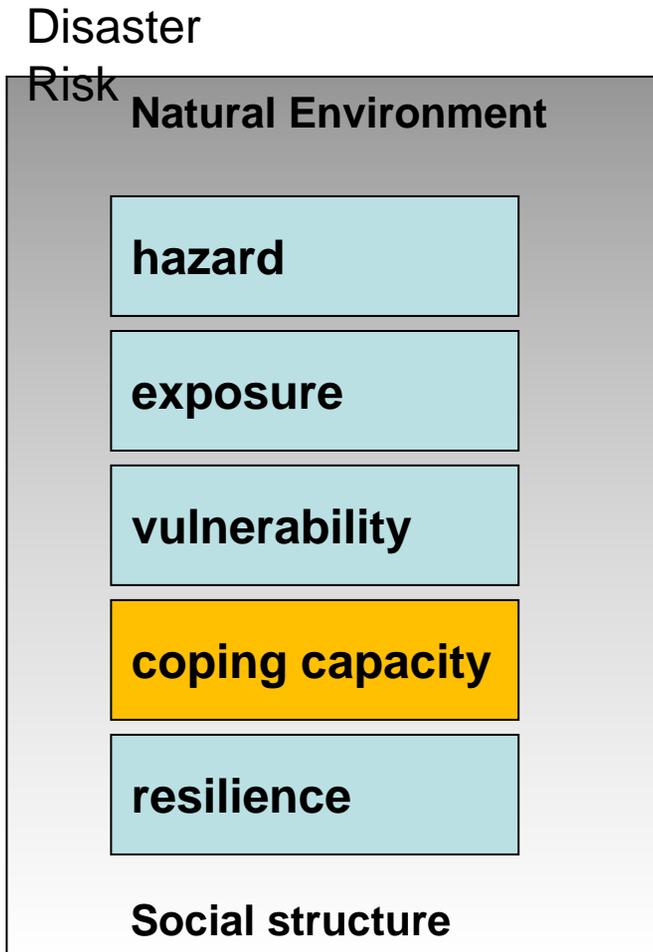


Measuring disaster coping capacity of local communities for better risk governance

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What is ‘coping capacity’?



“Coping capacity” is defined as a combination of all strengths and resources available within a community or organization that can reduce the level of risk, or the effects of a disaster (UN/ISDR, 2002).

It is also regarded as one of the key elements of “vulnerability” by some works (Birkmann 2006).

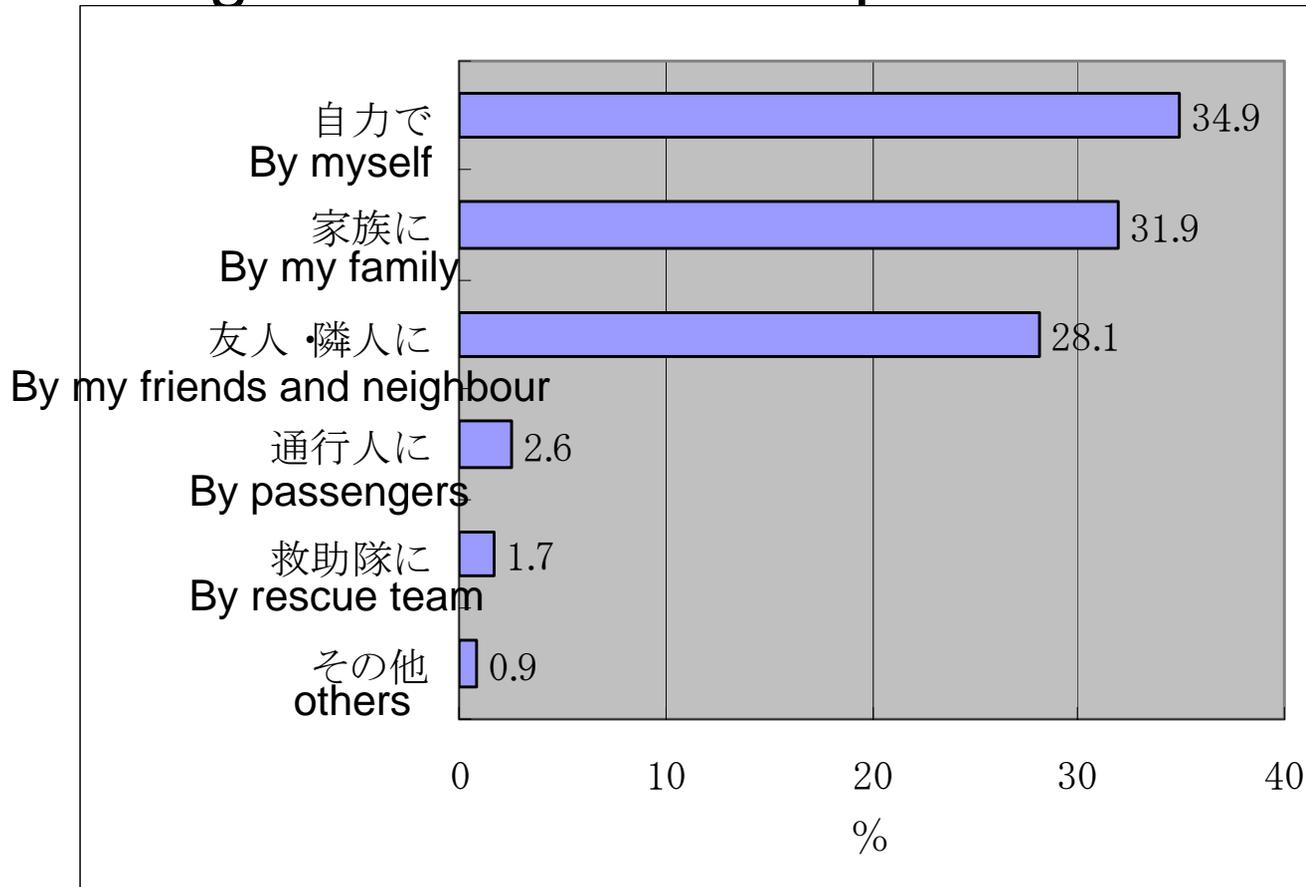
'Coping capacity' as a key concept of Japanese Disaster Reduction Policy

- Disaster Prevention Basic Plan (national plan) requires the people to establish voluntary disaster preventing organizations (VDO, "Jisyu-bosai-sosiki" in Japanese), since 1962.
- JBS was basically established by Neighborhood Associations (NHA, "Chonai-kai" in Japanese), which is based on the residential proximity. NHK has been covering almost all of the Japanese citizens.
- The Fire and Disaster Management Agency (FDMA) of Japan has urged local communities to establish such an organization. In 2006, the coverage ratio of the JBS to total households in Japan is 66.9%.

Policy Background of coping capacity building

- Urbanization
 - Increasing physical vulnerability of urban area.
 - Urbanization disintegrated traditional community, losing the ties between citizens.
- Alternative approach to disaster prevention
 - Japanese government can hardly afford constructing disaster prevention structures, due to significant fiscal deficit.

By whom you are rescued from the debris during 1995 Kobe Earthquake disaster?

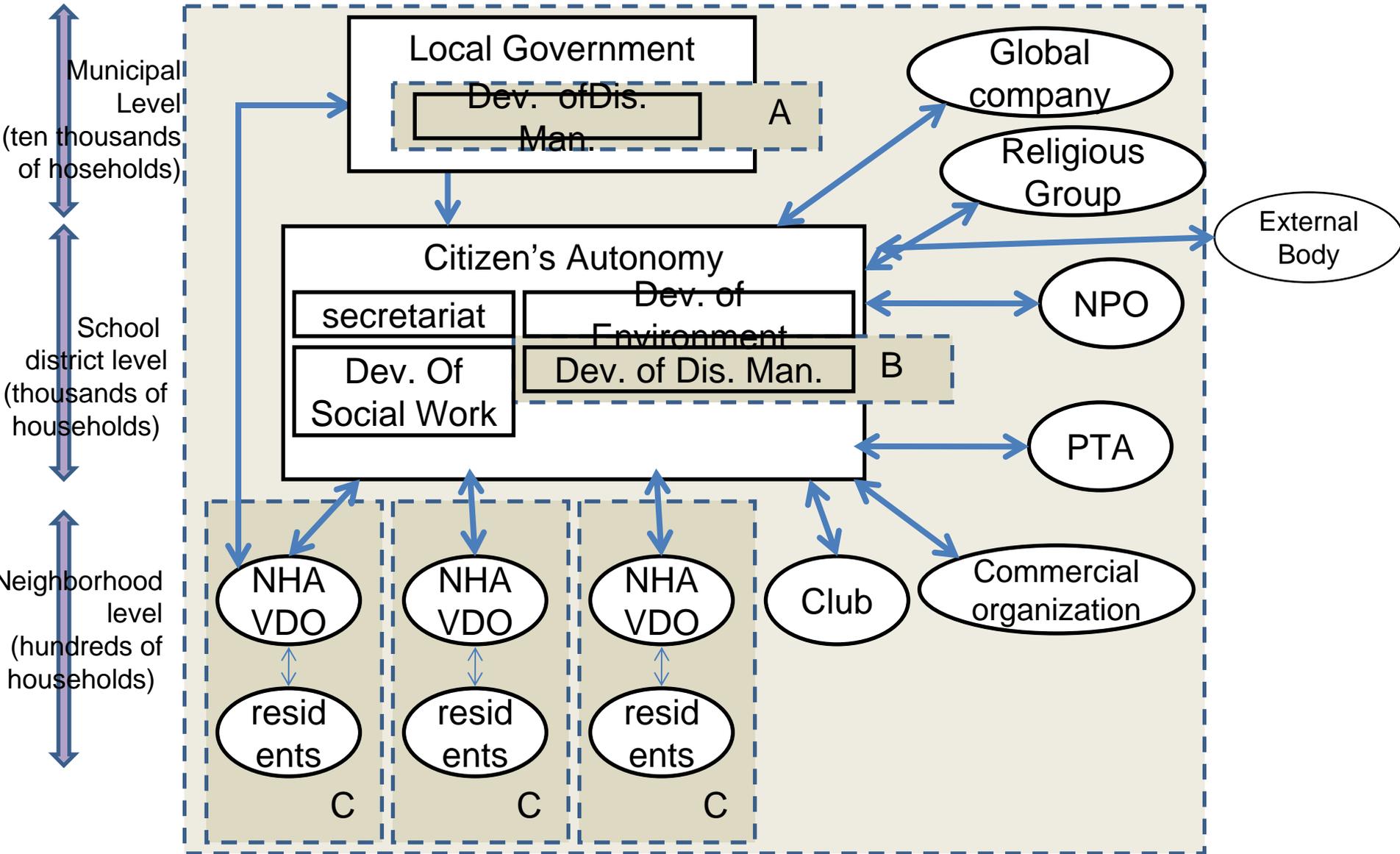


‘Coping Capacity’ has been expanding



Managing Refugee Cite

- Rulemaking and enforcement
- Distribution of food and water
- Information management
- Volunteer coordination
- Waste disposal
- Care for the refugees that have special needs, (ie, aged, handicapped, and foreigners)



An Example of Local Governance Structure

Challenges of measuring 'coping capacity'

- Disaster management activity in local community may be multiple (Level B and C).
- Each activity may be complementary.
- Functions of each level organization should be discussed.
- Expanded concept 'coping capacity' should includes the relationship among other stakeholders than VDO.

Measuring ‘coping capacity’; perspectives

1. At least school district Level should be targeted in order to take the multiple disaster management activity into

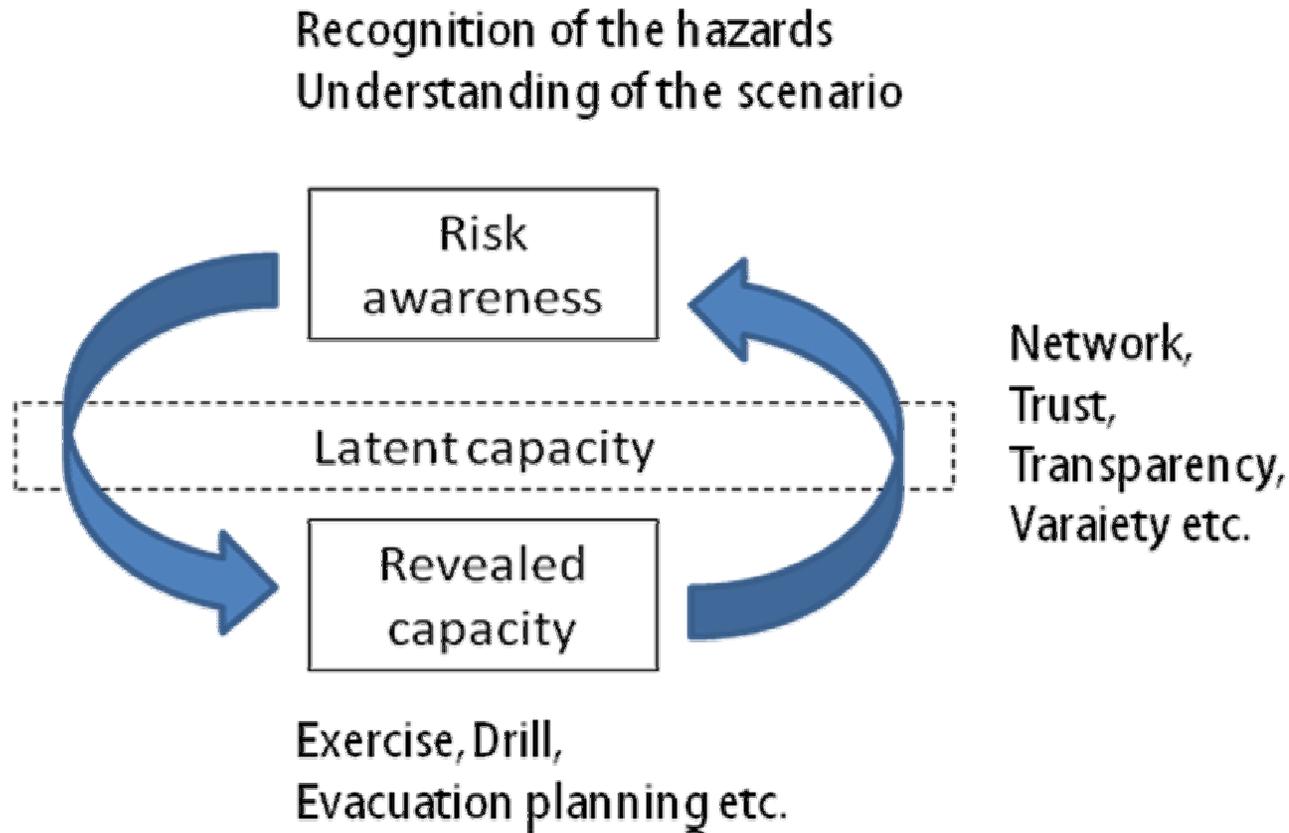
➔ considerations.

‘Revealed Capacity’

2. Expanded concept ‘coping capacity’ requires local community to have a good

➔ relationship among other stakeholders than JBS.

‘Latent Capacity’



The coping capacity growth model

Conclusions

- Measuring ‘coping capacity’ inevitably imply the identification and evaluation of the local governance (social network structure among stakeholders).
- Participatory approach to measure the coping capacity is necessary since no single person can grasp the whole local governance structure due to its complexity.
- Measuring coping capacity itself could be a good opportunity to trigger the capacity building activity.