

【Dialogue between Speakers and Participants: Session 1】

Moderator: Prasad Sethunga (University of Peradeniya, Sri Lanka)

Thank you, Carolyn. Now we conclude all the presentations. And we will give the time for the audience for your questions. I think we didn't get questions. Regarding Mr. Eguchi's presentation from Japanese JICA side, he pointed out what is the policy of JICA side and Divya from the other international cooperation, and basically views from UK. Finally Carolyn pointed out Philippine's situation and what are the priorities of the South Asian countries. Please, we have five minutes.

Questions

Moto Young nee Isah Francisca Chube (Ministry of Women's Empowerment and the Family, Cameroon)

I am Francisca from Cameroon, a participant in JICA program for promotion of education for girls and women. You talked about enforcing laws on compulsory education. I would like to know how it is possible, because sometimes parents don't have money to send their children to school. And sometimes children don't want to go to school. So, are parents refusing or unable to send will be punished?

Jarr Ould Inalla (Mauritanian Embassy)

According to your presentation, there is one point which is very interesting for me, and I would like to know what you can advise yourself or other panelist about that. Which is in your presentation, you mentioned that in some schools, school is there, students are there, but teachers are not there. I think this is the worst thing faced in my country. The government is spending a lot of money to train teachers. But these teachers just give up; we are suffering from brain drain mainly in education system. So what can you advice us to deal with this situation.

Hameed Rathore Saadat (JICA Trainee, Pakistan)

I have gone through different presentations, but at one point, you told about the conditions of the teachers. You have focused that the conditions of teachers could be improved. It's a really good point, everyone talked about primary education, means of improving education, and enrollment rates, but no one talked about the conditions of teachers. You know if you improve the conditions of teachers, definitely the education will be improved. But you must have some incentive for the teachers as well. You must have some sort of mean you provide good facilities to the teachers so that you can hire the good qualified teachers or make professional choice as you said. It's a really good point, but do you have any suggestion how you can achieve this goal in your country or how we can achieve the goal?

Ahlijah Peter (Hiroshima University, Japan)

Thank you very much. My name is Ahlijah, Hiroshima University student. My question goes to Eguchi Sensei. He was talking about the fact that Japan would want to extend supports to the NGOs. I think that is rather good idea. The question I want to ask is that this support which is going to the NGOs. First what I know is that JICA is a governmental institution and it supports governments of other countries. Now that you want to support NGO. How is the structure going to be? Is there any NGO that is interested in education? Or that NGO that are affiliated to the governments of very specific countries as far as education is concerned? How would that be done? Thank you very much.

Mekonnen Geberew (Hiroshima University, Japan)

Thank you very much. I am a Fellow from Hiroshima University. I am a student. My question is actually general. I

am not referring for a particular presenter. I start with the topic of the presentation that is “Five Years Left Until 2015 - What Should be Our Priority?” And when I say this, should our priority be only to achieve MDG, or to address the real situation we have in our country? Because I feel the priority we see for achieving MDG could sometimes be different from the priority we have in our country. Right? So I really want to know where our effort is. Are we really interested in only to achieve MDG to 2015? What about after 2015? And what should be done for sustainability of what were achieved so far again? This is my question, and this is general. Thank you.

Gomez Felicia (Ministry of Women’s Empowerment and the Family, Cameroon)

Thank you for this opportunity. I am Gomez Felicia from Cameroon for JICA project for promoting women’s and girls’ education. My question is directed to Dr. Divya of Scotland. Yes, your presentation actually impressed me in one element, because when I followed all the other presentations of what have to be achieved in 5 years, all in the course of supply element, that’s difficult element. I am impressed by your touching that aspect of self-esteem. It really impressed me because I am working on that as a researcher for my PhD. I am really interested and I really want to know. We forget that self-esteem touches not only on many elements, it touches on dropout issues, and it touches on performance issue. So I don’t know if, as you are working on this, do you have some strategies in this, or do you have some proposal on how self-esteem can be improved in children? Thank you.

Response

Prasad Sethunga (University of Peradeniya, Sri Lanka)

In Sri Lankan context, they would like to go to school. Their cultural thing will enforce schooling. They are willing to come to the schools. We are not into enforcing, but motivation is the main thing we are into enforcing, not pressure for them.

Charles Aheto-Tsegah (Ministry of Education, Ghana)

I guess every country has its system to prepare its teachers. And most importantly, we are looking for qualified teachers. This entails a lot of teacher preparation and teacher development. So to ensure that the teacher has the specific competency to deliver, there should be a lot of training and skills to impart for the teachers to deliver. The other part is the terms and conditions of service. This is very specific to countries. The countries where the teachers are given good condition of service, education is improving. And in countries where teachers are paid anything, education is also anything.

But the other challenge is about supporting deprived districts, the communities where most teachers don’t want to go to because if they do, they are likely to compromise their desire to continue their education. There is a need to prepare a package of incentive for those teachers that are very willing to go into those areas and also to create motivation for more teachers to go into these underserved areas. In fact, it is important to drive down the gap between deprived areas and so called endowed areas, in order that we make any progress in terms of our effort to improve education in our respective countries.

In addition there’s the need to put in place some properly structured teacher professional development program that would enable teachers to continue to learn while they are on the job.

Hideo Eguchi (JICA, Japan)

Thank you very much for your question. Collaboration with NGOs is still a challenge for JICA, to be honest with you. But as I said in my presentation, especially for non-formal education and early childhood development, NGOs and

other international organizations have their comparative advantage. So when we are approaching these areas, we are looking for possibilities for collaboration with NGOs.

Moderator: Prasad Sethunga (University of Peradeniya, Sri Lanka)

Thank you very much. Little bit difficult to give a real answer, but I think after the next session, they are going to touch on that perspective. Actually our presenters also all the time discussed on this, not rushing the targets, but how to go towards these targets based on our real situations. That's our stance. Let me give some feedback at the final session with all the chairpersons like the previous ministry of education will think about that situation after the next session. Any other question? The final one, yes please.

Divya Jindai-Snape (University of Dundee, Scotland)

Sorry, there isn't a really short answer for this, so maybe we can talk about it later on. But when we talk about self-esteem, my colleague Miller and I are talking about 2 dimensional self-esteem. We are looking at the 2 dimensions, self-competence and self-worth. Self-competence is "I can do this", and self-worth is more about "I am valued and respected". So when we are looking at self-esteem, we are looking at giving the child or the student chances to succeed, but also being very aware that they should not be too easy. The child should feel that they've been challenged and then they are succeeding. But also they need to have a feeling of being valued by the teacher, by the peers, by the family and the community. So it's multiple strategies about how to carefully increase the feelings of self-competence and self-worth. I can discuss this with you further later on. Thank you.

Moderator: Prasad Sethunga (University of Peradeniya, Sri Lanka)

Thank you. Time is running. I would like to conclude this session with this five concluding remarks, considering your feedback and other presentations. One: not only the excess, quality is what we have to think about with child centered curriculum. Two: please don't rush for the mainstreaming, time for formal funding of complementary education. Three: education or advance programs for parents. Four: teacher is the key. Good teacher makes a big (good) difference. As Rodriguez pointed out, quality teaching practice. Five, final: enhancing 2 way dialogues between policy and schools with funding. Thank you, and special thanks for the presenters. Sorry about controlling your time.