

[Concluding Discussions by Keynote Speakers and Panelists with Moderator]

Kazuhiro Yoshida (Professor, Center for the Study of International Cooperation in Education (CICE), Hiroshima University)

Thank you. At this time we were to change the layout but as we are running out of time I'd like to get into the final summary without changing the layout. When we came up with the idea of this year's Japan Education Forum theme, we thought we would have a wide range of discussion and now I find it very difficult to summarize today's discussion. I believe this forum is not designed to come to some conclusions but rather we have lively discussion on issues and we do not attempt to reach agreement and consensus. In this respect there is a big souvenir for all people who come to this forum which is to consider how we can improve aid effectiveness and what would be effectiveness in education aid. I would like to give you food for thought as you contemplate the theme of aid dependency. So many inputs were given in this forum as to how we should define what Dr. Yamada called a paradigm shift. Last November in Pusan we discussed aid effectiveness and said we should shift from aid effectiveness to the development of partnerships of mutual learning. In international cooperation it is said of Japan that its donor aid does not help but that we collaborate with each other to achieve development. There is also the paradigm shift thinking here. Today we have had two keynote addresses and a panel discussion and it is impossible to summarize them all. I would like to ask the two keynote speakers and Dr. Nampota for each of you to make some concluding remarks. But briefly I would like to summarize some of the key points that were discussed in this forum today.

One of them is ODA. The role of ODA has changed very much. The development challenge for developing countries and the positioning of ODA has changed and there is also the role of new emerging donors and the role of the private sector. Even in the education sector, donors and governments are equal partners and that was the main stream of discussion. But there is the addition of emerging donors and the private sector so there are diversified players getting involved and the circumstances of aid effectiveness have changed. And 2015 is getting closer and closer which is the target year to achieve EFA and the MDGs and education is one of the objectives to make sure all children will be able to receive primary education and we have seen progress so far. Then as a next step and beyond 2015, not only graduating from universities is important but what they can learn in school and what will lead to professions and occupations later in the future. So this discussion is not only confined to primary education but what we should do. Then from the EFA goals there are still marginalized children and equity and remaining issues we have to address toward 2015. And in thinking about post-2015 challenges this is the only timing we can consider for this challenge in relation to the EFA, so the focus will concentrate there. On the other hand we can see the development of globalization and in order to enjoy the benefits, people have to be active in the knowledge-intensive society. Higher education receives a lot of importance so in education in Africa what will be our priority? We can't come up with one correct answer as it is a very difficult and complex situation. Dr. Fredriksen mentioned there is an issue of allocation efficiency so since we have very diverse progress, one of the approaches cannot fit into all the countries in their own needs. And we talked about countries' ownership and harmonization. We have to promote them and in promoting ODA how do we define it? What would be the optimal allocation of ODA and the objectives from the respective donors and countries? What purposes do the recipient countries have for ODA on the assumptions that ODA will no longer exist in the future? We should review the way we provide ODA. If we want to achieve self-reliant development we need to change our perspective on aid and identify the efficient way of allocating aid resources – how it will be used and for what purposes and how to achieve maximum outcomes and results. We should use development to let the recipient countries gain ownership. So we have a declaration and many basic questions we have to address and without having thoughts on this aspect we can't really move on to effectiveness. But can we summarize the discussion we have had today to short-term challenges toward

2015? We have to think about the major impacts beyond 2015 so we have to think in terms of a critical review of what we have done and aid effectiveness. The document that summarizes the Pusan High Level Meeting on Aid Effectiveness last year does not seem to reflect on these important matters. So we have to review critically what we have done so we can set a new agenda for the future as members of the international community. As a way to cooperation, what would be our common objectives? We should come up with these by critically reviewing what we have done and have a shared vision of our effort. So my role is not to summarize but I am pleased if you consider this as my personal statement of what I think was discussed during today's sessions. Now I'd like to call upon Dr. Nampota to make some remarks and then Ms. Mubanga and Dr. Fredriksen.

Dorothy Nampota (Director, Center for Education Research and Training, University of Malawi)

Thank you very much. In terms of a summary let me say more on the panel discussion. We have seen the commitment from JICA and issues of changing paradigms in aid provision for developing countries. It is a good thing there is a lot of commitments from our donor partners to continue to support developing countries and commitment from JICA to align aid with developing countries, so I think this is a positive outcome. From the donor country perspective the issue of understanding the social contexts to ensure aid effectiveness is the most important and it was mentioned there are some areas of interest in alignment with policies of developing countries with issues of access to education. These issues we have done quite well on but relevance of education and if learning is actually taking place are issues that remain. Issues of quality still need to be addressed. JICA's commitment to align projects with country policy shows there is a light at the end of the tunnel to achieve some of the needs we still have as developing countries. So there is a need for developing countries to refocus their agenda in terms of relevance and how learning is taking place and what the curriculum is like. What is actually taking place in the classroom so we have better outcomes? The issue of importance of cooperation we didn't really comment upon. Issues of cooperation include learning from each other as partners in development to share a common goal. One good message we can carry home is, though issues of attitude change and commitment are aligned with the corporate agenda, no one side or the other is better if we agree on a common goal. In order to achieve it, to see it will be fulfilled and adhered to the cooperation is necessary and from the discussion that is what I can say as a summary. We are moving into a positive direction but we need an attitude change and more focus on areas that need attention in the development agenda.

Ruth M. Mubanga (Director General, Education and Specialized Services, Ministry of Education, Zambia)

Thank you. As a way of concluding, there was a question we didn't answer on the private and public sector and this is not really looked at as a way of development aid, so very little is being done to get the private sector into the education sector. Developing countries have a shopping list of what we need, and I think while we talk about paradigm shift, we also need a paradigm shift with the countries to state what exactly it is that they need – what needs to be done. Yes, there are a lot of challenges but which of these priorities, if addressed, would act as a catalyst for development? Also defining what it is you'd like to see. We keep hearing of so many changes likely to happen in the education sector but what is your vision for 2020? We would like to be a prosperous middle income country but we have not defined what that would look like. How do we know we have arrived? What kind of change do we want to see and once we have all that, we can sit at the table and discuss with development partners this is what we want to see. This will be the catalyst that will change the entire education sector. We don't seem to be at that point. We wait for the development partners to define what we need and everyone is working to 2015 and we have focused on that and once we do get to that we haven't started thinking beyond that. The issue is that skills development education is a passport out of poverty and the citizens want to see an education that, when they finish education, they will be able to address family needs

in getting out of poverty. But when you look at the education that is provided after grade 12 they are not ready to do anything so the issue of skills development has not been given attention in the curriculum, so for me there is a paradigm shift on both sides. Mutual respect above all in this dialogue and recipients being able to negotiate what they want rather than being told what they need as they will accept anything because they are in such dire need. But I think if we can define what we want to be and categorize aid it would be very easy to have this mutual agreement with cooperating partners.

Birger Fredriksen (Former Director, African Region Human Development Department, World Bank)

I will start by thanking the organizers. I have attended many conferences over the last 40 years or so. This has been one of the best ones in terms of discussing issues that are forward-looking and important to development cooperation, so I'd like to congratulate the organizers from the different institutions on the excellent initiative of creating this annual education forum. My second comment is that our Chinese colleague called for more attention to African studies and I think that is an excellent idea. When we talk about development in Africa, it is as if Africa was one country. But Africa is such an enormously varied region with education levels and issues that vary enormously between countries. So the importance of knowing what we are talking about is really important. For example, in 1960 when most sub-Saharan African (SSA) countries became independent, while the average primary school enrollment in SSA was about 40%, countries such as Burkina, Ethiopia, Mali and Niger had less than 10% primary school enrollment, and Niger and Burkina did not even have one single secondary school. While the gaps between countries today are closing at the primary level, they are often increasing in secondary and higher education.

I also want to make a comment on the discussion of the "Japanese model". Whether or not there is a very distinct Japanese model (I think there is), to my mind, there certainly is an "East Asian approach" for how some key East Asian countries (Korea, Singapore and Taiwan and, later on, Vietnam) developed their education systems after World War II. Compared to many SSA countries, these East Asian countries set strong priorities for education and economic development, including high priority in public budgets for universal primary education and literacy, and very strong focus on employment generation and shared economic growth. This focus on universal basic education and shared growth has not always been the overarching objective in many SSA countries. I will also say that pragmatism rather than dogmatism has been a major characteristic when it comes to education and economic policies. This is reflected in former Chinese Chairman Deng's comment to the effect that the color of the cat doesn't matter as long as it can catch the mouse. You try something and if it doesn't work you change it to try something else. These and other factors have characterized East Asia and are aspects that other countries can learn from.

Finally, I have been trying to argue for the need of better aid coordination, both for the need for more evidence-based allocation and to allocate aid where it could have the greatest impact in different countries depending on national context, but I don't think that just adding money is the best type of assistance. You want the aid to have additionality. If you have aid and you want to make a difference, you don't want the country to shift its own money from education to other less productive purposes. And I think you have additionality when you help poor countries, which often cannot fund even their teacher salaries, to fund other essential education inputs that would not be funded in the absence of aid. This is the comparative advantage of aid: to provide additionality for high-priority investments. Also, the Paris Declaration argues for division of labor among donors and JICA has found a good area in supporting science and math teaching in secondary education which is a high priority area where there is underinvestment. There is a need, so why not focus on something that could bring something additional? I also think that capital investments of the type China

is making in many countries can be a comparative advantage of aid, when the investments are made in a sustainable manner. We need to develop higher education and we need to develop secondary education. Although I have been arguing for soft investment for capacity building, I don't think that means that donors should not support capital investment because Africa does need infrastructure.

I want to end by stressing that better quality aid necessitates more evidence-based allocation and use of aid. Many new donors are coming in and public-private partnerships will have a much larger role in the education sector. Therefore, better coordination among all is necessary to ensure effective use of all these different sources of aid. A well-coordinated global system does not mean micro-management of aid allocation but to ensure more financing for major areas which are severely underfinanced, despite general global consensus on their importance (e.g. female literacy, early childhood development, global public goods common to humanity, technical cooperation). Also, all donors do not need to follow the same approach; indeed they should not. For example, many countries such as Japan and the US have been reluctant to give budget support. This is fine; there is room for different aid modalities, but there should be coordination. We don't have an obvious best approach so some come in with targeted aid and others with budget support. And for good reasons poor countries which may not be able to pay their teachers may not feel that they can afford to send their education planners and policy makers to Singapore or Japan to learn from their past policies. But to use aid for such learning and knowledge exchange can be very effective use of aid. And donors should be more willing to fund regional cooperation, so I was very glad to hear the SEAMEO presentation and I wish African donors would spend more money on supporting well-performing regional institutions. JICA has also been good in supporting knowledge exchange and networks of university cooperation between Asia and Africa. I believe this is very effective use of aid money. Also, in Africa, regional cooperation is very important. Remember there are a dozen African countries that have less than two million inhabitants, and many have less than one million, so they need to cooperate with other countries in developing a fully-fledged education system.

Again, thanks for your questions and for inviting me.

Kazuhiro Yoshida (Hiroshima University, Japan)

I think it is time for us to end and we would like to thank all our speakers and we hope you all enjoyed today's forum. This completes our program. Thank you very much.