

# **Globalization in Asia and Local Revitalization Efforts: A View from One Village One Product (OVOP) Movement in Oita**

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## **1. Introduction**

Oita prefecture's 'One Village One Product' (OVOP) movement provides an important model of success in regional development policy. The movement encouraged and empowered local citizens to unearth opportunities for economic growth and develop local industry with a global outlook. The principles behind this movement, and the efforts of the local citizens which sustained it, have attracted attention from across Japan and from many other Asian countries, and the movement is now often presented as a new paradigm for regional development. This paper reviews the movement's formative process and its subsequent development, with a view ascertaining its applicability to issues of regional development throughout Asia. It is hypothesized that the movement can be seen as a model approach to the issue of rejuvenation of local industries in the era of globalization. Together with a historical review of the growth of the 'OVOP movement as led by Oita prefecture, the paper will attempt to identify the unique characteristics of the movement as well as its limitations, and make proposals for how Japan's experience with the movement may be applied in other parts of Asia.

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## **2. What is ‘One Village One Product’?**

The OVOP or OTOP is now becoming one of the most popular term in Asia regarding community development and local industrial promotion. It has been conducted under the current globalization trend in the area, especially in Thailand, Philippines, and China to pursue their own way of alternative economic development path. Eventually this movement started here in the Oita prefecture in 1979 as unique model of regional revitalization policy under the leadership of Governor Hiramatsu. Since then it has been widely adopted by many local governments in Japan to promote local industries, particularly in the agricultural based products. Its concept has also disseminated to many Asian countries. Although Asian countries have engaged in the vigorous policy accelerating industrialization, the policies have revealed many problems at the same time, such as the income gap between urban and rural, depopulation problem, congestion of big cities, and environment issues, and others. The OVOP wanted to partly answer these problems, especially to prevent economic deterioration of local communities.

The condition of Oita was in the similar condition in the 1960s and 70s. The GDP of Oita prefecture was at the bottom in the whole Kyushu and the mountainous rural regions were isolated and suffered depopulation phenomena and their indigenous industries was stagnated with little hope. Under these conditions the OVOP movement was started. Eventually the movement has brought a certain lustering light to the local communities to be able to tackle these difficult conditions.

It suggested the local people to explore potential resources with own wisdom and efforts. Of course the way was not so smooth in the initial times, but finally the movement was able to inspire the people to develop indigenous industries using their own local resources. It has been propagated by showing the model of successful cases under the strong guidance of local administration through disseminating enlightening messages, such as Strategic Marketing, Innovative thinking, and Nurture of local leaders. That endeavor has opened eyes of local people, gave big bravery to challenge the goal, and open up possibility to access to the wider global market for their identical goods and services.

The principle of "One Village One Product" seems simple, but signified by the understandable terminology and clear message even to the non-educated local residence. As "One unit area should have at least One product, and you can do it if you have guts", literally means, "One Community creates One marketable Product" with identical brand by using own resources, and brushes up the Product, upgrades the Value, establishes the own Brand, and merchandises in the Global markets. Through this series of efforts the local people could recover

their pride and be confident to live in the local community with self-esteem, and revitalize their social and economic life.

However, the implementation and settling movement is not so easy. It has to completely change the people's mindset which had been enclosed in the small community and never been familiar with business and commercial matter so far.

It requires continuous efforts by local leaders and administrations. Only good leadership makes it possible and good administration might lead the movement. In the case of Oita, the combination of these factors was superb, and it brought successful results of development of local industries and people's welfare. This process gave a big impact to other regions in Japanese as well as Asian local communities, because these areas were suffering the similar condition such as depopulation, backwardness and heavy dependence on the economic center, and so on.

Source: Oita Prefectural Government "One Village One Product Movement" (Pamphlet)



The Oita's OVOP movement propagated as follows by local government.

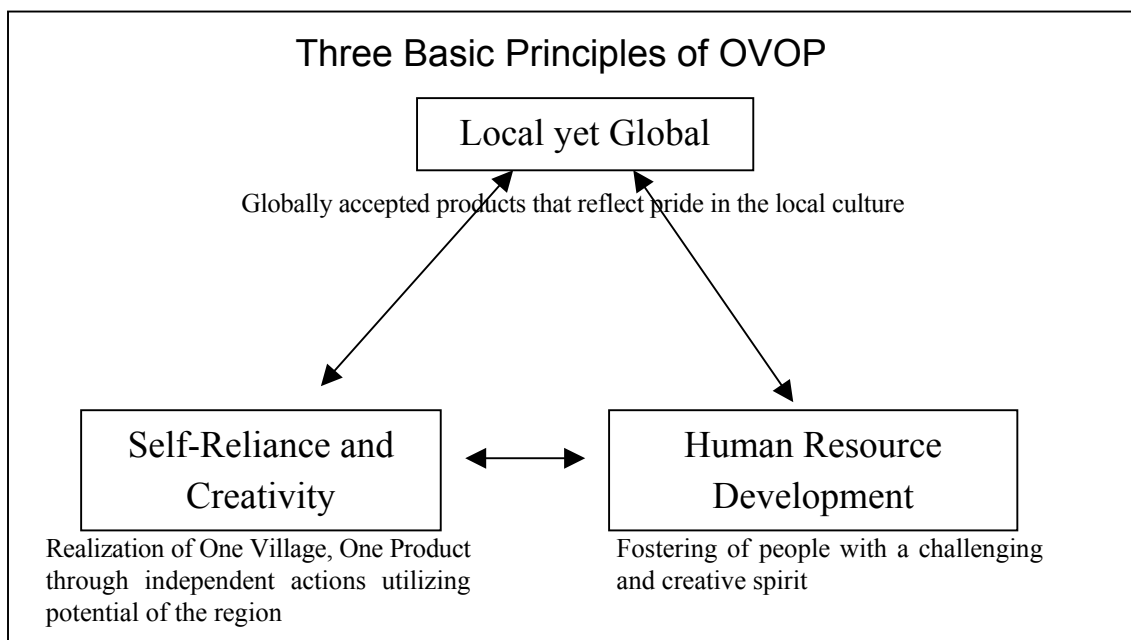
- (1) Local government directly called for the grass-roots leaders to take initiative of movement.
- (2) Local leaders asked the people to find at least commerciable One Product in each town and village.
- (3) Movement was publicized widely through mass media and galvanized their competitive

spirit.

- (4) Prefectural government took initiative to propagate OVOP products in the global market in the big cities, including exhibition of OVOP products.
- (5) Prefecture research organizations mobilized technical supports for product development.
- (6) Training and education were offered to regional and industrial leaders.
- (7) Effective channel of distribution and marketing of OVOP products were established and promoted.

However, the uniqueness' of OVOP was that the movement was mainly left under the hands of local people, and the local government only gave technical support, encouragement, and marketing promotion, not much of financial subsidies, because too much dependence on government might weaken the dynamism of the movement. Because of it the basic principle of OVOP put strong emphasis on the three points.

- (1) Local yet global
  - Creating globally accepted products that reflect pride in the local culture
- (2) Self-reliance and Creativity
  - Realization of OVOP through independent actions utilizing potential of the region
- (3) Human resource development
  - Fostering of people with a challenging and creative spirit



Source: [http://www.ovop.jp/en/ison\\_p/](http://www.ovop.jp/en/ison_p/)

### **The practical progress of Oita's OVOP movement as follows.**

OVOP was initiated autonomously in 58 cities, towns and villages of Oita prefecture. In the year of its introduction, the number of OVOP was 143, but 20 years later the figure had increased to 329.

OVOP wasn't always met with success, and there were many trials and errors along the way. Yet, no matter how unpromising things seemed, the prefectural government never attempted to provide subsidies for OVOP regions because they feared that such assistance would only hamper self-reliance and prevent lasting success of OVOP. Instead, the government assisted in product development and distribution. Through the establishment of institutions such as Agricultural Technology Center, Mushrooms Research and Guidance Center, and others, the government offered guidance in production and processing technology. Distribution routes were opened and expanded by the efforts of the prefectural government and the then governor Mr. Hiramatsu himself, who organized numerous fairs in major Japanese cities and abroad, where he personally advertised Oita's prospective products. Also, regional markets were set up throughout Oita to encourage local consumption of OVOP products.

Moreover, groups and individuals with outstanding achievement in OVOP were honored with reward.

### **3. The 'One Village One Product' Movement in Oita: Origins, Development, and Principal Features**

As previously mentioned, the 'OVOP' in Oita has grown into a movement for unearthing new local industries and rejuvenating regional communities. The movement has its roots not only in national or regional government policy, but rather in the initiative and efforts of local communities themselves. Then, the OVOP Movement didn't started suddenly or occasionally by the initiation of the Oita Prefectural government. We can eventually find a number of prescient grass-root movements in the region in Oita previously as pre-models. The government had just introduced it into their own policies and integrated them with enlightened approach and conceptual crystallization.

One of such typical model was found in Oyama village in the Oita prefecture. This village (now town) nestled in a mountainous region far from the urban centers of the prefecture. In 1961, local people of Oyama, which at the time consisted of less than 1000 households, initiated the so called 'NPC' (New Plum and Chestnuts) Movement, promoting the production of plums and chestnuts to take advantage of the village's geographical characteristics. This movement was

eventually in direct contrast to the national agricultural policy of the post-war period when the increase of food supply was the national agenda and national government vigorously encouraged the production of rice above any other agricultural products. But Oyama people definitely determined to grow other products by their own initiatives even if it was against the national policy and lost chance to get subsidies from central government.

The first period of time the challenge had been in the quite severe condition because they didn't have any experience except their spiritual braveness. However, their direction was right. Gradually the productivity went up and their commercial activities were expanded by putting well-thought quality keeping and own value added efforts in the process of changing consuming pattern of foods. A so-called '1.5<sup>th</sup> sector industry' (not only producing raw products but processing them to the marketable one) for the promotion of agriculture was created by this particular small community, led by its younger members. The village then even moved NPC into its second stage with setting their goal to the more humanitarian level with contrasted to the initial main target which was an income raising only. Incorporating human resource development initiatives, and subsequently 'third stage NPC' tackled the issue of improving the living environment and lifestyle conditions for local residents. Oyama's efforts are particularly noteworthy in that they were initiated within the local community itself, and led and developed by local people with a broad global outlook and vision.

In addition, the Oyama movement provided for the cultivation of human resources with the creativity and energy to lead the next stages of the movement, and ultimately led to an improvement in living conditions and a general revitalization of the community. Similar movements soon appeared in other parts of Oita prefecture (Table 1).<sup>1</sup>

The model provided by Oyama, one of community revitalization for areas with little or no significant industry and far from the major population centers such as Tokyo and Osaka, was refined into a prefecture-wide policy of industrial rejuvenation by Morihiko Hiramatsu, the Governor of Oita Prefecture at the time. Hiramatsu provided the principal ideological force behind the movement, empowering local citizens and defining bureaucracy's role as one of providing support for community initiative. Hiramatsu emphasized that actual implementation and development of the movement was to be led not by him, but by local people at ground level.

The concepts of 'think globally, act locally', 'autonomy, initiative and creativity' and 'people

first’, which had appeared in a primitive form in Oyama, subsequently became the core principles of the ‘OVOP’ movement. Goods should be produced with a view not just to the local arena, but with national and international standards in mind; activities should be directed and implemented by local citizens themselves; the movement must place priority on nurturing forward-thinking individuals to inspire and lead the movement into the future; government and bureaucracy should provide only peripheral support. These ideals made the ‘OVOP’ movement more than just a project for producing and promoting local specialty goods – it was in fact a comprehensive movement for community regeneration.<sup>2</sup>

**Table 1. Examples of products developed under the ‘OVOP’ movement**

Bungotakada city	White spring onions	Tsukumi town	Sunqueen mandarins
Kitsuki city	Greenhouse mandarins	Himeshima village	Kuruma prawns
Yonozu village	Dried fish	Yufuin town	Bungo beef
Oyama town	Japanese apricots, chestnuts, enoki mushrooms	Saganoseki town	Seki brand horse mackerel and mackerel
Usa city	Shochu spirits	Ajimu town	Grapes, turtles
Hiji town	Shiroshita flounder, shochu spirits	Taketa city	Kabosu (citrus fruit)
Kusu town	Kicchomu-zuke pickles		

Source: Hiramatsu Morihiko, *Isson ippin no susume* Gyousei 1982

The fact that the movement offered potential for sustainable social change and improvement is the principal reason for the acclaim it gained in Japan and indeed throughout Asia. The production of regional specialties was the key function, but the real motivating force behind regional development was the people – the intrepid and visionary individuals who led the movement in each community. Led by these people, regional economies achieved a kind of autonomous and organic development, in which community leaders’ efforts fostered continuous innovation and pioneered new directions. As former Governor Hiramatsu puts it, ‘the ultimate goal of the OVOP movement is people-based; the term “product” refers not just to physical goods, but to products and capabilities in the human sense – the cultivation of human resources.’<sup>3</sup>

When this movement began, Oita had the lowest average personal income rate of any prefecture in the Kyushu area, and was facing a major depopulation problem which was particularly severe among the younger generation. However, the advent of the movement saw a flood of new specialty products devised by local citizens, which were then refined and promoted heavily through prefecture-wide initiatives. The Oita brand label became well known throughout Japan, and local industry experienced strong growth. The number of ‘products’ registered under the ‘OVOP’ movement grew from 100 level to over 300 in the 1990s, and the total value of product shipments increased from 10 billion yen to over 100 billion. A number of entrepreneurship related ‘academies’ were formed to train future leaders of local industry; there are now over 10 such academies covering a variety of areas (Table 2 and 3).

**Table 2. Development of the ‘OVOP’ movement into social initiatives**

<b>Title of Initiative</b>	<b>Year founded</b>
<i>Toyonokuni Shirayuri Juku (Toyonokuni Shirayuri Academy)</i>	1984
<i>Toyonokuni Shounin Juku (Toyonokuni Business Academy)</i>	1987
<i>Oita Nougyou Heisei Juku (Oita Agricultural Heisei Academy)</i>	1990
<i>Nougyou Mirai Juku (Academy for the Future of Agriculture)</i>	1996
<i>Toyonokuni Kokusai Kouryuu Karejji (Toyonokuni International Exchange College)</i>	1998
<i>Chiiki Bunka Doujou (Regional Culture Forum)</i>	1999
<i>Oitaken Fukushi Borantia Dagakkou (Oita Prefectural School for Welfare Volunteers)</i>	1999
<i>Toyonokuni Akinai Mirai Juku (Toyonokuni Academy for the Future of Business)</i>	1999
<i>Toyonokuni Kankou Karejji (Toyonokuni Tourism College)</i>	1999
<i>21-seiki Oita Nougyou Juku (Oita Agriculture Academy for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century)</i>	2000

<b>Town/city</b>	<b>Project</b>
Kokonoe	Kokonoe Ice Festival
Nakatsue	Taiokinzan Underground Museum
Yufuin	Hotsprings and tourism culture
Ajimu	Green tourism
Shounai	<i>Kagura</i> (Shinto performing art) promotion
Hita	Promotion of Mameda historical precinct

Source: *Isson ippin undou 20nen no kiroku* [20 years of the One Village One Product Movement]



**Table 3. Number of Products and Volume of Sales under the OVOP Movement**

Year		1980	1985	1990	1995	1997	1998	1999	2000
Sales (billion yen)		35.9	73.4	111.7	129.4	137.3	136.3	139.8	140.2
% growth from 1980		100	204	328	360	382	380	389	391
Number of products	Value								
	< 100 million yen	74	148	136	156	170	173	187	198
	100-300 million yen	34	53	68	76	68	79	70	75
	301-500 million yen	16	14	21	15	30	24	28	22
	501-1000 million yen	15	17	27	27	21	18	18	19
	> 1000 million yen	4	15	20	15	17	18	18	19
TOTAL		143	247	272	289	306	312	318	329

Source: Document produced by the Oita Prefecture One Village One Product Promotion Division

This success attracted much attention both domestically and from abroad. Other areas of Japan, such as Hokkaido, as well as other Asian countries including China, Thailand and Malaysia, commenced moves to implement projects based on Oita's prototype. Today, the prefecture enjoys a high level of exposure throughout Japan, and its model of regional development has become well established overseas as well.



In 1988, the Japan Center for Regional Development, at the time an arm of the Ministry for Home Affairs, announced that ‘over 3000 municipalities throughout Japan have participated in this movement [OVOP] in one way or another’, and also noted that the movement had sparked an increase in interaction between municipalities, in the form of symposia and other exchange events.<sup>4</sup>

Hokkaido was the first region to show an interest in the movement, and by the late 1980s it had established the ‘Hokkaido One Village One Product Movement [*hokkaidou isson ippin undou*]’ to promote industry and revitalize local communities. Discussing the reasons for this move, Hokkaido’s Governor stated ‘*Hokkaido boasts a great variety of primary products. However the majority of these either leave the island in an unprocessed state, or alternatively local producers rely on manufacturers in Honshu to process the goods. We want to get out of this cycle, and achieve a situation whereby our citizens can take the initiative themselves to process and add value to our indigenous products*’. Other prefectures followed suit, with Iwate’s ‘Home Town Products Promotion Scheme’, Yamagata’s ‘One Region, One Production Center Project’, and Nagano’s ‘Local Development Pilot Project’ being among the many initiatives which sprung up nationally (Table 4).<sup>5</sup>

**Table 4. Examples of the proliferation of ‘OVOP’-inspired initiative**

Hokkaido	Hokkaido One Village One Product Movement [ <i>hokkaidou isson ippin undou</i> ]
Aomori	Project to Revitalize the Marine Resources Manufacturing Industry [ <i>suisan kakougyou kasseika jigyou</i> ]
Iwate	Home Town Products Promotion Scheme [ <i>furusato tokusanhin shinkou jigyou</i> ]
Yamagata	One Region, One Production Center Project [ <i>ichi chiiki ichi sanchi jigyou</i> ]
Fukushima	Fukushima Home Town Products Promotion [ <i>fukushima furusato sangyou okoshi jigyou</i> ]
Kanagawa	The 50 Famous Products of Kanagawa [ <i>kanagawa meisan 50sen</i> ]
Toyama	Indigenous Products Kingdom Project [ <i>tokusan oukoku-zukuri</i> ]
Nagano	Pilot Project for Local Development [ <i>muraokoshi moderu jigyou</i> ]

#### **4. The ‘Oita Model of Regional Development’ in Asian Regional Development Policies**

East and Southeast Asian nations have devoted much effort to economic development and industrialization since the 1970s, with a high degree of success. However, this early success was generally confined to major urban centers of population, with outlying regions gaining little benefit in terms of industrial advancement or increased employment opportunities. In addition, the

income gap between urban and rural residents widened, and the remarkable prosperity achieved by major cities was clouded by continued poverty in non-urban areas. An influx of rural dwellers to urban areas with no prospect of employment led to the expansion of slums and the aggravation of other social problems. By the 1980s, many nations had targeted economic growth and promotion of industry in backward rural based regions as a major challenge for their economic development policies; however the decade came to an end with no effective remedial steps put in place. The foundations of industry were slow to develop in many areas, and the crisis of poverty and overpopulation continued.

Economic cooperation and development circles became acutely aware of the problems of poverty, environmental destruction, and regional imbalances, and experts began once more to emphasize sustainable development and the importance of nurturing human resources and local organizations to drive this development. Today, theories of development assistance place as much emphasis on the promotion of 'Participatory Development' as they do on sustainable development and environmental issues. There is increasing recognition of the importance of 'bottom-up' economic development founded on the initiative and participation of local residents, as opposed to macro-level industrialization and promotion of industry based on large scale investment and direction from the central government. The DAC has stressed the importance of this kind of development, saying.

It is not difficult to see the 'One Village One Product' movement as a manifestation of 'Participatory Development' ideals. The manner in which it encouraged grass roots initiative and nurtured local industry can offer valuable hints for economic development and industrial growth in the wider Asian region, across various stages of economic development and transcending differences in social conditions.<sup>6</sup>

'Participatory Development' emphasizes concepts such as continuity over transience, organization and collective consciousness, formation of internal mechanisms, amalgamation of tradition and new perspectives, and strategic accumulation of practical experience. All of these concepts are entrenched in Oita's 'OVOP' movement. The movement can be placed alongside other well-known Participatory Development initiatives such as the 'Mini Credit Project' in South Asia, and Korea's "Semaul Movement" in the 1970s, as a model of potential-building and community empowerment which is still relevant in today's circumstances.

By the 1980s many governments in Asia were embarking on projects to apply the ‘One Village One Product’ movement to nurture local industry in their countries. Although this proliferation through Asia was encouraged by former Governor Hiramatsu’s efforts in local diplomacy, it also demonstrates the movement’s universal appeal.

The following examples (Table 5) further illustrate the applicability of the movement, examining the forms it took when introduced to China, Indonesia, Malaysia, and more recently when promoted as a key economic policy in Thailand by Prime Minister Thaksin.

**Table 5. The ‘OVOP’ movement in Asia**

China	(1) One Hamlet, One Product Movement (Shanghai)
	(2) One Town, One Product Movement (Shanghai)
	(3) One Region, One Vista Movement (Shanghai)
	(4) One Village, One Treasure Movement (Wuhan)
	(5) One Community, One Product Movement (Jiangsu Province)
	(6) One Product Movement (Jiangsu Province)
	(7) One Village, One Product Movement (Shaanxi Province)
	(8) One Village, One Product Movement (Jianxi Province)
Philippines	(9) One Barangay, One Product Movement
	(10) One Region, One Vision Movement
Malaysia	(11) Satu Kampung, Satu Produk Movement
Indonesia	(12) Back to Village (East Java)
Thailand	(13) One Tambon, One Product Movement
Cambodia	(14) One Village, One Product Movement
Laos	(15) Neuang Muang, Neuang Phalittaphan Movement
Mongolia	(16) Neg Baag, Neg Shildeg Buteegdekhun

Source: Oita Prefecture International Center

## 5. ‘One Village One Product’ in Asian Contexts

It is generally agreed that China was the first nation outside Japan to realize the potential of the ‘OVOP’ movement. In the 1980s, facing acute problems of population shift to urban areas and decline of surrounding rural communities, the city of Shanghai initiated a movement – under the slogan ‘One Hamlet, One Product’ – to encourage the development of industries to process goods produced in its surrounding rural areas, thus stimulating the economy in these areas. In the same period, the city of Wuhan further inland embarked on a project to nurture local industry under

principles of ‘self-improvement’, and using the catchphrase ‘One Village, One Treasure’. Similar projects for local industry development began to spring up in Southeast Asia as well: the Philippines began a ‘One Barangay, One Product’ project (Barangay meaning ‘village’ or small municipality), while in Malaysia, Prime Minister Mahathir’s state of origin Kedah embarked on the ‘Satu Kampung Satu Produk’ project. By the 1990s, the East Java region in Indonesia had begun a ‘Back to Village’ campaign to encourage citizens to return to rural areas.<sup>7</sup> All of these movements involved regional development policies following the pattern set by ‘OVOP’ in Oita. Of particular note is Thailand’s ‘One Tambon One Product’ movement initiated in 2001 under Prime Minister Thaksin. This movement is being implemented on a national scale, with all 50,000 villages (‘tambons’) across Thailand receiving special loans and grants to implement projects relating to the movement.<sup>8</sup> It must be noted that international cooperative bodies have been enlisted to assist products manufactured under this movement to achieve success on the export market, and that the Japan External Trade Organization (JETRO) has cooperated in the areas of product development and marketing. Cambodia and Laos are now embarking on similar national-scale projects of regional development.

Although there may be differences in the exact method of application, all the above regions are using Oita’s model actively to encourage local industry, increase consciousness among local residents, enhance the quality of local products and explore market opportunities including in the export arena. This is occurring in the context of an economic upturn throughout Asia, with Asian nations experiencing social and industrial conditions and urban/rural dichotomies similar to those experienced by Oita prefecture – and other regions of Japan – during Japan’s period of high economic growth.

## **6. Applicability of the Oita Model**

The ‘OVOP’ movement now requires re-evaluation and examination in the light of new theories of economic development and changing policies relating to regional industrial revitalization. To date there has not been sufficient objective assessment of the movement, interaction amongst those involved, nor attempts to define it in the context of industrial policy and regional development. There is a great diversity in social patterns among different rural areas in developing Asian nations; in addition, these areas have weak economic bases and limited human resources, making it difficult for them to achieve the dynamism required by the ‘OVOP’ movement. For these reasons, in many cases the movements have ended up as nothing more than a

government-led projects for the manufacturers of new local specialties. It is doubtful whether the process of manufacturing these specialties has actually encouraged local ingenuity or rejuvenated communities in manner originally intended by the movement's founders.

However, regional development movements along the lines of 'OVOP' may have some validity in Asian countries in the following terms.

- (1) **Economic rationality:** The process envisaged by the movement, of selective and concentrated use of limited resources to develop a certain 'product' to which value is added before sale, is a very rational process in economic terms.
- (2) **Citizen empowerment:** The product development process increases opportunities for interaction between local citizens and external markets, raising awareness and encouraging active involvement among local citizens.
- (3) **Community spirit and participation:** Traditionally, Asian cultures emphasize strong bonds within the local community, and thus the movement's emphasis on cross-community participation may be accepted easily.
- (4) **Decentralization of power:** Decentralization and the allocation of power to regional governments is a major political trend throughout Asia. The movement provides an example of how local regions may increase their economic control and independence.

The 'OVOP' movement's model is valid in many contexts, and in Asia it has the potential to contribute significantly to policies of regional development, revitalization of rural society, reduction of income gaps, alleviation of poverty, and expansion of employment opportunities.

However, it must not be forgotten that 'OVOP' emerged in Japan when this nation had achieved a certain level of social maturity and industrialization. It is necessary to identify elements of the movement which may be difficult to transfer to the context of other Asian countries. In addition, an examination of the movement's current situation reveals many unresolved issues, including the following:

- (1) Most manifestations of the movement are no more than the projects for the manufacturers of local specialties, and have not led to any general revitalization of local society.
- (2) Implementation of the movement often relies heavily on government support, with a low level of direct involvement by local citizens.
- (3) Most regions do not have sufficient human resources, systematization or community

awareness to sustain growth in the movement.

- (4) The movement can be introduced as no more than a political campaign, with no effective measures for implementation at administrative level.

The above points require further close examination and analysis.

However, it is also true that the movement has brought positive benefits in many cases, such as (1) driving export growth; (2) successfully nurturing and bringing together local industries; (3) achieving personal income growth and expanding employment opportunities for low-income earners. It also seems to be necessary conducting further analysis of the movement, sharing of experiences amongst its participants, and providing more support for its effective application for the success of the movement.

Oita prefecture and other regions of Japan now face a new challenge: how to integrate local industry developed under the ‘OVOP’ movement with modern research and development-based industries (a field of rapid growth in Japan), manufacturing plants which have been relocated from urban areas, and local small and medium business enterprises. They also need to consider how to expand industrial growth beyond regionalist boundaries and how to build collaborative relationships with emergent regions in Asia.<sup>9</sup>

## **7. Significance of the Movement as Locally-Initiated International Cooperation**

As explained above, in general terms, the ‘OVOP’ movement can be evaluated positively as an important model for regional development in Asia. However, it may be possible to identify further positive aspects of the movement by re-evaluating experiences in its point of origin – Oita Prefecture – and undertaking comparative research into different Asian contexts in which the movement has been applied, with a view to the promotion of international economic cooperation. The effectiveness, the limitations, and the further potential of the movement need to be re-evaluated.

Models of ‘Participatory Development’ are becoming predominant in economic development circles, with the World Bank leading calls for the eradication of poverty by the middle of this century, the adoption of a broader perspective to development, and a renewed focus on the

sustainability of development (note 10). In this context, the experiences of regional development in Asia under the ‘OVOP’ model need to be organized and analyzed in a more systematic manner. Based on this analysis, Japan could work to establish some kind of ‘Model project for nurturing regional industry in Asia’ as a means of effective economic cooperation with Asian nations.

## Notes

1. The activities in Oyama town, which were the starting point of the movement, are outlined in detail in ‘*Genba kara no shougen – oyama no monogatari* [Report from the front line – the story of Oyama]’, pages 6 to 10 of *Isson ippin katsudou 20nen no kiroku* [20 years of the OVOP movement], Oita Prefecture One Village One Product 21 Promotion Conference 2002. The catchword NPC encapsulated each stage of development in the movement: stage one being ‘New Plum and Chestnut’, stage two ‘New Personality Combination’, and stage three ‘New Paradise Community’. The above volume also introduces other examples, such as the fusion of environmental protection and cultural movements in Yufuin (p.11-14), and the production of *kuruma* prawns in Himeshima in the North of the prefecture (p.63-64).
2. See the document produced by the Oita Prefecture International Center, *Isson ippin no haikai, susumekata, rinen* [OVOP: background, implementation, and ideals. [http://www.oic.or.jp/ison\\_p/haikai.html](http://www.oic.or.jp/ison_p/haikai.html)]
3. Hiramatsu, *Chihou kara no hassou* Iwanami Shoten [YEAR], p.84. For more detail regarding the importance of community leaders within the movement, see the third chapter of *Isson ippin katsudou 20nen no kiroku* (note 1 above)
4. *Ibid.*, p. 138.
5. *Ibid.*, p. 138-139.
6. Japan International Cooperation Agency, *Sankagata no yoi touji, bunyabetsu enjo kenkyuukai houkokusho* [Report of research committee on Participatory government and assistance], p.i-ii.
7. “Back to village campaign is listed as an OVOP movement in the Oita document but it’s slightly different from the OVOP. However, Indonesian government adopted this movement for the revitalization of rural villages.
8. Refer to website <http://www.thaitambon.com>.
9. Recent concrete examples of industrial revitalization include Sanwa Shuzou’s application of modern technology to traditional *sake* brewing, Oyama town’s development of manufactured agricultural products in collaboration with Suzhou in China, and the green tourism initiatives in Ajimu. Oita Prefecture’s Research Committee for the Promotion of the OVOP Movement is



also developing a new framework for the movement under the banner of ‘Uniting the Globe with OVOP 21 [*Chikyu o musubu isson ippin 21*]’.

10. World Bank “Frontiers of Developing Economics” in R. Chambers, Rural Development: Putting the Last First (at translated into Japanese as *Sanka gata kaihatsu to kokusai kyouryoku*, Akashi Shoten 2000.

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