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ELDERS LEADING THE WAY TO RESILIENCE

Emi Kiyota, Yasuhiro Tanaka, Margaret Arnold, and Daniel Aldrich



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Contents

v Acknowledgements

1 Introduction and key concepts

- 4 Concept of *ibasho*
- 4 Social capital
- 6 Resilience

9 Ibasho Café

- 10 Ibasho Café principles and process
- 13 Impact of the Great East Japan Earthquake
- 14 Overview of the Ibasho Café project in Ofunato

19 Synthesis of research findings

- 20 Who are Ibasho Users?
- 21 Impact of Ibasho Café on efficiency
- 22 Impact of Ibasho Café on social networks
- 23 Impact of Ibasho Café on sense of belonging
- 24 Impact of Ibasho Café on participation in volunteer activities
- 25 Impact of Ibasho Café on participation perception of recovery
- 25 Change over time

27 Lessons learned

- 27 Empowering elders and the broader community
- 28 The role of external facilitators and other stakeholders
- 30 Design and functions of the physical space

31 Conclusions

33 References

35 Annex 1. Methodology

- 35 Research Questions
- 36 Research Methodologies
- 36 Quantitative Data: Survey
- 36 Qualitative Data: Participant Observation
- 36 Analytical Method

39 Annex 2. Data and analysis

- 42 Profile of Ibasho users
- 44 Perception of positive/negative impacts
- 45 Impact of Ibasho Café on self-efficacy
- 46 Impact of Ibasho Café on social networks
- 48 Impact of Ibasho Café on sense of belonging
- 49 Impact of Ibasho Café on participation in volunteer activities
- 50 Impact of Ibasho Café on perception of recovery

55 Annex 3. Survey questionnaire

Tables

- 40 Table A1. Survey data collection matrix
- 41 Table A2. Descriptive statistics for 2013 Ofunato survey data
- 42 Table A3. Descriptive statistics for 2014 Ofunato survey data
- 46 Table A4. Estimated regression coefficients for efficacy
- 47 Table A5. Estimated coefficients for number of friends in neighborhood
- 48 Table A5.1. How many people do you talk with
- 49 Table A6. Estimated coefficients for sense of belonging to neighborhood
- 52 Table A7. Estimated coefficients for family recovery
- 53 Table A8. Estimated coefficients for neighborhood recovery
- 54 Table A9. Trust in neighbors

Figures

- 2 Figure 1. Theory of change for Ibasho Café project
- 11 Figure 2. Ibasho mission and principles
- 13 Figure 3. GEJE earthquake map
- 14 Figure 4. Map of Ofunato City
- 15 Figure 5. Massaki neighborhood map
- 16 Figure 6. Ibasho Café floor plan
- 17 Figure 7. Ibasho Café work process
- 43 Figure 8. How well Ibasho Café is known by local residents
- 43 Figure 9. Ibasho users by age
- 43 Figure 10. Ibasho users by family structure
- 44 Figure 11. Ibasho users by housing situation

Acknowledgements

This report describes and assesses the experience of Ofunato, Japan, which was devastated by the 2011 Great Eastern Japan Earthquake. After the GEJE, older people wanted to do something useful to help Ofunato recover. With facilitation by the NGO Ibasho, elders and other community members planned and built the Ibasho Café, which now acts as a hub that is restoring the fabric of a community still badly damaged by the disaster. With elders leading the operation of Ibasho Café, the space is strengthening social capital and resilience, while at the same time changing people's mindsets about aging.

As part of its Inclusive Community Resilience program, the World Bank's Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery (GFDRR), provided support to evaluate the impact of the Ibasho approach on Ofunato's recovery. Under this initiative, support was also provided to conduct a peer-to-peer exchange between elder community members of Ofunato and elders in Ormoc, Leyte, in the Philippines, which was devastated by Typhoon Haiyan in November 2013. The elders of the Ofunato Ibasho Café and the elders in Ormoc shared views on the disaster events and their recovery experience, and exchanged ideas on how elders of both communities can contribute to strengthening broader community resilience. A documentary film of the Ibasho experience was also produced with GFDRR support, and is accessible at www.gfdr.org or www.ibasho.org.

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People with more ties to each other and to their community are more likely to stay after a disaster.



Introduction and key concepts

Japan has the world's highest proportion of older people. In 2013, there were 31.9 million people over 65 years in 2013, up from 30.8 million in 2012. That is the highest recorded figure for that age group in the history of Japan, making people over 65 more than a quarter (25.1%) of the nation's total population of 127.3 million. That percentage is expected to rise to 32 percent by 2030 and 40 percent by 2050. (UNDESA, 2010).

The graying of the population is not just in Japan, but is a global phenomenon. With the incidence of natural hazard events on the rise due to climate change other factors, engaging all members of society, including elders, in disaster risk management and inclusive approaches to strengthening resilience is a critical issue. For this reason, we can all learn from the challenges faced and the lessons learned in Japan as a result of the Great East Japan Earthquake (GEJE).

The impact of an aging society is often seen as a negative and older people are treated as liabilities, a vulnerable population in need of care and support, especially in the wake of a disaster. While the intentions behind this are benevolent, this narrow interpretation of aging overlooks the positive contributions elders can make to our society. In marginalizing older people, elders lose opportunities for interaction and the ability to contribute to society, and young people lose the wisdom and talents that elders have to offer—knowledge and experience that can be particularly valuable when standard systems cease to function due to disruptions caused by natural disasters.

With the simultaneous rise in the number of elders and in climate-related natural disasters, societies worldwide are facing two critical questions: How can we care for

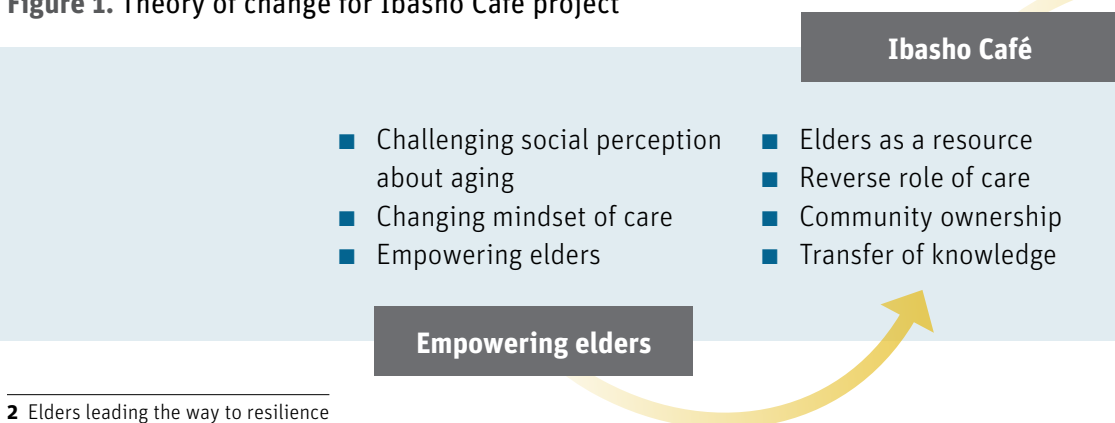
unprecedented numbers of elderly in our society? And how can we reduce the vulnerability of elderly populations affected by disasters and empower them to strengthen resilience? To create an effective response, we need both intelligent policy making and practical solutions emerging from citizen engagement.

The concept of *ibasho*—a Japanese term meaning a place where one feels a sense of belonging and purpose, and is accepted as oneself—challenges prevalent perceptions about aging. The *Ibasho* approach recognizes elders as valuable assets to their community, empowering them to be active participants and changing the harmful outcomes created by society’s negative perceptions and expectations—social isolation, a loss of dignity and respect, and a sense of uselessness and irrelevance. This approach improves the community’s ability to withstand shocks caused by natural hazards by creating a strong informal support system in which elders are the catalyst to strengthen social capital among community members of all ages.

Elders are particularly vulnerable to the effects of a hazard event due to their physical, social, and economic conditions. They can also provide essential support. As the Great East Japan Earthquake (GEJE) of March 11, 2011 demonstrated, evacuees need to support each other in order to survive until help arrives after a disaster. Elders are an important part of the community networks that are crucial to making that work. After the GEJE, people emphasized how important it was for them to be surrounded by familiar faces after the tsunami, speaking to the importance of pre-existing community ties. People also remarked that “Elders knew how to manage without electricity and water.” These reactions suggest that younger people need elders’ skills and perspective as much as elders need the support of the younger generation in order to create a resilient community.

The first *Ibasho Café* was developed in Ofunato, a city in Iwate prefecture that was devastated by the GEJE. The project objective was to help strengthen the social capital needed to recover from the disaster, giving community members of all ages a place where they can develop more and deeper connections with each other. Since the café

Figure 1. Theory of change for *Ibasho Café* project



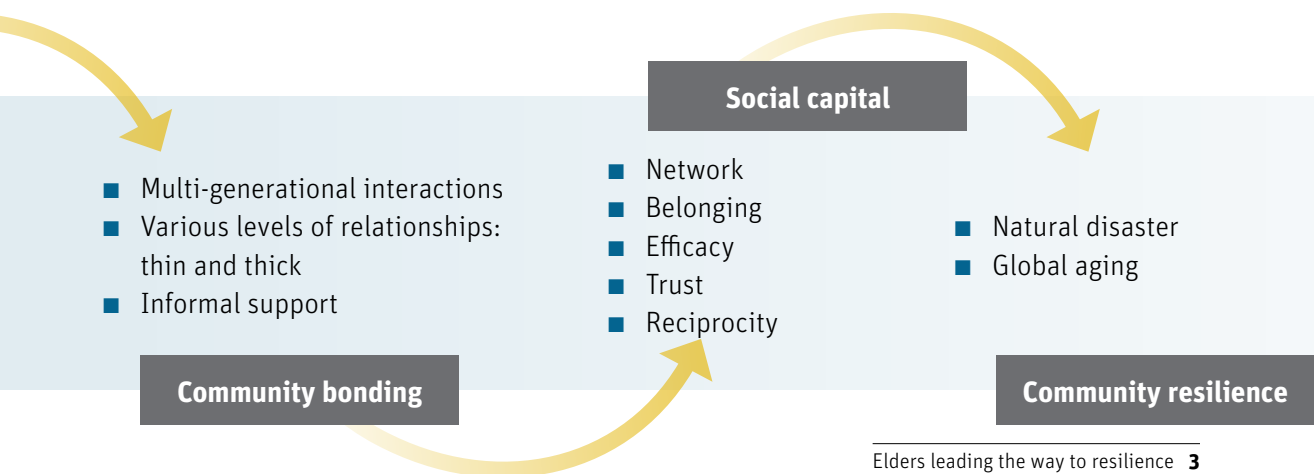
was completed in June 2013, all generations have connected in the space, with children coming to read books in the English library, older people teaching young people, younger people helping elders navigate technology, and so on. In the first year, elders organized approximately 70 events and welcomed more than 5,500 visitors.

This study focuses on the effects of the Ibasho Café on social capital in the city and neighborhoods of Ofunato after the Great East Japan Earthquake. The study used both quantitative and qualitative measures to evaluate the effect of the Ibasho Café on the level of social capital among community members, its impact on the community’s perception of the recovery process, and the general well-being of community members. Quantitative data was gathered through semi-structured surveys conducted in 2013 before the café began operation, and in the fall of 2014 after a year of operation. Participant observation conducted with ethnographical methods over the course of a year captured the qualitative data, recording the experiences of Ibasho Café users and staff members. Full details on the methodology and data analysis are presented in annexes 1-3.

Key concepts

The theory of change behind this project draws on multiple constructs, including elder empowerment, *ibasho*, community bonding, social capital, and community resilience. Figure 1 explains how these concepts relate to each other, based on four assumptions:

1. Empowering elders changes the way they feel about their role in their community
2. Creating the Ibasho Café (both physical and social infrastructures) with elders in a leadership role increases the community bonding among the members of all ages
3. A strong sense of community bonding increases the level of social network and community participation, enhancing the sense of belonging and trust, and developing reciprocity between neighbors
4. An enhanced sense of social capital strengthens the community’s resilience so it is better prepared to withstand future natural disasters and the impacts of global aging.



Concept of *ibasho*

The straightforward definition of the Japanese term *ibasho* is “whereabouts” or “location”. It also refers to a physical place where a person feels at home, is accepted and can be oneself, and to the social relationships associated with that place. The critical element of *ibasho* is that it involves sharing a physical place in an informal manner, allowing for stable relationships to establish over time through an interdependent support system. It is a place that provides a sense of belonging to individuals, allows people to pursue their own interests and gives them opportunities to talk to others (Sumita 2003). Further, an *ibasho* allows participants to select their role and use their skills and experience as they like, without imposing strong expectations on participants (Tanaka 2007).

The *Ibasho Café* aims to relieve elder isolation through the creation of a community gathering space, staffed and managed by local residents. The café provides a public place without a rigid or specific purpose, where people can do as they want and find their own role. This notion is similar to Ray Oldenburg’s concept of a “third place,” which consists of “social surroundings separate from the two usual social environments of home and the workplace” (Oldenburg 1989). The difference between *ibasho* and third place is that *ibasho* is created and maintained by participants who shape it to fit their needs and the needs of their peers. A third place could be a Starbucks café staffed by paid employees, for example. The *Ibasho Café* developed in Ofunato is a locally owned nonprofit managed by local elderly volunteers.

Social capital

Social capital consists of the “networks, norms, and social trust that facilitate coordination and cooperation for mutual benefit” (Putnam 1995: 67). Social scientists generally divide social capital into three categories: bonding, bridging, and linking. Bonding social capital refers to relationships among individuals who are quite similar and may be family or kin; they usually share a language, educational achievement, and norms. Bridging social capital connects people who are different in significant ways such as age, socio-economic level, race/ethnicity or education. Institutions such as clubs, schools, and workplaces frequently create these kinds of ties. Linking social capital connects regular citizens with those in power and authority (Szreter and Woolcock 2004). Bridging and linking social capital are seen as exposing individuals to new ideas, values and perspectives (Woolcock 2004). The *Ibasho Café* may provide all three kinds of bonding, though it is likely to be most useful in strengthening social capital through bridging.

While many scholars focus solely on the benefits from strong social capital (Cohen and Rogers 1995), it can also have negative repercussions. If internal bonding becomes too strong, it can create an exclusive network of insiders who have little interest in anyone else. Putman (1997) referred to the negative effects of social capital as its “dark side” and Fukuyama (1995) called it the “narrow radius of trust.” Beyond simple exclusivity, it is possible that very strong bonding social capital without equally strong bridging social

capital can reinforce patterns of discrimination against out-groups and minorities, making the role played by Ibasho Café all the more important to strengthening a sense of community.

In undertaking the study, community members of Ofunato were asked questions relating to different aspects of social capital, as explained below:

Changing the perception of self-efficacy

Social scientists refer to self-efficacy as an individual's belief that he or she can have an impact on his or her environment. People with higher levels of efficacy are more likely to undertake communal activities, engage decision makers, and participate in activities such as voting, petition signing, and attendance at meetings, etc. By facilitating connections and engaging previously-isolated individuals in social activities, an Ibasho Café may enhance the self-efficacy of participants. For example, residents who had never participated in local politics may be inspired by their work running and managing Ibasho to sign a petition for more parks or become involved in a campaign to provide more funding for elder care. Moreover, people who feel that they have control over their environment may be more likely to take the initiative to help fellow survivors through volunteering, donating blood, or leading renewal projects.

Deepening or widening social networks

People who regularly attend events, volunteer, and become involved in community activities through institutions like Ibasho can make new acquaintances and friends. Having opportunities to create and sustain friendships is important, and research shows that individuals with deeper social networks have better mental and physical health. In addition, people with more trust and cooperation with each other had a better chance of surviving the disaster than people who trusted less.

Enhancing a sense of belonging

A stronger sense of a belonging to a community is often connected with a stronger sense of purpose and a drive to help others, enriching one's quality of life. People who feel a part of their neighborhood are more likely to participate in communal events (e.g., community clean-up, neighborhood watch groups, looking after neighborhood children), and joining others in a program like Ibasho may help people see themselves as members of a neighborhood rather than merely residents in it. After a disaster, people who feel more connected to their neighborhood are more likely to stay in a damaged area and work for its recovery. Those who feel disconnected from their neighbors and are uninvolved are more likely to relocate after a disaster. This divide may reflect a similar situation for elderly individuals in their communities. Those with stronger connections to their neighbors are able to participate in their community life longer, while those with less connection to their neighbors may lack the social support to stay in their community.

Heightening a sense of trust of one's neighbors

Social capital inheres in people's personal connections and interactions with others and in the shared values associated with these contacts and relationships. Social capital with a shared goal can only be achieved when community members trust one another. In something of a circular process (Fu, 2004) of social feedback, a heightened sense of trust between neighbors may make community members more likely to engage in neighborhood activities like an Ibasho Café; the café itself may help community members build up their trust of one another, young and old.

Creating reciprocity among community members

Reciprocity is a voluntary collective behavior that generates the good will needed to help one another achieve goals that fit with shared norms or values. In a culture of reciprocity, individuals consider not only their own self-interest but also their responsibility to the community. Familiar and stable relationships can relieve members of anxiety and uncertainty about other people's motivations and actions. On an individual level, a person has trust in another based on what they know about them – their disposition, ability, reputation and so forth. On the collective level, if someone does not trust an agency or organization with whom they are affiliated, they won't trust the organization to follow-through on an agreement (Dasgupta, 2000).

Resilience

Benson et al. (2012) defines social resilience as “the ability to withstand, recover from, and reorganize in response to crises so that all members of society may develop or maintain the ability to thrive.” A key aspect of thriving despite crises is the ability of a community to resume the rhythms of life together after a major shock. Many people still think of disaster response and recovery as government responsibility, such as formal search and rescue teams or shelter, food and water. Experience shows, however, that first responders to disasters are typically family, neighbors and friends. In interviews with survivors of the 2011 earthquake and tsunami, many described how friends, kin, and caregivers helped them evacuate their homes after the earthquake during the short 40 minutes they had before the tsunami arrived. Without the help of these neighbors and colleagues, many elderly evacuees may not have survived. Research shows that, in communities with higher levels of social capital and trust, fewer people perished from the tsunami than in similar areas without these characteristics (Aldrich and Sawada 2015). Similarly, following the 1995 Kobe earthquake, most lives saved in the first few days following the event were thanks to neighbors who knew where to dig in the rubble for their friends (Horwich 2000; Shaw and Goda 2004).

Beyond immediate and short-term responses from the community, resilience in a neighborhood depends strongly on the depth of its reservoir of social capital. In a crisis, social capital accelerates the recovery process and reduces mortality by three main mechanisms. First, stronger social capital allows for collective action and mobilization. Many of the difficulties that arise during and after crises are collective action problems, requiring people to work together. For example, when police services are compromised, residents can band together to fend off scavengers and thieves by creating community patrols. Without trust in each other, such group activities will not succeed. Second, deeper bonds also allow residents to draw on one another for mutual aid. With disrupted access to food, medical supplies and child-care services for days or weeks after a crisis, residents must find such resources within their networks. Neighbors with bonds of trust can borrow tools, food, places to stay, and information; those without such connections may find it more challenging. Finally, people with more ties to each other and to their community are more likely to remain in the area after a disaster, investing time and effort in rebuilding. Those with fewer ties are more likely to uproot themselves and family members and restart their lives in an undamaged place.

Elders discussing how to build and use the terrace area of the Ibasho Café.





Outdoor cafe when the weather is nice.

Ibasho Café

Beautiful buildings, furniture, and decorations will not make people happy if they are lonely, bored, and marginalized, even in care facilities with the best of intentions. The Ibasho concept was developed to improve the living environment for elders so they can live with meaning and voice about where and how they live, as an active and contributing member of their communities. When elders lose their sense of belonging and purpose, it can easily lead to social isolation resulting in physical and emotional decline. This happens not only in Japan but in other parts of world, as modernization changes family structures and lifestyles as well as the role of community in our lives. The Ibasho Café project aims to enable elders to maintain balanced relationships, interacting with people of all ages, from the local community and beyond. In particular, elders can interact with and influence the growth of children and young people in their community. While initially “thin,” these relationships can be important, letting children know there is a non-family adult who knows and cares about them. And as elders invest more time and effort into Ibasho, “thin” relationships like these may grow into friendship (Torche and Valenzuela, 2011).

Ibasha Café mission, principles and process

Ibasha Café is an informal gathering place where the larger community can come together. Elders take a leadership role – in development, planning, operations, management, finance, etc.— sharing their knowledge and experience with each other and with younger generations. The objective is to create and strengthen social ties while operating a sustainable business. In developing the Ibasha Café, the following mission objectives and guiding principles were followed:

Create a place where elders are valued as a community resource

Ibasha recognizes that place plays an important role in how elders are viewed in society. Ibasha creates a place where elders are in charge and people of all ages can come together, allowing elders to form new relationships with younger people, share their friendship as well as their knowledge, experience, skills, and wisdom. Most importantly, a café allows all members of the community to experience an everyday place where Ibasha principles are embraced.

Collaboratively determine a unique social mission that extends beyond the community

An Ibasha Café empowers elders to support people outside their own community, tapping into the strong sense of social purpose that is common among elders and sending a positive message about their contributions to society at large. At the Ibasha Café in Japan, for instance, elders are setting aside some profit and collecting donations for a disaster relief fund to help elders affected by natural disasters in the future.

Eight guiding principles of Ibasha

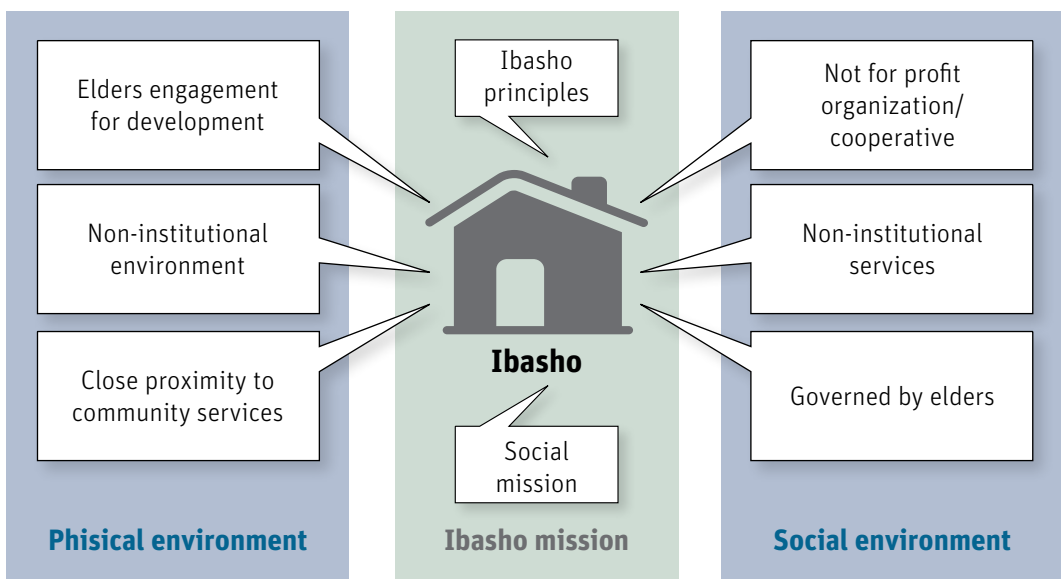
- 1. Older people are a valuable asset to the community:** Ibasha believes in a society where the elderly can contribute with confidence and their wisdom and knowledge are valued.
- 2. Create informal gathering places:** Living in institutions with strict rules and schedules is confining and limiting. Ibasha creates places of normalcy where elders can stop by at their leisure to do what they want.
- 3. Community members must drive development and implementation:** Each Ibasha place, whether a café or elder care facility, is created not *for* elders but *with* them. Other members of the community must also be involved in the development and operation of the new place, so all can share a sense of ownership and pride.
- 4. All generations must be involved in the community:** Connecting within one's own generation is easy and comfortable, but stopping there cuts a person off from other perspectives and sources of knowledge, as well as other individual relationships.

Ibasho creates places where the young learn from their elders and the elderly learn from the young.

- 5. Local culture and traditions must be respected:** Each community has its own history and culture, even if it is not something easily identified. Ibasho creates places where people can discover and reflect on the treasures of their communities.
- 6. All residents must participate in normal community life:** An Ibasho, like a community, succeeds only when it is a welcoming home for everyone, regardless of age or ability, gender, ethnicity, stage of life, or any of the other traits that differentiate a diverse community. Even the socially-disconnected should be able to find a place there. Ibasho is a place to not to worry about what one *cannot* do, but rather to enjoy what one *can* do.
- 7. Communities must be environmentally, economically, and socially sustainable:** An Ibasho protects the nature that brings bounty to life, is economically self-sufficient, and cherishes and nurtures the connections among individuals.
- 8. The community must grow organically and embrace imperfection gracefully:** Ibasho does not strive for perfection. It is adaptive and flexible, as life is forever changing. Each community has its own path to balance, believes in the possibility of change, and gently embraces imperfection.

The Ibasho Café achieve these objectives and adheres to the stated principles through both the physical and social aspects of the project (Figure 2).

Figure 2. Ibasho mission and principles



Physical attributes

Because Ibasho involves creating an actual place that will nurture a sense of community, the physical environment was an important factor in the project's success. It is non-institutional and is sited close to the people it serves. In Ofunato, the café is adjacent to temporary housing communities, making it easily accessible for people displaced from their homes and seeking to continue the community of old and new friends.

Social attributes

Several social attributes are key to the success of the Ibasho Café:

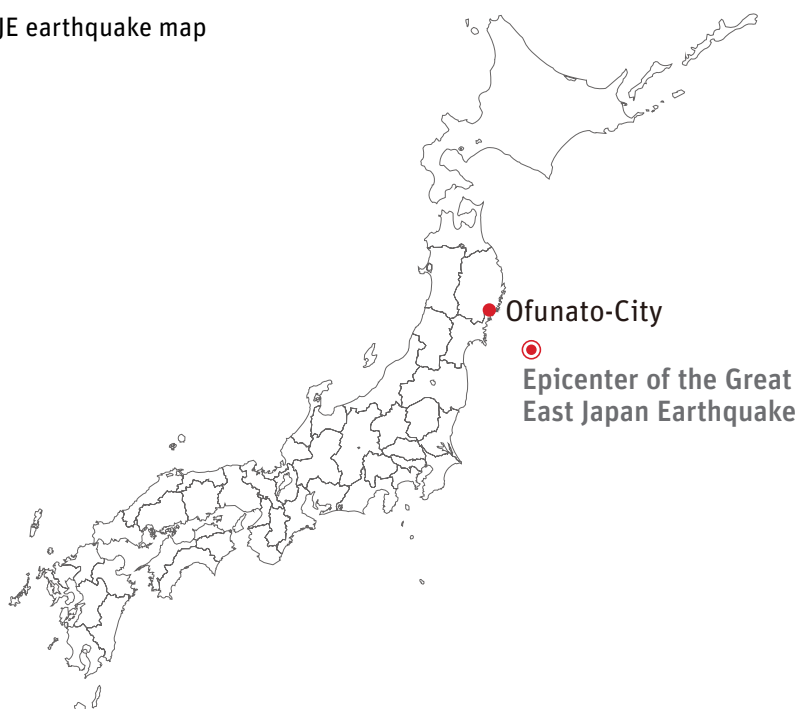
- 1. Elders must be engaged in the development process.** To create sustainable and integrated communities that value elders' input and meet their needs, elders must take leading roles in the creation and realization of their community's café.
- 2. It is formally owned by the community elders.** An Ibasho Café is a community-driven project rather than a policy-driven initiative. To make that work, it should be structured as a not-for-profit organization or a cooperative and owned by a group of elder community members.
- 3. It offers non-institutional services.** In an institutional environment, elders are expected to receive care, rather than care for others. Routines are rigid and the environment sterile, without much of a sense of comfort. Ibasho aims to provide a "normal" place where people can come when they want and do what they like. Elders are active participants and have opportunities to be useful to others.
- 4. It is governed by the elders, with support from the local government.** To ensure long-term sustainability, the Ibasho Café should function as a sustainable business. Linkages to and support from the local government also help to ensure sustainability. This could come in the form of legal or IT support.



Impact of the Great East Japan Earthquake

The Great East Japan Earthquake caused one of the most devastating tsunamis in recorded history. With a magnitude of 9.0 off the Sanriku coast of northern Japan, the earthquake and resulting tsunami left vast damage in a wide section of the country's coastal area, especially in three prefectures: Iwate, Miyagi, and Fukushima. Significantly deadlier than the 1995 Kobe earthquake, which killed 6,434 people, the 2011 disaster left 15,883 people dead and 2,668 missing. In addition, 126,656 houses were destroyed and another 272,300 damaged. Immediately after the earthquake and tsunami, 8 million households lost power and 1.8 million had water outages, paralyzing basic living and communication systems.

Figure 3. GEJE earthquake map



Combined with the resulting nuclear power plant accident in Fukushima, this disaster forced approximately 470,000 people to evacuate. Initially, more than 2,000 evacuation sites housed evacuees until they were able to move to temporary housing units or join family members. Soon after, more than 53,200 temporary housing units were built and approximately 60,000 existing apartment units provided to house evacuees until they could find permanent accommodations.

Older people in the Great East Japanese Earthquake

As is the case in every disaster, elders were particularly vulnerable to the effects of the Great East Japan Earthquake. Two-thirds of those that lost their lives were over 60 years

Facing page: Brain fit exercise with community members.

old.¹ There were several reasons for this increased vulnerability. The affected prefectures had very large elder populations. Some individuals with dementia were too disoriented to evacuate and others were unable to outrun the oncoming waves.² Those who were left battled for survival in cramped conditions with insufficient food, water, and heat, and sometimes without life-saving drugs, conditions that were particularly difficult for the very young and the very old.

In the wake of the disaster, Miyagi, Iwate and Fukushima Prefectures faced a range of issues that were especially challenging for frail elders, including limited access to housing and welfare services. With many medical and care facilities destroyed by the powerful waves,³ access to health services was also limited, a particular concern for the many elders who required continuous treatment for chronic diseases.

Overview of the Ibasho Café project in Ofunato

The Ibasho team visited Ofunato (Figure 4) after the disaster, conducting interviews with elderly survivors still living in temporary housing communities almost a year later. Both elderly residents and the younger generation spoke of elders who saved younger people's lives by guiding them to higher ground and teaching them how to survive with extremely limited resources. Older people also expressed a great deal of gratitude for all the aid they had received. In addition to tales of extraordinary courage and hardship, many elders expressed a strong desire to give back, contribute to the rebuilding of their communities, and to be useful to others, although they did not know how.

Figure 4. Map of Ofunato City

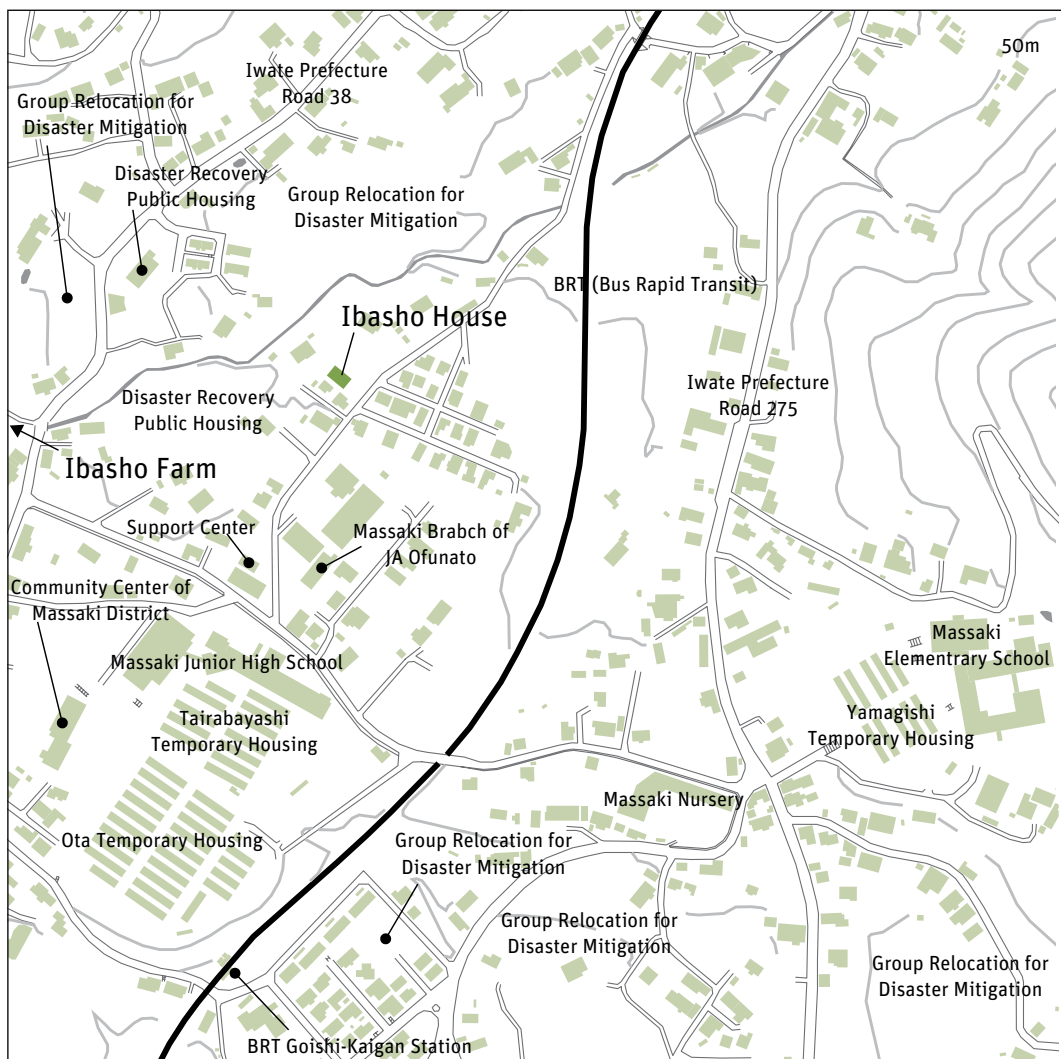


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These conversations made it clear that elders' wisdom and experience had become more valued when the standard system was interrupted. Establishing an Ibasho Café would create opportunities for elders to actively participate in the recovery of their community, rather than be treated as liabilities to be cared for and protected. The café project was initiated by the non-profit organization, Ibasho, in February 2012, eleven months after the Japan earthquake and tsunami.

Ibasho partnered with Tenjinkai, a social welfare organization in Ofunato, to help reach out to elders in the city. The team visited five communities, conducted informal interviews with elders living in temporary housing communities, and met with local leaders and city officials to understand the needs of community members. The Massaki neighborhood was selected as the site for the café because there was strong community interest and commitment from leaders, members, and government (Figure 5). Following

Figure 5. Massaki neighborhood map

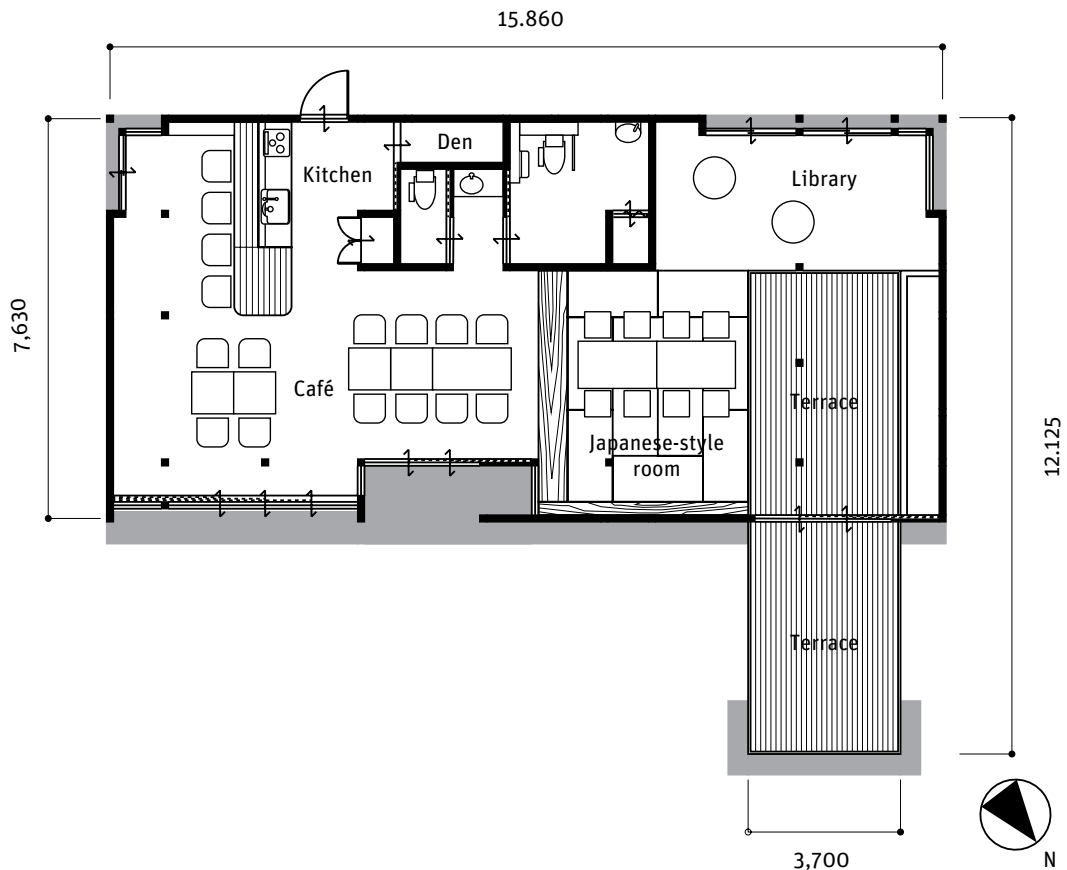


close consultation and collaboration with local elders, and with support from the Mayor of Ofunato, a local family donated an old farmhouse as the building for the café and the landowner agreed to ten years rent-free.

The significance of the farmhouse was important for the project. It centered the café in a culturally significant, permanent structure in the area damaged by the tsunami, conveying the life and history of the community. The farmhouse was disassembled, moved and reconstructed as the Ibasho Café in the Massaki area (Figure 6). The farmhouse had been built with a traditional Japanese architectural technique that did not use nails, and this gave elder carpenters opportunities to transfer their knowledge and skills to younger craftsmen.

Over 18 months, Ibasho organized more than 10 community workshops where community members of all ages worked with the Ibasho elders to develop a shared vision of the café's purpose, design, and operations, all the while challenging preconceived notions about what was "appropriate" for elders. The café, as a gathering place for all ages, would offer traditional local meals and drinks for visitors, supported by donations. Elders could bring foods they've cooked at home, warm up meals onsite, or prepare light meals together

Figure 6. Ibasho Café floor plan



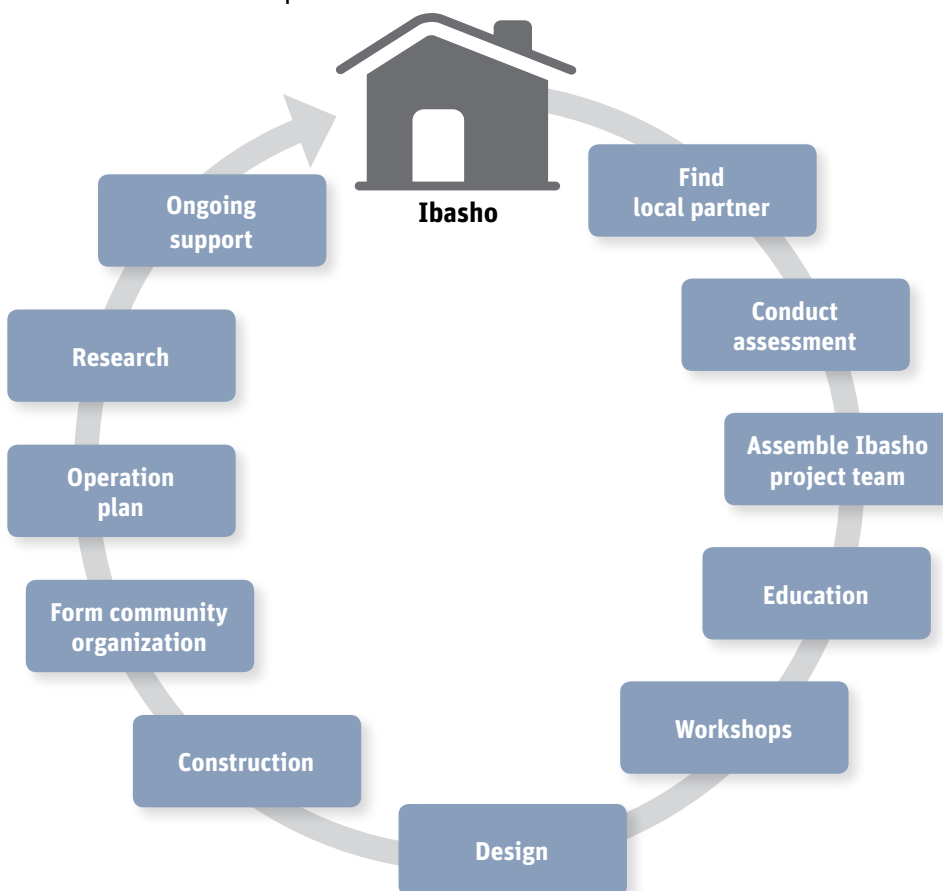
at the cafe. To ensure the long-term sustainability of the café as a community initiative, founders formed the Ibasho Sozo Project, a not-for-profit organization led by a group of local elders.

The Ibasho Café opened on June 13, 2013, two years after the GEJE.

Strong governing and operational teams led by local elders plan and implement the café's activities and organize monthly operational meetings with operation core team members. The nine elected board members, all members of the community, meet quarterly. The governing elders created four types of income-generating activities to cover operation and maintenance costs: (i) soliciting donations for food and drinks; (ii) organic farming; (iii) organizing a farmers' market; and, (iv) applying for grants. The income generated from these activities has allowed them to organize activities for community members of all ages and has provided employment for three part-time staff members, all of them community members who were affected by the disaster.

Figure 7 illustrates the steps followed in establishing and maintaining the Ibasho Café.

Figure 7. Ibasho Café work process





末崎町泊里地区 2008/06/10 12:02:40



震災後の末崎町泊里地区 2011/05/03 9:42:42

Synthesis of research findings

The research team conducted two rounds of community surveys in the city of Ofunato and its neighborhoods, including Massaki, where the Ibasho Café is located, and other neighborhoods for comparison. The first survey was conducted in the summer of 2013, just before the café began operations, and the second during the fall of 2014. In addition, the team conducted approximately six hours of participant observation at the café every day for more than a year. The findings here profile Ibasho Café users, and synthesize the survey findings regarding the impact of Ibasho Café on different components of community-level social capital—self-efficacy, network, sense of belonging—as well as community perceptions of disaster recovery and reconstruction. A full discussion of survey findings, the survey data collection matrix (Table A1) and 2013 and 2014 descriptive statistics for Ofunato survey data (Tables A2 and A3) are presented in Annex 2.

Who are the Ibasho users?

In the first year of the café, 5,560 people visited the Ibasho house. Nearly all of the café's regular visitors lived within walking distance in the Massaki neighborhood, suggesting that walkability is key to determining whether users would engage with this type of service—especially older users. Respondents from outside Massaki indicated that the need for transportation may deter elders from visiting Ibasho Café, as few drive and others may find transportation too costly. About 60 percent of the city-wide survey respondents were aware of the café. Most of the people at the café who were younger than 75 years old were still working, perhaps due to economic drivers or indicating that people prefer an active role after age 60, whether in the workforce, through community activities, or both. (Figures 8-11, Annex 2)

Most of the café's patrons felt that the Ibasho Café had improved their social connections and their everyday life experience. People were happy to be in the company of others at the café, connecting with old friends and meeting new people of all ages from in and outside the neighborhood. Going to the café provided people with a place to go that was meaningful and fun, where they could volunteer in the community any day of the week, be busy, and learn from others. The farmers' market and café also offered a child-friendly place for shopping and visiting. The few negative impressions were primarily concerns about the number of elderly in the café, traffic, noise, and attracting people from outside the neighborhood. (Annex 2)



Impact of Ibasho Café on self-efficacy

The survey research found that people who attended more Ibasho events felt more strongly that they could make their community a better place than those who did not go to the café. For café participants, there was little difference whether they lived in the neighborhood or elsewhere in the city. (Table A4, Annex 2).

This sense of elders' self-efficacy was in evidence daily at the café. The elders who managed Ibasho organized events to educate children about traditional local culture, such as cooking, holiday decorations, and traditional festivals. Elders organized activities and events for disaster risk management, teaching younger generations how to live in an environmentally sustainable manner and to survive without electricity and water. They reached out to young mothers, volunteering to watch their children.

Before the Ibasho Café was built, elders were unconvinced of their own efficacy. But through their work with the café over the course of the year, they developed enough confidence to make an impact not only on their own community but also on communities abroad. Upon learning that the Ibasho concept was being replicated in the Philippines, several of the elders expressed an interest in supporting the project. They traveled to the Philippines to help local elders set up an Ibasho Café in an area affected by Typhoon Haiyan. After returning to Japan, they created a disaster-recovery fund and reached out to their community members to help people in the disaster-affected area in Philippines. Subsequently, more elders expressed an interest in going to the Philippines to help the survivors of Haiyan.

"I have learned that we have something we can do to help people in the Philippines. I always thought that helping people in other countries was beyond what we could do. But we don't have to be in United Nations or international organizations to make difference. We received so much help from others. It is our turn to do something for the people in the Philippines. There is a lot I want to do with them and to learn from them. I hope we can help each other for a long time." –74 year old man

One year after the Ibasho Café opened, the elders who operate it started an organic farm and a farmers' market. The farm and market provide vegetables and other fresh foods for temporary housing residents, give elders a convenient place to purchase their daily necessities, and help to generate the income needed to operate the café. Elders have also learned to apply for grants to fund positions for three part-time staff, all of whom are young adults affected by the disaster.

Facing page: Traditional way to heat the Ibasho Café.

Impact of Ibasho Café on social networks

People who regularly attended the café reported having more friends than those who were not at the café quite so often. This applied to attendees living in Massaki, the neighborhood where the café is located, as well as to people living elsewhere in the city (Table A5, Annex 2).

These findings—that Ibasho fostered social networks—are reinforced by experiences at the café. Many people had previously known other café participants only by sight and had never had a chance to sit down and talk. As one person put it: “Now we’re friends because we have conversations here.” People who came for events would often stop to chat with a neighbor over a cup of coffee or tea. Others initiated relationships simply through informal, one-on-one conversations. People formed groups around common interests like a hobby or a family situation, which evolved into smaller, more intimate support networks within the larger system of the Ibasho Café. The farmhouse is small enough so people can easily see what is happening in the space, but large enough to allow community members to organize small activities and gatherings they could not otherwise hold in their homes or other public spaces.

The café also provided a place where elders living alone could spend time surrounded by familiar faces, even if they didn’t seek out interaction with others. One 94-year-old woman came every day, sitting at “her place” all day. When she did not come to the café for two days, some members of the community went to her apartment, where they discovered that she had broken her arm on the way back from Ibasho. From then on, Ibasho elders took turns walking with her between the café and her apartment. “It is so nice to have a place like this where I can come,” she said. “I would be alone in my apartment and doing nothing.



People know me in this place, so I sit here all day and go home in the evening. I have to have this place, so I will have to contribute.” The woman, who walks the 10 minutes from her apartment every day except in the rain, when she takes a taxi, leaves a small donation every day before going back home.

Friendships also formed that reached beyond the community. After the disaster, many volunteers and visitors came from out of town—sometimes from other countries—to organize events for community members. The Ibasho Café provided a comfortable, informal place where outsiders can find and get to know people from the community, and many long-distance friendships were formed there. One 39-year-old woman organized music events and English learning classes for the community, and periodically visits Ibasho Café to visit elders with her friends. As she described it:

“After the disaster occurred, I felt an urge to help, but had no connections. Ibasho Café was the place where visitors could organize spontaneous activities or simply sit down and chat with local people. It is a place I can go back, stop in, and have a cup of tea and snacks with people who have become friends. It makes a difference that I have a place where I feel welcomed as a friend by local people.”

Impact of Ibasho Café on sense of belonging

Survey research found that regular attendance at the café was significantly tied to individuals’ deeper connection to their neighborhood and the city (Table A6, Appendix II). Observations at the café suggest two possible reasons why. First, most of the people who come to the café are from the Massaki neighborhood, where many residents have lived in their home for years, with a long attachment to the community and friendships with their neighbors. Also, Ibasho Café users may already be inclined to participate in community activities, such as the local festival or sporting events, and have strong pre-existing relationships with other members of their community. One 56-year-old woman described her commitment to her community, despite having lost her house to the tsunami:

“We had a big house with many nice things that my mother-in-law was so proud of. When my family went back after the tsunami, we discovered the foundation of the house but nothing else. Most of my neighbors experienced the same, and we moved to the temporary housing community. Thanks to Ibasho Café, we can still get together to see what we are doing. We have no intention of moving away because we have been living here for more than 50 years. This is my home and the place where all my friends are.”

Facing page: Visitors sit around the heater and talk during the winter.



People from out of town come by and share their talents and enjoy their time with community members.

Impact of Ibasho Café on participation in volunteer activities

Before the GEJE, most people who were older, with a higher income, had a large social network, or lived in the Massaki area were active volunteers in the community; younger people and individuals who were less affluent and less social, were not. After the earthquake, more people of all ages volunteered. Membership in the café, however, did not seem to effect the level of volunteerism; 80 percent of Ibasho members had volunteered in the past, about the same as people living in the area generally. This likely reflects Massaki's strong culture of community participation before the disaster. Because the Ibasho project was initiated with leaders of local groups in Massaki, those leaders and their members stayed to support Ibasho Café. People living outside the area also had a tradition of volunteering (70%), though somewhat less than in Massaki (79%).

While the level of participation in local organizations remained almost the same, the type of involvement changed after the disaster. People participated less in the neighborhood association and women's association, with many elders retiring from the local festival and cultural events committee. Instead, people participated in more leisure-related volunteer activities. This suggests that the people who always participated in community activities may be the same ones likely to get involved in a new initiative for their community, however, they have also started to participate in more life enriching and fun activities, rather than only engaged in community duties. For people who retired from cultural event organizing committees, or who lost their roles because the community was destroyed, Ibasho Café may provide a new social role. A 67-year-old volunteer reflected:

“This disaster changed the way I think about volunteering. After losing my home, so many people helped me from everywhere, even people I did not know, and I wanted to give something back. I was asked by a volunteer group to take charge of Ibasho Café’s social networking and website. And with help from the Ibasho Café people, I am learning to post information about Ibasho activities. It is nice to have a place where I can come and do something useful for people in my community.”

Ibasho Café impact on perceptions of recovery

Perceptions of how well a person’s family and neighborhood will recover from the disaster varied with their age, gender, and levels of education, income, and self-efficacy. Younger people were more optimistic, as were women and people with higher education, income, and belief in their ability to control their environment (Tables A7 and A8, Annex 2). But visits to the Ibasho Café had no bearing on an individuals’ outlook, nor did living in or outside of Massaki.

When discussing the recovery, many local residents talk about securing a stable place to live. Their interest is not a longing for the physical structure of a house but the importance of reestablishing a sense of belonging, security, privacy, comfort, and familiarity, and being surrounded by friends, family and their own possessions. Looking forward, people are also interested in neighborhood planning, more public space, and improved communications among the local residents and with local government. When asked about the recovery process, a 56-year-old woman responded:

“I do not think my life has been recovered because I am still living in a temporary housing unit. For me, full recovery means that I can live in my own home and see other people’s houses being built. We want our neighbors to have a clear prospect to their life, not only my household. Then we have chance to get together as a community. I don’t feel normal because local events and festivals are not back. We need to feel that the sense of community we lost is back. ”

Change over time

Data from the community surveys revealed that from the summer of 2013 to the fall of 2014, social networks remained largely stable, as did neighbors’ trust in each other, their sense of belonging, and their feeling of control over their environment. Also, across the city, people felt their families and neighborhoods were recovering from the disaster.

Improvements were more apparent in the neighborhood of Massaki. Over the course of the year, Massaki residents’ perceptions of family and neighborhood recovery increased

considerably more than in other parts of the city. This may be because the Ibasho Café was built in Massaki, making residents proud of the permanent structure that replaced the city's temporary one – even if they did not attend. It may also be a reflection of the strong community commitment to creating a social space for its residents, convincing the city to choose Massaki for the café. Community leaders' commitment may have also brought about other improvements that increased people's sense of progress regarding post-disaster recovery.

Importantly, there was a sense of confidence and solidarity among the elders, embodied by their accomplishments and the environment they had created at the café. Community leaders learned that it takes a long time to develop community solidarity when initiating a new idea and approach. Even so, they met early challenges, e.g., in developing a feasible operational plan in keeping with the members' vision, and were proud of what they could do for their community. Several leaders have recruited other members of the community to be members of the board. Local residents have also become more involved, suggesting ways to improve the café through more outreach, communication and transportation, and greater operational flexibility to support all ages and different interests.

As Ibasho elders developed their own sense of solidarity, the café facilitated bonding with the rest of the community. Its leaders hope it will become even more effective at creating community bonds in the future. The main members of the operation team are discussing how to create a more inclusive environment by reaching out to more community members of all ages and inviting them to participate in Ibasho operations.



Learning how to make Soba noodles.

Lessons learned

The NGO Ibasho is working with communities in other countries to facilitate the development of similar initiatives that empower elders to contribute to their communities and strengthen resilience. The development and operation of the Ibasho Café in Ofunato has provided valuable lessons on how to implement this approach. Applicable to other actors that want to support community-driven approaches that engage elders, the lessons focus on four key areas: empowering elders and the broader community, the role of external actors and other stakeholders, and the design and functions of the physical space:

Empowering elders and the broader community

Establish community consensus on vision, needs, and resources first

Assessing community needs and resources, and developing a group commitment and consensus, must come before designing a space or planning the programs that will be offered, and before community elders can take a leadership role.

Invest the time in establishing shared goals and changing mindsets about aging

It takes time for people—including elders—to recognize that a new approach is needed to fully integrate older people into community life and enable them to play a positive and useful

role. While the physical construction of the café took about six months, the community of Ofunato invested a year and a half in co-designing and planning the type of gathering place they wanted in their community and how it would function. It was useful to provide a framework to community members to develop and implement their ideas, particularly in the initial phase. Once they gained confidence and agreed upon clearly defined goals, they were ready to operate on their own.

Encourage a strong solidarity and support system among elders

The creation of Ibasho's non-profit organization fostered solidarity and a shared sense of ownership among the elders who manage it, which helps to ensure the long-term identity and sustainability of the café. Having a collective voice and shared responsibility in managing the café has helped the elders address operational challenges and external pressures to direct the activities of the café.

The role of external facilitators and other stakeholders

Let the community lead the way

Outside experts should act only as facilitators, empowering local members to create the community they want and helping them become fully integrated as active participants and leaders. Experts should encourage community members to share their views freely in order to avoid discouraging community participation. While members of the local community are acquiring the skills and confidence needed to manage day-to-day administration and plan for the future, it is important to appoint a local coordinator who is involved in the project development and early operations. The project coordinator must act as a partner, not a leader, providing support and technical assistance to help the local elders make a smooth transition to leadership in the early stage of operation.

It is also essential to understand the community's pre-existing power dynamics and interpersonal issues. Facilitators should promote an inclusive approach by ensuring that all voices are heard, and help community members work together to share the space and resources. This may require adjusting the goals and mission of the organization over time to suit the community's capacity and changing needs.

Project leadership needs to be flexible as the project evolves, and all participants can be encouraged to take leadership roles for different tasks. In Ofunato, elders took the lead on various tasks according to their skills and capacities. For instance, a retired carpenter took a leadership role for fixing and maintaining the building, while a woman elder led the organization of certain cultural activities.

Work through a trusted local partner

It is essential to work with a credible local partner who is trusted by community elders to participate in project development and help lead ongoing operations. The social welfare organization, Tenjinkai, played an important role in establishing a relationship with the communities in Ofunato. Throughout the development process, members of the facilitation team can work with the local partner to assess the capacities of the community, and encourage an inclusive approach by reaching out to people with different interests, abilities, and age groups to take on different responsibilities. Without a local partner and leaders who fully understand the meaning of a community-driven project, the project could revert to having an “elder care” approach rather than empowering community elders to manage the project themselves.

Ensure inclusive and transparent decision-making and communications

Maintain transparent communication with community members. Design the workshop programs so participants can provide feedback, share workshop outcomes, and communicate how their inputs will be implemented. Ensure consensus on decision-making processes for the final design.

Reach out to the community for help and resources

When resources are limited, look to the community and come up with creative problem-solving alternatives. The experience in Ofunato showed that having limited resources encouraged the elders to do creative problem solving and develop their own solutions to challenges.

Bridge the project and lessons learned to broader communities

As the project creates internal bonding among local residents, also think about how to create bridges with people who have different backgrounds and link to other communities. Invite outside people or groups to exchange ideas, and to give the elders an opportunity to share what they have learned and receive recognition for their hard work.

Involve local government

The project can provide an important opportunity to strengthen the relationship between community and local government, which would further support project sustainability. In Ofunato, the local government and the mayor welcomed the community initiative and found ways to offer support. Local governments can provide such support as adapting social policy, licensing procedures or building codes as needed to accommodate innovative ideas; or by offering in-kind support in the form of technical assistance, computer, legal, or accounting support. They can provide public land, or invest in upfront development costs to create a public space.

Design and function of the physical space

Create a community space for all ages

Though the operation of the Ibasho Café aims to target older people, planning and operations should embrace community members of all ages. Creating an age-specific space is counter to Ibasho's principal of fostering interaction and building social capital, and will likely limit the sustainability of the initiative.

Design a low-cost, low-O&M, high-efficiency space

Project infrastructure should not create a financial and maintenance burden for the community members who run it, and leaders should take full advantage of energy-efficiency technologies. The lower the cost of operations and maintenance (O&M) – for heating, cooling, repairs and other maintenance – the more money project leaders have to spend on the programs.

Budget resources for evolving café aesthetics and function

For members of the community, part of making the project their own is decorating it or making other adjustments as they see fit. Be sure to set aside funding to allow for cosmetic and functional adjustments once the café is open.

Provide accessible transportation

Creating a social gathering place operated by elders raised the issue of accessibility. In Ofunato, the research found that elders over the age of 75 living outside of the Massaki neighborhood participated less in Ibasho Café events to limited access to transport. Since many elders rely on public transportation to move about, it is important to think about how people will get there when planning where to create a place, ideally selecting a site that is convenient to affordable public transportation.

Conclusions

The Ibasho Café has become a place where locals meet. Elders living alone come for conversation, children come to read books and play, students come to study, mothers bring their children, and community members of all ages come to learn local traditions from the elders. In its first year of operation the café served more than 5,000 people and hosted over 50 events at which elders shared their knowledge with younger generations, cooking traditional foods that young people no longer know how to prepare, organizing traditional festivals and teaching how to use old equipment without electricity, and more.

The research findings demonstrate that participation in Ibasho had at least three measurable effects on the population. First, individuals who were part of Ibasho believe they have more control over their environment than those who were not. As a result of that heightened self-efficacy, they have initiated actions—establishing the organic farm and market, applying for grants, etc.—to ensure the sustainability of Ibasho as a community resource. They have also become more active in communal governance and undertaken activities to help fellow community members prepare for future hazard events.

Second, people regularly participating in Ibasho programs reported having more friends than similar people who did not participate. The café offered people a tangible place of their own, an *ibasho* where they could go whenever they wanted and do whatever they wanted, whether learning from each other, getting to know one another, or just sitting quietly in “their place,” surrounded by familiar faces. These features allowed them to

develop broader social networks, which indicate that they may be better situated to receive information, assistance, and support, in emergencies as well as in everyday life.

Finally, individuals who regularly attended Ibasho events had a deeper sense of belonging to their neighborhood than similar individuals who did not participate in Ibasho. Many mentioned that Ibasho Café created a place for them to do something meaningful for their community. Some also said they formed new friendships by being involved in the café. Perhaps most importantly, they learned that community is something that they have to negotiate and create with others, not something they can passively receive.

In developing the Ibasho Café, important lessons emerged on community engagement and empowerment. While the Ofunato community benefited from facilitation and technical support from outside individuals and organizations, the project team had to learn to trust community members when it came to leading and managing the project. The team also learned that pre-existing issues and longstanding conflicts are inherent in any community, and that community-driven projects must develop on their own timetable, giving their leaders time to learn, grow and adjust. The role of a third party is to empower community members to make their own decisions and create a project that they are proud of, patiently listening to their needs and facilitating the process so they can realize their goals. Without this distance, the project will not last long. A comment from one elder leader articulates this issue well: “Please fully trust us to operate this place, if you would like us [elders] to be in charge. We will not do this, if you organize the half of the work for us to complete the rest.”

In addition to supporting community recovery, elders of the Ibasho Café have also helped to change the perception of the role of older people among members of the community (including themselves). By demonstrating the knowledge, skills and experiences they have to offer, they have proven that they are not just a vulnerable population who need to be looked after and protected. Rethinking their roles in the community made many elders realize that they still want to be active participants in the community life.

Of course, community-driven projects like the Ibasho Café cannot solve all the issues related to global aging or the vulnerability of elders during and after natural disasters. But they bring power and self-determination to elders who have much to give and foster greater engagement among all members of the community. By creating a place where elders can give to their neighbors, the Ibasho Café has helped its community become stronger and more integrated. The Ibasho approach provides a long-term, sustainable model of incorporating elders more fully into their communities to enhance and enrich their lives. In addition, it presents a nuanced way to create more resilient communities, by connecting people of all ages and building social capital.

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Elders heat the Ibasho Café with firewood rather than relying on electric heat.

Annex 1

Methodology

Research Questions

Projects such as Ibasho that create or enhance existing social ties, bringing people together in informal settings for communal gatherings, have a variety of potential effects on the people involved. To better understand the effects of the Ibasho Café, this study examined three points:

1. Did Ibasho Café have an impact on the level of social capital among the community members?

- Did Ibasho Café affect their sense of belonging to the community?
- Did Ibasho Café affect their level of efficacy in the community?
- Did Ibasho Café affect the frequency and depth of everyday social interactions between elders and others?
- Did Ibasho Café affect the level of trust to their neighbors?

2. Did the level of social capital impact on the perception of individual and neighborhood level of recovery and reconstruction?

3. How did the Ibasho Café influence the well-being of community members of all ages, including elders?

- How did elders feel about operating the Ibasho Café?
- How did elders feel about visiting Ibasho Café?
- What were the experiences of both older and younger people in Ibasho Café?

Research methodologies

To answer our research questions, we employed a mixed-method research design, using both qualitative and quantitative measures to evaluate the effect of the Ibasho Café in a holistic manner. Quantitative data was gathered through a semi-structured survey developed to answer the research questions listed above. Meanwhile, participant observation conducted with ethnographical methods over the course of a year captured the qualitative data, recording the experiences of Ibasho Café users and staff members.

Because Ibasho conducted two rounds of surveys, one in the summer of 2013 and the other in the fall of 2014, the Ibasho team has been able to observe changes in the community. This is not a longitudinal panel survey, as the same people were not necessarily interviewed both times. Instead, the study captured responses from respondents in the same locations over a year period. Because of the large size of the sampling, however, Ibasho is confident that the data capture important changes over time in the same population.

Quantitative Data: Survey

The survey instrument (Annex 4) was tested with 25 individuals and then modified to facilitate respondents' understanding. Enumerators in the city of Ofunato distributed more than a thousand survey forms through a number of institutions, temporary housing communities, and other locations. For the first round of data, which took place in 2013 before the Ibasho program was up and running, 599 respondents took the survey. For the second round of data, which took place in the fall of 2014 after a year of operation of Ibasho Café, 1,142 people responded. A relatively small number of the people who responded in 2014 had regularly participated in Ibasho Café. Tables A1 and A2 in the appendix provide descriptive statistics on the variables for which we collected data.

Qualitative Data: Participant Observation

Participant observation began immediately after the opening of the Ibasho Café, and data was accumulated more than a year. The researcher visited the Ibasho Café from 10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. almost every day. He observed activities and talked to the staff and visitors. He was also an active participant in the café operation. He recorded observational data in the setting as field notes, noting everyday events, number of users, activities, and occasional reflections. In addition, he recorded his reflections in a daily journal, which he typed into a word document every night. His conversations were not tape-recorded.

Analytical Method

In a classic “double blind” scientific investigation, a researcher would randomly assign some Ofunato residents to attend Ibasho Café while directing others not to participate. Then, after a period of a year or longer had passed, both groups would answer the same set of questions. Because of the pressing need to establish the café (rather than study its

creation) and because we did not want to discourage anyone from joining the program, we did not use the double blind method. Instead, we collected information randomly from participants and non-participants after less than a full year of programming. This type of information is called observational data.

There are two ways to evaluate the impact of a program or intervention using observational data. The standard way is through a regression analysis, which allows the researchers to take into account multiple factors in linking outcomes to predictors. This technique would allow us to control for the age, income, education, and gender of a respondent when analyzing how Ibasho Café may have changed his or her behavior or cognition. The other way is through a more specialized method known as propensity score matching (PSM), in which the full observational data set is pared down into pairs. In the same way that many medical experiments use twins to try to parse out the impact of things such as medicine and exercise on health, this method generates similar pairs of observations for analysis. Our analysis uses both regression analysis and PSM.

Qualitative data collected with the participant observation was analyzed through two approaches, ethnographic and quantitative content analysis. The ethnographic approach analyzes the meaning of communications and actions based on detailed descriptions as well as to verify theoretical relationship. Quantitative content analysis combines analysis of the frequency and variety of messages about certain events and themes with comments based on observation and contents of the discourse in the field.



Preparing for Hina Matsuri (Girls festival) and sharing the stories of elders from their childhood.



Ibashi farm: elders grow organic vegetables and sell them at the farmers' market.

Annex 2

Data and analysis

Through the survey results and participants' observation, certain factors, efficacy, network, and sense of belonging appears to be strongly related to the frequency and depth of Ibasho participation. We have also explored these factors that might also influence on the level of volunteer participation and the sense of recovery process. This section discusses those findings from both quantitative and qualitative data with the focus on the impact of social capital on the Ibasho users and its surrounding community. The findings section begins by presenting the survey data collection matrix (Table A1) and descriptive statistics for 2013 (Table A2) and 2014 (Table A3). What follows is analysis of Ibasho Café users profile based on the survey results, and the factors of social capital: efficacy, network, sense of belonging, followed by the perception of disaster recovery and reconstruction.

Table A1. Survey data collection matrix

Places where surveys were distributed	Type of respondents	Year	Area	Number of distribution	Distribution date	Duration	No. of respondents	Respondents (Massaki-Cho)	Respondents (Ofunato-City)	Returned ratio
Support center: community center operated by local government	Local residents	2013	Massaki-Cho	-	-	6/4-6/27	175	172	3	-
Temporary housing communities in Massaki-area	Local residents	2013	Massaki-Cho	250	6/27/2013	6/28-7/5	106	106	0	0.42
Temporary Housing communities in Ofunato-City	Local residents	2013	Ofunato-City	-	-	8/1-9/5	60	5	55	-
Syokyu-Kai: hospital	Employees	2013	Ofunato-City (+Massaki-Cho)	200	11/20/2013	11/25-12/13	191	0	191	0.96
Tenjin-Kai: social welfare organization	Employees	2013	Ofunato-City (+Massaki-Cho)	98	11/27/2013	11/4-12/20	67	0	67	0.68
Ibasho Café	Residents	2014	Massaki-Cho	90	10/12/2014	10/9-10/27	21	21	0	0.55
Massaki Elementary School	Parents	2014	Massaki-Cho	340	10/10/2014	10/10-10/25	60	60	0	0.18
Massaki Middle School	Parents	2014	Massaki-Cho	200	10/15/2014	10/15-10/24	24	24	0	0.12
Temporary housing communities in Massaki-area	Residents	2014	Massaki-Cho	418	10/8/2014	10/7-10/19	69	69	0	0.17
Syokyu-Kai: hospital	Employees	2014	Ofunato-City (+Massaki-Cho)	294	10/8/2014	10/11-10/22	233	24	209	0.79
Temporary housing communities in Ofunato-City	Residents	2014	Ofunato-City	1233	10/14/2014	10/12-10/25	221	0	221	0.18
Ofunato Municipal Office	City employees	2014	Ofunato-City (+Massaki-Cho)	610	10/14/2014	10/15-10/24	514	41	473	0.84

Table A2. Descriptive statistics for 2013 Ofunato survey data

2013 Survey	No. of observations	Mean	Standard deviation	Min	Max
Demographic Characteristics					
Age Category [18-29; 30-44; 45-59; 60-74; 75+]	514	3.00	1.22	1	5
Gender [0 for women, 1 for men]	582	0.35	0.48	0	1
Education Level [1 = middle school; 5 = grad]	552	2.95	0.67	1	5
Income Category [1 = <99k yen, 6 = >6.5million]	324	3.19	1.45	1	6
Geography					
Live in Massaki-Cho	599	0.47	0.50	0	1
Social Network Characteristics					
Talk with how many people	578	2.79	0.99	0	4
How many friends	574	2.09	1.05	0	4
Sense of belonging to neighborhood	581	1.48	0.66	0	2
Level of trust in neighbor	578	1.52	0.65	0	2
Efficacy	560	2.44	1.02	0	4
Perceptions of Recovery					
Family recovery level	551	2.10	1.36	0	4
Neighborhood recovery level	567	1.95	1.26	0	4

Table A3. Descriptive statistics for 2014 Ofunato survey data

2014 Survey	No. of observations	Mean	Standard deviation	Min	Max
Demographic Characteristics					
Age Category [18-29; 30-44; 45-59; 60-74; 75+]	1107	2.73	1.09	1	5
Gender [0 for women, 1 for men]	1096	0.44	0.50	0	1
Education Level [1 = middle school; 5 = grad]	1064	4.02	1.38	1	8
Income Category [1 = <99k yen, 6 = >6.5million]	799	3.92	1.65	1	6
Geography					
Live in Massaki-Cho	1146	0.21	0.41	0	1
Social Network Characteristics					
Talk with how many people	1099	2.89	0.93	0	4
How many friends	1106	2.18	1.04	0	4
Sense of belonging to neighborhood	1095	1.52	0.63	0	2
Level of trust in neighbor	1047	1.56	0.62	0	2
Efficacy	1083	2.66	1.03	0	4
Perceptions of Recovery					
Family recovery level	1027	2.59	1.21	0	4
Neighborhood recovery level	1084	2.50	1.13	0	4
Participation in Ibasho					
Visits to Ibasho [0 = none, 3 if weekly, 6 if daily]	1146	0.175393	0.686581	0	6

Profile of Ibasho users

Of 1,164 total survey respondents, 123 reported regular visits to Ibasho Café. The number was small considering the total number of visitors during the 12 months after the Ibasho Café opening (n=5,559) because of the two-week duration of the data collection period. Based on the collected data, 90% of the regular Ibasho users are from Massaki area where Ibasho Café is located. Most of the regular users are living in walking distance of the café. This suggests that walkability is a critical point to determine whether or not users would engage with this type of service—especially older users. Those who came from outside the neighborhood were younger (30-74 years old) than those from the Ibasho neighborhood. It is assumed that this result reflects the availability of accessible transportation to the Ibasho Café. People have to drive or use public transport to the Ibasho Café if they live outside of Ibasho neighborhood. Few elders drive, and many find it too expensive to regularly use public transportation.

Figure 8. How well Ibasho Café is known by local residents

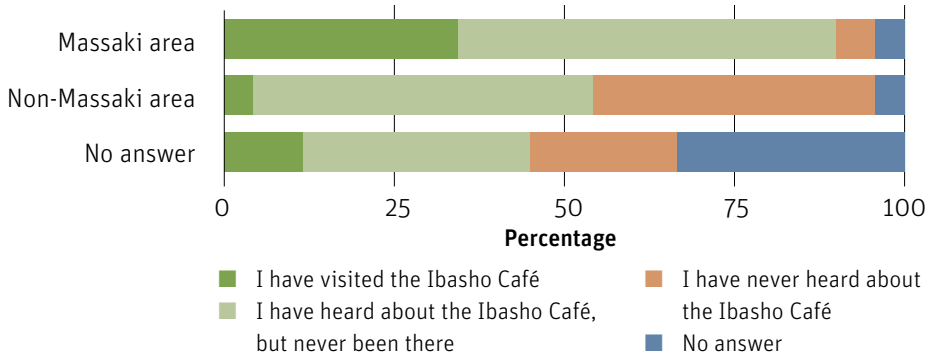


Figure 9. Ibasho users: Age distribution

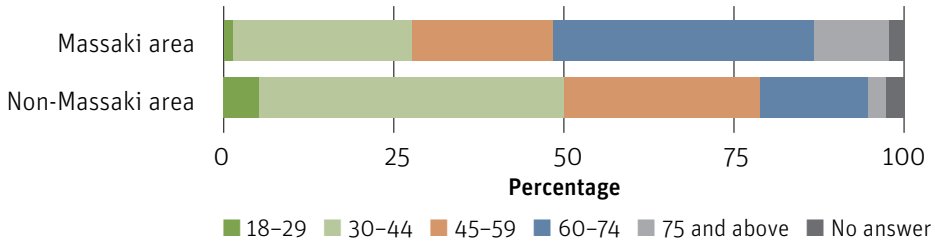


Figure 10. Ibasho Users: Family structure

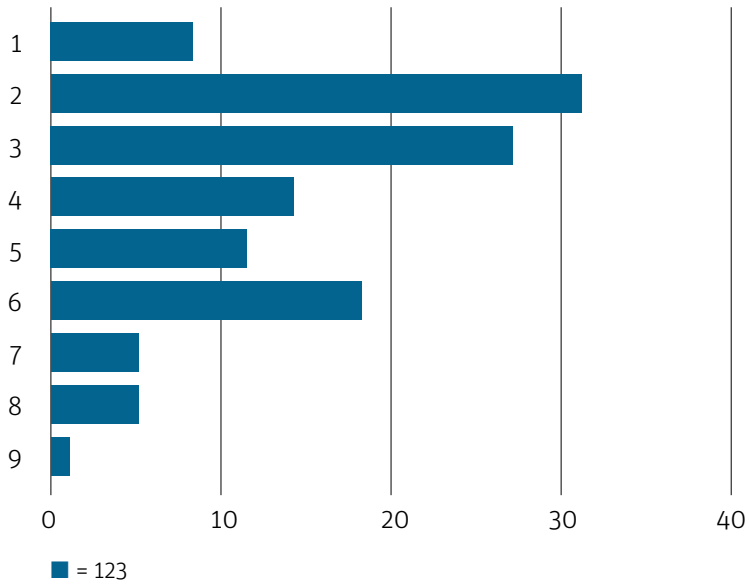
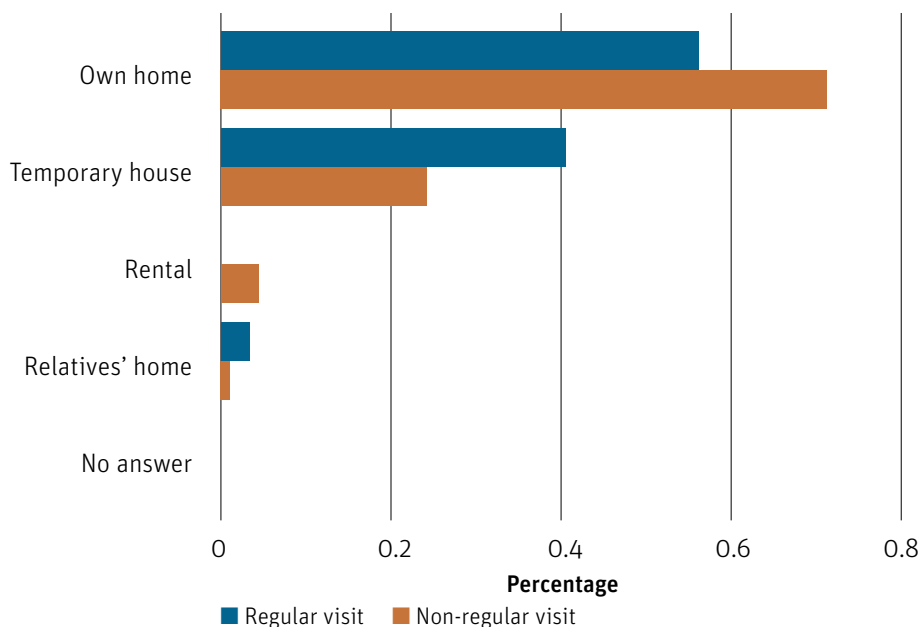


Figure 11. Ibasho users: Housing situation



Perception of positive/negative impacts

In response to questions about whether anything changed since the Ibasho Café was opened, the majority of responses were positive, though there were some negative concerns as well.

Positive impacts

- Social connections
 - I am happier because I was able to meet new people
 - I connected with new friends
 - I was able to interact with people of all ages
 - I can stop by whenever I feel like going
 - I have more people to talk to
 - I have more interaction with others
 - I was able to connect with people from outside of the community
- Improved everyday life experience
 - I am happier because I have something meaningful to do
 - I found something fun to do everyday

- My life is more meaningful
- I learned new things
- I became more active in my community
- I enjoy volunteering at the café
- I became busier
- I have easier access to fresh produce now
- I like shopping at the farmer's market
- My children visit Ibasho Café with their friends
- It's nice to have a place where children can play
- It's nice to have a community gathering place

Negative impacts

- Too many elders in this place
- Created heavy traffic in the neighborhood
- Not comfortable having out-of-town people walking around the neighborhood
- It is noisier than before

Impact of Ibasho Cafe on self-efficacy

To understand the level of self-efficacy, the survey looked at how participating in Ibasho may change how individuals view their ability to influence their environment. Table A4 provides the results of the regression analysis, which shows that several factors correlated strongly with respondents' sense of self-efficacy, including age, gender and income. Of the Ibasho patrons who responded to the survey, men and wealthier individuals all felt more personal efficacy, and regular Ibasho attendees have a higher level of belief in their ability to control their environment. In contrast, women, lower-income, and younger people felt that they had less control over their political and social environments. For example, we estimate that young women with a low income would have an average self-efficacy score of 2.3 on a scale of 0 to 4. In contrast, a typical older, wealthier man would have a score of 3. After controlling for these demographic factors, we found that individuals who attended more Ibasho events felt that they can make impact on their community a better place.

To delve more deeply into the question of efficacy, we also used the propensity score matching (PSM) method to study this outcome. Comparing very similar individuals who went to Ibasho regularly with those who did not, we found reported levels of personal efficacy higher for the Ibasho attendees. We narrowed our dataset from more than 1,000 respondents to 700 very similar individuals—individuals whom we believe would have been

likely to go to Ibasho. Then, we looked at the levels of self-efficacy for those who actually went to Ibasho regularly (daily or weekly) and those who did not go. From this smaller of more similar people, those who attended Ibasho had self-efficacy scores .25 higher than those who did not attend (on the 0 to 4 scale).

There are slight, measurable differences in those who participate regularly (daily or weekly) in Ibasho between individuals who live in the Massaki area and those who do not. The average self-efficacy score (on the 0 to 4 scale) is 2.64 for all those living outside Massaki and 2.9 for the small number of regular Ibasho attendees from Massaki.

Table A4. Estimated regression coefficients for efficacy

	Coefficient
Age Category [18-29; 30-44; 45-59; 60-74; 75+]	0.099*** 0.04
Gender [0 for women, 1 for men]	0.124* 0.08
Education Level [1 = middle school; 5 = grad]	0.02 0.03
Income Category [1 = <99k yen, 6 = >6.5million]	0.051** 0.03
Live in Massaki-Cho	-0.08 0.10
Visits to Ibasho [0 = none, 3 if weekly, 6 if daily]	0.091* 0.06
Constant	2.08 0.22

Note: *** indicates p value <.01, ** indicates a p value < .05, and * indicates a p value < .1

Quantitative Data on Impact of Ibasho Café on social networks

Table A5 provides the results of the regression analysis, which shows the variables that influenced a respondent’s reported number of friends: age (older people reported more friends), gender (males reported more friends), and income (poorer individuals reported more friends). Controlling for these factors, our regression analysis shows that more regular attendance at Ibasho made it more likely that people would report having more friends. Table A5.1 provides the results for how many people respondents reported talking to. Here,

only three variables had a strong correlation with this outcome: age, gender, and income, with older, wealthier men reporting that they spoke to more people. Ibasho visits had no measurable impact on this outcome.

Individuals who were at the café on a regular basis – daily or weekly – reported a moderately high number of friends (2.3 on a 0 - 4 scale), with an higher number (2.5) reported by participants who lived in the Massaki neighborhood and a lower number (2.08) by those living outside of Massaki. There were no measurable differences in the number of friends reported by respondents who lived in temporary housing versus long-term housing.

Controlling for these factors, more regular attendance at Ibasho made it more likely that people would report having more friends. Researchers also considered how many people respondents reported talking to (Table A5.1). Here, the same three variables had a strong correlation with this outcome: age, gender, and income, with older, wealthier men reporting that they spoke to more people, but Ibasho visits had no measurable impact on this outcome.

Table A5. Estimated coefficients for number of friends in neighborhood

	Coefficient
Age Category [18-29; 30-44; 45-59; 60-74; 75+]	0.25***
	0.04
Gender [0 for women, 1 for men]	0.21***
	0.07
Education Level [1 = middle school; 5 = grad]	-0.01
	0.03
Income Category [1 = <99k yen, 6 = >6.5million]	0.070***
	0.02
Visits to Ibasho [0 = none, 3 if weekly, 6 if daily]	0.098*
	0.05
Constant	1.14
	0.22

Note: *** indicates p value <.01, ** indicates a p value < .05, and * indicates a p value < .1

Table A5.1. How many people do you talk with

	Coefficient
Age Category [18-29; 30-44; 45-59; 60-74; 75+]	0.205*** 0.0353847
Gender [0 for women, 1 for men]	0.127* 0.0657347
Education Level [1 = middle school; 5 = grad]	-0.0364575 0.02597
Income Category [1 = <99k yen, 6 = >6.5million]	0.143*** 0.0217861
Visits to Ibasho [0 = none, 3 if weekly, 6 if daily]	0.0661942 0.0451279
Constant	1.854151 0.1900761

Note: *** indicates p value <.01, ** indicates a p value < .05, and * indicates a p value < .1

Impact of Ibasho Café on sense of belonging

To assess the impact of Ibasho Café on the sense of belonging, we asked two questions: “Does living in Ofunato city give you a sense of community or a feeling of belonging?” and “Does living in your neighborhood give you a sense of community or feeling of belonging?”

As shown in Table A6, demographic factors that appear to affect a person’s sense of belonging to his or her neighborhood include age and income. Those with the highest incomes had a higher sense of belonging to their neighborhoods than those with less income, and older people had a far deeper sense of belonging than younger ones. Our oldest and wealthiest respondents had an average sense of belonging of 2 (on a scale of 0 to 2), while for the youngest and poorest the sense of belonging was only a 1 (on a scale of 0 to 2). Residents of Massaki had only a slightly higher, not statistically significant level of belonging than those living outside the area. Controlling for these demographic factors showed that regular attendance at Ibasho was significantly associated with a deeper sense of belonging. Our PSM analysis echoed that finding.

Similarly, only age and income had an impact on a person’s sense of belonging to the overall city of Ofunato (as opposed to a particular neighborhood). For the oldest and wealthiest respondents, the average sense of belonging to the city was 1.9 on a scale of 0 to 2, while for the youngest and poorest it was close to 1. The sense of belonging was also high both among the most regular (daily/weekly) Ibasho users (1.6) and among Massaki dwellers (1.6). It was a bit lower among those from outside Massaki (1.5), but these slight differences were not statistically significant.

Demographic factors of age and income appear to affect a person’s sense of neighborhood belonging. Individuals with the highest incomes had a greater sense of belonging to their neighborhoods than individuals with less income, and older people had a far deeper sense of belonging than younger people. Residents of the Massaki neighborhood had only a slightly higher, though statistically insignificant, level of belonging than those living outside the area. Controlling for these demographic factors, regular attendance at Ibasho was significantly associated with a deeper connection to their neighborhood.

At the city level, the oldest and wealthiest respondents similarly had a higher sense of belonging to Ofunato (as opposed to a particular neighborhood), though less so for the youngest and poorest. Among regular Ibasho users and people who lived in the Massaki neighborhood, their sense of belonging to the city was also high. People living outside Massaki had a somewhat lower sense of belonging, but the slight differences were statistically insignificant.

Table A6. Estimated coefficients for sense of belonging to neighborhood

	Coefficient
Age Category [18-29; 30-44; 45-59; 60-74; 75+]	0.131*** 0.02
Gender [0 for women, 1 for men]	0.00 0.04
Education Level [1 = middle school; 5 = grad]	0.00 0.02
Income Category [1 = <99k yen, 6 = >6.5million]	0.083*** 0.01
Visits to Ibasho [0 = none, 3 if weekly, 6 if daily]	0.0774* 0.03
Constant	0.80 0.13

Note: *** indicates p value <.01, ** indicates a p value < .1

Impact of Ibasho Café on participation in volunteer activities

To gauge whether the café inspired more people to participate in volunteer organizations, we asked people if they were a member of any organization before and after the GEJE. Several factors were found to have made participation in volunteer organizations before

the earthquake more likely: Older people, wealthier people, Massaki area dwellers, and those with more friends were more likely to report participating in volunteer activities before the earthquake. The great majority (90 percent) of our oldest, wealthiest, and most social respondents reported that they participated before the earthquake. In contrast, only 10 percent of the youngest, poorest, and least social respondents said they did so.

After the earthquake, only income levels and how many people they report talking to (number of friends) correlated with greater levels of participation in volunteer organizations. Holding all other factors constant, 80 percent of Ibasho members reported that they had participated in activities before the earthquake, compared with 79 percent of those living in Massaki and 70 percent of non-Massaki dwellers.

Massaki had a strong culture of community participation before the GEJE. We also assumed that because the Ibasho project was initiated with leaders of local groups in Massaki, those leaders and their members stayed to support Ibasho Café.

While the level of participation in local organizations remained almost the same, the type of involvement has changed after the GEJE event, from participation in community duties such as a neighborhood association, a women's association, the local festival and other cultural events to more leisure-related volunteer activities. This suggests that the people who always participated in community activities may be the same ones likely to get involved in a new initiative for their community, however, they have also started to participate more life enriching and fun activities, rather than only engaged in community duties. We also learned that many elders retired from the festival and cultural event committees after the disaster, presumably because they wanted to find a more meaningful way to contribute to their community.

Impact of Ibasho Café on perception of recovery

Table A7 shows the estimated coefficients for how respondents perceived their family's level of recovery from the disaster. A number of factors correlated strongly with this perception, including age (younger people were more positive about recovery), gender (women were more positive than men), education, income, and self-efficacy (for each of these three traits, people with more had more positive perceptions of their recovery). Younger, better educated, wealthier women who believed that they had control over their environment were more likely to see a good recovery at the family level. Ibasho visits were not statistically related to this outcome; nor was living in or outside Massaki.

Table A8 shows the estimated coefficients for perceptions of neighborhood recovery. Age, income, sense of self-efficacy, how many people they spoke with, current participation were correlated with neighborhood recovery perceptions, in that younger, wealthier, more efficacious, and more involved people saw their neighborhood recoveries more positively. Ibasho visits were not statistically significant in these data. Neither was living in or outside Massaki.

The survey asked respondents for their suggestions as to how to make their community a better place. Most were related to housing reconstruction, because many are still in temporary housing. Some were related to neighborhood planning to enhance their lifestyle, while others mentioned improving communications among the local residents as well as with local government.

- Build public housing quickly
- Not enough space for children
- Create park and public space
- Open up school play ground (school play grounds have been occupied for the space for public housing community, and children do not have place to play or practice their sports)
- Education facilities for children—too much focus on elders
- Convenient access to shopping
- Enhance accessibilities for people of all ages
- Traffic control (Too many trucks and cars in town for the constructions, which creates traffic jams. Lack of plan for the traffic control to handle these construction related vehicles)
- More job opportunities
- Mitigate the division between people who lost their house and who did not
- Fill the gaps between the current recovery project and what local people want to have
- Enhance the transparency of the local politics related to the recovery process with community members

When discussing the recovery with local residents, many start to talk about securing a stable place to live, whether in the form of public housing or of a house for themselves. The underlying theme of these comments is not a longing for the physical structure of a house but the importance of reestablishing a sense of belonging, security, privacy, comfort, and familiarity, and of being surrounded by friends, family and one's own possessions.

Before the GEJE, all residents in Massaki belonged to a neighborhood association, many of which were discontinued after the disaster. Social workers organized support systems and activities to encourage social interactions for people living in temporary housing. With many residents now moving out to public housing, they need not lose relationships formed in the temporary housing communities. Ibasho provides a place for new residents to socialize with old friends and to meet and befriend long-time local residents.

Table A7. Estimated coefficients for family recovery

	Coefficient
Age Category [18-29; 30-44; 45-59; 60-74; 75+]	-0.188*** 0.0472
Gender [0 for women, 1 for men]	-0.154* 0.0853
Education Level [1 = middle school; 5 = grad]	0.087** 0.033
Income Category [1 = <99k yen, 6 = >6.5million]	0.123*** 0.0295
Sense of efficacy	0.325*** 0.041
To how many people do you speak	0.060 0.064
How many friends do you have	0.005 0.0546
Current participation in organizations [yes/no]	0.157 0.099
Visits to Ibasho [0 = none, 3 if weekly, 6 if daily]	0.026 0.062
Live in Massaki-Cho	0.107 0.116
Constant	1.17 0.27

Note: *** indicates p value <.01, ** indicates a p value < .05, and * indicates a p value < .1

Table A8. Estimated coefficients for neighborhood recovery

	Coefficient
Age Category [18-29; 30-44; 45-59; 60-74; 75+]	-0.108*** 0.046
Gender [0 for women, 1 for men]	-0.125 0.082
Education Level [1 = middle school; 5 = grad]	0.025 0.032
Income Category [1 = <99k yen, 6 = >6.5million]	0.086*** 0.028
Sense of efficacy	0.327*** 0.040
To how many people do you speak	-0.116* 0.061
How many friends do you have	0.031 0.052
Current participation in organizations [yes/no]	0.174* 0.095
Visits to Ibasho [0 = none, 3 if weekly, 6 if daily]	0.034 0.059
Live in Massaki-Cho	-0.062 0.112
Constant	1.763 0.262

Note: *** indicates p value <.01, ** indicates a p value < .05, and * indicates a p value < .1

Table A9. Trust in neighbors

	Coefficient
Age Category [18-29; 30-44; 45-59; 60-74; 75+]	0.052** 0.024
Gender [0 for women, 1 for men]	-0.009 0.043
Education Level [1 = middle school; 5 = grad]	0.010 0.017
Income Category [1 = <99k yen, 6 = >6.5million]	0.001 0.015
Sense of efficacy	0.194*** 0.021
To how many people do you speak	0.030 0.032
How many friends do you have	0.120*** 0.028
Current participation in organizations [yes/no]	0.207*** 0.050
Visits to Ibasho [0 = none, 3 if weekly, 6 if daily]	0.002 0.031
Live in Massaki-Cho	0.003 0.059
Constant	0.356 0.138

Note: *** indicates p value <.01, ** indicates a p value < .05, and * indicates a p value < .1

Annex 3

Survey questionnaire

1. Name _____
Age _____, Number to contact _____
Gender: Male Female
2. Please select the region (area) where you currently live.
 Sakari area
 Ofunato area
 Massaki area
 Akasaki area
 Ikawa area
 Takkon area
 Hikoroichi area
 Sanriku-Yoshihama area
 Sanriku okirai area
 Sanriku-Yoshihama area
3. Did you live in the same area before the GEJE?
How long have you been living in this area? _____ years
4. Reasons why you have moved here:
 a) I was born here
 b) others _____
(e.g. marriage, work, family and so on)
5. How many people live in your household? (family structure _____)
6. Please select the type of your current housing.
 owned property temporary housing unit rental others

7. Please select your projection for the housing situation.
- continue to live in the current house
 - building a new house at the higher ground
 - building a new house at my owned property
 - purchase a propriety and building a new house
 - move to relatives house
 - move to public housing
 - rent or purchase privately developed housings
 - no plan
8. Do you currently work?
 What kind of work do you do? _____
 What kind of work did you do? _____
9. Were you a member of any organization before GEJE? Yes No
 (e.g. union, cooperative, volunteer group, senior club, wives club, or some similar group)
 If so, please select the organizations where you are a member. _____
10. Are you a member of any organization after GEJE? Yes No
 (e.g. union, cooperative, volunteer group, senior club, wives club, or some similar group)
 If so, please select the organizations where you are a member. _____
11. Do you participate in community hearing, township meetings, and other community meetings for post-disaster construction? Yes No
12. Does living in Ofunato city give you a sense of community or a feeling of belonging? Yes No
13. Does living in your neighborhood give you a sense of community or feeling of belonging? Yes No
14. Generally speaking, would you say that you can trust the following people a lot, some, only a little, or not at all?
- The people in your neighborhood Yes No
 - The people in Ofunato city Yes No
 - The people in Iwate prefecture Yes No
 - The Ofunato local government Yes No
 - The Iwate prefecture government Yes No
 - The central government Yes No
15. Would you say that the recovery/reconstruction efforts for your personal live have made progress?
- Great progress Moderate Small progress No progress

16. Would you say that the recovery/reconstruction efforts for your neighborhood have made progress?
 Great progress Moderate Small progress No progress
17. What level of impact can people like you have in making your community a better place?
 No impact Small impact Moderate Big impact
18. Do you expect to be living in your community three years from now?
Yes No
19. How many people in your neighborhood do you regularly talk in a daily basis?
 None 1 person several people 10 people 50 people or more
20. How many friends do you have in your neighborhood?
 None 1 person several people 10 people 50 people or more
21. Do you have friends or neighbors besides your family whom you can ask for help
 Yes No who? _____
22. Do you have a "Ibasha," a place where you feel being at home outside of your house? Yes No
If so, please tell me where your Ibasha is? _____
23. What age do you consider being in the "elderly" population? _____
24. What is your income source?
a) Salary
b) Pension
c) Self-employment
d) none
25. Which income level are you belong? (Optional)
a) Less than 10,000 USD
b) Between 10,000 – 25,000 USD
c) 25,000 – 35,000 USD
d) 35,000 – 50,000 USD
e) 50,000 – 65,000 USD
f) 65,000 USD and above
26. Last academic degree:
 Elementary school Middle school High school
 Bachelor Graduate school

27. Please share your thoughts and suggestion regarding the reconstruction efforts in your neighborhood.
28. Have you been to Ibasho House in Massaki Area?
 Yes, I have heard about it but never visited I never heard
29. How often do you visit Ibasho house?
 everyday 3-4/week 1-2/week several times/month
 once/month other
30. How did you find out about Ibasho?
 Having tea with friends
 Recommended by family
 recommended by friends
 accidentally found it
 Live close to the Ibasho Café
 participating in events
 volunteer opportunity
 participated in the pre-opening workshops
 newspaper flyers
31. How many people you newly formed friendship in the Ibasho Café?
 None 1 person several people 10 people 50 people or more
32. Please select all the events you have participated in at Ibasho Café.
 Cafe
 meetings
 community gathering
 music even
 Health education
 hobby
 seasonal events
 cultural education classes
33. Have you participate in volunteer activities in Ibasho Café?
 Yes No what type of volunteer? _____
34. Did Ibasho house have impact on your daily life?
 Yes No How? _____
35. Please describe your suggestions for Ibasho Café.



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GFDRR’s Inclusive Community Resilience program facilitates and fosters community-led disaster and climate risk management for more resilient societies and reduced losses. The program aims to strengthen community level resilience at a large scale by leveraging country investment programs that put resources directly in the hands of poor households and communities; supports civil society and citizen engagement in disaster and climate risk management efforts for greater accountability and impact; and supports innovations, knowledge and learning to promote the voice of vulnerable communities in national and global policy dialogue and disaster risk management.



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