

## Report on Research Group B Activity

### Summary Record of the Decisions and Discussions Africa – Asia University Dialogue for Educational Development

#### Group B Research Planning Meeting “Financial and Decentralization Policies and Measures and Improvement of Educational Quality at School Level”

19-23 October 2009

Chiang Mai University, Chiang Mai, Thailand

#### 1. Participants (titles omitted, Group B researchers only)

Prof. Pierre Kouraogo, University of Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso  
Dr. Demis Kunje, University of Malawi, Malawi  
Prof. Jandhyala Tilak, National University of Educational Planning and Administration, India  
Dr. Tran Thi Bich Lieu, Vietnam National University Hanoi, Vietnam  
Dr. Anop Pongwat, Chiang Mai University, Thailand  
Dr. Phetcharee Rupavijetra, Chiang Mai University, Thailand  
Prof. Nobuhide Sawamura, Osaka University, Japan  
Prof. Hideaki Shibuya, Tokyo Gakugei University, Japan  
Assoc. Prof. Shoko Yamada, Nagoya University, Japan  
Prof. Kazuhiro Yoshida, Hiroshima University  
Mr. Tetsunaga Eki, Hiroshima University

#### 2. Program

#### 3. Main Discussions

##### (1) Presentation on Background and Status

Prof. Yoshida made a presentation on the contextual background of the overall theme of Group B.

##### (2) Reconfirmation on the A-A Dialogue Key Principles

Group members reconfirmed the key principles of A-A Dialogue decided at the General Assembly in Hiroshima, namely Comparability, Excellence/Quality, Joint Learning, Output, Impact.

##### (3) The tentative common research title for Group B remains to be “**Financial and Decentralization Policies and Measures and Improvement of Educational Quality at School Level**”, though this may be revised as necessary.

#### 3. Emerging Issues

Most of the issues raised are for the continued discussion, as the specific country context may require its own definition.

##### (1) Common Framework

Quality of Education, Financial Decentralization, Capitation Grant

(2) Decentralization

- Local willingness to accept the policy can be one of the research points. Normally, the capacity development would be critical to be accompanied with decentralization as the WB put “decentralization does not lead to the quality.”
- Where to focus? At the administrative level or at the financial level? From which level to which level?

(3) Time Frame of the Research and Policy Measures

- Not all country cases have sufficient time of implementing the decentralization policy measures, although Malawi and Ghana have some length, hence possible analyses of the outcomes of the measures. In such cases it may still be possible to establish a hypothesis for the design, the process of formulation, and the interim progress to indicate the likelihood of success.

(4) Improvement

- Normally, the improvement of quality tends to be measured by the test scores.
- How can we measure not only cognitive but non-cognitive (emotional/personal) aspects of the students’ skills?
- What is the definition of quality improvement of education?

(5) Co-relation, Causality, Content and Process

- Is it reasonable to expect the common research methodologies?
- Do we need to set some common indicators for all the researches?

(6) Reform Stakeholders

Who do “Stakeholders” mean in the process of the educational reform? To what extent, would international concept have the effect on it in relation to the own government policy?

(7) Sample Size would matter, but does not have to be same for all the countries

(8) Output of the Research

All the research findings should be jointly discussed in the final stage.

**4. Format of Research Plan**

- (Introduction)\*1
- Content and Justification/Significance
- Statement of the Problem
- Theoretical Framework of Research (common or individual)\*1
- Objective of the Research
- Scope and Limitations of the Research
- Literature Review
- Research Questions(Core questions)\*2
- Research Methodology
- Time Frame
- Funding
- Research Team
- References

\*1 To be discussed later

\*2 Core questions such as “What is Education for?,” “What is the school for?,” “Is the educational reform necessary?”

## **5. Field Visit**

During the meeting, the group visited Chiang Mai Province Educational Area Office 1 and 4 respectively and the local primary school run by the government and exchanged their views on the improvement of the quality of education and its measurement, decentralization, financial issues and the privatization of the education.

## **6. Future Plan**