

voluntary labor to some extent, but how far they go beyond self-promotion is a subjective assessment. Even semi-commercial organizations such as the Co-ops in Japan have regular publicity for social welfare (workshops for the disabled), environmental (recycling projects), and international assistance (UNICEF) programs they support, ensuring that hundreds of thousands of people are exposed to the need for such participation by average citizens.

Whether education efforts by NGOs have any relation to civil society in Japan cannot be assessed conclusively, but the growing success of Japanese volunteer groups demonstrate that there is interest in contributing to the greater community. The fact that a growing number of volunteer groups is involved in international activities means that attention is being drawn from the local, immediate concerns to more global issues. An excellent example of such a transition is the recent newspaper notice requesting funds for victims of the November 6th cyclone in India (Funds sought, 1996). Perhaps such an appeal would not be so unusual except that it was issued by the "NGOs Coordinating Team for Hanshin Quake Relief," a very locally focused group. Now that more than three years have passed since the Hanshin earthquake, related needs continue, but sensitivity to others' plights appears to have been established. Civil society need not focus on international issues, but when neighbors can work together to assist people on the other side of the globe, there is more of a sense of civic virtue rather than self-interest.

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