

THE 13TH EAST ASIA CIVIL SOCIETY FORUM

Child Support by Civil Society Organizations

Three Keynote Addresses and Six Case Reports from Korea, China and Japan

ENGLISH SUMMARY EDITION

Held online (Zoom)

November 18, 2022

HOST

Japan Association of Charitable Organizations

PARTNER BODIES

The Korea Forum of Volunteerism (KVF)

China Association for NGO Cooperation (CANGO)

The 13th East Asia Civil Society Forum — Proceedings

English Summary Edition

An abridged English edition of the Japanese-language proceedings published in January 2023 by the Japan Association of Charitable Organizations.

Original edition

第 13 回東アジア市民社会フォーラム 報告書 — 市民社会組織による子ども支援

Published January 2023 · © 2023 Japan Association of Charitable Organizations

2-27-15 Honkomagome, Bunkyo-ku, Tokyo 113-0021, Japan · Tel +81-3-3945-1017 ·

<https://www.kohokyo.or.jp/>

Grant

The Niwano Peace Foundation

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About This English Summary Edition

The 13th East Asia Civil Society Forum was held online on November 18, 2022, on the theme “Child Support by Civil Society Organizations.” This volume is an abridged English rendering of the Japanese proceedings published by the Japan Association of Charitable Organizations in January 2023.

What has been kept, and what has been shortened

- **Every speaker is represented.** All three opening addresses, all three keynotes, all six case reports, the whole review session and the closing address appear here.
- **Substance is preserved; repetition is not.** Spoken asides, restatements and the courtesies that open and close each talk have been compressed. Facts, figures, dates, organization names and policy references are carried over exactly as the original prints them.
- **Slides and photographs are reproduced from the original report.** The captions are the editors' and are written in English; the slides themselves remain in the language in which they were shown.
- **Part 5 has been added by the editors of this edition.** It draws together themes that recur across the Forum's presentations and forms no part of the original proceedings.

The Forum at a Glance

Forum	The 13th East Asia Civil Society Forum
Theme	Child Support by Civil Society Organizations
Date	Friday, November 18, 2022
Format	Online (Zoom), with simultaneous interpretation among Japanese, Chinese and Korean
Host	Japan Association of Charitable Organizations (JACO)
Partner bodies	Korea Forum of Volunteerism (KVF) China Association for NGO Cooperation (CANGO)
Grant	The Niwano Peace Foundation
Organizer	Executive Committee for the East Asia Civil Society Forum (Japan), 16 members
Moderator	SHIRAISHI Yoshiharu, Senior Research Associate, JACO
Speakers	3 opening addresses · 3 keynote addresses · 6 case reports · 1 review session
Proceedings	Published January 2023 · 162 pages · Japanese
Video	https://youtu.be/FcRynSK-XXA

Why this theme, and why online

The East Asia Civil Society Forum has been convened since 2009, rotating among Japan, Korea and China. The 13th edition was again held online: as the moderator noted in opening the day, the COVID-19 pandemic had still not subsided, and an online meeting was judged better than no meeting at all. It was Japan's turn to host, and JACO chose children as the subject — child poverty, child abuse and the difficulty of raising children — inviting each country to set out the situation of its children, its child and child-rearing support systems, and the work of its civil society organizations and communities.

The timing was pointed for the Japanese host. In June 2022, five months before the Forum, Japan's Diet had passed the bill establishing the Children and Families Agency, which would open as an external bureau of the Cabinet Office in April 2023, and had enacted the Basic Act on Children alongside it. In China, the comprehensively revised Law on the Protection of Minors had entered into force on June 1, 2021. In Korea, a framework act on children was expected from the central government within months. All three countries were, in other words, rewriting the law on children at the same moment.

Program

Moderator: SHIRAIISHI Yoshiharu, Senior Research Associate, Japan Association of Charitable Organizations

1 · Opening Addresses

	Speaker	Position
Japan	AMEMIYA Takako	President, Japan Association of Charitable Organizations (JACO)
Korea	NAM Young-Chan	President, The Korea Forum of Volunteerism (KVF)
China	WANG Xiangyi	Vice Chairperson & Executive Director, China Association for NGO Cooperation (CANGO)

2 · Keynote Addresses

	Speaker	Title of address
Korea	KIM Hyung Mo Professor, Department of Social Welfare, Kyonggi University	Supporting Children through the Policy and Practice of Korean Civil Society Organizations
China	TONG Lihua Director, Beijing Zhicheng Law Firm; Director, Beijing Children's Legal Aid and Research Center	Key Changes Brought by the Revision of the Law of the People's Republic of China on the Protection of Minors
Japan	WATANABE Yumiko President, Certified NPO Kidsdoor	Supporting Children in Poor Households — The Work of Kidsdoor

3 · Case Reports

	Speaker	Title of report
Korea	LEE Bae Geun President, Korea Association for the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect	Casebook of Protection and Support for Victims of Abuse by a Citizens' Association
Korea	CHUNG Moo Sung Professor, Department of Social Welfare, Soongsil University	Child-Rearing Support by Civil Society Organizations — The Role of "Bibil Andak" in the Independence of Care Leavers
China	BAI Yaqin Chairperson, Beijing Happy Family Center for Promoting Popular Science, Education and Public Welfare	The Angels in White Lecturers' Corps
China	TU Mei President, Qingshen County Center for Women & Children Development	Toward the Healthy Growth of Children and a Caring Home Town — An Outline of the "For the Children" Project
Japan	KURIBAYASHI Chieko President, Toshima Children's WAKUWAKU Network	Change the Community, Change the Child, Change the Future
Japan	HAMADA Shinji President, Nara Association for Supporting the Independence of Young People	From the Front Line of the Self-Reliance Support Homes "Aran's House" and "Mimosa's House"

4 · Review Session

	Speaker	Position
Chair	PIAO Meihua	Secretary-General, East Asia Environmental Information Center (facilitator and interpreter)
Korea	NAM Young-Chan	President, The Korea Forum of Volunteerism
China	HUANG Haoming	Honorary Chairman, CANGO; Executive Dean, Asia Academy of Philanthropy
Japan	WATANABE Yumiko	President, Certified NPO Kidsdoor

5 · Closing Address · 6 · Group Photograph

SHIRAIISHI Yoshiharu, Senior Research Associate, Japan Association of Charitable Organizations.

Part 1 — Opening the Forum

0. The Moderator's Introduction

SHIRAISHI Yoshiharu, who is responsible for research at the Japan Association of Charitable Organizations, opened the day as moderator. He thanked the many participants from Korea, China and Japan, and explained that the pandemic had again made an online meeting necessary.

The theme of the 13th Forum, he said, was **Child Support by Civil Society Organizations**. Taking up child poverty, child abuse and the difficulties of raising children, he hoped the day would allow the three countries to share the circumstances of their children, their systems of support for children and for child-rearing, and the work of their civil society organizations and communities — an exchange of cases and of best practice.

The Forum video

The proceedings of the day may be viewed at
<https://youtu.be/FcRynSK-XXA>



SHIRAISHI Yoshiharu, Senior
Research Associate, Japan
Association of Charitable
Organizations — moderator of the
13th Forum.

1.1 Opening Address — Japan

AMEMIYA Takako 雨宮孝子

President, Japan Association of Charitable Organizations (JACO)

Greeting the participants in Japanese, Chinese and Korean, Professor Amemiya described the Forum as an international conference organized so that Japan, China and Korea — three countries of different histories and cultures — might work toward peace and prosperity in East Asia through mutual understanding and reconciliation. It is held jointly by CANGO, the Korea Forum of Volunteerism and JACO, rotating among the three countries each year. This year Japan was the host, the theme was child support by civil society organizations, and in Japan the work was carried out by the Executive Committee for the East Asia Civil Society Forum with a grant from the Niwano Peace Foundation.

“Children are the treasure of the future in every country,” she said. And yet in Japan the falling birthrate and aging population had become a social problem bearing on the strength of the nation itself; news reports repeatedly carried stories of poverty among the many children of single parents, of children with nowhere to be amid family breakdown, of child abuse. Even so, civil society organizations rooted in their own neighborhoods — running educational support, opening children's cafeterias — were achieving a great deal.

Measures against the declining birthrate had not been very successful, she continued, and in Japan the idea that “child-rearing is the family's responsibility, and above all the mother's” still ran deep; many women struggled to combine work and family, and it could not be said that the notion of supporting children as a whole society had taken hold. But in June 2022 the bill establishing the **Children and Families Agency** had at last passed the Diet, and in April 2023 the Agency would be created as an external bureau of the Cabinet Office. The **Basic Act on Children** had been enacted at the same time. Japan, she noted, already had many examples of local civil society organizations tackling problems around children with flexibility and quick footwork, and several of them would be presented that day.

Turning to the other two countries, she suggested that many of the problems surrounding children in China and Korea, though approached from different angles and directions, had much in common with Japan's. Amid a confused



AMEMIYA Takako, President of the
Japan Association of Charitable
Organizations.

social situation, it was important to pool wisdom across culture, history and nationality so that the children who will carry the future can live equally and abundantly.

1.2 Opening Address — Korea

NAM Young-Chan 南英燦

President, The Korea Forum of Volunteerism (KVF)

Mr. Nam said it was deeply meaningful and a pleasure that the 13th East Asia Civil Society and Volunteer Web Forum could be held even in the circumstances of COVID-19, and thanked JACO for its thorough preparation and communication, and the officers and specialists of CANGO and KVF for their part in preparing and attending.

This Forum, he said, was being held on the theme of **the participation of civil society in child support, and the policy and practice of non-profit support service programs**.

Children are the future of a country. To protect them, nurture them and educate them is an investment in the future.

— NAM Young-Chan



NAM Young-Chan, President of the Korea Forum of Volunteerism.

Even though the economy had developed and the public sector's role in policies to protect and support children had expanded, there remained parts that civil society and NPOs should care for; in that respect the theme was very timely. The seminar would bring specialist presentations on the policies and systems of child support by civil society in the three countries, together with a great deal of shared experience from actual cases. Through such discussion, communication and sharing, he said, the civil societies of Japan, China and Korea would be able to raise the policy and practice of child support to a still higher level.

The East Asia Civil Society and Volunteer Forum was first held in Tokyo in 2009. Since then the three countries had taken turns hosting it, setting an agenda and a theme, sharing their real cases and experience, and leading meaningful change in civil society. He hoped that the 14th Forum could be held in Korea, face to face, in the autumn of the following year.

1.3 Opening Address — China

WANG Xiangyi 王香奕

Vice Chairperson & Executive Director, China Association for NGO Cooperation (CANGO)

Ms. Wang greeted the leaders, experts and friends of China, Japan and Korea and said she was honored to take part in the 2022 East Asia Civil Society Forum. With the global pandemic continuing, she thanked JACO for adapting flexibly so that the Forum could be held and for giving everyone the chance to gather virtually. As a founding member of the Forum she offered CANGO's congratulations on the success of this year's meeting and thanked the Japanese organizing committee for its energetic preparation.

China, Japan and Korea, she said, are neighbors separated by the sea, alike in their geographical character, sharing interests across a wide field and important cooperation partners for one another. The year 2022 marked the 50th anniversary of the normalization of China–Japan relations and the 30th anniversary of the establishment of China–Korea relations. It was also **CANGO's 30th anniversary**, and Mr. Shiraishi of JACO and Mr. Nam of KVF had sent congratulations by video call — words of blessing that, she said, had become the driving force for CANGO's advance.

In the course of economic and social development the three countries face common challenges — for example negative population growth. According to statistics for 2021, Japan's population had fallen for thirteen consecutive years; Korea's was showing signs of negative growth; and China had entered a stage of zero growth. This challenge, she observed, was directly connected to the theme of the Forum.

Since its founding, the Forum had taken up disaster prevention and mitigation, NGO capacity building and volunteer systems, corporate social responsibility and the volunteer spirit, the role of social organizations in an aging society, and the policy and practice of NGOs engaged in social enterprise. The civil societies of the three countries were, she said, very closely connected; by sharing and learning from one another's achievements they were supplying their countries with limitless motivation and ideas for the post-pandemic era.

This year's theme was the role of NGOs in child welfare services and its policy and practice. Through the Forum she hoped that the NGOs of the three countries could deepen their exchange of policy discussion and practical experience in the field of child welfare support, and that their exchange would produce the bridging effect that only this platform can. CANGO, she said, would do its utmost to support the Forum and to help the NGOs of the three countries cooperate. She closed by saying she looked forward to meeting everyone in Seoul the following year.



*WANG Xiangyi, Vice Chairperson
and Executive Director of CANGO.*

Editors' note — a partnership older than the Forum

The moderator's linking remarks record the length of these relationships. JACO has held joint events with the Korea Forum of Volunteerism since **2009**; with CANGO it has attended international conferences together, held events and exchanged information through mutual office visits since **2004**.

Part 2 — Keynote Addresses

Three keynote addresses set out, in turn, the century-long history of civil society child support in Korea, the 2020 rewriting of China's Law on the Protection of Minors, and the shape of child poverty in Japan.

2.1 Supporting Children through the Policy and Practice of Korean Civil Society Organizations

KIM Hyung Mo 金亨謨

Professor, Department of Social Welfare, Kyonggi University

The video shown before the address

"What is a volunteer?" — *voló* (will): activity undertaken voluntarily, on one's own responsibility, of one's own free will.

"What characterizes a volunteer?" — spontaneity, working without reward, public benefit, continuity: the act of an individual or an organization giving time and labor freely for the sake of the community, the country, human society.

"What is the attitude of a volunteer?" — diligence, innocence, responsibility, setting an example: your action gives someone else strength.

"What are sharing and compassion?" — a warm heart and love: sincere action that gives hope and gives a reason to live.

The same video was shown again before the case reports of LEE Bae Geun and CHUNG Moo Sung; the original report omits it there as a repetition.



KIM Hyung Mo, Professor of Social Welfare at Kyonggi University.

Professor Kim introduced his talk in five chapters: an overview; the history of child support by civil society organizations; how child support activity by civil society organizations was carried on in the course of the development of child welfare; how child support by citizens' groups is proceeding in Korea today; and the future direction of civil society child support in Korea.

Where modern social welfare in Korea came from

Social welfare in the modern sense, he said, began to be introduced in Korea after the port-opening period of **the 1870s**. (*The Japanese transcript prints "the 1980s"; Professor Kim's own slide 3 reads 1870년대 개항기 이후. See Appendix E.*) Looking at citizens' groups and citizens' activity, these began at the private level with relief work for the poor, and the religious world exercised a large influence on the development of child support by Korean citizens' groups. The concept of modern philanthropy was newly established after the forced annexation by Japan in 1910. The private sector and the religious world worked together; and it is an important point that not only organizations but individuals took part. In the United States, work for women and children had been led mainly by Protestants.

Social welfare in the modern sense began, in order to resolve various hardships, after liberation in 1945 and after the Korean War of 1950–1953. What matters, Professor Kim stressed, is that the starting point was not foreign governments but **foreign aid agencies** coming to Korea and carrying out a range of activities. This was the period of the introduction of social welfare in Korea. Foreign volunteer organizations — Christian, Catholic — exercised a great influence, building social welfare facilities, orphanages and children's homes.

Seven foreign voluntary bodies that took root in Korea

In speaking of how foreign voluntary organizations contributed to child support as Korean civil society organizations, he said, one has to look at how they became indigenous.

1. **Christian Children's Fund.** Foreign volunteers took part and carried out a range of activities for children; in a sense this is the beginning of the history of child support. The organization has since changed its name to the **Green Umbrella Children's Foundation**.
2. **Korea Sunmyung-hoe — that is, World Vision Korea.** World Vision came to Korea and carried out many activities. What is distinctive is that at first children were supported privately with World Vision's help, but as Korea grew economically the Korean body developed into an organization that supports other countries. A civil society organization had developed into a donor.

3. **Holt Children's Services, Inc.**, the adoption agency founded by Mrs. Holt, which supported both domestic and overseas adoption. Since the Korean War of 1950 there had been a great many war orphans and lost children; one way of supporting them was adoption, and many adoption agencies were created.
4. **Save the Children**, famous in the history of child support. A foreign organization for saving children was established in Korea and carried out many activities; it still runs a range of support projects for children, including domestic and overseas adoption.
5. **The Unitarian Service Committee of Canada**. Not widely known nationally at first, it worked for children mainly in the provinces. An important point is that it employed professionally trained social workers and was the first facility specializing in social work — an example of an organization that widened its scope from child support to social welfare as such.
6. **The Mennonite Central Committee**, which came to Korea with aid from the United States Department of Agriculture and provided economic assistance including food. Importantly, it trained orphans. It worked mainly in Daegu and Gyeongbuk — like the fifth organization, an example of a foreign voluntary body taking root in Daegu and Gyeongbuk and contributing to the development of Korean social welfare.
7. **Foster Parents' Plan** — in a word, fostering. This agency carried out much of its work through substitute families who take a child in and raise the child for a fixed period.

What all of them have in common, Professor Kim said, is that they came to Korea after the Korean War to support orphans and contributed to the development of Korean social welfare.

Child welfare in Korea today: five fields, each with civil society roots

Sponsorship services. A service connecting children in economic difficulty with sponsors. This too was carried on by private organizations, and the welfare foundations described earlier still do it today under commission from government — which is to say that the private sector carries it.

Child poverty, which occupies the largest place in the history of child support. Private bodies carry out a range of activities for children in poor households. One is the **Educational Welfare Priority Support Project**, in which social workers go into schools to support children in economic difficulty, children of single-parent families and children of multicultural families. It is run today by the education ministry. But it began with NGOs — citizens' groups — dispatching social workers into schools with the support of local government. The administration took it over and developed it into the Educational Welfare Priority Support Project.

Dream Start, known as Sure Start in the United Kingdom and Head Start in the United States. It rests on the recognition that children from households in economic difficulty begin from a different starting line at school, and seeks to make that equal. This too was begun by civil society organizations. An NGO active in child support first ran a **We Start** movement; the welfare ministry took it over and developed it into Dream Start. It was called Hee-Man Start at the outset and is Dream Start today — but the start was We Start, and citizens' groups were the ones who did it.

Community children's centers, run under the Child Welfare Act for children in economically difficult circumstances. These facilities too have their roots in citizens' groups: the starting point was small churches providing a study room and meals to pupils in economic difficulty. Because it worked well, the welfare ministry turned it into a system of community children's centers supporting children from poor households.

Child abuse. The Korean government began to pay attention to this problem in 2000. But as early as 1979 the Korea National Council on Social Welfare — an association whose members are private social welfare facilities and agencies — had recognized it, and awareness grew as **Good Neighbors** carried out a range of work on child abuse. In 2000 the state introduced provisions on child abuse into the Child Welfare Act and also enacted a special law on the subject. The important thing, Professor Kim said, is that this was begun entirely by citizens' groups.

Foster care and adoption. There are now 17 foster care support centers in cities and provinces. The budget comes from central government, but NGOs run the centers under commission, and private bodies bear a third to a quarter of the whole budget; case by case, 75 percent of the cost is government support and 25 percent comes from the private sector through civil society. Adoption is similar: Korea has many adopted children at home and abroad, and private agencies handle almost all of them. They developed the work by operating on small commission fees;

government created the relevant law and began working with them only a few years ago.

Children in need of protection, and childcare

Children in need of protection are children whom the state must protect. Children are, as everyone knows, raised in families; when a parent can no longer protect them because of abuse or poverty, the essence of child support is that the state protects them. As he had said at the outset, **more than 200 facilities** take in children in need of protection, carrying out a great deal of socially-supported work through sponsorship on low personnel and operating costs.

As for childcare: to strengthen educational outreach, central government and cities and provinces employ public servants to run nurseries — but these amount to less than one tenth of the whole. **Nine tenths are run by individuals or by citizens' groups.** Support for child-rearing is still, in large part, carried by the private sector.

Three proposals for the future

Speaking as a researcher who had studied Korean child welfare for more than twenty years, Professor Kim set out three directions.

1. **Implementing the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.** Korea is a party and its citizens' groups are already very active. The Convention was the first international treaty to emphasize that the child is the subject of comprehensive rights, and it has become the universal standard for children's human rights. It is also, importantly, the standard for the work of civil society organizations on children; the Committee on the Rights of the Child has consistently attached weight to civil society activity.
2. **Approaching new problems of children.** This connects to the history he had described: before the state moves, civil society organizations, individuals, religious bodies, foreign volunteer organizations, NGOs and NPOs discover the new problems — children in poor households, child abuse, children in need of protection. He proposed that civil society organizations go on approaching children's problems without stopping what they already do. One private body, **Child Welfare Practice SEUM**, reaches the children of prisoners on a small budget, and lately has begun reaching the children of migrants from abroad. He said he expected further new initiatives and promised to take part himself.
3. **Enacting a framework act on children.** Korea's central government planned to enact one in the second half of that year at the earliest, or by the beginning of the following year at the latest. There is a Child Welfare Act, but it is not sufficient to carry the content of the UN Convention. Citizens' groups were working on a framework act of their own and he was himself responsible for the research; he proposed thinking together so that both the government's bill and the citizens' proposals would be reflected in a good framework act.

A word that does not appear in the Constitution

Finally, Professor Kim turned to the most powerful and important law in Korea, the **Constitution of the Republic of Korea**. He had checked two or three times, he said, and the word “child” does not appear in it. Article 10 provides that all citizens have dignity as human beings, but “citizens” is generally taken to mean adults. Article 34 does contain the words “women,” “the elderly” and “youth,” and citizens' groups have already joined together to protect those groups.

His conclusion was a proposal to amend the fourth paragraph of that article so that it reads that **the State shall bear a duty to implement welfare policy for the elderly, for children and for youth** — that is, to put the word “child” into the Constitution, and to think about how to do it together.

He closed by saying he hoped Korea's civil society organizations would go on cooperating so that Korea's children can grow up in health.

2.2 Key Changes Brought by the Revision of the Law of the People's Republic of China on the Protection of Minors

TONG Lihua 佟丽华

Director, Beijing Zhicheng Law Firm; Director, Beijing Children's Legal Aid and Research Center

- 北京青少年法律援助与研究中心（以下简称青少年中心）**成立于1999年**，是中国第一家专门从事未成年人法律保护的公益机构。2003年5月，正式登记注册为“北京青少年法律援助与研究中心”。
- 青少年中心创建了包括**为未成年人提供法律服务、开展未成年人法学研究、推动和参与立法等方面的未成年人保护综合模式**。
- 2011年，青少年中心**获得联合国特别咨商地位**。



TONG Lihua, Director of the Beijing Children's Legal Aid and Research

Slide 2 — The Beijing Children's Legal Aid and Research Center: founded 1999, formally registered in May 2003, granted UN special consultative status in 2011.

Mr. Tong introduced himself as director of the Beijing Children's Legal Aid and Research Center, founded in 1999 — the first civil society organization in China to work on the law relating to the protection of minors. It does more than give legal support directly to children whose rights have been violated: it researches the relevant law and policy and takes part directly in the processes of law-making and policy change.

His subject was the **Law on the Protection of Minors**, China's principal statute on child protection. He began by stressing that “minor” here is conceptually the same as “child” in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child: a person under 18. He therefore often comments that China's Law on the Protection of Minors is an important statute originally enacted in order to meet the requirements of the UN treaty.

Three enactments, three sizes

The law was first enacted in 1991 and is called, in Chinese society, a mini-constitution for the protection of minors. As enacted in 1991 it had 56 articles and a little over 4,000 characters.

In 2004 the National People's Congress began work on revising it, and Mr. Tong joined that work; he was given the task of drafting the experts' opinion for the revision. In 2006 the NPC passed the revised law, which added 16 provisions to make 72 in all and ran to a little over 6,000 characters.

Given the changes of recent years, he came to feel that the law's scope was hard to call sufficient and could not answer what social development demanded. So in 2018 the NPC began revising it again, and he was again asked to supply a draft for the hearing of expert opinion. In **October 2020** the Standing Committee of the NPC formally passed the newly revised Law on the Protection of Minors, with **132 articles and more than 16,000 characters**. Everyone who works in law knows, he said, that the more detailed a law and the more characters it contains, the more complete the relevant legislation; this revision therefore had to be thorough, once and for all. The revised law came into force on **June 1, 2021**.

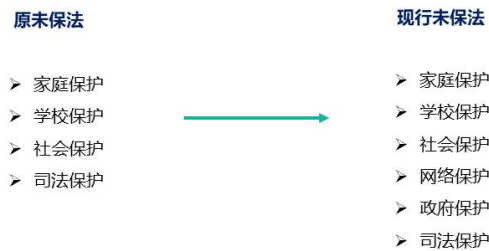
Table 2.1 — The three versions of China's Law on the Protection of Minors, as described by TONG Lihua.

Enactment	Articles	Length
1991 — original law	56	a little over 4,000 characters
2006 — first revision	72 (16 added)	a little over 6,000 characters
2020 — second revision (in force June 1, 2021)	132	more than 16,000 characters

Note: the speaker describes the 2020 revision both as adding 60 articles and as producing a total of 132; $72 + 60 = 132$, and the figures are consistent.

First: from four protections to six

一、完善体例结构 “四大保护——六大保护”



Slides 3–4 — From four protections to six: family, school, society and judicial protection, joined by network (internet) protection and government protection.

Before the last revision, Mr. Tong explained, China's Law on the Protection of Minors was built around four protections: **family protection, school protection, social protection and judicial protection**. The law set out clearly the responsibilities that the family, the school, society and legal institutions should carry in the course of protecting the rights of the child.

In the revision of 2004–2006 many of the experts had asked for the establishment of **government protection** — for the responsibilities of the relevant departments inside government to be written into the law. That proposal caused much argument and was not adopted in the law as finally passed.

This time two provisions were added: **government protection** and **protection on the internet**. So the revised law now has six main protections, and these two newly added provisions carry great weight in child protection.

On government protection, the new provision clearly and in detail sets out the responsibilities of all the relevant government agencies — education, health, personnel, civil affairs and so on. In particular it writes down the role of guardian for children who have lost their parents, or whose parents cannot for the time being be found and who have no one to act as guardian. It defines clearly in what circumstances the civil affairs department of government must take on temporary guardianship and in what circumstances long-term guardianship. Because the concrete tasks of each agency are written down, each is pressed to act.

On internet protection: in the revision work of 2004–2006 not one person thought it necessary to draft a provision about it. But when the Standing Committee discussed revising the law again in 2018, the case for such a provision was put and everyone agreed it was extremely important. Over the past decade the influence of the internet on the growth of minors has grown ever greater — minors absorbed in online games, bullying online, sexual assault of children — and society is deeply concerned about the risks the internet's advance brings. A provision dedicated to internet protection has therefore been added, and on the basis of that provision the State Council intends to enact regulations on internet protection as well, always with the aim of strengthening the protection of minors in the internet age.

With this revision, he concluded, China's Law on the Protection of Minors became a statute of six protections — a legal system for the protection of minors with Chinese characteristics.

Second: three of the new rules

The revision added 60 articles to make 132 in all, and the original articles were themselves revised. Mr. Tong selected three of the new rules.

The duty of inquiry on hotels and other lodging houses. In judicial practice there are children who have been taken to a hotel by adults and sexually assaulted; what function should a hotel serve? The new law provides that in order to forestall such crimes, the proprietor of a hotel or other lodging must inquire into the circumstances when a minor checks in, or when a minor checks in together with an adult. If the minor checks in alone, the hotel asks for the guardian's contact details. If the minor checks in with an adult, it asks about the relationship between the two.

Where an adult brings a minor to check in and cannot state the relationship clearly, and hotel staff who make the inquiry notice grounds to suspect an illegal act, the proprietor or the staff must notify the public security organs and at the same time contact the minor's guardian. In China from now on, an adult staying at a hotel with a child must make the relationship clear to hotel staff, and hotel staff bear duties of inquiry and of report. The purpose is to prevent assaults on minors in hotels.

The mandatory reporting system. This principally requires institutions in close contact with minors — schools, hospitals, child welfare facilities — to report to the appropriate department when they learn that a child is a victim of abuse; many countries have such a system. The newly revised Chinese law provides first that the range of those bound must be broad: government offices, neighborhood committees and village committees that are in close contact with minors all bear the duty, and the law states clearly that government organs — legislature, judiciary and administrative departments alike — are all regarded as government organs of China, while neighborhood and village committees, as self-governing bodies, are of course regarded as organizations in close contact with minors. Where these organs or their staff notice in the course of their duties that a minor is suffering, or is suspected of suffering, physical or mental abuse — for example an injury or suspected injury on the minor's body, or extreme emotional instability suggesting injury or some other danger — they must report to the relevant departments: public security, civil affairs, education. This is a new and important rule in Chinese legislation.

Record checking and the employment ban. The law states clearly that the state must build a database of sexual abuse, trafficking, physical abuse and other criminal conduct. Institutions in close contact with minors — schools, kindergartens, education and training institutions, child welfare facilities, hospitals — must consult and check that database when they recruit. If a person they are about to employ turns out to have such a criminal record, that person cannot be employed. These institutions must also investigate every year whether their own employees have such a record, and where one is found the person must be dismissed. The purpose is that institutions in contact with minors should know who has committed such crimes, so that children can grow up in safety.

There are other new provisions of the same kind, he said, but he would leave the detail aside and keep to these three. Through them the revision has laid down many new legal rules aimed at problems that actually exist, in the hope of providing minors with a space in which to grow up safe and sound.

Third: legal responsibility

Under the original law there were many provisions about the protection of minors, but legal responsibility was not very severe, with the result that those who broke the law were not severely dealt with. This revision laid down a large number of concrete and detailed legal responsibilities.

As an example he took the special chapter on internet protection — **17 articles in all**, one of which concerns legal responsibility and essentially provides for the special obligations of internet companies toward the protection of minors. There are many online platform companies today, and they too must bear responsibility for protecting the rights of minors.

What happens if they do not? They face a fine. Where there is no illegal income, the fine runs from **RMB 10,000 to RMB 1 million**. Where the illegal income exceeds RMB 1 million, the fine is **one to ten times** that income. Where the circumstances are especially serious, or the violation is repeated, permits and business licenses can be revoked and the business shut down.

So, in the field of child protection in China, it is often said that the present Law on the Protection of Minors is a very strict law: parents, schools, companies, even government bear legal responsibility if they break it.

Mr. Tong had, he said, witnessed and taken part in the legislative revolution of China's Law on the Protection of Minors over more than twenty years, and with the newly revised law in force the legal system for the protection of minors in China was becoming ever more complete. New problems remained — how to implement these laws better, above all. The internet advances so fast that it has become a double-edged sword for minors, bringing many new opportunities in education on the one hand and many security risks, addiction among them, on the other. How to protect children's rights better in this new age, and how to carry out the existing legal rules, are still real challenges. He hoped to exchange with friends in other countries, share experience and face these problems together.

2.3 Supporting Children in Poor Households — The Work of Kidsdoor

WATANABE Yumiko 渡辺由美子

President, Certified NPO Kidsdoor

The shape of child poverty in Japan

Ms. Watanabe opened with the measure used among advanced countries — relative poverty, measured on income. On that measure **13.5 percent of Japan's children, roughly one in seven, are poor**. That is ninth from the top among the 34 OECD member countries, which shows, she said, that Japan is a country with a very high child poverty rate. Among single-parent households the rate is **48.1 percent, the highest of the 34**. Japan's child poverty rate was first officially produced only in 2009; poverty is, in that sense, a new subject in Japan.

How poor is poor? The relative poverty line for a two-person household — a mother and one child, say — is an income below **¥1.73 million**; for a three-person household, below **¥2.12 million**. Out of that income most people rent an apartment, feed their children, pay for education and pay for water and electricity: a very hard line. And the poverty line is the *top* of the range, so everyone in poverty is below it. When Kidsdoor asks the families it teaches what they live on, many are working hard in several ways and still take home only a little over ¥100,000 a month, adding various allowances to get by.



WATANABE Yumiko, President of the certified NPO Kidsdoor.

Almost all of Japan's single parents work. **The employment rate of single-parent households is the highest among advanced countries — by a wide margin — and the poverty rate is also the highest.** They work the most in the world and are the poorest in the world: the world's worst working poor. This working poverty — being poor although in work — is, she said, a very large problem, and among child-rearing families it produces a chain of poverty as parents work hard and raise children at the same time.



2022 © NPO Kidsdoor

2009年に初めて貧困率を公表 → 新しい社会課題

日本の子どもの**相対的貧困率**は、先進国の中で上位
日本にも満足にご飯が食べられない子どもがいます。



13.5%
(2019年国民基礎調査)
子どもの**7人に1人**が貧困

OECD加盟34カ国中9番目
OECD平均 11.6% (2014)



48.1%
ひとり親家庭の貧困率は、
OECD加盟34カ国中1番

二人親でも**10.7%**が貧困

Why the rate is so high

1. **The long-standing employment structure and the gender wage gap.** Women's wages are

inevitably low; single-mother households are very common in Japan, and when a woman is the main earner sufficient income is not available.

2. **The low rate of receipt of child support payments.** Even where an agreement on support has been made, only about a quarter of those entitled actually receive it.
3. **Redistribution through taxation is too weak.** This is a Japanese characteristic: very little tax money is spent on child-rearing or on education. In most countries redistribution improves the child poverty rate; in Japan alone it makes it worse, or leaves it much the same.

What she wanted to convey, she said, is that **child poverty in Japan is not a matter of personal responsibility**. Almost everyone is working hard; for a variety of reasons they cannot earn enough, and their children suffer for it.

Slide 5 — Japan's relative child poverty rate: 13.5%, about one child in seven; 9th highest of 34 OECD countries, against an OECD average of 11.6% (2014). Among single-parent households the rate is 48.1%, the highest of the 34; among two-parent households, 10.7%. Japan first published a child poverty rate in 2009.

What the state has done

Before the welfare ministry first measured the relative poverty rate in 2009 there were almost no measures against poverty at all, and none whatever against child poverty. Recognizing the seriousness of the problem, various initiatives have now begun to find their footing. The **Act on the Promotion of Policy on Poverty among Children** was passed in 2013 and the outline that follows from it in 2014; in 2017 the Cabinet Office established an experts' council on child poverty policy, of which Ms. Watanabe is a member. **Thirty-nine indicators** are now used to monitor progress.

The state's priority measures fall into four groups: **educational support** (free early childhood education and childcare, equal opportunity of access to university); **support contributing to stability of living** (support for the living of parents and of children, employment support); **support for the working life of parents** (employment support for single-parent households and for households in hardship generally); and **economic support** (cash benefits such as the child allowance and the child-rearing allowance, and reduction of the burden of educational costs, such as free high school tuition).

Then came COVID-19

Just as Japan's measures against child poverty were at last making progress, she said, the pandemic struck, and it is having a very great effect on child-rearing households. She set out three features of the economic damage.

1. **The damage is concentrated on the working generation.** Society could turn if it were allowed to; because it does not turn, people cannot work and their income falls.
2. **Unlike an earthquake or a natural disaster, the damage is very hard to see.** The struggling families Kidsdoor supports may have no food for their children in the summer holidays — no rice in the house, no money for meat or fish — but from the outside nothing shows; no house has been swept away. So it is hard to concentrate support on the people who need it.
3. **Child-rearing households run a far higher risk of being unable to go to work.** A nursery closes, a child becomes a close contact at school, a grandparent living in the same house is infected. Many child-rearing and single-parent households are in non-regular employment, so not going to work means no income. Two weeks off work halves next month's pay: a small wage of ¥120,000 becomes ¥60,000 and the rent cannot be paid.

The heart of it, she said, is that public support for children and for education is thin in normal times; people living on the barest income who can no longer work are now in a desperate position.

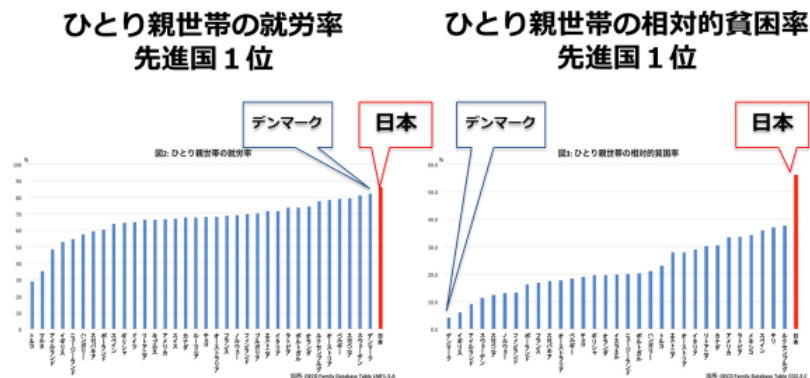
What the surveys show

In a survey of struggling child-rearing families in **November 2021**, 64 percent said they had been unable to buy clothing, 48 percent — about half — that they had been unable to buy food, and about a third that they had been unable to pay utility bills. Some could not pay school costs or the school lunch and tuition savings.

Asked in **January**, after the turn of the year, how things stood against November, families reported not only cheaper side dishes and a decline in the quality of meals but a fall in the sheer volume of food: not being able to let a child have a second helping, difficulty in adding a dish to the staple, no meat or fish, getting by on eggs and *nattō*. **Fourteen percent said they could not give their children three meals a day**; with no school lunches in the summer holidays, three meals have to be prepared at home, and so a child is asked to go without breakfast and to make do with two.



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**世界一働いているのに、世界一貧困な日本のひとり親
＝世界一のワーキングプア**

子どもの貧困は自己責任ではなく、社会構造の欠陥が作り出している

Slide 7 — Japan's single parents have the highest employment rate among advanced countries and the highest poverty rate: "the world's hardest-working and the world's poorest" — the world's worst working poor. Child poverty is not a matter of personal responsibility; it is made by a defect in the structure of society.

A more recent survey in **July 2022** asked about the effect on the children themselves. Thirty-two percent said their child's school performance had fallen; about two in ten said the child was struggling to keep up in class, or had begun to dislike going to school. **Only 29 percent reported no particular effect** — meaning that seven children in ten had been affected in some way.

Worst of all is that the effect is being prolonged. The COVID-19 emergency began in January 2020, and the third year was under way. Asked in July about total household earned income, **half** said it had fallen and remained low; two in ten said it was recovering; **only 5 percent** said it had returned to its former level. On the effect on children, three in ten said there had been a bad effect but it had improved — while **37 percent** said the bad effect was still continuing.

Educational disparity, and the environment that produces it

The great characteristic of child poverty in Japan is educational disparity: where the parents' income is high the child's attainment is high, and where the parents' income is low the child's attainment is low. This is a very strange thing, she said, because it is not as though high-IQ children were born only into rich households; the two really ought not to be tied together. But they are, and low attainment puts a child at a disadvantage in going on to further education and in finding work, with large consequences for the rest of life.

It is easy to assume that children on low incomes simply do not study at home, or do not try hard enough. That is not so. It is the living environment that poverty produces which does the damage.



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**塾や家庭教師に行かせられないというだけでなく
生活環境が大きく影響している。**

住環境
家が狭く、勉強部屋がありません。宿題をやろうとすると、保育園の妹が邪魔をして、ドリルやノートをぐちゃぐちゃにしまいます

時間の貧困
母子家庭で、正社員につけないため、低賃金のパートをWワーク、トリプルワーク。子どもは家で勉強をみてもらうことができない

教育へのわずかな投資ができない
家にはパソコンがない。参考書や問題集を買うのも大変。模試が受けられない

20

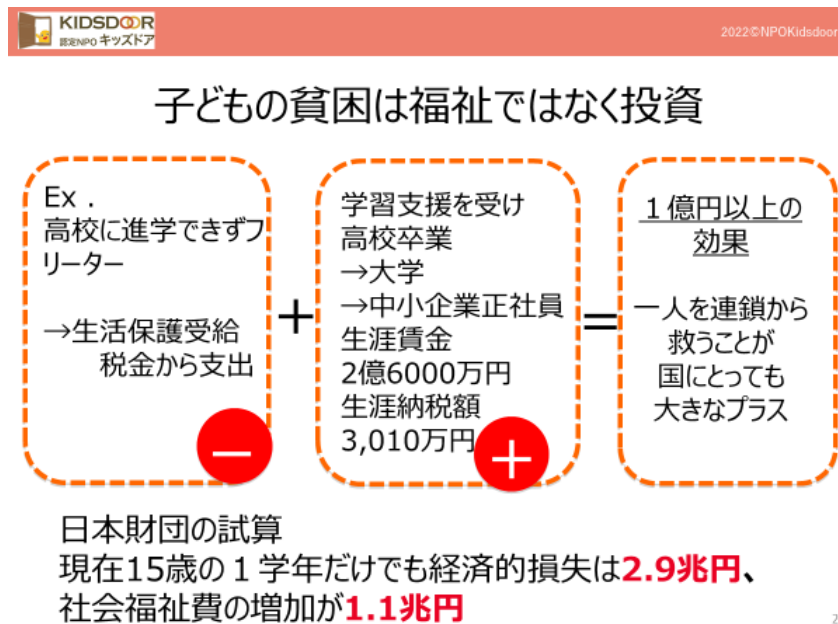
Slide 20 — Three ways poverty depresses attainment: the housing environment; poverty of time; and the impossibility of even a small investment in education.

1. **The housing environment.** Little can be rented on a limited income; children have no study room of their own and often no desk of their own, and no calm space at home. It is hard to study for an entrance examination while younger brothers and sisters watch television or play games.
2. **Poverty of time.** Because the parent is one of the working poor, there is no time made to sit with a child over schoolwork — two or three very low-paid jobs held at once: out to the first job after the children have gone to school, home in the evening to feed them, then out to the second job, a restaurant or an *izakaya* before the pandemic, a convenience store or a supermarket checkout now. There is no help with homework, no getting the school things together; when the child hits something he does not understand, he stops there.
3. **Investment in education is impossible.** In households that cannot even feed a child properly, buying a workbook or a reference book is hard; a candidate for entrance examinations who cannot be sent to a cram school ought at least to sit practice tests, but at ¥4,000 or ¥5,000 each they are out of reach. Some families cannot buy the stationery they need. Kidsdoor now sends notebooks, erasers and pencils, and families reply that they had not been able to buy them and are very grateful.

What this produces is the chain of poverty: too little income, too little education, disadvantage in study and in work, no well-paid job, and poverty again. No one can choose the parents they are born to, she said; that a child who

happens to be born to a low-income single parent should carry the negative effects forward is a very bad thing, and it has somehow to be cut.

Child poverty is not welfare — it is investment



Slide 22 — The case for investment: a supported child who finishes school, works and pays tax rather than drawing benefits is worth an effect “of the order of ¥100 million.” The Nippon Foundation estimates that for a single cohort of 15-year-olds the economic loss is ¥2.9 trillion and the increase in social welfare costs ¥1.1 trillion.

Kidsdoor's response to the fact that children cannot get enough education is to deliver education free — teaching, of course, but also putting the environment for learning in order and offering a range of experiences: support for the child's growth.

It is easy to assume that state action against child poverty costs a great deal. But **child poverty is not welfare; it is investment**. Supporting children now is supporting Japan's future. A child on a very low income who cannot study, who goes on to high school and drops out, will find it hard to work steadily afterward and stands a high chance of ending as a recipient of public assistance and other welfare. Give that child enough support in childhood and he finishes high school and works, or goes to university and works — earning a wage, becoming independent and also paying tax. It is said that the effect can be of the order of **¥100 million per child**. The Nippon Foundation's estimate is that for a single cohort of today's 15-year-olds alone the economic loss is **¥2.9 trillion** and the increase in social welfare costs **¥1.1 trillion** — a project worth ¥4 trillion, and so worth doing properly.

Learning support for children is easy to think of purely in terms of **economic capital** — paying for cram school, providing a place to be. But **cultural capital** matters too: a range of experiences, contact with books, being told that education matters. So does **social capital**: being embedded in a genuinely good social and human network. Assemble all three and a child forms real attainment and can get out of poverty.

What Kidsdoor actually does

The most emblematic of Kidsdoor's projects, she said, is to rent premises and create a place to be in a poor district, where children come every day: to study, of course, but also to be in a safe place, to meet volunteers and staff, to take part in activities, and to receive food support — a compound of supports, which does a great deal for a child's growth.

Many people imagine learning support as a kind of cram school. What matters is that it should be an enjoyable place where a child feels psychologically safe. Children whose attainment is low have, in the first place, no appetite for study; if the place they are invited to is one that teaches sternly, or a place that teaches at them one-way like a school, they will find no value in it and will not come however free it is. So making a place that such children can easily reach is very important — offering the experience of using a computer as well as studying, taking them somewhere on a trip, cooking together, meeting people from other countries: supporting them to do the things they

otherwise cannot.



社会全体で子どもを育てる・教育する
誰もが豊かな教育を享受できる国へ



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Slide 28 — Raising and educating children as a whole society: community, NPOs, children's cafeterias, after-school clubs, cram schools and the education industry, and companies, all around the school.

The most important thing of all, she said, is that society as a whole raises and educates children. A generation ago children were the school's business — work experience, activities, attainment, everything. In today's diverse world there are so many capacities a child must acquire that the school cannot do it alone. The community, NPOs, companies, after-school clubs, children's cafeterias and many others must link up firmly and support children together.

Left alone, child poverty is bad for the children's own futures and bad for the country. And it is very hard for the state alone, or the administration alone, or the school alone to deal with. Society as a whole must take it on, everyone putting out their strength to support children's healthy growth, so that children in poverty too receive enough education and become the next generation of supporters. She closed by hoping that everyone would work on child poverty together.

Part 3 — Case Reports

Six organizations — two from each country — described what they actually do. The moderator introduced the session by noting that two representatives had been invited from each of Korea, China and Japan.

3.1 Casebook of Protection and Support for Victims of Abuse by a Citizens' Association

LEE Bae Geun 李培根

President, Korea Association for the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect (KAPCAN)

Mr. Lee introduced cases of support for abused children by a citizens' organization. The purpose of the study, he said, was to throw light on the thirty-year history of KAPCAN — the first body in Korea established by civil society for the support of abused children — and to set out a desirable direction for private organizations supporting the protection of abused children as the times require.

That direction comprises: holding seminars, education and campaigns for the understanding and prevention of child abuse; establishing child abuse counseling centers; receiving reports of abuse cases; organizing nationwide support bodies made up of citizen volunteers; professionalizing the Korean child protection association; training child rights counselors as a private qualification course; and providing child rights education to guardians and to primary, middle and high school pupils.

The effects expected of this work are: recognition that child abuse is a crime; the activation of reporting of child abuse by citizens; pressing government to enact laws related to the prevention of child abuse and to make protective facilities compulsory; organizing citizen support bodies and steering committees; activating prevention through education of those under a duty to report; and educating primary school pupils so that they acquire the ability to protect themselves from abuse.



LEE Bae Geun, President of the Korea Association for the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect.

Table 3.1 The three periods of KAPCAN's activity as described by LEE Bae Geun.

Period	Name	Character of the work
1989–1999	Establishment	Child abuse counseling centers opened; publicity and awareness work
2000–2009	Growth	Government began commissioning private bodies to run the child counseling centers of 16 cities and provinces
2010–2019	Expansion	Child abuse counseling work promoted in solidarity with private bodies; support for abused children and for group homes; education of guardians and child counselors begun

The transcript says “the past 301 years,” an evident typographical error for 30 years.

The founding period, 1989–1999

For a week from **November 30, 1988**, Dr. Duke — then a vice-president of ISPCAN — was invited to Korea, and seminars on the theme of the prevention of child abuse and neglect were held in Busan, Daegu, Gwangju, Daejeon and Incheon. About **600 leaders of citizens' organizations** attended and the seminars ended in success.

As a result, on **March 24, 1989**, KSPCAN was founded in solidarity with government and with many private bodies including the Child Fund and UNICEF. Child abuse counseling centers were opened in **14 cities and provinces**, receiving cases of child abuse, counseling and running prevention campaigns; and **20 academic seminars** were held for some **2,100 people** — scholars, administrators, teachers, guardians. Their themes were mainly the prevention of child abuse and legal countermeasures, changing the consciousness of civil society, the treatment of and intervention in child abuse, the prevention of violence in schools, desirable child-rearing, and counseling skills for abused children.

Four workshops were held for the staff of the counseling centers, on child abuse, the construction of a social safety

net, the crisis of child-rearing and desirable child-rearing, and effective counseling skills for treatment and child support. **Forty-nine case presentations** were made — on the protection of abused children, on mother–son incest, on abuse by stepmothers, on separating abused children from their families. Eight training courses were held for interns on the theme of child protection.

The association also worked to press government to enact the relevant laws — the prevention of domestic violence, revision of the Child Welfare Act and other legislation related to child abuse. In **1994** a bill for a Child Abuse Prevention Act was submitted to the National Assembly, and in **1995** a bill for a Domestic Violence Prevention Act was submitted to committee. Revision of the Child Welfare Act was used to press for legislation on the prevention of child abuse, and on **September 3, 1997** a public hearing on a child abuse prevention act was held at which the laws and systems of other countries were introduced. In **1999** specialist officers of the Ministry of Health and Welfare drew up and distributed **Korea's first guidelines on the prevention of child abuse**, for police, public servants, teachers and medical workers.

Photographic exhibitions and street campaigns against child abuse were held nationwide, and in 1994 a **Domestic Violence Prevention Week** campaign was run. Korean television programs — among them *Depth! Accident of Human* — were used to bring home to civil society the horror of child abuse. Throughout the period the association counseled, guided, treated, took emergency case consultations, received reports, confirmed facts of abuse and provided prevention education nationwide for parents, children, teachers, guardians, survivors and citizens; it published **37 casebooks**, covering child abuse, the situation in Korea, and treatment and intervention, and pursued joint projects with the Korea Child Association and other private bodies.

In 1999 it announced the development of a mock-up group home, and in February of that year founded **Korea's first group home**, in Mapo, Seoul, beginning with the protection of **seven abused children**. That group home became the origin of *SHIMTEO*, which government promotes under the name “community home” on the basis of the Child Welfare Act as revised in 2000. As of **2022 the government runs 89 shelters nationwide** under commission.

The growth period, 2000–2009

In this period the association raised civil society's awareness of preventing and reporting child abuse, strengthened education and publicity, and activated projects supporting abused children. **Thirty-nine photographic exhibitions** were held, along with child abuse prevention education and the Yellow Ribbon campaign: ten exhibitions, campaigns and education sessions in 2002; 13 child protection education sessions for teachers and guardians in 2003; 19 campaigns for guardians and survivors in 2004; and the Yellow Ribbon campaign nationwide in 2009.

Over the ten years **20 academic seminars** were held, taking up the state of child abuse, child welfare law and systems, community-based prevention and treatment, the protection of abused children, the protection of abducted and missing children, and child protection work — all to encourage active participation and reporting. **Seven case presentation meetings** were held, including cases of children's emotional maladjustment caused by neglect and physical abuse at home, and teaching materials were produced and distributed for parents, children, school teachers, nursery teachers and police. **One hundred and twenty counseling sessions** were held for abused families, abused children and teachers; regional and functional organization was activated, **35 support bodies** were established in **2008**, and resource development with citizens' groups was begun. Leaflets on preventing child abuse were produced and distributed to police stations, primary schools and nurseries, posters were produced, and the message was carried nationwide through newspapers, broadcasting, television and websites.

The expansion period, 2010–2019

Over these ten years support for the group homes of abused children was expanded nationwide, education of guardians was promoted, child rights counselors were trained, local and prefectural branches were established, and materials were organized through a website.

Eighty thousand citizens nationwide took part in the Yellow Ribbon signature campaign against child abuse, and **120 prevention campaigns** for teachers and guardians were successfully held through the association and its branches. **Eighteen academic seminars** were held for child welfare field staff, teachers and guardians — on building local safety nets to manage child abuse cases, on the effects of child abuse and the protection of victims, and on the achievements and challenges of the child protection system — attended by **1,080 people**.

To train specialists in mandatory reporting and in parent education and counseling, **21 child guardians** were produced in 2015 and **33** in 2016. In **August 2017** the education for child guardians was converted into education for the child rights adviser, a private qualification recognized by the state; by 2019 **five courses had been completed by 34 people**, whose fields of activity include counseling guardians, guidance and counseling in educational institutions.

From **2014** support was expanded nationwide for group homes — the temporary protection facilities for abused children separated from their guardians. By 2019 the association had supported **24 group homes and 11,192 abused children** nationwide, mainly with the costs of improving living conditions, medical and psychological care, study, equipment purchases, clothing and meals.

What comes next

Since **87 percent of child abuse occurs within the family and 82 percent of perpetrators are parents**, the first task is to activate prevention education and campaigns and to improve the immaturity and the mistaken attitudes to child-rearing of parents. To professionalize and diversify that work, a child rights education center should be established and a **community child safety net** built, linking private child support bodies, schools, hospitals, police and family courts in support of abused children and their families.

The challenges child protection cases pose to civil society are, he said, systematic prevention education, running child abuse prevention campaigns centered on civil society, writing child abuse prevention education into the school curriculum, and strengthening advance parent education.

Thirty years ago, when no one took an interest in child abuse and abused children could get no support at all, we changed the awareness of civil society and carried out projects to support abused children through citizens' organizations.

— LEE Bae Geun

This case, he concluded, means that it impressed on civil society that child abuse is a social problem to be solved by publicity, campaigning and education, and that it set a precedent showing that social problems can be solved through public–private cooperation and the activation of community-rooted citizens' groups.

3.2 Child-Rearing Support by Civil Society Organizations — The Role of “Bibil Andak” in the Independence of Care Leavers

CHUNG Moo Sung 鄭茂晟

Professor, Department of Social Welfare, Soongsil University, Seoul

Professor Chung spoke about the role civil society organizations can play in the community in supporting the independence of children who have left residential care.

Who the care leavers are

To understand children whose protection has ended, one must first understand children under protection. In Korea these are children with no guardian, children living apart from their guardian, children abused by their guardian, and children whose guardian is unfit to raise them under the Child Welfare Act.

A **care leaver** is a child from whom the local authority has withdrawn protection because the purpose of protection has been achieved on reaching the age of 18, and who therefore leaves the children's home. Protection can now be extended to the age of 24 on request. From **2021** these young people, being already in their twenties, have come to be called “**young people preparing for independence.**” Unlike children in ordinary families, they must become independent when they reach a certain age, regardless of their own will or capacity — so very concrete and finely-grained support for independence is needed.



CHUNG Moo Sung, Professor of Social Welfare at Soongsil University.

Three kinds of protection, and the numbers

Table 3.2 Children under protection in Korea, on the latest statistics cited by CHUNG Moo Sung.

Form of protection	Character	Children
Children's homes	Residential facilities for the protection of children	3,000
Community homes	Group homes, protection in conditions much like a family	1,111
Foster care	Raising the child in a family atmosphere; increasing lately	5,991
Total		10,102

Protection ends after five years, and statistics show that some **2,500 children a year** leave protection; there are at present some **12,000 to 13,000** care leavers. Surveys find that they have difficulty with money and with securing housing, and that they are asking for support with living costs and rent.

What the state provides

In response, government has set out a policy for their independence. Its basic direction is to secure a fair opportunity to enter society and to be thorough about support for independence and case management, with work and projects suited to the individual.

Even so, having been in collective care for a long time, care leavers often show negative attitudes at the point protection ends: listlessness, social maladjustment, depression, aggression, a sense of loss, disconnection, dissatisfaction with life. Many have not sufficiently acquired the skills daily life requires, and find it hard to live alone in society.

- **Independence allowance** — KRW 300,000 a month, and KRW 350,000 from August 2022.
- **Independence settlement grant** — from KRW 5 million to KRW 15 million on leaving the facility, varying by local authority.
- **Housing** — 2,000 units of public rental housing.

- **CDA (Child Development Account)** — where the local authority saves a fixed sum each month, the government's matching support adds the same amount up to KRW 100,000 a month, so that money is put by for entry into society.
- **Public assistance** — where income after discharge is insufficient, the young person becomes a recipient and an allowance is paid.
- **Education** — scholarships to secure the opportunity to go on studying, and relaxed conditions for entering dormitories.
- **Employment** — skills training at Meister high schools and employment support linked to government projects.

Why public support is not enough

Public support of this kind is not sufficient, Professor Chung said. For these young people to live together in the local community and build human relationships, the role of the private sector is very important: companies, schools, friends, neighbors and religious bodies can play an active part by providing spiritual and material support in the community.

Support by public agencies centers on economic support and has the limitation of being poor at psychological and mental support. Care leavers often carry trauma, and surveys find that **one in two has thought of wanting to die**. Recently a child who entered university after leaving protection took his own life because living alone in a dormitory over the first vacation was too hard to bear. Social, psychological and mental support must therefore be provided sufficiently — and the private sector does this far better.

As for the delivery system: the administration has established agencies for independence support, including the NCRC, but for children living in the community these feel remote. What is needed is a structure in which children can consult someone close at hand and solve their problems there.

The Bibil Andak project

Professor Chung then turned to the “**Bibil Andak**” project — the name means, roughly, *something to lean against*. It is run by an organization called **CROSSROADS**, founded by a pastor who had finished his ministry and retired in Goyang and Paju, in the northwest of Seoul. Wanting to do something of value in his community, he created CROSSROADS to support young people struggling after protection ended and they had left the shelter; the organization's work is mainly support for them, and Bibil Andak is its central activity. Just as a cow grows well if it has something to rub against, so a person needs something to lean on.

Asked what was hardest, the young people answered: “**Cooking for myself is the hardest.**” So the organization began by forming a volunteer team at the church and providing meals.

Under CROSSROADS sits the Bibil Andak volunteer team, made up of **five bodies — one local middle school and four churches** — which take turns working to solve the young people's various problems.

The children's home behind the project

A children's home in Paju, typical of Korea, supports the project. Many Korean children's homes were founded just after the Korean War; this one was founded in **1958** and at first supported war orphans with aid from abroad. When Korea was struck by the Asian currency crisis in **1998** there were many calls for the protection of infants and children, but no government support was available, so the home developed its own resources. From the 2010s the number of children in foster care rose because of family breakdown and family discord — an arrangement for taking a child in temporarily, for which there are many systems.

The home is one of Korea's leading facilities, chosen as an excellent facility in **four consecutive** facility evaluations. It actively supports the Bibil Andak project, and about **48 children** live there now — considerably fewer than in the past. Through the project it provides psychological and mental support, support for independence and for daily living, and career and employment support. Research funding was also provided to analyze the results of the project, which has run for about ten years.

What the research found

Both quantitative and qualitative research were carried out: an online survey of **23 young people**, and interviews with **11** who had joined the Bibil Andak project after leaving the facility. Asked whether the project's support had helped them become independent, many answered “strongly agree” or “agree,” and no negative answers were seen.

In the survey of the 23, the commonest answers were that it had **helped them mentally and financially**, that it had helped to be supported attentively, that they thought it necessary for independence, and that they would **recommend it to those following them at the children's home** — the last two especially numerous. They also wanted the relationship to be a long one.

The interviews described the experience at first hand. At the start there was a sense of release, but thinking about whether they could manage brought anxiety about the future and a feeling of needing help. Just after becoming independent they were very anxious: they could not trust people, wanted to throw their lives away, did not want it known at university that they had come from a children's home for fear of prejudice. They had no margin to buy what they wanted, and money had been taken from them by seniors and juniors. Wanting something to rely on, some tried religious activity and found it did not come easily. Some were hurt by friends of the opposite sex.

But they were very grateful to the children's home, and said that if they succeeded they wanted to go back there and be role models for those coming after them. Of Bibil Andak they said they were grateful that it supported them in small things and gave them what they wanted. Their trust in the volunteers was particularly strong: it had been hard at first, but the volunteers had attended to the smallest details for their sake, and they had been able to open their hearts.

There really are such good people in the world. Even if the administration's support goes away, we are all right so long as the volunteers are there. The volunteers are like family — and from that, a strong will to become independent can grow.

— Care leavers interviewed for the Bibil Andak study

They had also gained the courage to face things alone without flinching at having come from a children's home.

The lesson

What the results of Bibil Andak brought home, Professor Chung said, is that **economic independence is not everything**. The administration puts its strength into supporting economic independence, but keeping good relations with people in the community mattered very much too — and public support does not manage this well. Rather, it is people living close by in the community who become dependable supporters and stand in for parents, so that a young person can stand alone with confidence.

In that sense the Bibil Andak project, centered on volunteer teams from a local church and school, contributed greatly to the children's lasting independence. He closed by saying he hoped support projects by citizens' organizations would increase.

3.3 The Angels in White Lecturers' Corps

BAI Yaqin 白亚琴

Chairperson, Beijing Happy Family Center for Promoting Popular Science, Education and Public Welfare

Ms. Bai presented a child welfare project called “**The Angels in White Lecturers' Corps — Protection with Love.**” The corps draws on **more than 5,000 medical workers** in 22 provinces and municipalities directly under the central government; there are now close to 5,000 welfare lecturers, which has made it possible to hold **more than 20,000 events and activities** in children's health science.

Why train the trainers

The reason she wanted to present this program, she said, is that every lecturer of the Angels in White has been through **TTT — training of trainers**. First the lecturers are trained; then, after empowerment and training, standard courses are set; and then the lecturers hold welfare activities and educational lectures such as parent-and-child sessions on children's health.

The lecturers give up their days off and use their free time to take part in this science education, so that more child-rearing households can benefit.

We often say “don't let the child lose at the starting line.” More than that, I think: don't let the parent lose at the starting line.

— BAI Yaqin



BAI Yaqin, Chairperson of the Beijing Happy Family Center.



白衣天使讲师团·因爱守护

In working on child welfare projects and research and on the study of family education, she had found this to be a very important factor. As everyone knows, a child with a problem always has a family with a problem. So the lecturers of the Angels in White must first of all have knowledge of a very high level, so as not to lose at the starting line — not to be behind the children or the parents.

Slide 1 — “The Angels in White Lecturers' Corps · Protection with Love.”

For the past **nine years** the corps has run empowerment training for its lecturers, offline and — in principle monthly — online. Offline training lets lecturers meet specialists face to face and hear empowerment lectures within their own work. The training covers mental health, physical health, family education, marital health, the relevant legal rules and adolescent health education, so that lecturers learn more specialized knowledge and can pass it on to tens of thousands of households with children.

When training is given, she noted, everyone knows that in rote-style training a lecturer absorbs only about **5 percent** of the knowledge. Only through practical training and demonstration teaching do lecturers learn well enough to convey high-quality knowledge to tens of thousands of families.

The standard courses

After practical and empowerment training, the lecturers are given a set of **ten standardized courses**. One of them concerns **vaccination**: everyone agrees that prevention is very important, that all health arises from prevention, and that if a child's vaccination is not in time it will certainly affect entry into school or study abroad. Other courses include **parent-child hugging** and **parent-child attachment**.

The family is the smallest form of the nation, and the nation is made of tens of millions of households. If every family is happy and healthy, our families and our nation will be strong.

— BAI Yaqin

When these standard courses are to be delivered, an excellent lecturer is sent out from headquarters to demonstrate

the course before the lecturer in charge runs it, so that lecturers on the ground learn how best to introduce the project to parents, families and children.

Lecturers who have completed the standard courses may run **online courses for expectant mothers**. Like the Forum itself these are two-way. In the first half of the year alone close to **10,000** such courses were held. Offline courses for expectant mothers, new mothers and children are also held; the two-way exchange offline allows better communication with households that have children.



Slide 7 — Mode one: the online classroom for expectant mothers. Nearly 10,000 such courses were held in the first half of 2022 alone.

The lecturers act as the first window for both online and offline courses, reviewing and researching both and reporting content, reviews, corrections and requests back to the organization, so that the courses can be improved and empowerment training extended to more lecturers.

The scale of it

In **2022** the lecturers of the Angels in White ran close to **20,000 online and offline courses for mothers**. A single science education session reaches about 100 people; an online course in principle 200–300; the smallest audiences are 200–300 and a large course can approach 10,000, while some courses are taken by more than 30,000 people — 30,000 households. Through the courses run in the first half of the year the project reached close to **two million households**.

Through TTT training, she said, this many families are being helped. If one had to visit every household with children to give a class, it would be very hard indeed to be of use to two million households' children. The TTT method — training the association's own lecturers by day, and having those lecturers deliver courses to families in the form of science education — is, she believes, a very good shape for a child welfare project.

Protection with Love

The welfare project itself is called **Health Plan for Happy Child**, in the hope that all children may have a happy childhood: that in early childhood they may feel love and care from society, from the lecturers of the Angels in White, and from the project itself. That is **Protection with Love**, and it is love that brings the lecturers together — using their free time to carry out this mission of science education and taking part in the project as volunteers.

By taking part in training and exchange, the more than 5,000 welfare lecturers have raised their level in education, in management and in welfare work by leaps and bounds; the ethics of their practice in health education have been cultivated, and their capacity to work as welfare volunteers has greatly improved.

Through online and offline courses the project runs classes in infant nutrition and works to protect infant health. Volunteers go deep into individual households — feeding a baby noodles while at the same time carrying out the education mission with scientific knowledge of family education, nutrition and health, and how to raise a child. Families that have been taught send words of thanks.

When I received the noodles that were full of love, the volunteers on our staff went out of their way to explain how to eat them and what to watch for — so I could feel the consideration and love of the welfare project for households with children, and the consideration and love of the government too.

— LI Guofen, a parent

Going to the sites, she said, one can feel how much the children like the project and how much trust the parents place in it. Because the lecturers are medical workers, everyone knows that when they carry out the project's

activities they can also give the family health guidance. Studying with them, families come to understand the laws and rules of family education as well; and when the lecturers communicate with parents they do so in a way that ensures the parents do not lose at the starting line and that more of the benefit reaches them.

This is what she felt in introducing the corps: because the lecturers take part as volunteers, they can offer greater value than an ordinary volunteer — and the empowerment given to them is worth more than that given to an ordinary volunteer, because ordinary volunteers do not have medical expertise and the Angels in White do.

Nuo Nuo

She told a short story. Among the beneficiaries is a small child called **Nuo Nuo**, who lives in Lichuan and who turns one this year; because of a metabolic disease the child must take medicine over a long period, adding to the burden on an already hard-pressed family. Because the association's lecturers are medical workers, in carrying out Protection with Love they can do more than hold welfare science classes: they can go to Nuo Nuo's home and deliver the medicine, and they can carry out a health check. The project intends to go on giving Nuo Nuo health consultation and help while introducing various programs; so far it is going very well.

For the project a dedicated **WeChat group** was created, through which families can receive free science consultation every **Tuesday and Thursday**: a parent who has a question can communicate two-way with the specialist volunteers of the Angels in White, and with specialists in family education. This supports people at the grassroots who have few opportunities to meet specialists at home or abroad. Building an online and offline platform of this kind through the corps allows the visiting child welfare project to be of better service to households with children.

In the course of children's growth, she noted, even where a child is healthy — leaving aside cases like Nuo Nuo's with an underlying metabolic disease — the parents too have many problems, and she would like them to communicate with the association's specialists and lecturers even a little. The TTT training and the two-way communication of the Protection with Love WeChat group afterward are, she thinks, the fine points of this project.

Protection with Love has received support from many quarters and has been taken up by many media. Because children's smiles are the most beautiful decoration the association could have, she hoped the lecturers of the Angels in White would be able to help and care for still more children.

3.4 Toward the Healthy Growth of Children and a Caring Home Town

TU Mei 涂梅

President, Qingshen County Center for Women & Children Development

Ms. Tu presented a program under the title *Growth of Youth Filled with Love — Qingshen County Rural Women and Children Cooperative Development Promotion Association — Service to Children*.

The national picture

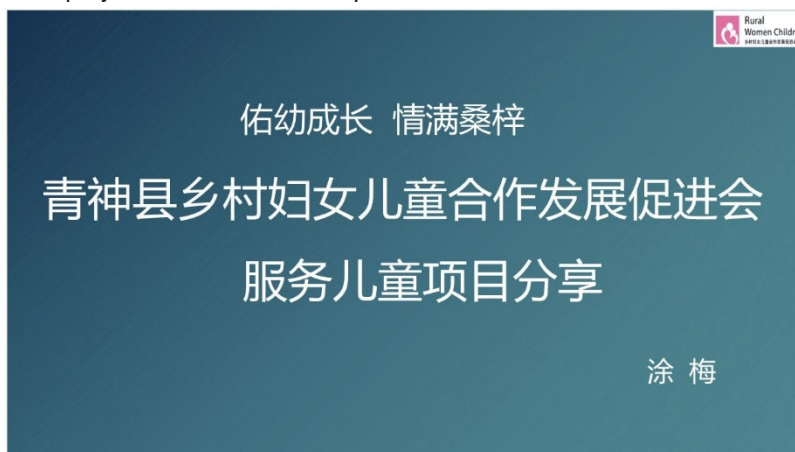
That every child should have a happy childhood is a family's hope, and in fact the responsibility of society as a whole. According to the data of the **Seventh National Population Census**, China has **494 million households**, and the population aged 0 to 14 is about **253.38 million — 17.95 percent** of the whole. With the two-child and three-child policies in force, the child population will go on rising.

The Party and the state have attached weight to child welfare and supported children's healthy growth. Between **2011 and 2020** four successive frameworks for child development were drawn up and implemented. Measures to promote the cooperative development of child welfare projects with the economy and society, to emphasize the basic national policy of equality between women and men, and to protect the legal rights of women and children were included in the reports of both the **18th and the 19th Party Congresses**.

The quality of child welfare has steadily improved, the mechanisms of protection have become more complete, the environment for growth and development has been optimized, and a social atmosphere of caring for and loving children is taking shape. But because of regional differences in growth and development and imbalances in government support, the unevenness and insufficiency of children's development remain marked. The gap between city and countryside persists, the level of livelihood security needs raising further, and the legal framework and the implementation of policy to secure children's rights need further backing.



TU Mei, President of the Qingshen County Center for Women & Children Development.



Slide 1 — “Nurturing the young, filling the home town with feeling”: the Qingshen County Rural Women and Children Cooperative Development Promotion Association shares its work for children.

Qingshen County

Table 3.3 — Qingshen County, as described by TU Mei.

Location	Meishan City, Sichuan Province, in the southwest of the Chengdu Plain
Area	386 km ²
Resident population	197,029
Main industries	Agriculture and stock-raising; the economic level of the whole area is comparatively low
Consequence	As migrant labor increases, the proportion of left-behind elderly people, women and children, and of children on the move, is very high

Government has consistently directed support policy at the various kinds of children in difficulty, she said, but has not succeeded in forming effective cooperation among the different bodies; support work has been one-sided and

comparatively weak. China still faces many problems and difficulties in children's living environment, educational circumstances and health. The principle of children first needs far more force behind it; the legal structure securing children's rights must be continuously improved, the gaps between city and countryside and between groups narrowed, and the basic mechanisms of child protection and services made more complete.

The association

In **December 2007**, with the support of the Qingshen County Women's Federation, the social charitable body **Qingshen County Rural Women and Children Cooperative Development Promotion Association** was registered and formed. It was the first social organization in Qingshen County and the first social organization in the field of women and children in Sichuan Province.

Since its founding it has held to the idea of “**giving hope to every mother,**” giving hope to the realization of every child's dream, actively practicing industry that helps mothers escape poverty, and pursuing the mission of accompanying children as they grow. On the basis of securing the basic needs of children with disabilities, it provides support from many sides — illness, safety, education, feelings.

Working with the Sichuan Haihui Poverty Aid Center, the A Dream Foundation, the Salvation Army (Hong Kong) Sichuan office, a Taiwanese research institute and the Shanghai head office of BNP Paribas, the association has for **seven consecutive years** given scholarships to study in Paris to **102 children from poor households** outstanding in conduct and study, totaling more than **RMB 1.2 million**. Through public welfare projects for women's development and for the social care of children it has reached more than **50,000 direct and indirect beneficiaries**.

(The original report gives the scholarship destination as France; the number of recipients, the number of years and the total are as printed.)

At the Third Plenary Session in **2013** the Party emphasized and encouraged the vitality of social organizations while carrying out a series of practical policy reforms, further optimizing the legal and policy environment for the healthy growth of children and young people. The bodies engaged in child welfare have become ever more diverse, an ecosystem within the sector has gradually formed, and the pattern of the child welfare industry has grown more detailed; in a diversifying society, new child welfare projects have appeared one after another.

New problems, and a four-layer service

In today's dizzying social and economic development, with heavy pressure on employment, the association has noticed new problems arising in child welfare and child relief work — in the family, in health, in school, in safety. Examples she gave: the lack of family harmony around a child; misunderstandings in parents' thinking about child-rearing; harmony between parent and child; the fostering of young people's physical and mental health; the uneven quality of teachers in village schools.

The strength of government agencies alone cannot resolve every problem and contradiction, nor meet the needs of young people's continuing growth and change in their actual lives, nor sufficiently secure their right to protection and to participation in their own development. The association therefore needs further support from government and from society, expanding the youth service network across policy, services and mechanisms, extending from preferential services to more comprehensive and integrated ones, making the protection network denser and closer, and promoting the creation of a social space that respects and protects young people.

In recent years, holding to its grassroots beginnings, the association has worked with other agencies to build a **four-layer linked service structure** across the county and its villages, reaching to the furthest end and opening the last mile to reach and serve women and children.

Little Dream Houses, art classes, and care for girls

Driven by the wish to brighten the hearts of children in difficulty, the association has worked with volunteers and with people from many industries to provide “**Little Dream Houses**” to children living in the barest conditions without adequate facilities for living. For the living environment, rooms in the existing house are planned and designed, and the furniture and fittings a student's life requires are renovated and put in order.

To strengthen the ethos of village schools in the county the association has promoted comprehensive education, encouraged the balanced development of rural education with the cities, and enriched the “second classroom” for

village children. To fulfill the dreams of left-behind children it began **delivered art education**, expanding from the first three schools to seven primary and middle schools and successfully running **7,920 course sessions**, in which **15 art teachers** took part and which reached more than **2,000** of the county's primary and middle school pupils.

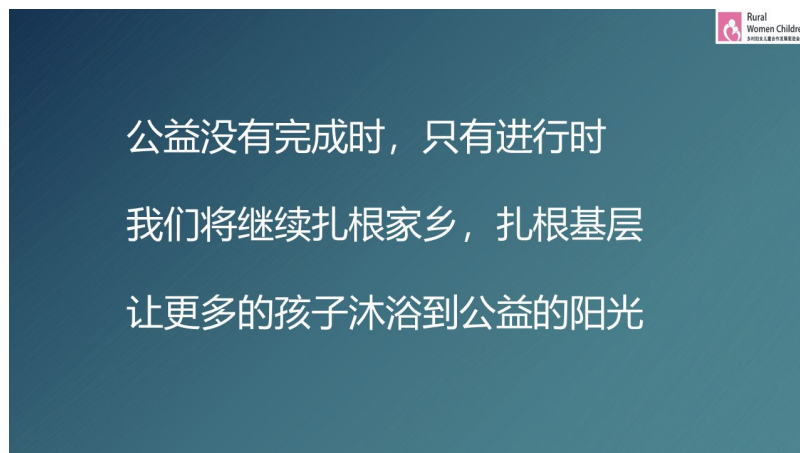
Because of the particular character of girls' growth the association further widened its scope of care, and was taken up by the Meishan civil affairs bureau; the related youth project was included in **“Happy Little Dongpo.”**

A series of social protection projects for minors targets some of the left-behind girls aged 10 to 16 in the rural areas of all six districts: home guidance on physical and mental health, sex education, guidance on menstruation, hygiene education, and the distribution of sanitary products. The association also works actively with the public security bureau and the prison so that children in de facto marriages can meet their parents and feel parental affection again — which also gives those serving sentences a firm foundation for rehabilitating themselves actively and returning to society in a new posture.

This series of public interest activities won high praise from society. County and city media competed to cover it, and it drew the attention and strong support of the city, the county offices and the county women's federation. Related policy was soon examined and introduced, and both the housing project for children in hardship and the **“Happy Little Dongpo companion youth”** project for girls were continuously promoted.

Making the Little Dream Houses, preparing groups of matched volunteers and running a program of accompaniment and care for the heart brought not only the renovation of a small house but a transition to a new spirit. To date the association has completed the Little Dream House project for **six young people** living in the villages and towns of the county, and **70 pairs** of volunteers and children in the volunteer care project have distributed sanitary products and underwear to **40 middle school girls** for **12 consecutive months**.

Family, early education and the arts



Slide 9 — “Public welfare has no time of completion; it is always in progress. We will go on putting down roots in our home town and at the grassroots, so that more children may bathe in the sunlight of public welfare.”

The family is the cradle that protects the minor; it is the first institution responsible for promoting a minor's healthy development. Because family and child-rearing matter so much to healthy growth, the association obtained the knowledge and support of the Faculty of Human Arts and Development of **China Agricultural University**, actively invited in resources such as the New Era Civilization Practice Project, and combined them with the various resources of accredited organizations in the district.

It implemented a **mother-accompaniment system** — including academic research on mother-accompaniment and the protection of minors — and, together with the child development promotion association, began early childhood education in **7 townships and 23 villages and districts**. For children from **0 to 3** it ran parent-child reading and parent-child exchange, promoted scientifically supported methods of child-rearing, and, working with the Qingshen bamboo weaving art museum and the Xishan history memorial hall, ran series such as **“Paradise of Youth”** and **“Children's Hearts to the Party.”** Making full use of public cultural resources, it guides children to discover true beauty through historical heritage and to cultivate good sense and a moral heart.

Safety, and the campaign against domestic violence

In strengthening the protection of minors, the association's services have widened from family safety to safety inside and outside the school and on the internet; it is organized to spread education against domestic violence and against bullying at school, to spread knowledge of minors' safety and to prevent harm to young people. This, she noted, is a new item for the protection of children and minors that China's child development plan requires to be added between **2021 and 2030**.

Since last year, with the support of the Salvation Army (Hong Kong) Sichuan office, the association has run a **county-wide anti-domestic-violence project**, widening its target from the traditional women's and girls' groups to children, young people and parents. It gathers parents for anti-DV meetings and runs scientific parent-education training for those with supervisory responsibility, raising the value of supervision, of child-rearing and of the supervisor's own growth, and promoting a better family environment for minors.

It has also held joint meetings with the relevant functional departments — the procuratorate, hospitals, civil affairs, the women's federation, health, education and sport — and built a linkage mechanism, forming an anti-DV alliance with mechanisms for linking information, disputes and resources. With the education and sports bureau it has run lectures on safety knowledge and points to watch. Through cooperation between parents and school — lectures on preventing bullying, and work on local children's self-esteem, self-love and self-defense — it is jointly building a harmonious and civilized school and providing children with a safe and civilized environment in which to study.

To raise a human being, one must first raise the heart.

— TU Mei

What comes next

Work for children shows its results only in the distant future. As the first to take part in and practice public interest and charitable work in Qingshen County, she said, the association feels deeply the urgency of its mission, the weight of its responsibility and the difficulty of its task. In a society aiming at the early realization of the Chinese Dream, the generation of children and young people who drive it will become a great pillar of the grand dream of national revival.

For its children's program the association will persist in focusing on children and its guiding ideas, on the basic ideas and overall aims of the development of child welfare work, and on **health, safety, education, welfare, the family environment and legal protection** — discovering children's difficulties and challenges at a deeper level from these seven fields. For groups of young people it will design child welfare projects that are appropriately targeted, exemplary in significance, sustainable and replicable.

From the various standpoints of child welfare, child safety, children's mental health and the protection of minors, it will unite a wider range of caring social forces to complete the welfare service system and the coordinating mechanisms among the relevant departments. It will guide young people into welfare volunteer service, practicing the core socialist values and experiencing the shift of role from beneficiary to contributor, training their comprehensive abilities — cooperation, interpersonal communication, decisiveness, confidence. Through practical guidance it will cultivate and encourage young people's social responsibility and patriotism, laying a sound foundation for service to society in the future; and through practical charitable service it will open the way to children's health, to the pursuit of study and to the development of talent.

3.5 Change the Community, Change the Child, Change the Future

KURIBAYASHI Chieko 栗林知絵子

President, Toshima Children's WAKUWAKU Network (certified NPO)



Slide 1 — “Change the community · change the child · change the future.” Toshima Children’s WAKUWAKU Network.



KURIBAYASHI Chieko, President of the Toshima Children’s WAKUWAKU Network.

Ms. Kuribayashi's organization makes places for children to be in Toshima Ward, Tokyo — a compact ward of **290,000 people with 22 primary schools and 8 middle schools**.

How it began

WAKUWAKU was founded in **2012**. Taking as its theme the hard-to-see problem of child poverty, it makes a variety of places to be, in the hope that children will change their lives for the brighter through contact with all sorts of adults in the community. Its distinguishing feature is that it is an organization of local residents, with many local volunteers involved.

Her own route in began with a wish that her own child should play as hard as he liked and grow: she came to help run a **play park**. Because a play park is outdoors and anyone can come at the weekend, all kinds of children gathered. Among them were a child who said every week, “I haven't eaten since yesterday, I'm hungry,” and a child who let slip, “Before we moved here we were living in a car.” It was the play park, she said, that made her notice that right next to her own child were children growing up in circumstances she could not have imagined.

A boy in his third year of middle school who came to the play park murmured, “**I might not be able to go to high school.**” She and the student volunteers at the play park supported him through his entrance examinations — that was in **2011** — and out of the connection with him came the recognition that there are children in this community growing up in difficult circumstances, invisibly; that one should connect with them loosely, make places for them to be, and be nosy on their behalf. WAKUWAKU came out of that.

In **2013** the organization began a **children's cafeteria** and **free learning support**. As more places to be came into existence, it started **Home-Start** in the belief that listening to the parents of infants could change the environment a child grows up in. In **2017** “**WAKUWAKU Home**” opened — a place where children can also stay overnight, free.

The value common to all these places is that the community watches over and raises the community's children. Through many adults and children being connected, no one in trouble is left alone; someone is nosy on their behalf. That is the kind of town the organization is working toward.

The places

Before the pandemic the work rested on three pillars — support for living, support for play, support for learning. In the pandemic the “**nosiness**” work — not just places to be but nosy attention to whatever is troubling a family — has grown very large.

The play park is run under commission from Toshima Ward and opens every day except the New Year and *Obon* holidays. It has no ready-made play equipment but plenty of natural material — fire, water, earth, wood. Children

of mixed ages gather and play; a younger child sees what the older ones are doing, thinks it looks interesting, wants to try, and realizes what he wants to do while making mistakes. There are always **play leaders** on hand watching over the children, and their presence is what makes the place work as a place to be.

Free learning support has been run face to face in parallel with online sessions through the pandemic. Ikebukuro being what it is, a great many children with roots abroad live there, and learning support online does not reach them; they come every week in person and study while mixing with the volunteers. Out of the student volunteers' own wish to try something came "**WAKUWAKU × Roots**," a place where children with roots abroad could gather without study as the object. The pandemic made meeting in person difficult, so once a week children of many nationalities connect online and mix.

Children's cafeterias — the organization runs three. Before the pandemic they were places of connection where everyone ate together noisily. Group meals are still not possible, but for the sake of the community's children local people make warm home-cooked *bentō* for children to collect; when they cannot cook, there is a **pantry** where food itself can be picked up. In this way the cafeterias have gone on running every week and every month through the pandemic. Twice a month, she said, the cafeteria is a place that treasures the community's children and connects them onward to the community's resources. It lets many generations mix, and it lets the organization itself go on being active locally and keep working on child poverty.

Home-Start WAKUWAKU sends local people with experience of raising children into the homes of families with infants, free of charge, to listen and to work alongside them. In the pandemic they went often to families with roots abroad, because parents from overseas could not come to help after a birth and such families grew increasingly isolated; deliberately visiting them created a current.



WAKUWAKUホーム





- 宿泊支援: 子どもが泊まれる場所
- 居場所の提供: 学習支援、遊びの支援、食の支援
火・木・・・小学低学年 水・金・土・・・中高生中心
- 相談支援

地域の子どもを地域で見守り育てるために
一時的にあずかれる場所が必要




Slide 13 — WAKUWAKU Home: overnight support, a place to be (study support, support for play and for food — Tuesday and Thursday for the lower primary years; Wednesday, Friday and Saturday centered on middle and high school students), and consultation. To watch over and raise the community's children in the community, a place is needed where a child can be taken in for a while.

WAKUWAKU Home is a place where children can stay the night free of charge, and where the ward also places children on short stays. On Tuesdays and Thursdays children in the lower primary years from single-parent families come in the evening, do their homework together, eat, and go home at eight. On Wednesdays, Fridays and Saturdays middle and high school students — many of them inclined to withdraw, or not attending school — come; at first the connection is made through games, and as time passes it becomes a place where they eat together and enjoy talking.

Networks across the ward

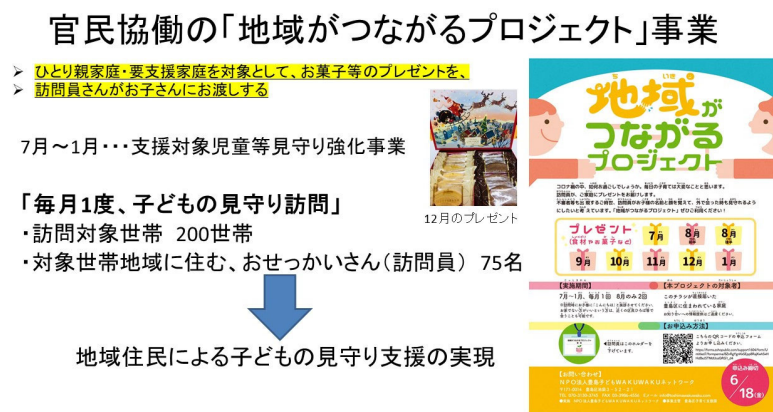
Besides WAKUWAKU's own, there are about **20 free learning support sites** in Toshima Ward. The Council of Social Welfare acts as secretariat, links them in a network and holds a meeting once a month, which the various related agencies also attend to exchange information. For children's cafeterias, the children and youth section acts as secretariat and a network meeting is likewise held, sharing food and information.

Because these groups had been cooperating before the pandemic — providing food support during the long school holidays, when there are no school lunches — the community and its residents were able to move quickly to support children when the schools closed.

Food support in the pandemic

What they did was food support. Under the name **Toshima Food Support Project**, from **March 2020**, when the schools closed, they handed over 5 kg of rice and other food every month. The closures continued through April, May and June. In May and June, restaurants that wanted to deliver a warm lunch to children joined the organization to create the **Toshima Lunch Support Project** — but children can only collect if there is a pick-up point within their own primary school district, so the *kumin hiroba*, a public facility of which there is one in each primary school district, was used as the collection point.

As residents' initiatives grew more active, the administration too collected money — not tax revenue — under the name **Children and Youth Support Fund**, and from **2020** has used it for food support aimed at single-parent households. Left to itself the administration would have ended with posting rice: it mailed notice of the food support to **1,100 single-parent households**, but applications came to WAKUWAKU, and personal information was shared. Through this public-private food support, families came to the *kumin hiroba* to collect the rice and connected with local residents there. As a result the organization is now connected to **600 households in hardship** with whom it had no connection before the pandemic.



Slide 19 — The public-private “Project to Connect the Community”: a monthly watch-over visit to 200 target households by about 75 “nosy neighbors.”

In the pandemic the organization also ran the **Project to Connect the Community**, one of the national measures against isolation and loneliness. The administration secured a national budget and ran the **program to strengthen watching over children in need of support**, which Toshima Ward commissioned to WAKUWAKU. Personal information about households needing support — households in hardship prone to isolation, households where there is a risk of abuse — is shared with the organization, and local people visit the children of those households with sweets and make a connection. This is the third year of the project, and it is running again this year, with about **70 “nosy neighbors”** taking part and visiting homes.

Separately — not run by WAKUWAKU — lawyers of the Tokyo Public Law Office, which has premises in Ikebukuro, the Toshima Ward Council of Social Welfare and an NGO have combined to run food support for people with roots abroad using **dormant deposits**. Having people come to collect food creates the opening to hear about their troubles: the lawyers support them on questions of residence status, and those raising children are passed to WAKUWAKU, who connect them to the local community. This linked food support — connection through food — was born in the pandemic.

What food support turns into

The Toshima Food Support Project runs once a month; the rice and all the food come from donations and contributions, and more than **100 local residents** take part each time, meeting the children and seeing the same faces again and again. The great achievement of the work during the pandemic, she said, is that families in hardship changed their own minds about it — coming to feel that it is all right to consult others, all right to ask for help.

Applicants to the Food Support Project write down what is actually troubling them. If someone writes that they cannot stop themselves raising a hand or shouting at their child, the child is invited to stay at WAKUWAKU Home; if they write that they are anxious about the child's studies, they are connected to free learning support. Nothing is left alone: information, suggestions, listening, and the connection to the next support. When someone says they have lost their job, staff go with the mother to Hello Work and look for work together; when someone's income has

fallen and the rent can no longer be paid, they support a move. All kinds of nosiness.

The children's cafeterias, the play network, the free learning support network, the network for children and families with roots abroad, and school social workers, community social workers and welfare commissioners are all connected, making a safety net for children.

The nosy connector

Information reaches households in hardship, and single-parent households in particular, with difficulty; and even where there is information they often do not apply. So what is needed, she said, is not only to provide information but a **nosy connector** — a person who connects a child to a place, and a child to another person. Connecting children to the community's resources is the anti-poverty work that they can do.

The aim is to have children and parents connected to community resources as early in the child's life as possible, and to grow up being fussed over — that is, being treasured — nurturing self-affirmation and encouraging independence through being able to depend on many people: a cycle built in the community.

The pandemic created many kinds of connection. Public and private working together reached households in hardship that had not been reached before. Connections were made through food, and through children's clothes: it is real, she said, that **things — gifts — can create new connections in a society where connection is hard to make**. In future she would like industry and companies to work more closely with residents' initiatives, so that the things and the experiences a child needs to grow can be supplied among them all, making connections and building a support team for children — turning the chain of poverty into a chain of nosiness within the community's own cycle.

Children's cafeterias have now spread to **6,000 locations** across Japan. If each of them, like WAKUWAKU, keeps putting into practice what residents can do, and the cafeteria becomes a platform that builds the support children need, then as such organizations spread across the country they can, she hopes, drive a transformation of society.

3.6 From the Front Line of the Self-Reliance Support Homes “Aran’s House” and “Mimosa’s House”

HAMADA Shinji 浜田進士

President, Nara Association for Supporting the Independence of Young People (certified NPO); General Manager, Self-Reliance Support Homes Aran’s House and Mimosa’s House; Director, Kansai Office, Research Institute on the Convention on the Rights of the Child

Mr. Hamada runs two self-reliance support homes in the city of Nara — the site of Japan’s ancient capital, and the homes stand on the site of that capital. His presentation described how the children in Japan’s alternative care have lived under the effects of COVID-19 since February 2020.

What a self-reliance support home is

A self-reliance support home supports young people aged **15 to 22** who have suffered abuse and cannot live with their families. Each home has **six private rooms** — one home for boys, one for girls — and supports living, employment, schooling, support after leaving, and the work of promoting independence within the community. In Japanese law it is the child self-reliance living assistance program of the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare, under Article 6-3 of the Child Welfare Act. The number of homes rises every year: there are **232 homes** nationwide, together with more than twenty **children’s shelters** whose addresses are not disclosed.

The association opened Nara’s first self-reliance support home in the spring of **2013**, nine years before the Forum. Over those nine years it has taken in **72 young people** in their late teens, boys and girls; **65** have already left and are living in the community. Most come from children’s homes. Many go on living alone, holding a job and renting an apartment, without being able to draw on support from a guardian. Some who dropped out of high school have transferred into a correspondence high school; some have married and are raising children.

The three features of the home, he said, are these. First, **entry is by commission but not by placement order**: unlike a children’s home or foster care, a young person can live there if he himself says he will do his best under the rules, without the parent’s consent. Second, **employment is the premise**: the resident works and pays a fee of around **¥30,000 a month**. Third, unlike children’s homes and foster care, **it may be used from 15 to 22** — in line with the Japanese government’s policy of strengthening support beyond the age of 18.

What the pandemic did

The global spread of COVID-19 in the early spring of 2020 completely changed the daily lives of the young people living in the Nara homes. Even in normal times they had been forced into unstable lives; with the government’s requests for self-restraint, problems surfaced all at once as early as **February 2020** — the loss of work above all. Their difficulties continued, and the staff of Aran’s House and Mimosa’s House have gone on supporting residents and leavers day after day.



HAMADA Shinji, who runs the self-reliance support homes Aran’s House and Mimosa’s House in Nara.

自立援助ホームの特徴

①委託措置

措置施設ではなく、利用者申し込みによる入居制度
本人の意思で利用、親権者の同意の必要がない。

②就労自立

養育を目的とするのではなく、就労自立を目指して練習する場
収入を得て、利用料を支払う。（近年、就学も増加）

③15歳～22歳

2009年～18歳・19歳が利用可能、2017年～22歳年度末まで
2023年？ 25歳まで？年齢制限撤廃？

児童養護施設の次のステップ→**家庭から直接入居が半数超に**

Slide 40 — Three features of the self-reliance support home: entry by the young person’s own application rather than by placement order; employment as a premise, with the resident earning and paying a fee; and an age range of 15 to 22.

House and Mimosa’s House in Nara.

But children, he wanted to emphasize, are not only weak beings suffering damage: even under COVID-19 they have overcome adversity and lived hard in the community, connecting with all sorts of people.

More consultations, more requests for placement

Not only in Nara but throughout Japan, reports of abuse to child guidance centers rose to **two or three times** the previous year's level after the pandemic began. The temporary shelters of the child guidance centers filled up, and with them came emergency temporary placements at the self-reliance support homes. With each new wave of infection, consultations and admissions rose further. Reports also came from the young people themselves, from private bodies and from members of the public, and there were cases of protecting children who had run away from Tokyo and Nagoya. Requests for placement came from a children's shelter in Osaka and from support organizations such as **Colabo** in Tokyo.

In fiscal **2021** in particular there were cases of consultations received directly from children running away from home. So that the parents would not know, staff communicated by LINE or telephone and met the child at a railway station — an increasingly common way of taking a child into care. One child, whose household was in hardship, was made to give up club activities while attending high school and was handing over about **¥70,000 a month** of part-time earnings as household living costs: what is called a **young carer**. Such children too sent out an SOS, and in cooperation with the police the association helped them leave home and enter the facility.

The pandemic has deepened the problems of fragile families. Guardians' anxiety and sense of powerlessness grow, they are driven into hardship, and they cannot help dominating someone they can control — and so, it is thought, child abuse occurs. A father loses his job and stops looking for work; drink follows, then quarrels with his wife, then violence in front of the child and then violence against the child. In some cases, he said, the abuse might not have happened had the child been going to school. There has also been an increase in sexual violence, and cases of sexual abuse by guardians.

Work, and the loss of it

The pandemic also cost the young people their work. With the declaration of a state of emergency, children working in restaurants were suddenly not renewed and lost their jobs. Falling income brought anxiety about life in general and worry about work, together with the inability to pay the home's fee and difficulty in paying for a smartphone.

For those who had already left, life deteriorated whether they were part-timers, casual workers or in regular employment. In one case a leaver's nutrition deteriorated in the interval between losing a job and finding another, and the association provided food support. It is said that the proportion of households whose income halved is greater the lower the income: according to a survey by **Single Mothers Forum**, an organization of single-parent households, **30.6 percent** of households with an annual income below **¥2 million** answered that their income had halved because of COVID-19.

Young people in live-in employment were in a serious position. Some had been working steadily in a car assembly plant subcontracting to Toyota, or in hotel and *ryokan* kitchens; after the foreign technical intern trainees who worked alongside them, they faced large wage cuts or were not renewed at the end of their contracts. Losing their housing at the same time, they looked for accommodation and new work together with the children's home they had come from and with aftercare offices, moving into day-labor construction and demolition work and somehow keeping going. Some had no choice but to return temporarily to their family homes.

There was an interesting side to it too. Watching employment, one could feel the shifts in business models the pandemic brought. One boy doing day labor suddenly became flush; asked where he was working, he said: *“Well, Amazon suddenly decided to add two distribution centers in Kansai, and the day-labor work building them pays really well.”* The expansion is attributed to the growth of home delivery under COVID-19.

The widening gap in learning

Residents and leavers alike were attending correspondence and part-time high schools, and were unable to attend for long stretches. Entrance ceremonies were canceled, and they could not keep proper contact with their class teachers. A child who had been using LINE on a second-hand smartphone only where a Wi-Fi signal reached found himself unable to take part in online learning.

With COVID-related grants the association bought laptops and dispatched learning-support volunteers, and with

that the young people managed to graduate or move up a year. But some had no choice but to give priority to part-time work, and the quality of their student life deteriorated. The gap in learning, he said, widened.



Slide 49 — “A graduation six years late.” Some young people re-studied at a public correspondence high school while working, and reached their graduation ceremony in March 2022 two years, or six years, behind.

Among them were young people who studied again at a public correspondence high school while working and reached their **graduation ceremony in March 2022** two years, or six years, late. One girl sat the high school equivalency examination, took university entrance examinations and passed. The association gathered donations so that candidates could sit more than one examination, and helped them use donation-funded scholarships and loan schemes for study support. **One leaver has gone on to graduate school.**

Games, sleep, money and mental health

From April to May 2020 there was no work, job advertisements collapsed and schools were closed, so the young people had to spend their time shut inside the home. They became absorbed in the game the transcript calls a role-playing game, *Knives Out* (『荒野行動』), and there were spells of day and night reversed. Communication among residents improved in some ways, but there were health problems — lack of sleep among them. In one case a resident was invited in by outside gaming acquaintances, was defrauded and filed a report with the police.

With the spread of smartphones and social media, the movement of money by children and young people has become invisible and they are easily drawn into crime. Point systems in smartphone applications and payment systems such as PayPay make it impossible for a guardian to follow the flow of money. Facility staff too can no longer see money lent and borrowed among the children. There were cases of a resident being pressed for large payments through a charging system by an adult met in a game chat, and of being deceived by a woman. One child photographed someone else's driving licence without permission, impersonated the holder, rented a car through a car-sharing service and drove it without a licence until the police caught him.

The pandemic also worsened mental health. As the prevention of infection came first in every part of society, all sorts of behavior and activity were restricted. It was not only work and study that suffered: concerts by BTS and other favorite artists and Halloween costume parties were canceled. Psychological stress rose, and some suffered distress amounting to mood disorder or anxiety disorder. Staff bore a very heavy psychological burden in responding to “corona depression,” autonomic dysfunction, self-cutting, overdoses — swallowing a whole bottle of medicine at once — and acts of self-harm. Serious cases requiring the advice of doctors and clinical psychologists have increased. In Japan self-harm and suicide among people in their teens and twenties have risen in the pandemic; **suicide is the leading cause of death** in those age groups.

Issues particular to girls

Sexual violence in particular has increased under the pandemic. The association has taken into care girls who met men through free applications such as Twitter and LINE and were victimized. In some cases the police were able to take a girl into protection because her location could be established through her smartphone. Obstetricians and gynecologists prescribed emergency contraceptive pills and tested for sexually transmitted infections; staff have helped with an abortion. Nationally, he said, syphilis and other sexually transmitted infections have been increasing this year among teenagers.

It was also a year of working on trauma care for children who had suffered sexual abuse from guardians and relatives. In some cases a consultation did not lead to placement and another home had to be found — because a child who had grown up in facilities in other prefectures did not want to enter a facility if it meant handing over her smartphone, or because she had suffered enough at a children's home and did not want facility life again. Those wishes were respected.

The association applies for public assistance on their behalf and continues a range of outreach: prenatal and postnatal care in pregnancy, support with child-rearing, and help with anxiety about living, tuition and school costs, family and relatives' problems, the cost of clothing, and health problems.

The special benefit, and family friction

There was friction with guardians over the special cash benefit. The ¥100,000 special benefit of early summer 2020 was, by the state's consideration nationwide, paid directly to the young people according to where they actually lived rather than their registered address. For young people rebuilding their lives, he said, that ¥100,000 was precious. But around the time it was paid, parents who had not been in contact got in touch and asserted a right to receive it, and staff had to handle tense situations between parent and child.

In another case, a boy's separated mother's workplace went bankrupt because of COVID-19 and she disappeared with his stepfather in what amounted to a flight by night, leaving him to take over repayment of a welfare loan she had taken out. The association sought a lawyer's advice and used an emergency small-sum loan scheme.

Not letting them be isolated

What he most wanted to stress, Mr. Hamada said, is that these young people must not be isolated in the community. They are caught in a vicious circle of low education and low income; unstable work leaves them unable to make a living; rates of leaving and changing jobs are high and many can no longer pay the rent. Under COVID-19, once out of work they cannot pay rent or the smartphone bill, and end up in live-in employment or living in an empty house. Debts mount, and some come to receive public assistance. Being pushed out from the center of society, some commit crimes such as shoplifting, or become untraceable.

To stop that circle, Aran's House and Mimosa's House do not wait for an SOS; they go out to the young people.

We want to go on, with the children, being a place they can always come back to and say "I'm home," and giving them a turn where they can feel "I'm actually being counted on."

— HAMADA Shinji

(女性特有の課題 続き)

- 背景として、女の子たちの家庭は、「性別役割分担意識」が比較的強く、「女の子だから高校にいなくてもいい」「女の子だから家事に専念してほしい」などと親が子どもたちの自立を阻害する場合がある。



- **新型コロナ禍で女の子の方が、相対的に「子どもの貧困」は深刻になっているかもしれない。**

Slide 53 — Issues particular to girls, continued: the households these girls come from tend to hold relatively strong ideas about gender roles — “a girl doesn’t have to go to high school,” “a girl should devote herself to housework” — and parents can obstruct the child’s independence. Under COVID-19, child poverty may have become relatively more serious for girls.

「居場所」と「出番」
その2つを通して
社会の一員＝自分自身を
「価値ある大切な存在」だ
と思えること

Slide 80 — “A place to be” and “a turn to play”: through those two, feeling oneself a member of society — feeling that one is a valuable and important existence.

Part 4 — Review Session and Closing

The review session was the only part of the day in which the three countries spoke to one another directly. Its transcript survives in full in the original report, and it is given here almost complete.

4.1 The Review Session

Table 4.1 — The review panel.

	Participant	Position
Chair	PIAO Meihua	Secretary-General, East Asia Environmental Information Center — facilitator and interpreter
Korea	NAM Young-Chan	President, The Korea Forum of Volunteerism
China	HUANG Haoming	Honorary Chairman, CANGO; Executive Dean, Asia Academy of Philanthropy
Japan	WATANABE Yumiko	President, Certified NPO Kidsdoor

Introducing the session, the moderator said it was a great honor to have been able to welcome three representatives from the three countries as speakers, and handed over to Ms. Piao.

Ms. Piao explained that the session would run until 5:30 p.m. Japan time with interpretation among three languages — Japanese, Chinese and Korean — and asked each guest, with apologies, to keep to **two minutes** and to be strict about the time. She then asked for comments on the Korean presentations.

On the Korean presentations

HUANG Haoming (China)

Dr. Huang said the Korean case reports and keynote had been excellent, and offered about five points.

1. **The aims of the presentations were very clear** — the cases of abused children, the independence of young people who had left care — and were explained in a very easy-to-follow way.
2. **Each of them has been carried on over a long period**, and on a local and community base. Doing it that way, he could see, leads to more detailed and more concrete cases in child protection, and to concrete countermeasures.
3. **Each service or activity is highly specialized**. In Korea's case, the campaigns he had heard about and the Yellow Ribbon work showed how important such specialized services are.
4. **Cooperation must be multi-sided and multi-dimensional** — not only the community and civil society but many different people in the locality, the children's centers, and government.
5. **When society as a whole makes the effort and combines its strength**, local problems can be put to government as policy proposals, and that finally leads to the resolution of the many problems and challenges facing children.

NAM Young-Chan (Korea) — speaking out of turn, on Japan

At this point in the transcript Ms. Piao called on Ms. Watanabe, then asked her to wait; Mr. Nam spoke instead, and on the Japanese rather than the Korean presentations. The order is as printed in the original report.

Mr. Nam said he had listened to President Watanabe's presentation with great interest and that it had made a deep



PIAO Meihua, who facilitated and interpreted the review session.



HUANG Haoming, Honorary Chairman of CANGO and Executive Dean of the Asia Academy of Philanthropy.

impression. He had been genuinely startled, he said, that the proportion of children in poverty and hardship in Japan should be so high, and he thought some kind of political or social structure in Japan had produced that result. He hoped for laws to prevent child poverty and for existing laws to be improved, and that awareness would spread that child poverty is not our problem but the problem of society as a whole, to be solved together.

The second thing that had impressed him deeply was that support for children is in fact support for society — **not welfare but investment in the future**. That was, he said, a very striking and good point, and Korea shared the same recognition and wanted to carry it forward into the problem of child poverty and other problems.

WATANABE Yumiko (Japan)

Ms. Watanabe apologized that she had joined late and had not been able to hear the Korean presentations properly. What she strongly felt, she said, was that in Japan, China and Korea alike children are in a difficult position, and that civil society activity of many kinds — and the state — are responding to it; that, first of all, is very important.

In the pandemic the number of children in an increasingly hard position was growing in Japan too. And with the world situation now very unstable, Japan was seeing rising prices; probably Korea and China were seeing the same, and one could imagine children's circumstances becoming harder still. What everyone was doing was, she said, admirable, and speaking as someone who runs an NPO she wanted to take their presentations as a reference and support children further.

On the Chinese presentations

NAM Young-Chan (Korea)

Mr. Nam said that in the Chinese keynote, Director Tong had introduced the law on children and minors very well; he had been able to learn in particular how firmly protection is being carried out by the **six** different sectors. A second point: it is very important that child protection pays attention to new technological development. The protection of children in an internet society is particularly important, and China had provided Korea with a very good point of reference.

On the Chinese case reports: the protection of children — that work of protection and support — depends not only on government but very much on private effort, and he was very glad to see that in China many different sectors carry out a range of activities and so make up what is lacking. Korea, he said, would take such cases as a reference and put them to use.

WATANABE Yumiko (Japan)

Ms. Watanabe first apologized to everyone for not having been able to attend the whole of the day's meeting. On the Chinese presentation, what struck her strongly was the **six protections** — that a new protection should be added covering the internet as well was, she thought, truly epoch-making.

Reporting on the Japanese situation, she said that with the **Children and Families Agency** to be created from the following year, the **Basic Act on Children** had been made to go with it and children were to be protected. But how far children can actually be protected under that Act, and how far children will be respected, would need a great deal more discussion; she wanted to make use of the Korean and Chinese presentations and convey what she had heard to her own government.

On the Japanese presentations

HUANG Haoming (China)

Before turning to Japan, Dr. Huang added a word about Professor Kim's Korean keynote: it had summarized the whole of civil society child support in Korea very well. In particular, that international organizations at first carried out various support activities, and that these gradually became local, took root domestically and turned into the activities of domestic bodies, offered a large suggestion to China as well.

On the Japanese presentations — one keynote and two case reports — he again offered about five points.

1. Japan's various active organizations gave him the impression of bodies that take the problems and difficulties children face exactly as they are and **solve each problem, each difficulty, one at a time**.

2. At the same time, for all the different problems, **the analysis is done thoroughly.**
3. Above all, with COVID-19, they had **analyzed well what new problems would emerge for children and for families,** and he could see the effort to solve them.
4. Children face different challenges and problems at different stages of growth, and the Japanese organizations **approach each of them in different ways to resolve them.**
5. Even after young people leave care, **supporting them in finding work** so that they can find themselves and develop together with society and the community — that too was very striking.

Toward the next Forum

NAM Young-Chan (Korea)

Today, Mr. Nam said, had been a place where the three countries learned from one another, shared what they know and their various experiences, and studied afresh — a very meaningful occasion. It had also confirmed once again why this East Asia Civil Society Forum must go on being held.

The welfare of children — as in what our Japanese colleagues said — is not welfare but investment. And it is not simple support: it is the responsibility net, the safety net, of society as a whole. I hope citizens and government can each play their part in balance and solve it together.

— NAM Young-Chan

He closed by saying he wanted to meet everyone face to face in Korea the following year.

HUANG Haoming (China)

Dr. Huang thanked the Japanese side warmly for preparing the meeting. The Japanese and Korean case reports, he said, had a great deal in them for Chinese civil society to learn from, giving many hints and suggestions; it had been a good opportunity to learn. He was glad to have met old friends and new, even if online, and hoped to meet everyone offline the following year, visit communities and organizations, and discuss the various problems more deeply.

As for the following year's theme, he suggested charitable work and services in the community — or the question of how to support people with physical and mental disabilities, of whom **China now has more than 80 million**, which has become a very large challenge. If it were possible, he said, he would like to learn about the policies of each country and the activities civil society carries out in that field.

WATANABE Yumiko (Japan)

Ms. Watanabe said she thought disparities in the world would widen further and circumstances become more difficult; at such times it is always the weak children who suffer, so how to support children would grow ever more important. For China, Korea and Japan to exchange information in this way was very meaningful and they had learned a great deal; she hoped it would continue.

In Japan, she said, the sense that children are raised by their parents is very strong, and until now there had been almost no structure by which government or the community supported them. Various initiatives had at last appeared recently, but much remained to be done.

She gave an example. Speaking recently with a politician, she had raised the point that **Japan's rate of receipt of child support payments is very low**, and that this is a cause of poverty among single parents — and that **Korea has a much more advanced approach**. The politician replied that Japan would have to do the same.

Knowing how things are in China and Korea, and being able to talk about where Japan stands in that light, makes for a very strong message.

— WATANABE Yumiko

In that sense too, she said, they should exchange information properly with one another so that each country's children can go on more happily.

4.2 Closing Address

SHIRAISHI Yoshiharu 白石喜春

Senior Research Associate, Japan Association of Charitable Organizations

Mr. Shiraishi began by praising Ms. Piao's facilitation and interpretation — he is astonished, he said, every time by her handling of three languages at once — and declared the 13th East Asia Civil Society Forum closed.

The keynotes of KIM Hyung Mo, TONG Lihua and WATANABE Yumiko, and the case reports of LEE Bae Geun, CHUNG Moo Sung, BAI Yaqin, TU Mei, KURIBAYASHI Chieko and HAMADA Shinji, had given much to learn from and had been of great value. In the review session there had been a lively exchange of views, and he was honored that Dr. Huang of China had proposed a theme for the 14th Forum the following year.

It was a great pleasure, he said, to have been able to hold an international forum of this kind in the circumstances of the pandemic. They could not meet in person this year — but holding the event online and meeting over the internet was better than doing nothing.

Thirteen years had passed since the first East Asia Civil Society Forum was held in Tokyo, and everyone knew already how much that long history had strengthened their relationships.



SHIRAISHI Yoshiharu closing the 13th Forum.

Look at it geographically and the societies, cultures, lifestyles, personal feelings — and even the social problems and challenges — of our three countries are very much alike. That is because we are always close at hand in distance, unable to refuse the existence of important neighbors; we are more like family. And that is precisely why we must be the best of partners in solving social problems and creating a better society together in the years ahead.

— SHIRAISHI Yoshiharu

Even where countries come into conflict for one reason or another, he suggested, one may think of it as a quarrel between brothers; there is a Japanese proverb that the more you quarrel the closer you are, and he thought his meaning would be understood. What he wanted to say was that only those who look forward and go on can take hold of, and create, a better society and a better future.

In their own case, Korea, China and Japan had begun to advance at the level of civil society from **2009**. For a bright future the three countries must cooperate, think positively and go on exchanging resources — experience, wisdom and the rest — to solve social problems constructively. As far as he knew, at least these three countries already had that feeling and that way of thinking, which is why the Forum had been held continuously since 2009. If everyone agreed, he hoped they could grow the Forum along with that idea and keep going forward for a bright future.

The following year Korea would be the host of the **14th East Asia Civil Society Forum**. With the “with COVID-19” policy spreading and border controls being greatly relaxed and removed around the world, he sincerely hoped that next year the Forum could be held in person in some Korean city. Discussion among the three host countries would begin early in the new year, and the theme, venue and format would be announced as soon as they were decided.

4.3 Group Photograph

The moderator asked everyone to stay in the Zoom meeting and to show themselves on screen for a group photograph, and asked Ms. Piao to translate the request into Chinese and Korean.



The participants of the 13th East Asia Civil Society Forum. The original report reproduces only the first page of the participant display.

Part 5 — Cross-Cutting Themes

A note on this Part

Part 5 has been written by the editors of this English summary edition. It draws together points that recur across the Forum's twelve presentations and the review session; every claim in it rests on something a speaker actually said, and the speaker is named. It forms no part of the original Japanese proceedings.

5.1 Civil society goes first; the state follows

The single strongest pattern of the day was chronological. In field after field, a civil society organization identified a problem, invented a response, ran it on private money, and was then either commissioned by government to keep running it or watched government take it over and scale it up.

Professor **KIM Hyung Mo** made the point most systematically for Korea. The Educational Welfare Priority Support Project began with NGOs putting social workers into schools with local authority support and is now run by the education ministry. Dream Start began as the **We Start** movement, run by an NGO, and was taken over by the welfare ministry. Community children's centers began with small churches offering a study room and a meal, and became a national system under the Child Welfare Act. Recognition of child abuse came from the Korea National Council on Social Welfare in **1979** and from Good Neighbors' campaigning long before the state legislated in **2000**.

LEE Bae Geun supplied the same shape in a single organization's history. KAPCAN opened Korea's first group home in Mapo in February 1999 with seven children; that group home became the origin of *SHIMTEO*, which government now runs, under commission, as **89 shelters** nationwide.

KURIBAYASHI Chieko described the pattern operating in real time. Because Toshima's residents had already been providing food during school holidays before the pandemic, they could move within days when the schools closed in March 2020; the ward administration then built its own **Children and Youth Support Fund** on top of what residents had started, and commissioned the national watch-over program to WAKUWAKU.

TONG Lihua represents the same relationship in its most institutional form. The Beijing Children's Legal Aid and Research Center does not merely take cases; it drafts the experts' opinion for the National People's Congress. Both the 2006 and the 2020 revisions of the Law on the Protection of Minors were prepared with its participation, and the demand for a government-protection chapter — rejected in 2006 — was carried in 2020.

HUANG Haoming named the pattern explicitly in the review session, saying that what struck him about Professor Kim's account was that international organizations' activity gradually became local, took root domestically and turned into the activity of domestic bodies — and that this offered a large suggestion to China.

5.2 The public sector is good at money; the private sector is good at people

Two speakers said this in almost the same words, from opposite ends of East Asia.

CHUNG Moo Sung, describing Korea's substantial package of support for care leavers — a monthly allowance, a settlement grant of KRW 5–15 million, 2,000 public rental units, a matched savings account — said flatly that support by public agencies centers on economic support and is poor at psychological and mental support. The research on the Bibil Andak project bore him out: what the young people valued was that volunteers attended to small things, that they came to feel volunteers were like family, and that they gained the courage to stand alone. His conclusion — **“economic independence is not everything”** — is the sentence Part 3 of this report turns on.

KURIBAYASHI Chieko made the operational version of the same argument. The administration mailed notice of food support to 1,100 single-parent households; applications came to WAKUWAKU. Left to itself, she said, the administration's version of food support would have ended with posting rice. What the public-private version added was that people came to a place, met other people, and were then connected onward — to learning support, to an overnight stay, to Hello Work, to help with moving house. **“It is not enough to provide information; you need a nosy connector.”**

WATANABE Yumiko approached it from the design side: economic capital alone is insufficient, and **cultural capital**

and **social capital** have to be assembled alongside it. Money buys a cram school place; it does not buy being embedded in a good human network.

5.3 Not welfare but investment

WATANABE Yumiko put a number on it: a supported child who finishes school, works and pays tax rather than drawing benefits is worth an effect of the order of **¥100 million**, and the Nippon Foundation's estimate for a single cohort of today's 15-year-olds is an economic loss of **¥2.9 trillion** plus **¥1.1 trillion** of additional social welfare cost.

NAM Young-Chan had reached the same conclusion in his opening address hours earlier and without having heard her: *“Children are the future of a country. To protect them, nurture them and educate them is an investment in the future.”* In the review session he explicitly cited her formulation back — welfare is not welfare but investment — and added the second half of the thought: it is society's safety net, and citizens and government must each play their part in balance.

The convergence matters because the three speakers arrive at it from different starting points: a Japanese NPO director arguing with her own finance ministry, a Korean former judge speaking for a volunteer federation, and — in TU Mei's Chinese formulation — the generation of children who will become **“a great pillar of the grand dream of national revival.”** The vocabulary differs sharply; the underlying claim that spending on children is not consumption does not.

5.4 The internet arrives as a subject of law

The 13th Forum caught a legislative moment. **TONG Lihua** described how, in the revision work of 2004–2006, *“not one person thought it necessary to draft a provision about the internet”* — and how by 2018 everyone agreed such a provision was essential. The result is a chapter of **17 articles** with real penalties: RMB 10,000 to RMB 1 million where there is no illegal income, one to ten times the illegal income above RMB 1 million, and revocation of licences for serious or repeated violations. It is the only place in the day's proceedings where a speaker described a state imposing child-protection duties on platform companies.

HAMADA Shinji described the same technological shift from the receiving end, without any law to appeal to: money that moves through smartphone point systems and PayPay so that neither guardians nor facility staff can see it; a resident pressed for large payments by an adult met in a game chat; a resident defrauded by outside gaming acquaintances; girls meeting men through free applications and being victimized. His one positive instance is also technological — a girl found and taken into protection because her smartphone gave her location.

NAM Young-Chan joined the two in the review session, saying that attention to new technological development is very important in child protection and that China's internet-protection provisions offered Korea a good reference point. **WATANABE Yumiko** called the same provision *“truly epoch-making.”*

5.5 What COVID-19 did, in three registers

The pandemic runs through the Japanese presentations especially, and the three accounts fit together as macro, meso and micro.

Table 5.1 — The pandemic at three scales, from the Japanese presentations.

Register	Speaker	What it looked like
National statistics	WATANABE Yumiko	64% could not buy clothing and 48% could not buy food (Nov 2021); 14% could not give their children three meals a day; 32% reported a fall in the child's school attainment and only 29% no effect at all (Jul 2022); half of households still on reduced income and only 5% back to the former level
A ward	KURIBAYASHI Chieko	Schools closed in March 2020; food support monthly from that month; the Toshima Lunch Support Project in May–June using the <i>kumin hiroba</i> as collection points; 600 hardship households newly connected; about 70 “nosy neighbors” visiting homes

Register	Speaker	What it looked like
Twelve rooms	HAMADA Shinji	Reports of abuse to child guidance centers at 2–3 times the previous year; temporary shelters full; residents losing restaurant jobs on the state of emergency; live-in workers losing job and housing together; day and night reversed over <i>Knives Out</i> ; graduation two and six years late; suicide the leading cause of death among people in their teens and twenties

The Chinese and Korean speakers were less directly concerned with the pandemic — **BAI Yaqin's** corps works online as a matter of standing practice, running close to 10,000 online courses for expectant mothers in a single half-year — but the online Forum itself was the standing evidence. As the closing address put it, they could not meet in person, but holding the event online was better than doing nothing.

5.6 Three legal frameworks, all in motion at once

Table 5.2 — The state of child law in the three countries in November 2022.

	Instrument	Status at the time of the Forum
China	Law on the Protection of Minors, as revised October 2020	In force since June 1, 2021. 132 articles, six protections; State Council internet-protection regulations still to come (TONG Lihua)
Japan	Children and Families Agency Act; Basic Act on Children	Passed June 2022; the Agency to open as an external bureau of the Cabinet Office in April 2023 (AMEMIYA Takako; WATANABE Yumiko)
Korea	A framework act on children	Not yet enacted. Expected from central government in late 2022 or early 2023; civil society drafting its own proposals in parallel (KIM Hyung Mo)

The Forum thus caught all three countries mid-reform, and the review session shows them using one another as reference points in real time: **WATANABE Yumiko** saying she would carry the Korean and Chinese presentations to her own government, and citing to a Japanese politician the fact that Korea's arrangements for the receipt of child support payments are far more advanced than Japan's. **NAM Young-Chan** and **HUANG Haoming** each said they would take the other countries' cases as references.

Professor **KIM Hyung Mo's** proposal is the boldest of the three, and the one furthest from enactment: that the word “child” — absent from the Constitution of the Republic of Korea, whose Article 34 names women, the elderly and youth — be written into the fourth paragraph of that Article, so that the State bears a duty to implement welfare policy for the elderly, for children and for youth.

5.7 What the six case reports have in common

The six organizations are strikingly unlike one another in scale, form and country. They share four features.

- 1. They train people rather than only serving beneficiaries.** BAI Yaqin's corps is a training-of-trainers system through and through — 5,000 lecturers reaching two million households; KAPCAN converted its guardian education into a state-recognized private qualification, the child rights adviser; TU Mei's association runs scientific parent-education for those with supervisory responsibility; WAKUWAKU's *play leaders* and *nosy neighbors* are recruited and prepared locally.
- 2. They work through existing local institutions rather than building new ones.** Bibil Andak's volunteer team is one middle school and four churches taking turns; the Toshima Lunch Support Project used the *kumin hiroba*, one to each primary school district, as its pick-up points; TU Mei's association works with the bamboo weaving art museum and the Xishan history memorial hall; Kidsdoor rents premises in poor districts.
- 3. They combine material help with human contact deliberately, not incidentally.** BAI Yaqin's volunteers feed a baby noodles *and* deliver family education; WAKUWAKU's rice collection *is* the moment of connection; Aran's House provides food support to leavers who have lost their nutrition between jobs. In every case the goods are

the occasion, not the object.

4. **They connect onward.** KAPCAN's proposed community child safety net; TU Mei's four-layer linked service and her anti-DV alliance across the procuratorate, hospitals, civil affairs and education; the ward-wide network of some 20 learning-support sites that WAKUWAKU takes part in, and its links to school and community social workers; the association in Nara working with police, aftercare offices, lawyers, obstetricians and other prefectures' facilities.

5.8 Where the three countries diverge

It would be misleading to present the day as pure convergence. Three differences are worth recording.

The unit of concern. The Japanese presentations are organized around *poverty* — an income line, a rate, a chain to be broken. The Chinese presentations are organized around *the family* as the unit that must be made competent: BAI Yaqin's "don't let the parent lose at the starting line," TU Mei's mother-accompaniment system and her formula that the family is the cradle protecting the minor. The Korean presentations are organized around *protection and its ending* — who the state must protect, and what happens on the day it stops.

Where legitimacy comes from. TU Mei situates her association's work inside the reports of the 18th and 19th Party Congresses, the Seventh National Population Census, and the national child development plan for 2021–2030. KIM Hyung Mo situates his inside the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Constitution. KURIBAYASHI Chieko situates hers inside a neighborhood — a ward of 290,000 people, 22 primary schools and eight middle schools.

Scale. Two million households reached in half a year (BAI Yaqin) sits in the same session as six Little Dream Houses and 40 girls receiving sanitary products for twelve months (TU Mei), 72 young people over nine years (HAMADA Shinji), and 23 survey respondents and 11 interviewees (CHUNG Moo Sung). The Forum makes no attempt to reconcile these, and neither does this edition; but a reader comparing programs should hold the difference in mind.

5.9 The phrases the day is likely to be remembered by

- *"The world's worst working poor"* — WATANABE Yumiko, on single parents who have the highest employment rate and the highest poverty rate among advanced countries.
- *"Child poverty is not welfare; it is investment."* — WATANABE Yumiko, echoed by NAM Young-Chan.
- *"Don't let the child lose at the starting line — and more than that, don't let the parent lose at the starting line."* — BAI Yaqin.
- *"Cooking for myself is the hardest."* — the answer that started the Bibil Andak project, reported by CHUNG Moo Sung.
- *"I might not be able to go to high school."* — the boy at the play park whose entrance examinations WAKUWAKU was founded out of supporting, reported by KURIBAYASHI Chieko.
- *"Public welfare has no time of completion; it is always in progress."* — TU Mei's closing slide.
- *"To raise a human being, one must first raise the heart."* — TU Mei.
- *"A place to be, and a turn to play."* — HAMADA Shinji, on what makes a young person feel he is a valuable and important existence.

Appendix A — The Japanese Executive Committee

The Forum was carried out in Japan by the Executive Committee for the East Asia Civil Society Forum, whose sixteen members are listed at page iv of the original report in Japanese *gojūon* order. Affiliations are as printed there.

Table A.1 The Executive Committee for the 13th East Asia Civil Society Forum (Japan).

	Member	Affiliation
1	AMEMIYA Takako	President, Japan Association of Charitable Organizations
2	IINO Yuji	Representative Director, Akame Satoyama Conservation Association
3	ITO Michio	Representative Director, Asia Community Center 21
4	KUSUDA Kenta	Associate Professor, Tokyo University of the Arts; Director, Japan International Institute for Volunteering Research (JIVRI)
5	SHIRAISHI Yoshiharu	Senior Research Associate, Japan Association of Charitable Organizations; President, JIVRI
6	SUZUKI Katsuji	Vice President, Japan Association of Charitable Organizations
7	TAKAYA Tadatsugu	Executive Director, The Niwano Peace Foundation
8	TAKAMIYA Yoichi	Lecturer (formerly Professor), Josai International University
9	TADA Masahiro	Adviser to the Research Department, Japan Association of Charitable Organizations
10	NAGANUMA Yoshiyuki	Director, Japan Association of Charitable Organizations
11	BANG Jin-a	Doctoral course, Graduate School, Japan College of Social Work
12	FUJII Mamoru	Former specialist in welfare for the elderly and for persons with disabilities
13	HONDA Shiro	Program Associate, Japan Foundation Center
14	MIYASADA Akira	Representative Director, Machi Communication (certified NPO)
15	YAMAOKA Yoshinori	Chair. President, Civil Society Initiative Fund; Chairman, Japan Foundation Center; Director, JIVRI
16	YAMADA Emi	Secretary-General, Civil Society Initiative Fund

Romanizations of the members' names are the editors'; the original report prints them only in Japanese.

Appendix B — Glossary

Table B.1 — Terms used in this report.

Term	Original	Note
Care leaver / child whose protection has ended	保護終了児童	Korea: a child from whom the local authority withdraws protection on reaching 18 (extendable to 24 on request), who therefore leaves the children's home. Since 2021 also called “young people preparing for independence” (자립준비청년).
CDA — Child Development Account	CDA	Korea: a matched savings account for children under protection; where the local authority saves a fixed sum monthly, government matches it up to KRW 100,000 a month.
Children and Families Agency	こども家庭庁	Japan: created April 2023 as an external bureau of the Cabinet Office; the establishing bill passed the Diet in June 2022, five months before the Forum.
Children's cafeteria	子ども食堂	Japan: a locally run place, usually free or very cheap, where children can eat and be looked after. By 2022 there were some 6,000 nationwide.
Community children's center	地域の児童館 / 地域の児童相談所	Korea: a facility run under the Child Welfare Act for children in economic difficulty, originating in study rooms and meals provided by small churches.
Community home	コミュニティホーム	Korea: the group home format; also the name under which government promotes <i>SHIMTEO</i> , which grew out of the first group home opened by KAPCAN in 1999.

Term	Original	Note
Dream Start	ドリームスタート	Korea: the national early-intervention program for children in economic difficulty, equivalent to Sure Start (UK) and Head Start (US). It began as the civil society <i>We Start</i> movement, initially named Hee-Man Start.
Home-Start	ホームスタート	A home-visiting scheme in which experienced local parents visit families with infants to listen and to work alongside them; run in Toshima as Home-Start WAKUWAKU.
Kumin hiroba	区民ひろば	Japan: a public facility, one in each primary school district of Toshima Ward, used as the pick-up point for the Toshima Lunch Support Project.
Mandatory reporting	通報義務制度	China: introduced by the 2020 revision of the Law on the Protection of Minors; binds government organs and neighborhood and village committees in close contact with minors.
Nosy neighbor	おせっかいさん	Japan: WAKUWAKU's term for the local volunteers who visit households needing support. Ms. Kuribayashi calls herself a “nosy aunt.”
Play park	プレーパーク	Japan: an outdoor adventure playground with natural materials rather than fixed equipment, staffed by <i>play leaders</i> .
Relative poverty	相対的貧困	The measure used among advanced countries, based on income. In Japan the line was ¥1.73 million for a two-person household and ¥2.12 million for a three-person household.
Self-reliance support home	自立援助ホーム	Japan: a residential facility under Article 6-3 of the Child Welfare Act for young people aged 15 to 22 who cannot live with their families; entry is by the young person's own application and employment is a premise. 232 nationwide.
Six protections	六大保護	China: family, school, society, judicial, government and network (internet) protection — the structure of the Law on the Protection of Minors after the 2020 revision, which added the last two to the original four.
TTT — training of trainers	TTT	China: the method of the Angels in White Lecturers' Corps — train the lecturers, then have them deliver standardized courses to families.
Young carer	ヤングケアラー	Japan: a child who carries adult responsibility for the household; Mr. Hamada's example was a high school student handing over about ¥70,000 a month of part-time earnings as household living costs.

Appendix C — The Original Report

Table C.1 — The original Japanese edition.

Title	第 13 回東アジア市民社会フォーラム – 市民社会組織による子ども支援 – 報告書
Published	January 2023
Publisher	Japan Association of Charitable Organizations
Address	2-27-15 Honkomagome, Bunkyo-ku, Tokyo 113-0021, Japan
Contact	Tel +81-3-3945-1017 · Fax +81-3-3945-1267 · https://www.kohokyo.or.jp/
Copyright	© 2023 Japan Association of Charitable Organizations
Printer	Bikosha Co., Ltd.
Extent	162 numbered pages plus front matter
Language	Japanese, with an English speaker-biography section at pages 158–162
Grant	The Niwano Peace Foundation