Since 2001 “e-Japan Strategy” and its modified strategies have been leading the development of ICT infrastructure in Japan. At the first stage, the target of these strategies was to generate a new type of economic growth based on ICT by network management, Electronic Commerce, e-government, and so on. Even though the basic concept of the strategies was not changed, the development of ICT infrastructure would be realized quite differently from the original target, caused by unexpected social context such as the collapse of ICT Bubble Economy, lower growth rate of subscribers for next generation Internet access services, and so forth.

Japanese government is now trying to fill the gap of broadband infrastructure between urban and non-urban areas, in accordance with “Next Generation Broadband Strategy 2010” [August, 2006]. In this strategy, there are two targets by 2010, to provide appropriate broadband infrastructure [optical fibre, ADSL, CATV, 3.5G mobile phone, satellite, etc.] for all municipal governments and to realize 90% coverage of FTTH [Fibre-To-The-Home] for all households. Also, this strategy aims at higher coverage of mobile phone services in remote areas.

As originally defined in “e-Japan Strategy”, ICT infrastructure with high capacity will heighten potential of business and quality of individual life, by generating and sharing various kinds of information over the net. The effect of ICT infrastructure could be easily observed in urban area, not in non-urban area. Particularly, since traditional way of business and individual life in non-urban area is different, compared to behaviour of ICT users in urban area, ICT infrastructure of high capacity might not function as to be expected to stimulate local socio-economic system in non-urban area. Or there might exist another way to enhance local socio-economic system with ICT being applied in non-urban area only.

This paper is aimed at seeking stylized fact in the development process of ICT infrastructure in Japan. It will be focused on analyzing diversified environment and usage of ICT between urban and non-urban areas, in order to suggest possible ICT infrastructure to support local economies.