

The prospect of social and solidarity economy (SSE) now possibly emerging in the post disaster affected areas of Tohoku, Japan

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Abstract

The Triple disasters of earthquake, tsunami, and nuclear power accident hit Tohoku, Japan on 11th March, 2011. The 3.11 accelerated the long term structural changes of rural Japan: depopulation and decay of local community. After six years since the disasters, there have been some noticeable progress on rebuilding physical infrastructure. However, rebuilding local communities have been facing daunting challenges. One positive sign that has been emerging in the post disaster areas in Tohoku is that there are some networks of producers and consumers who are reciprocally connected. Some networks are formed through agricultural cooperatives and others are promoted by the coordinated support for renewable energy. These diverse networks may promote fostering the new type of economy: social and solidarity economy (SSE). My presentation will critically examine both possibilities and limitations of SSE, which is still fragile yet potentially significant in making rural societies more resilient and sustainable than before.