

Institutional Limitations and Necessary Changes for Better Governance in Japan

“Challenges, Opportunities, and Surprises: Consensus Building
and Other Collaborative Efforts for Sustainability Governance in
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CB training/educational opportunities in Japan

- Short-term training for mid-career professionals
 - Both public and private, facilitation skills being popular
- Semester-long courses at a few universities
 - “negotiation” and “governance” courses at public policy and law schools.
 - Practicum at engineering schools



Example: “Negotiation and Consensus Building” Course at the Grad. School of Public Policy/U. of Tokyo

- 80+ students enrolled (increasing from 40 in 2007)
- 5th year of offering the course since 2007
- Developing negotiation and process management skills

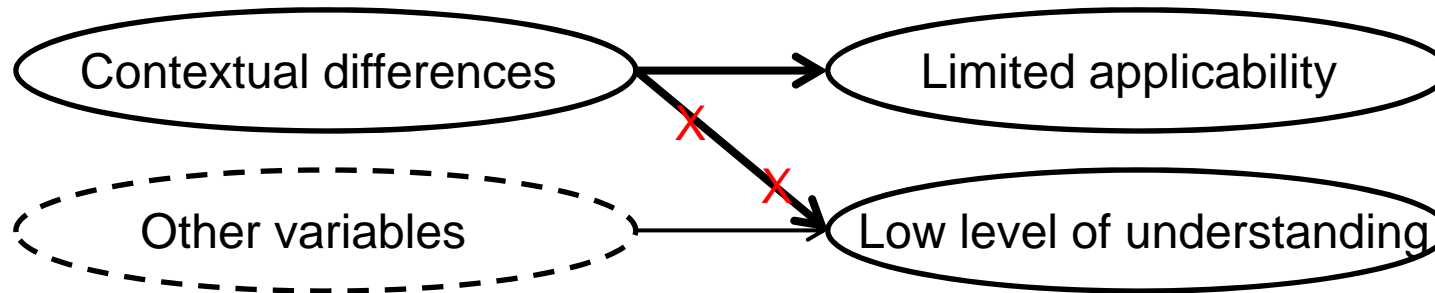


Challenges to CB training/education in Japan

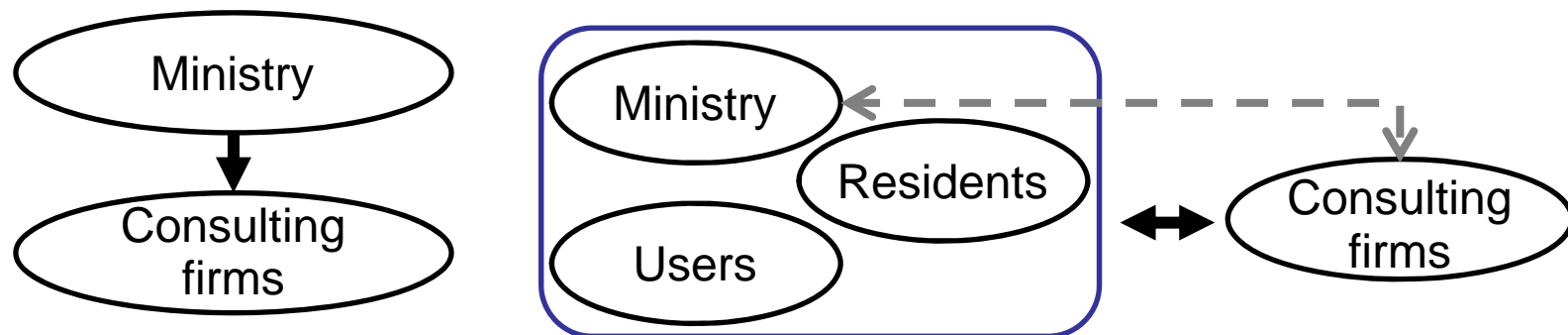
- Different culture? Inconceivable ideas?
 - Not so much!
- Typical reaction (esp. professionals) => Difficulties in applying CB skills and knowledge to policy-making and other processes in Japan
 - Strong institutions: no room for negotiation
 - Hierarchical organization, lack of delegated power
 - Unstable national politics, with more “top-down” decisions by the Diet
 - Interests in establishing “rights” through court decisions
 - Risks and uncertainties: hesitant to try new processes
 - Lack of non-partisan helpers with adequate skills and knowledge

Examples from my research findings

- 2004 training feed-back focus group survey



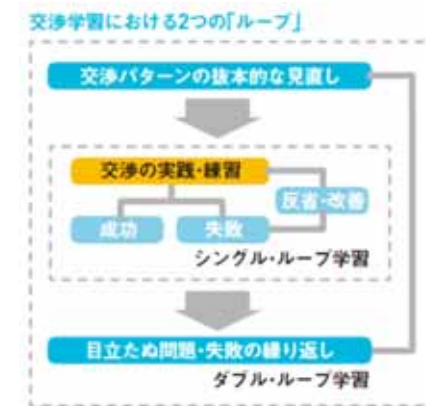
- Institutional change observed in an experimental consensus building effort (2004-6) in Japan



Improving the educational framework in Japan

- Raising awareness in contextual constraints in applying the lessons.

- Adapting to the constraints
- Changing the system
 - ✓ Need for double-loop learning



- Continuing advocacy for “better” governance
 - Pressure for the government to adopt CB and similar approaches
 - ✓ e.g., *stakeholder analysis* and *joint fact-finding* recognized in the recent reform for “evidence-based” science and technology governance.

Recent CB developments in Japan

- Planning:
 - Participatory workshops are more regularly adopted in the field of city planning, but...
 - ✓ Inadequate attention to governance/institutional issues
 - ✓ Lack of “qualified” facilitators and process managers
 - ✓ Post-3.11 planning challenge/disaster
 - Strategic Environmental Assessment and other upstream public participation requirements



Recent CB developments in Japan

- Energy and science/technology policy:
 - Major revision in the policy-making processes
 - ✓ After a decade of experience with European-inspired participatory technology assessment
 - Heightened interest in joint fact-finding \Leftarrow science vs. science
 - ✓ Nano-medicine experiment
 - ✓ Nuclear energy and post-*Fukushima*
 - Post-*Fukushima* energy policy

