

## **【Closing Discussions】**

**Riho Sakurai (Associate Professor, Center for the Study of International Cooperation in Education (CICE), Hiroshima University)**

I would like to thank the keynote speakers, panelists and all the participants who have gathered here. Thank you very much. Since we have little time, we would like to move on to the closing discussions. Although this session is called “closing discussions,” we welcome a free and open exchange of opinions. It is not our aim to reach a conclusion. I would like to ask each of the keynote speakers and the panelists, who are all on stage, to offer their impressions and opinions of today’s forum in 2 or 3 minutes, which I realize is a rather challenging request. When the student on the floor raises a card saying “1 minute,” please wind up your comments in 1 minute. I would also like to ask you to talk about what you have learned from today’s forum and what you think was important. I’m sure you have different views. May I first ask Prof. Kuroda on the far right to begin?

**Kazuo Kuroda (Professor, Graduate School of Asia-Pacific Studies/Director, Center for the Study of International Cooperation in Education, Waseda University)**

Thank you. The international community is now engaged in very lively discussions, or debate, on formulating the post-2015 frameworks. I have been participating in such discussions since about two years ago with the UNESCO Asia and Pacific Regional Bureau for Education. In these discussions, access to education and the quality of education are often mentioned. Particularly, the importance of the quality of education is being highlighted. This was discussed today, too. We must also recognize the importance of the unfinished agenda of access, as Prof. Little said. From today’s sessions, I also strongly felt that educational content is an important agenda item, which has also been widely discussed. Considering 21st-century skills—the skills needed in globalization and in promoting the relationship between nations and in conflicts within a state—we must clarify what academic skills are needed in order to formulate the post-2015 framework and to set educational targets. Not only developed but also developing countries should be engaged in these discussions. This is one point that I felt strongly about today.

There is another thing I would like to mention. “Human security” is one of the key concepts of “Japan’s Education Cooperation Policy 2011-2015,” which I have already described to you. As the subtitle of this report says, this policy promotes an integrated approach encompassing “human rights, development, and peace.” I am proud that peace is included here. The discussions on EFA have mainly focused on the two concepts: development and human rights. But looking back at the 2000s, we see that the concept of peace was left out of the discussions on EFA. We must keep in mind the element of peace in international cooperation in education. Today, the two keynote speakers and many participants referred to it. Prof. Angela Little also said that we must not only pay attention to the access issue but also promote sustainability and peace from a global perspective. So today, we were able to confirm once again that we must contribute to peace through educational cooperation. These are the two points I want to mention at this closing session.

**Fernando Palacio (Researcher, Center for Research in International Cooperation and Educational Development (CRICED), University of Tsukuba)**

As I explained earlier, expanding educational projects in international cooperation is a key approach if we expect to succeed in facing some of the challenges that globalization is posing. We live in a much more expanded and yet more integrated world than in the past; this brings new threats, for instance in how to ensure quality in higher education in front of the current massification it is going through. International cooperation offers instances and tools through which we can enhance our assets as we synergize with different partners; and so do the effects that can be achieved by working together.

Through my experience in SEAMEO, and now in the AIMS Programme, it is increasingly clear to me that creating and consolidating key partnerships in the academic world, and being ready to listen to others with an open mind and accepting that differences can enrich us is the best way to address this new scenario.

It is through international cooperation in education that we will be able not only to find our way forward and to develop cultural intelligence among future generations, but it is also from here that we can create an educational landscape that is more open and accessible to all, that is more democratic and transparent. Finding in your partners what you lack is a starting point.

The world is moving towards a more integrated space, where regions are gaining in legitimacy; for instance as ASEAN continues to grow closer, international cooperation in education is already creating bridges that colligate people, institutions and countries, fostering mutual understanding and good will; without any doubts this will lead to more prosperous future for all. Thank you.

**Keiko Mizuno (Senior Advisor (Education), JICA/Education Policy Advisor to Ministry of Education and Sports, LAO PDR)**

Thank you. I'll be brief, too. Today, I was able to listen to many stakeholders involved in education in different sector in different countries. They spoke from the viewpoints of their own fields of expertise about how education should address globalization. It was good to learn that there are various endeavors to promote education from different perspectives, pursuing the same goal. It is important for us to collaborate with others, amid globalization, in order to produce synergetic effects. In this regard, it was very interesting for me to listen to the different viewpoints today. I was listening from the perspective of how the private sector has been promoting education and whether or not these activities can be effectively introduced in Laos. I realized it is important for us to move forward, collaborating with others, making use of everyone's comparative advantages, toward a shared goal. Thank you.

**Anshul Sonak (Regional Education Director (Asia Pacific), Intel Corporation)**

Today was a good opportunity for me to listen to various people's viewpoints and questions and understand what Japan is aiming at and what Japan wants to change. This was a very fruitful forum. I'm sure you can have similar discussions with your students when you go back to your schools. I want you to create venues where people can discuss various matters. We must think about what new approaches and what educational visions are needed to reform education after 2015. When we try to identify the next step, we must fully discuss the matter, considering specific examples of what went well and what failed, what we can do with public-private partnerships, how we can promote PPP, and what government actions have succeeded. I hope that we will have another education cooperation forum like this next year, too.

**Kilemi Mwiria (Former Assistant Minister of Education, Kenya)**

It was a wonderful forum. It is rather difficult to give a brief summary of our discussion, but as you said, we must utilize the ICT revolution. As many of you said, with ICT, we can provide equal educational opportunities. ICT provides opportunities to people in disadvantaged countries. They can learn at the same speed as those in Japan or in the United States. I myself am from Africa, and I would like to promote democratization of ICT. The government is establishing digital centers to establish networks of schools in villages as well. ICT makes it possible to digitalize teaching materials, which we can provide to all students at less cost. ICT also makes it possible to connect our schools and organizations to different parts of the world. Students can make the best use of these experiences.

We also have mobile technology. Everything is changing in Kenya now, and mobile technology is used for business, for communication and even for banking. I believe we must make use of this technology in Africa as in other countries. Governments must invest in these areas. "Governments" means all of us. Governments must secure resources and make sure the resources reach remote areas, too. We also need support from scientists who work in the field of ICT. It is also important for our communities and parents to be interested in such technology. The children in Japan and in the United States are very good at using ICT because their parents invest in ICT and support their children. Not only governments and institutions as schools but also parents must make investments.

Universities must change, too. Universities must use the ICT revolution and learn from the examples of Silicon Valley and others. Small investments, even less than 100,000 dollars, will do. If we support startups and gifted students and promote venture businesses, then the international community will become their partners and support their initiatives. Finally, what do we do next? We discussed a lot today, but how can we convey this to a wider audience? I would like to believe that we will see the fruits of this forum in the years to come.

**Angela W. Little (Professor Emerita, Institute of Education, University of London)**

Thank you. This may sound unfair, but I am given a little more than two minutes. Please do not think I spend too much time. I am told that I have about 10 minutes, so I'll speak a little longer than others, but I won't speak for 10 minutes.

It was a wonderful day. The speakers and the panelists used the time so effectively to share their ideas. I would like to express my sincere appreciation to those who have organized this forum. I'd like to thank you for generously providing me enough time to speak. We have had very productive discussions today.

I would like to make one suggestion. I think the participants on the floor did not have enough time to discuss in pairs or in small groups and share their ideas. I was a teacher, so I wanted you to participate actively in discussions. For example, we could have so-called buzz sessions after the lectures to discuss various things and share what you thought about the lectures. Then, I think the forum would have been more interesting. This is a pedagogical advice. I hope the Japan Education Forum will introduce this method next year.

Today some speakers talked about how globalization and technologies will affect children and the world. Many participants also discussed various issues of globalization related to the education system, families and parents. It was also mentioned that when there is too rapid growth, disparities widen. This is not surprising. When new technologies are introduced, the schools and organizations that can respond actively to introduce the technologies go ahead, and others are left behind. This results in widening gaps between, for example, urban and rural areas, and schools with good teachers and those without good teachers. This may be inevitable, but we should keep this in mind. We often hear the term CSR, corporate social responsibility. It is important for us to make sure that the most disadvantaged people be given opportunities to catch up. It is important, for example, to offer them compensatory policies so that they can catch up. Ms. Suzuki asked what ICT should be like and how to bridge the gaps between urban and rural areas. This is a very pertinent question. There may be several answers to her question, but I think it would be effective to consider the cost of new technologies. The cost goes down eventually, but I am a little concerned about private companies promoting ICT and the relevant technologies. Maybe I'm too conservative. I think it is very good that private companies are interested in ICT and improve the value of ICT in education. The participants' comments were very convincing. They are all excellent pedagogues. I was impressed at how good they were at teaching and interacting with the audience. I think they were better than professional pedagogues. But I think we must keep in mind that big companies are interested in these activities because they want to make a profit. When people talk a lot about the concept of CSR or philanthropy, I think we must ask serious questions, too. For example, what about the outcomes? What outcomes are they seeking when they reduce the cost of technologies so that ordinary people can access the technologies? We must ask these tough questions, too.

Things will not suddenly change between 2015 and 2016. Even after 2015, those who are engaged in education must patiently continue doing what they have been doing. Education is not fashion. It doesn't change so often. We have an "unfinished agenda" of basic education, such as securing access and improving quality. These must be constantly pursued. In addition to this, educational cooperation for higher education and vocational training is also becoming a major agenda item in the international community. But we must keep in mind that the international agenda is not everything. It is true that the international agenda is very powerful, and it determines how international organizations allocate their resources, but we must not forget that the international agenda may be lopsided. Every country has different policies on technical and vocational training and higher education. What was good about Education for All was that it was partly in recognition that countries were too keen on post-secondary education and higher education. These areas need a lot of resources, but we need to distribute resources equitably to promote EFA. At the same time, it is not good if we only focus on basic education. When we consider the educational agenda, particularly securing resources for education, we must not just see the international community but consider different perspectives.

With regard to the question about the 21st century skills, there was a slide on the recent study made by Levy and Murnane. This was a very convincing and influential study, showing that non-routine analytic skills and non-routine interactive skills are in greater demand than routine and non-routine manual skills. This study was conducted on the U.S. economy and society. In fact, I have seen the same graph in many places. I saw it in one of the documents issued by the World Bank, focusing on a certain country. It is really interesting, but I wonder if research and a forecast made in the United States can really be applied to every country in the world. There are more than 200 countries in the world. Does that particular graph show everything needed in Kenya, for example, for the next twenty years? Does that graph really show what will be absolutely important in Laos for the next 20 years? Laos is still an agricultural country. There are many messages like this, but we must be a little careful. We must remember that a certain message is derived from a particular context. When you introduce a certain abstract message from a particular context into a new context, you have to be careful. We would like to see the results of the same study conducted many times in different contexts of different countries. JICA has also conducted various studies on international cooperation and international relationships and produced interesting results, but there are various situations in the world. Not just one. This is a very important point. There are many dissertations in this area, too, so I'd like to continue reviewing them. I also recognized that at least two people mentioned that human resources are being wasted. On one hand, there is a lack of human resources, particularly those who have certain skills, but on the other hand, many human resources and talents are wasted.

When I listened to the panelists in the afternoon session, I recognized another thing. I thought we must look more into reversal of teachers and learners. This was what the panelist from JICA said. She proposed inviting teachers from other countries to Japan to teach. She also proposed sending Japanese teachers, for example, to Kenya to teach at local schools with the teachers there. Her proposal was

really inspiring. I think we can once again ask who teaches what to whom, and what we learn from whom. I think Mr. Sonak gave a good example of his three-and-a-half-year-old daughter learning a lot about Japanese culture from “Doraemon.” When we think about teaching and learning, I think older people must learn more from younger people. We’re not learning much from young people. This is one good example of wasting young people’s talent. Many countries are facing the issue of an aging society. Japan is one of the countries in which the aging society is becoming a serious issue. Technologies are advancing, and elderly people cannot keep up with the new technologies. This means that older people can learn various things from younger people, including ICT and, for example, robots. Robots will be increasingly important in supporting elderly people’s lives. Robots may be able to do more to help the elderly who need care. But when I’m 85, I will have to ask young people to come over and teach me how to use robots and how to turn them off. This will be a completely new type of learning and teaching, and a new challenge. The reversal of teaching and learning will also include situations in which students teach, for example, ICT and other skills, to teachers who are not very good at these technologies. It is important for children to have such opportunities to teach.

Finally, I would like to comment on education for sustainable development (ESD). Before coming to Japan, I did not know that ESD was considered so important in the efforts to promote international education. Nor did I know that ESD was so important in the educational development promoted by Japan. I’d like to ask how much evaluation is conducted in Japan on the impact of ESD programs. I am particularly interested in how useful ESD will be in teaching and learning practices in the future in the long run. I am a pedagogue, so I know that teaching methods influence children’s way of thinking more than the content we teach. I have seen educational programs on conflict resolution, peace education and education for democracy introduced in classrooms. I have seen that democracy is taught by authoritarian teachers. I cannot help wondering what children can learn in that situation. So when we think about ESD and the content of teaching conflict resolution, we must critically ask how the teachers are teaching such subjects. There is a saying that values are caught not taught. We must ask ourselves if education for sustainable development can actually be taught and learned at school and in classrooms and if the schools that conducts ESD can teach other schools about it. Thank you.

**Riho Sakurai (Professor, Center for the Study of International Cooperation in Education (CICE), Hiroshima University)**

Prof. Little, thank you very much for summarizing today’s forum very comprehensively. As Prof. Little summarized important points of today’s discussions, I would like to add only one thing about what I felt in this forum as moderator. The word “globalization,” addressed in this forum, originally referred to global structural changes, particularly in the area of the economy, including people, money and goods, with the development of communication technology via the Internet. On the other hand, in his famous book, *Imagined Communities*, Benedict Anderson, a political scientist, said that the economy is not almighty. When he gave a lecture at a private Japanese university in 2005, he said that language is more important than trade in this age of globalization. He said that the current globalism is centered on the relationship between money and goods but that human relationships are more important. By this, he meant that we must be sensitive to different cultures and try to understand others through learning languages. In other words, he said that people-to-people relationships are important in this globalized age. Next year is 2015. There have been many discussions on what educational cooperation should be like in the future. As we can meet people in various ways and via the Internet, we may have to keep in mind the perspectives given by Anderson.

As I said at the beginning, it is not our aim to reach a conclusion at this forum. As an organizer, I will be pleased if the forum has given each participant some thought-provoking ideas. It is now time to close the forum. Let us give another warm round of applause to Dr. Mwiria, Prof. Little, Prof. Kuroda, Dr. Palacio, Dr. Mizuno and Mr. Sonak. Thank you very much.

With this, all the programs of the 11th Japan Educational Forum are concluded. On behalf of the organizers, I would like to express my sincere appreciation to the keynote speakers, panelists and all the participants here today, who have participated in the discussions throughout the programs. I would also like to thank the Japan International Cooperation Agency and Kyushu University, which supported the forum, the interpreters for the wonderful job they have done, and finally, the staff members of the secretariat, who have worked hard for several months to prepare for the forum, and the interns and students. Thank you very much.