

Chapter 2

Governance of the Education Sector and Disaster Risk Reduction

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Abstract Japanese disaster risk governance is integral to the education sector. The Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) is 1 of 24 ministries and agencies that compose the Central Disaster Management Council. The MEXT promotes disaster risk governance in the education sector through policy guidance and financial support. Compared to international arguments on strengthening disaster risk governance related to adoption of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030, the Japanese disaster risk governance in the education sector provides outputs and normative aspects of governance, such as policies, laws and regulations, financing, and institutional structure that are more advanced. In addition, Japanese disaster risk governance has evolved based on lessons learnt from past disaster experiences such as the 1995 Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake and the 2011 Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami. These context-specific revisions of the governance contribute to the reduction of risk for future disasters. A major issue found from the analyses is the lack of a school-community partnership for disaster risk reduction. While Japanese disaster risk governance in the education sector has strong leadership via the central government, a partnership with other actors at the school level is relatively weak. This is not only an issue for disaster risk governance but overall Japanese education governance. In the current educational reform, the MEXT promotes establishment of a collaborative platform between schools and communities. This could lead to enhancement of a collaborative relationship for disaster risk reduction. Under the newly adopted SFDRR, Japan and the international community could learn from each other to strengthen disaster risk governance in the education sector through international cooperation.

Keywords Governance • Education sector • Disaster risk reduction • Japan

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2.1 Governance and Disaster Risk Reduction

Governance is broader than government, as found in many literatures. Salamon argued that new governance is a way of thinking about how government and public administration meet the diverse needs of society. While earlier government activity focused on direct delivery of goods and services, new governance leverages third parties and seeks to network their capabilities to create solutions to an increasing array of public problems. It means “fundamental transformation not just in the scope and scale of government action, but in its basic forms” (Salamon 2000). According to the United Nations Development Programme (1997), which is the leading UN agency on governance issues, “governance” is defined as “the exercise of economic, political, and administrative authority to manage a country’s affairs at all levels. It comprises the mechanisms, processes, and institutions, through which citizens and groups articulate their interests, exercise their legal rights, meet their obligations, and mediate their differences.” Governance is the umbrella under which disaster risk reduction takes place (UNDP 2010). Disaster risk governance defined is “the way in which the public authorities, civil servants, media, private sector, and civil society coordinate at community, national, and regional levels in order to manage and reduce disaster and climate related risks” (Aysan and Lavell 2014). In the international field of disaster risk reduction, disaster risk governance emphasizes multi-stakeholders’ involvement at multiple layers of sectors and fields.

Although the Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA) did implicitly incorporate the importance of governance under priority of Action 1 and Action 5 (UNISDR 2005), the importance of governance to manage disaster risk is now a pressing priority. The Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (as SFDRR hereafter) 2015–2030, the newly adopted international strategy for disaster risk reduction introduced at the Third UN World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction in Sendai in 2015, sets “strengthening disaster risk governance to manage disaster risk” as a priority action within and across sectors by states at local, national, regional, and global levels in pursuance of the expected outcome and goals. These are for the substantial reduction of disaster risk and loss of lives, livelihoods, and health and in the economic, physical, social, cultural, and environmental assets of persons, businesses, communities, and countries (UNISDR 2015a).

This chapter reviews disaster risk governance of the Japanese education sector in an international framework of disaster risk governance. It attempts to verify advantages and issues on disaster risk governance in the Japanese education sector for identifying fields of international cooperation to enhance resilience of the education system in developing countries.

2.2 Disaster Risk Governance in the Japanese Education Sector

Japan has extensive experience with disaster risk reduction in the education sector at the national, local, and school levels. At the national level, the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) leads policy and vision and implements them at schools with support and guidance from the local boards of education. These disaster risk reduction policies and practices, especially after the 1995 Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake, progressed and evolved by reflecting on lessons learnt from disaster experiences (Toda 2015).

2.2.1 MEXT in the National Disaster Governance Structure

Under the national DRR governance structure, the MEXT is 1 of 24 ministerial agencies in the Central Disaster Management Council. To ensure the safety and security of schoolchildren against disasters, the MEXT also formulated its own Disaster Management Operation Plan of 2008 based on the Disaster Countermeasures Basic Act and National Basic Disaster Management Plan (Fig. 2.1). It specifies the MEXT's designated duties in a disaster management cycle and promotes comprehensive and systematic disaster management administration in the education sector. The MEXT's initiatives include promoting accident prevention by improving disaster education and strengthening disaster prevention functions of school facilities, promoting emergency disaster control measures, and promoting research and development in respect to disaster prevention and support for disaster recovery. The MEXT also supports strengthening school disaster management systems based on local disaster management plans at prefectural and municipal levels.

The MEXT's Disaster Management Operation Plan has had occasional revision. The latest plan of 2012 has nine sections, which include general rules and disaster countermeasures by hazard types, including earthquake, tsunami, and nuclear and large-scale accidents, and by specific expected large-scale earthquake disasters. Each hazard countermeasure includes disaster mitigation, emergency response, recovery and reconstruction, and support of preparing a regional disaster management plan according to a disaster management cycle. In the 2012 revision after the Great East Japan Earthquake, the tsunami disaster chapter was added, and roles and responsibilities of designated evacuation shelters were specified in accordance with revision of the National Disaster Management Basic Plan in 2014.

For example, in response to the 2011 GEJET disaster, the MEXT took immediate action to support early resumption of education in disaster-affected areas, which entailed bearing the cost of building temporary classrooms and reconstructing damaged school facilities. In addition, the MEXT secured educational opportunities for affected students by distributing free textbooks, accepting affected students in

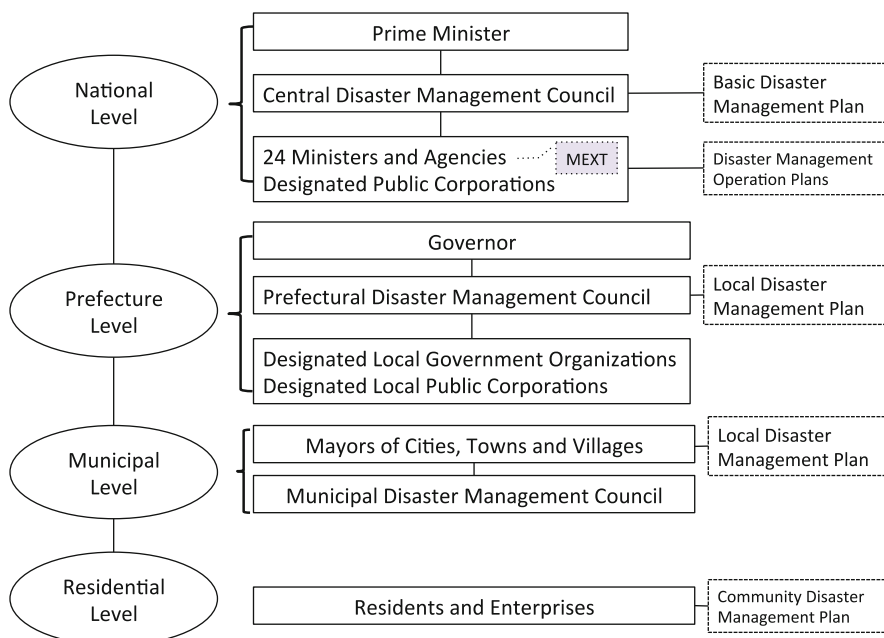


Fig. 2.1 Outlines of disaster management structure in Japan (Cabinet Office 2015)

resettled or evacuated areas, providing economic assistance to affected students, allocating additional teachers to schools in tsunami-affected areas, and dispatching school counselors for children's mental care. These MEXT actions are based on the MEXT's Disaster Management Operation Plan.

For mainstreaming disaster risk reduction (DRR), all actors involved in disaster risk reduction need to understand the importance of proactively implementing comprehensive risk reduction and preparedness initiatives in order to reduce the damage caused by natural hazards. As seen in Fig. 2.1, it is critical that government prioritizes DRR in the country's policy and that MEXT, as a government ministry, incorporates DRR in its strategies, plans, and policies at the national level.

2.2.2 School Safety in the National Education Strategy

The Ministry of Education and Science Establishment Act (No. 96, July 1999) defines 97 designated duties of the MEXT in Article 4 of Chap. 1, among which school safety along with health, school nutrition, and mutual aid disaster insurance is followed by related duties on educational reform, continuous education, local education offices, elementary and secondary education, and textbook authorization.

In 2006, the Basic Act on Education revision, for the first time in 60 years, reflected changes in society toward the promotion of education reform. To promote

the education reform described in the Basic Act, the MEXT formulated the Basic Plan for Promotion of Education in 2008. They activated the second phase of the Basic Plan (2013–2017). It shows four basic directions of education reform: (i) fostering survival abilities of children in a diversified and changing society, (ii) fostering human resources to lead Japan by creating new values, (iii) establishing a safety net of learning opportunities for everyone, and (iv) formulating tight-knit and vital community networks. One of the eight missions in the second plan relates to building a safety net of learning opportunities to ensure a safe and secure educational and research environment.

The mission of a safe educational environment specifies realizing safe and secure school facilities and promoting school safety as concrete actions based on the Five-Year (2012–2016) Plan on Promotion of School Safety (MEXT 2012). The target is for completion of all quake-resistant construction at all the public elementary and secondary school facilities by the end of fiscal year 2015. The plan also promotes countermeasures for nonstructured materials at schools, introduction of evacuation routes during tsunamis, and reinforcement of disaster prevention functions of schools. The primary goals are promotion of school safety, enrichment of disaster education and methodology for fostering children's attitudes toward independent thinking, and contributing to a safe and secure society.

2.2.3 Institutional Arrangement of School Safety in Japan

Under the order for the organization of the MEXT, the School Health Education Division under the Sports and Youth Bureau is responsible for school safety along with school health and school nutrition policy. However, with the establishment of the Sports Agency set for October 2015, a current consideration is having the School Health Education Unit run by the Elementary and Secondary Education Bureau. The Department of Facilities Planning and Administration under the minister's secretariat is responsible for the safety of school facilities.

In Japan, school safety against disaster lies within the framework of school safety, which also includes traffic safety and household safety (Fig. 2.2). Promotion of national disaster safety in Japan occurs within such legislative frameworks.

The School Health and Safety Act, which describes the division of responsibilities among educational administration for school safety, was enacted in 2009 by substantial revision of the School Health Act of 1958 after half a century of operation. In particular, it greatly expanded the content of school safety from the previous School Health Act, which led to changing the name of the law. It specifies the obligation of the national government, local authorities, and schools in school health and school safety (Takayama 2010).

Article 1 of the Act specifies that national and local governments should collaborate to implement school safety efforts at the school level and provide financial support and other necessary assistances based on the latest knowledge and information on DRR. The Act also stipulates that the national government shall

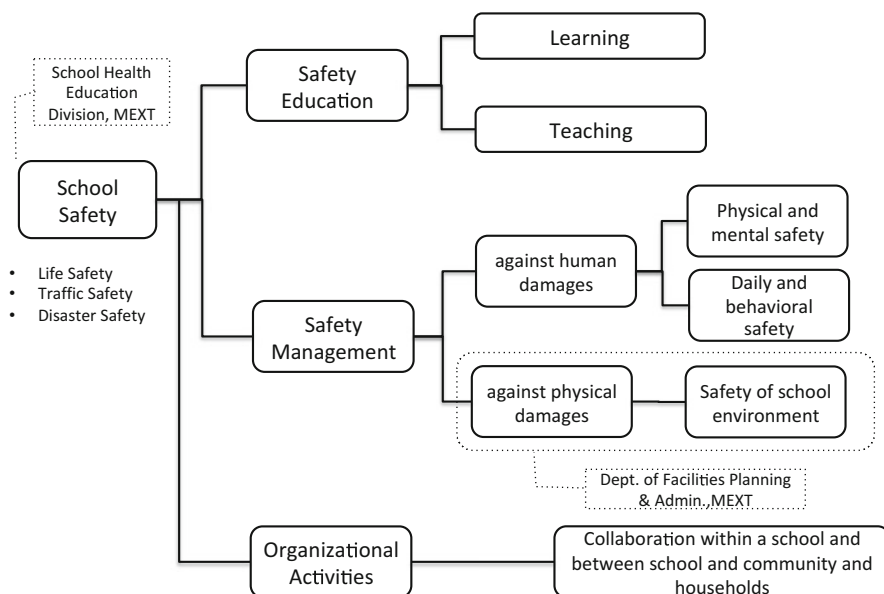


Fig. 2.2 Structure of school safety in Japan (MEXT 2013)

formulate a school safety plan that promotes school safety efforts and that the local government should follow the national government's guidelines. Article 3 specifies issues on school safety and articulates roles and responsibilities of a school including preparing a school safety plan, ensuring a safe school environment, creating a crisis management manual, and promoting collaboration between the school and communities. A school safety plan was formulated at 92.3 % of schools in 2012, crisis management manuals were prepared at 97.8 % of schools, and 91.0 % of schools implemented school safety inspections (MEXT 2012).

This clear definition of roles and responsibilities among authorities in educational governance helps to mainstream DRR within the education sector. In the vertical structure of the Japanese educational governance from MEXT to prefectural boards of education and municipal boards of education and schools, each level promotes school disaster safety. Mainstreaming DRR in the vertical educational governance structure supports schools that have the prime responsibility to secure children's safety.

2.2.4 Plan on Promoting School Safety

The School Safety Division of the Central Education Council formulated the "Five-Year (2012–2016) Plan on Promotion of School Safety" based on the School Health and Safety Act of 2009 and the lessons learned from the Great East Japan

Earthquake and Tsunami (GEJET). The plan aims to promote practical and comprehensive school safety measures by building a culture of safety and reducing injuries with the goal of zero deaths due to accidents and disasters at a school. The plan articulates concrete measures for the next 5 years regarding (i) safety education, (ii) safe school facilities, (iii) safety management at schools, and (iv) collaboration among schools, local communities, and households to further promote school safety.

The plan stresses promotion of further collaboration among safety-related agencies in the government and among multi-stakeholders. The plan also emphasizes that all students should receive a certain level of guidance on safety issues at schools throughout Japan through established teaching methodologies regardless of who teaches safety education.

2.2.5 Budget and Financing

Prior to the 2011 GEJET, promotion of reinforcement of public school facilities existed based on the Basic Plan for Improving Public Compulsory School Facilities 2006–2016 (MEXT announcement No. 62). Figure 2.3 indicates such trends. Since 2006, supplemental budgets have been added for improving school facilities. Responding to the 2011 GEJET and the Revision of the Act on Special Measures against Earthquake Disaster Prevention, the MEXT further revised the Basic Plan for Improving Public Compulsory School Facilities (MEXT announcement No. 90). The revision included reinforcing quake resistance of nonstructural materials at schools, tsunami countermeasures, school disaster preparedness as an

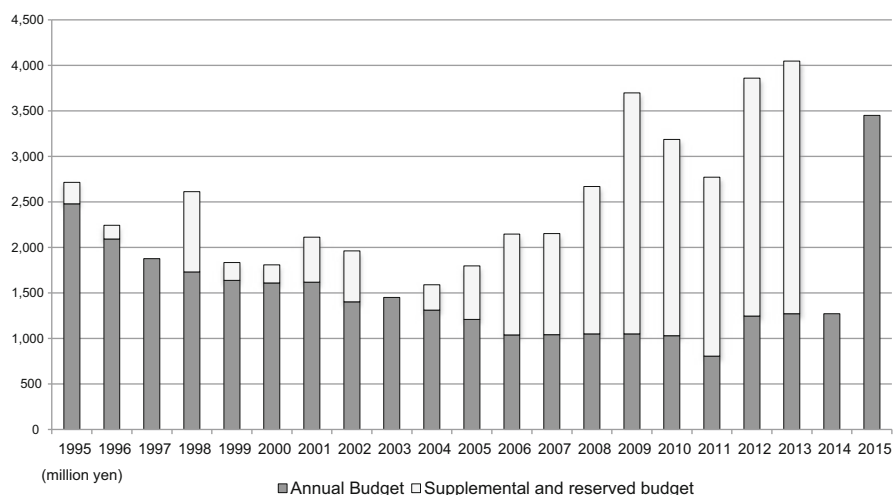


Fig. 2.3 Budget for improving public school facilities (FY 1995–2015) (Based on MEXT 2014)

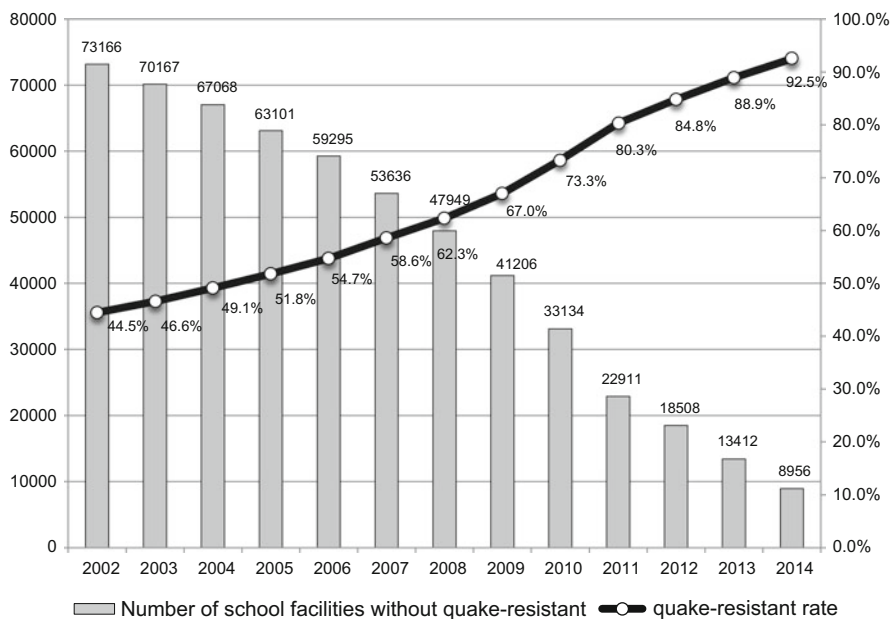


Fig. 2.4 Quake-resistant schools among compulsory public schools in Japan (Based on MEXT 2014)

evacuation shelter, renovation of deteriorated school facilities, and accelerating completion of quake-resistance facilities. The quake-resistance rate among public elementary and junior high schools in Japan improved from 73.3 % as of April 2010 to 92.5 % as of April 2014 (Fig. 2.4). To further accelerate the quake-resistance rate among public schools, the MEXT established a new subsidy for improving school facilities and expanded coverage of subsidies for the quake-resistance project. At the same time, the MEXT also secured a budget for recovery and reconstruction of damaged school facilities, including relocation of schools from coastal areas to higher places demolished by the 2011 Great East Japan Earthquake. The MEXT expects to complete 99 % of the planned reconstruction project and achieve 100 % completion of quake resistance of school facilities by the end of fiscal year 2015. This is supported by an increase of the 2015 budget request 2.7 times that of the previous year.

Although the budget for disaster education is far smaller than reinforcement of school buildings, Table 2.1 shows that the MEXT put emphasis on promoting disaster education by securing the budget after the 2011 GEJET. In the 2011 budget of the School Health Education Division, there was no independent “disaster education”-related budget item. However, starting from the third supplemental budget of 2011, promoting disaster education was included as a budget item. The establishment of the “Practical Disaster Education Support Project,” implemented in 2012 for 3 years, was to develop and disseminate educational methods and

Table 2.1 The MEXT's budget on child safety education (2011–2015) (Unit: thousand yen)

Budget item	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
School safety education project	–	52,279	203,807	102,003	62,773
Disaster education project	–	62,639	139,702	135,333	211,666
Child safety project total	96,550	114,918	345,509	237,336	274,439

approaches to disaster education based on lessons learnt from the GEJET. It is now the “Practical School Safety Support Project,” as of 2015, and also based on the Five-Year Safety Promotion Plan.

2.3 Discussion and Conclusion

2.3.1 Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction

As seen from the previous section, disaster risk governance has gained importance in the recent Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (SFDRR) 2015–2030, and priority 2 of the SFDRR covers strengthening disaster risk governance to manage disaster risk (section 26 of the SFDRR).

Disaster risk governance at the national, regional and global levels is of great importance for an effective and efficient management of disaster risk. Clear vision, plans, competence, guidance, and coordination within and across sectors as well as participation of relevant stakeholders are needed. Strengthening disaster risk governance for prevention, mitigation preparedness, response, recovery, and rehabilitation is therefore necessary and fosters collaboration and partnership across mechanisms and institutions for the implementation of instruments relevant to disaster risk reduction and sustainable development.

Guiding principles of the SFDRR also emphasize that disaster risk reduction requires that central governments, relevant national authorities, sectors, and stakeholders, as appropriate to their national circumstances and system of governance, share responsibilities.

Prior to the SFDRR, the HFA review process found that continuing efforts are necessary to strengthen good governance (e.g., transparency and low levels of corruption, accountability, participation, efficiency in government, etc.) in disaster risk reduction at the national, regional, and global levels. Importantly, the UNDP thematic review report points out that disaster risk governance was predominantly perceived in terms of outputs and normative aspects of governance (policies and laws, financing, institutional structure, decentralization, and platforms) rather than as a complex web of context-specific processes and interactions of various aspects, institutions, and actors. In addition, it mentions that the transformation of outputs into disaster risk reduction outcomes (i.e., reduced disaster impacts or vulnerability) was not adequately considered.

At the Third UN World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction, 16 governments engaged as “School Safe Country Leaders” and announced commitment to the Worldwide Initiative for Safe Schools (WISS). These 16 governments committed to allocation of national budgets for school safety, development of national strategies for school safety as a part of national disaster risk reduction strategies, assessment of the status of school safety implementation at the country level, and sharing of experiences and good practices in school safety implementation (UNISDR 2014). They held a working session on education and knowledge in building a culture of resilience (HFA priority 3) at the third conference. These working session discussions revealed challenges related to disaster risk governance: insufficient integration of disaster risk reduction in national development policies and education plans, a lack of coordination across ministries and institutions and between different stakeholders, and too few implementations of a holistic approach to school safety such as the three pillars of school safety (i.e., safe learning facilities, school disaster management, and disaster education) (UNISDR 2015b, c).

With an understanding of such international arguments on how to strengthen disaster risk governance, this section analyzes disaster risk governance in the Japanese education sector.

2.3.2 Advantage of Disaster Risk Governance in the Japanese Education Sector

The responsibilities of Japan’s MEXT include giving required instructions and advising and assisting local and municipal governments on education, including school safety issues, although educational administration reform has been under pressure to transfer more power and authority to schools. Clear vision, plans, and competencies related to disaster risk governance under the name of school safety are all made legally, institutionally, at the national level, and incorporated into the national disaster risk reduction strategy. These are delivered to municipal and local education authorities and schools with guidance and financial support, which is a major strength of disaster risk governance in the Japanese education sector.

Among the health and educational facilities in the SFDRR, securing safe learning facilities (i.e., disaster-resilient infrastructure) receives more attention related to the newly introduced target to measure substantial reduction of disaster damage to critical infrastructure and disruption of basic services. As seen from the previous analysis, building safe learning facilities requires a large investment compared to disaster education. Even though Japan did not participate in the WISS, the Japanese government could be a front-runner in safe school initiatives in the world because the Japanese government has taken initiatives to support local and municipal governments financially through provision of additional subsidies, which results in acceleration of completing quake-resistant school facilities.

Another strength of the Japanese disaster risk governance in the education sector is evolution of their governance based on actual disaster experiences. The lessons learned from the 1995 Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake provided a basic policy framework on school safety against disaster, which was established at a national level and revised based on lessons learnt from the 2011 Great East Japan Earthquake. Based on actual experiences, Japanese disaster risk governance is up-to-date and fully upgraded to reduce disaster risk at schools. Therefore, Japanese governance is outcome-oriented and evolves in the Japanese context.

The MEXT took a series of actions within a year of the 2011 GEJET to examine the damages and draw lessons learnt. These lessons included revised and enhanced school safety policies and disaster risk governance, as discussed in the previous sections. The other major revision included publication of a “Guidance on How to Prepare a School Disaster Management Manual” (March 2012) and “Revision of Reference Materials on School Disaster Management: Expansion of Disaster Education for Fostering Children’s Capability for a ‘Zest for Living’” (March 2012). These revisions are also included in the national education strategies and a 5-year (2012–2106) plan on school safety promotion (April 2012); notably, the revisions continue. In 2014, a report by a working group discussing disaster-resilient school facilities (March 2014) and a report by a working group on school safety under the Central Council on Education (November 2014) were publicized, recommending concrete actions on further strengthening school safety in terms of learning environment and educational methodologies and contents about disaster risk reduction. The Japanese disaster risk governance in education sector has seen constant evolution through a plan-do-check-act (PDCA) cycle in the disaster management framework.

2.3.3 Issues in Disaster Risk Governance in the Japanese Education Sector

A major challenge in disaster risk governance in the Japanese education sector is collaboration and partnership between schools and communities as well as among multi-stakeholders at each school district, which are identified in the HFA review in priority 3. The government is aware of these issues and specifies them as priorities in their 5-year plan for promoting school safety. The plan says that close collaboration between schools, parents, and community residents should be developed to formulate emergency response procedures related to handing over children to parents and opening and operating a school evacuation shelter. Regular meetings should be held among schools, disaster-related divisions of municipal government, and local disaster response organizations to discuss procedures for evacuation shelter operation and management and to conduct joint evacuation drills.

While this might oppose a strong national leadership structured in governance, the MEXT invites experts from various fields of study, including education,

engineering, architecture, etc., and relevant stakeholders from various areas as members of working groups and advisory committees in reviewing their policies. However, at a school level, schools are not good at building cooperative relationships with their community. This is not only limited to disaster risk reduction but also a common feature in Japanese educational administration.

The revised Basic Education Act of 2006 added an article on partnership and cooperation among schools, families, and local residents. Article 13 of the Act says that schools, families, and local residents shall be aware of their respective roles and responsibilities regarding education and endeavor to develop partnership and cooperation. The Basic Plan for Promotion of Education Phase II also points out that due to the progress of urbanization, depopulation, changes of family form, diversification of value, and lifestyle, community networks and the safety net function of society have deteriorated, especially in urban areas of Japan. Rebooting a vigorous community with a virtuous cycle where the community supports the people's learning, the people getting through their lives, and the people's learning supporting revitalization of their community, the plan emphasizes the role of schools, linking the community's educational resources to school through establishment of a collaborative platform between the school and community, and expansion of a community school in up to 10 % of all the primary and junior high schools.

This reform trend in the Japanese education sector perfectly matches enhancing community resilience against disaster through education. Because hazard and risks against disaster differ per each community's geographical, social, economic, and historical backgrounds, effective disaster risk governance in the education sector should leverage third parties, including the community's resources and educational authorities, to network their capabilities and create localized solutions and preparedness for disaster risk reduction. Collaboration and partnerships between schools and communities could also lead to enhancing resilience of the community against disaster.

After the 2011 Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami, the Japanese government reviewed its DRR policies and strategies assuming of the largest predicted scale mega-earthquakes and tsunami at Tokai, Tonankai, and Nankai Troughs by utilizing the latest technology and knowledge. The special Act on Earthquake Disaster Countermeasure Promotion regarding the Nankai Trough earthquake specifies that the government could designate high-risk regions that require tsunami countermeasures and financially support relocation of residential areas and public facilities such as hospitals and schools to higher ground in the region. This new policy indicates a new challenge of further coordination and collaboration beyond the education sector, because DRR efforts also extended to land-use planning.

Substantially enhancing international cooperation in developing countries is a major goal of the SFDRR. As seen from the discussion, Japan has accumulated extensive experience in disasters and evolved their disaster risk governance in the education sector. Developing countries can learn from them, not only from a context of disaster management but also from improving educational governance and capacity development. Conversely, Japan could also learn from other countries' experiences on how to facilitate collaboration between schools and communities.

This will further promote international cooperation with disaster risk governance in the education sector between Japan and other countries for global disaster risk reduction and enhance the disaster resilience of each country.

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