

Executive Summary of the Japan Education Forum IX (JEF-IX)

- Collaboration toward Self-Reliant Educational Development -

Outline of the Forum

Japan strongly acknowledges that for all people and all countries around the world, education is the foundation of self-reliant nation building and development, and contributes to realizing human security. As such, Japan launched its new education cooperation policy at the High-level Plenary Meeting of the United Nations General Assembly on the review of the Millennium Development Goals, proposing a basic education assistance model called “School for All”. Japan has been assisting the self-reliance efforts of its partner countries and striving for aid effectiveness. This was the topic of the 9th Japan Education Forum (JEF), an annual international forum established in March 2004 through government and academic collaboration as part of Japan’s educational cooperation. The purpose of the forum is to provide an opportunity for open and frank exchange of opinions and ideas among a wide range of stakeholders. The forum is jointly organized by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT), the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA), Hiroshima University and the University of Tsukuba. The event is also supported by the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA).

This year JEF IX was held in the Assembly Hall of the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology on February 7, 2012 in Tokyo, focusing on the theme of “Aid Effectiveness and Responsibility of International Cooperation in Education”. Prominent practitioners in educational aid from international and bilateral development institutions as well as noted scholars specializing in educational development discussed “aid effectiveness” and international cooperation in education, anticipating what will happen post-2015. In the morning, two featured keynote speakers addressed the assembly. The first keynote speaker, Birger Fredriksen, former Director of the African Region Human Development Department of the World Bank, was followed by a keynote speech from Ruth M. Mubanga, Director General of Education and Specialized Services of the Ministry of Education in Zambia. A question and answer session followed in which the audience could discuss the issues freely with the keynote speakers. The afternoon featured a panel session, which presented multiple viewpoints on “What Do We Mean by Effectiveness for Education Cooperation?” and included further opportunities for discussion between the attendees and speakers. The event concluded with open discussion among all of the speakers. In total, more than 150 people participated in the forum including diplomats from many foreign embassies, various ministry officials, development cooperation agency representatives, university faculty members, NGO/NPOs and the general public.

Keynote Speech by Dr. Birger Fredriksen, Former Director of the African Region Human Development Department of the World Bank

In his keynote address entitled “Revisiting Aid Effectiveness for Education in the Changing Global Climate”, Dr. Fredriksen began with a summary of Official Development Assistance (ODA) and stressed that the emergence of new donors, such as China, will influence trends in the future. Over the past decade, education’s share of aid has remained static at 10-12% of total ODA; however total education aid increased in 2009. Fredriksen stressed that to enhance aid effectiveness is a multi-faceted challenge that goes well beyond the technical efficiency of aid delivery by donors and used by aid-recipient countries which is the focus of the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness. While important and necessary, to deliver aid efficiently is not sufficient to ensure aid effectiveness if the allocative efficiency is poor, that is, if the aid is not strategically used where it can have the greatest impact on total education spending (domestic spending plus aid). Similarly, it does not help much to be able to demonstrate that a small, ring-fenced aid project implemented

by a donor or non-governmental organization is efficient if the results cannot be replicated to impact the overwhelming majority of education spending, which in most countries is from domestic resources. Too little attention is given in the international debate on aid effectiveness to the allocative efficiency of aid and to aid sustainability, including possible harmful impacts of long duration of high levels of aid dependency. To focus more on such aspects would be in line with the recent Busan Declaration's call for broadening of the international aid debate in order to enhance the attention to *more effective use of aid* to promote development. There is also little public discussion on how efficient aid has been in supporting global public good functions in the education sector. He concluded by emphasizing that the lack of global leadership in education has both reduced the effectiveness of available aid by not ensuring that it is allocated effectively and by lessening the effectiveness of the education sector in mobilizing additional resources. Whereas the health sector has been able to increase substantially its share of total aid over the last decade, education's share remains unchanged. For education aid to become more effective in helping countries address emerging challenges – which will require more knowledge and capacity-intensive policies than during the last decade – it is paramount that the global aid community take concerted actions to make aid allocation and coordination much more evidence-based, that is, allocating aid to areas and purposes where it can have the greatest impact on education outcomes. This is particularly important at the present time with high budget deficits and increasing skepticism in donor countries about the effectiveness of past aid.

Keynote Speech by Ruth M. Mubanga, Director General of Education and Specialized Services of the Ministry of Education, Zambia

Director Ruth M. Mubanga discussed aid effectiveness in her keynote speech by sharing a case of collaboration toward self-reliant education development in Zambia: the school program of in-service training for the term (SPRINT) program. Throughout her speech, she emphasized that when teacher professional development is government-driven and donor-funded, there is very little teacher ownership. The lack of ownership makes the project unsustainable and the use of the traditional cascade system results in skill transfer but allows for very little input and hence encourages dependency on centralized initiatives. However, when aid is used in school-based projects such as the Strengthening Mathematics Science Technology Education (SMASTE) project and schools are thus held accountable, ownership results in knowledge being actively acquired by the participants. Throughout her speech, Mubanga stressed that consultant injecting expertise does not result in ownership. It is only by holding schools responsible that buy-in occurs and programs become sustainable. However, she emphasized that attention must be given to local values and knowledge and their alignment with continuing professional development policy. As has been shown in Zambia, aid is not effective when it attempts to replace existing capabilities in partner countries with knowledge and systems produced in foreign countries.

At the conclusion of both keynote speeches, a question and answer session moderated by Professor Kazuhiro Yoshida, the Center for the Study of International Cooperation in Education, Hiroshima University, was held. Questions were received from audience participants from South Africa, Jamaica, the United States and Japan. Topics included aid allocation to secondary school programs, marginalized student populations and minorities, the issues of teacher education and mobility, the objectives of aid agencies and local expertise in promoting ownership.

Panel Session

A panel session was held in the afternoon under the theme “What Do We Mean by Effectiveness for Education Cooperation?” Dr. Dorothy Nampota, Director of the Center for Education Research and Training of the University of

Malawi served as a presenter and was also the moderator for this session. Two panelists provided the audience with reports of effective collaboration in the education sector, one in Malaysia and another through JICA-sponsored projects. The third panelist challenged the audience to reflect on the paradigm shift in donor aid occurring today. Dr. Nampota concluded the session with a presentation on opportunities and challenges facing Malawi.

Dr. Ui Hock Cheah, Senior Specialist of the Research and Development Division, Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization (SEAMEO), Malaysia, began the session by illustrating SEAMEO as an example of effective regional cooperation in education. The effectiveness of SEAMEO results from each of the member countries sharing their strengths with other SEAMEO countries and sharing their expertise in niche areas and, in return, receiving benefits from the cooperation. Empowerment by the Ministers of Education further facilitates implementation of SEAMEO programs. Bilateral and multilateral cooperation with international organizations and other countries are also fostered through SEAMEO. The presentation further highlights the role of the Regional Center for Education in Science and Mathematics (RECSAM) as an example of how SEAMEO centers operate. Training programs in RECSAM, which have been in effect since the 1970s, are now supplemented with research to inform policy and pedagogy, with a bi-annual journal being published since 1978. In addition, the Malaysian center holds an International Conference on Science and Mathematics once every two years and the SEAMEO search for Young Scientist Congress in alternate years. RECSAM has also been conducting the JICA-TCTP training programs for African educators in collaboration with JICA and the Malaysian Government since 2008.

Dr. Shoko Yamada, Associate Professor of the Graduate School of International Development at Nagoya University, was the second presenter. She addressed the issue of Japanese educational aid in the face of a paradigm shift. Diversification of focus areas among donor organizations and the emergence of non-conventional actors have caused structural changes in educational cooperation. Compared to the earlier period when the donor community stressed the importance of harmonization, the recent atmosphere is more tolerant of diverse modalities. Specifically, Dr. Yamada highlighted the consistent characteristics of Japanese ODA in placing great emphasis on the “support for the self-help efforts” and human resource development as a major pillar of self-help development. Dr. Yamada concluded her presentation by asking the audience to reflect on the comparative advantage of Japanese aid by illustrating the characteristics and good practices of Japanese ODA, highlighting cooperation in community participation as seen in the School for All project in Niger, Senegal, Burkina Faso and Mali.

Nobuko Kayashima, Director General, Human Development Department of the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) continued the discussion on effectiveness of education cooperation by focusing on JICA’s policies and approaches in addressing issues for post-2015. JICA has taken a three-pronged approach to improve international cooperation in education by focusing on capacity development, strengthening of collaborations and addressing education development needs. Capacity development focuses on what would be most effective for a country and provides both technical and financial support through programs such as those in the basic education sector of Bangladesh. There are currently 14 countries participating in South-South cooperation and networking through JICA’s strengthening of mathematics and science in primary and secondary education projects in Africa. Furthermore, this focus on mathematics and science in secondary education directly impacts on human resources development in our knowledge-based innovative society.

The final presentation of the session was made by Dr. Dorothy Nampota, who examined the opportunities and challenges in education cooperation in Malawi. Effectiveness of educational cooperation means alignment with established country priorities such as the National Education Sector Plan of Malawi. As criteria for success, there must be involvement in policy formulation and implementation resulting in ownership. Local actors who manage the project thus have mutual accountability, and outcomes include self-motivated teachers working in alignment with government

needs. While challenges still remain and current education cooperation is yielding mixed results, aid alignment appears well adhered to, so there can be expectations that capacity development and therefore ownership will advance along the same lines and be more strictly adhered to than at the current time.

After her presentation, Dr. Nampota moderated an open-floor question and answer session with the panelists. Questions were taken from participants representing China, Malawi, the Philippines, Saudi Arabia, the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs and various universities in Japan and abroad. Topics addressed included aid effectiveness in secondary education compared to basic education, public-private partnerships across countries and regions, points on which to focus aid in Africa during the upcoming five years, further issues of collaboration as seen in SEAMEO, the need for a Japanese model of ODA and what impact the earthquake and tsunami of March 11, 2011 may have had on education.

At the end of the afternoon, Professor Kazuhiro Yoshida, Hiroshima University, moderated a concluding discussion with the panelists, panel session moderator and keynote speakers to briefly summarize the day's main points and to challenge the audience to reflect upon them sincerely. Professor Yoshida stressed that the purpose of the forum is not to reach a conclusion but rather to critically review what we have done so that we can set a new agenda for the future as an international community. With that, the 9th Japan Education Forum on Collaboration toward Self-reliant Educational Development was concluded.