

I. Introduction

This paper is intended to describe the history and current activities of the Japan Center for International Exchange (JCIE) with a specific focus on its activities to promote the growth of philanthropy in Japan. It will also attempt an assessment of the effectiveness of these activities. In writing one's own history and evaluating that history, there is always the danger of being tempted either to distort the facts or to make false claims of achievements. We will strive to avoid those pitfalls.

It can be argued that the development of philanthropy in any country or society is affected by multiple factors and that it is difficult to definitively assess the extent to which any specific project contributes to the promotion of philanthropy. There are cases of "good" projects that do not achieve the impact in a society expected due to other factors constraining philanthropic development. It is hard to tell whether JCIE's activities can provide "replicable models for similar initiatives in other countries." The least we can do to contribute to the discussion of ways and means of promoting philanthropic development in diverse societies and cultures is to describe the reasoning and strategies behind JCIE's programmatic approaches.

One modest claim JCIE may make regarding its International Philanthropy Project is that strategies have

been adjusted to what were conceived to be changing priorities for philanthropic development in Japan and designed carefully to meet changing needs. Such continuous adjustments are consistent with JCIE's own evolution in which program priorities have been consciously adjusted over the years in response to the changing dynamics of Japan's society, the changing role of Japan in the world community, and changes in the international environment. In this sense, JCIE's activities to promote private philanthropy in Japan and to encourage international philanthropic cooperation have been central elements of its own institutional development and overall organizational goals.