecture and Kobe city before the Great Hanshin Awaji Earthquake, and lay out necessary fiscal and monetary policies targeting the large scale disaster damage.

**Basic policy 5: Emergency personnel support as currently required by local bodies**

(1) Personnel support for local governments over the short term

In small municipalities in particular, the number of employees and experts in each field is limited, and therefore, they are being pressed by the huge number of tasks. Although staff support has been provided by the government, municipalities outside the disaster-affected areas and the private sector, further staff support should be arranged based on requests by prefectures, cities, towns and villages.

(2) Dispatch of experts on regional development and urban planning, and public involvement (PI) The reorganization of settlements and land use must be thoroughly discussed with both experts and residents. Compared with the time of the Great Hanshin Awaji Earthquake, more knowledge and methods of PI have been accumulated. A meeting of experts in governmental institutions and municipalities outside the disaster-affected areas must be called and PI training (for about three days) must be conducted early.

(3) Cadastral survey

Holders of land rights cannot be identified in regions where a cadastral survey has not been conducted, which complicates the task of land use reorganization and the reconstruction of public facilities. Therefore, a cadastral survey must be promptly commissioned in such regions.

(4) Measures against wreckage and subsidence

It is necessary to quickly implement measures to deal with the vast amounts of wreckage and land subsidence in urban areas, but the involvement of experts on environment, geotechnical engineering and port engineering, etc., must be ensured as such measures are closely related to the development of land for settlements at a high altitude and the construction of ports.

**3. Conclusion**

After we observed the diverse and serious state of the disaster damage over a wide area, we realized that various proposals currently discussed for recovery miss one or other important matters. In our proposal, we have worked out a comprehensive framework

and have identified core elements of strategic policies for recovery and other important issues to be addressed for implementing these policies

Among others, the government should urgently declare the necessary policy framework and intended messages to the people as noted above.

Naturally, there are many other issues for which basic policies for each sector should be promptly decided and each policy should be enforced immediately. As a follow-up to this proposal, we are planning to work on sector-specific policy proposal in near future.

We believe that these activities are the part of the social responsibility of the faculty at GRIPS.

(Drafted by: Shigeru Morichi, Director of Policy Research Center)