

the municipality or community, (ii) flexible thinking or a shift in thinking, (iii) innovative use of existing resources, (iv) attention to fresh perspectives from outside, and (v) selection of advantageous resources.

An inspection tour of a traditional building



A former post office turned into a visitor center



[Maintenance, conservation and improvement of local resources]

Municipalities and communities should ensure that local resources are properly maintained, conserved, improved, and even recorded for future use as appropriate.

To that end, necessary arrangements may as well be made, as suggested by the case studies.

[Proactive use of external resources]

Some municipalities or communities combine local resources with external resources to enhance the value of the former. Some of them learn from development initiatives in remote locations with similar situations. Others work with neighboring municipalities or communities for synergy effects.

In the private sector, businesses take advantage of joint research and development with others or even with universities and research institutions.

[“Discovery,” strategic selection, maintenance, conservation and improvement of resources]

As the case studies suggest, some businesses concentrate their efforts on the cultivation of a small or niche market by identifying potential demand.

Section 3. Concentration

[Concentrated investment]

Businesses identify sectors where they can enjoy competitive advantages. Then they concentrate their management resources on these sectors to expand their market shares or establish their distinctive positions there.

[Integration of community development policies; strategic public relations]

As suggested in the case studies, municipalities should implement community development policies in an integrated manner so as to achieve successful outcomes soon and maximize their synergy effects.

Section 4. Cooperation and partnership

For successful community development, local stakeholders should—while exercising their originality—work together toward common goals. Businesses should also ensure such cooperation and partnership in developing new technologies with central or local governments and universities and in developing new services with other businesses of a different industry.

1. Pursuing common goals

Goals cannot be achieved unless different stakeholders share goals and work toward them.

With this in mind, some municipalities set up a council where the municipal government, local communities and businesses establish common goals. Some even incorporate such goals into an ordinance.

Businesses should set goals that can win support of other parties concerned.

2. Maximizing synergy effects through cooperation and partnership

[Ensuring cooperation and partnership through coordinators]

In cases where numerous stakeholders are involved, there is a great need to ensure coordination among their different interests.

Some municipal governments that play such a coordinating role provide integrated support with their departments and sections working as one.

In some cases, the central or local government serves as a coordinator in the development of technologies, products or services by businesses.

A sightseeing bus whose service has been improved by the “public transport stimulation program”



[Cooperation and partnership in fund raising]

Community development is funded not only by the central and local governments. Financial resources include private funds and contributions from participants are also used, enhancing the ownership and cost-effective awareness of the participants.

Some businesses organize technical research associations that are funded by the public and private sectors.

[Coordination with local industries]

As the case studies suggest, some community development initiatives pursue coordination with a local industry or coordination that transcends such industries. These efforts may create new local features or promote the drive to “produce locally and consume locally” and other local resources recycling movements.

Some local railway and bus operators work with municipalities and tourism service providers to lure tourists.

[Cooperation and partnership among local communities]

Municipalities and communities can enhance their competitive edge by working with their counterparts in other areas, since such cooperation and partnership make them better meet the diversifying needs of consumers. Information sharing with others offers opportunity to reflect on their initiatives. Joint public relations with them can have synergy effects.

[Coordination between tangible and intangible resources development]

Community development requires, as a crucial element, coordination between tangible resources such as facilities and intangible resources associated with them. In the case studies, tangible resources development includes restoring and preserving traditional buildings, laying power lines underground, and adopting alternative methods to pave roads. Intangible resources include landscape preservation agreements and tour guiding services by volunteers.

Volunteer tour guide



Tangible resources development should take into account many aspects of local landscapes, including color conditioning, design, lighting and background, to enhance the charm of the area concerned. As the case studies suggest, some of the existing physical infrastructure development plans may need to be revised to better accommodate local conditions.

It is increasingly necessary for the public sector to ensure that tangible resources development it implements will better support intangible resources development by the community and private sectors. They also need to ensure that the facilities they build will serve their purpose for a long time.

[Cooperation among businesses and with other industries and the academia]

As the case study in Chapter 1 suggest, it is important that businesses make the good use of knowledge and expertise of other business, industries and the academia, as well as internal resources, to develop new technologies, products and services.

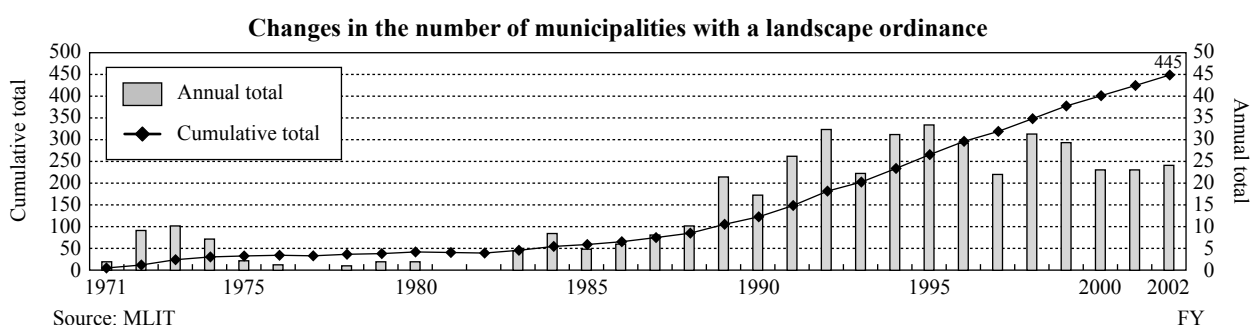
Section 5. Continuity and expansion

Initiatives to improve communities or businesses should be a continuous process, rather than a temporal one.

[Prevention of resource degradation and continual improvement]

Conservation, maintenance and management of local resources with the aim of preventing their degradation are a precondition for community development. One example of such efforts is the establishment of a townscape conservation ordinance that impose administrative regulations for the benefit of a town-making initiative.

Community development initiatives may not be sustained without assessing their impact and feeding back the results of such assessment to the initiative implementation process. This is supported by the survey on municipalities implementing a community development initiative. In fact, the survey has identified many challenges ahead.



[Developing into multiple activities]

Most community development initiatives in the case studies have developed into multiple activities. It is, therefore, advisable to expand such an initiative or add new activities for synergy effects, while maintaining the long-term impact of the initiative.

Some of the businesses that operated in a small market or geographical area on an experimental basis are now expanding their operation throughout the country or addressing a larger market.

[Maintaining the ownership of participants]

Arrangements should be made to sustain the ownership or drive of participants. In the case studies, participants are offered opportunities to enjoy gatherings or commended for their activities.

Businesses are also advised to make arrangements or even change their corporate culture so that employees can address issues that stimulate their intellectual curiosity or interest or issues that give them a sense of satisfaction that they are contributing to society.