

## **【Questions and Answers with Keynote Speakers】**

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

Now we would like to begin the question-and-answer session. If you have questions, please raise your hand and ask a staff member on the floor to give you a microphone. As we would like to hear from as many people as possible, please make your questions concise—shorter than two minutes—and ask no more than two questions. When you get the microphone, please give your name and the name of your organization, if you are affiliated with one. The floor is now open.

### *Question 1*

**M. Iqbal Djawad (Embassy of Indonesia)**

My question is for Prof. Little. I believe that you already know that next year, in 2015, Southeast Asia will be one community. The population of Southeast Asia is about 600 million, and 240 million of them are living in Indonesia. So, what is your opinion about globalization in Southeast Asia in the next 10 years? Thank you.

### *Question 2*

**Tetsuo Kondo (Director, UNDP Representation Office in Tokyo)**

I have a question for Dr. Mwiria about your comment on investment in education. As opportunities increase, how do you think that education should be integrated into the post-MDG agenda? Also, you didn't mention much in your presentation about gender equality or women's empowerment. How do you think African development will be involved in giving opportunities to women?

### *Question 3*

**Kazu Oda (Study Group on Education Act)**

I would like to ask Dr. Mwiria about your second slide on higher education reform. It says that recruitment and promotion of staff and students on none other than merit considerations. In Japan, personnel matters are sometimes decided by favoritism. How about in Africa? Do you have favoritism? I would also like to ask a question on governance reforms. On your slide, it says "depoliticizing the teaching profession." What do you mean by "depoliticizing"? In Japan, there is a growing tendency for ruling parties, or the government, to interfere in education. For example, the government tries to include its perspectives in authorized textbooks and insists on emphasizing patriotism in moral education textbooks. I would like to ask whether there is a similar situation in Africa or not. I would also like to ask the same questions of Prof. Little. You said the national identity is weakening. There is concern that if national identity becomes too strong, the nation may become too nationalistic and exclusive. So we must have a good balance. If patriotism becomes too strong, it leads to xenophobia, as we are seeing in Japan. Hate speech is one example. I'd like to ask these three questions. Thank you.

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

There are some questions for each of the keynote speakers. First, I'd like to ask Dr. Mwiria to answer the questions.

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

Thank you. Let me make some comments. Thank you for your questions on our presentations, and thank you for your interest. With regard to the first question on the post-MDGs, many countries will not be able to achieve the targets, even after the target year of 2015. The most important thing is to take basic actions so that we can come closer to achieving those targets. Investment in primary and secondary education must continue. There are also problems with regard to lack of ownership. We do not see clearly what the countries want to do. Donor organizations and bilateral organizations present package projects and tell these countries to follow the road maps, but it is difficult for them to do so. Governments in Africa must have more ownership of the program design and investment. It is no good if they are pressured by outsiders.

The second question was about gender equality. I explained it too quickly in my presentation. What I wanted to say is that gender issues actually coexist with the issues of educational opportunities and quality. The issues concerning gender, social groups, geographic locations, religion and other factors result in discrimination and inequality. I wanted to say that 30 to 40 percent of the people in Africa are not given opportunities because they are women, or because they live in rural areas or in areas where people have traditional values. We must do something to correct this. Otherwise, we won't be able to promote development in African nations and regions or enjoy global opportunities. The important thing is not just opening schools or assuring the quality of education. We must ensure that educational opportunities are given to everyone beyond differences in gender, economic situation, religion and geography.

I would now like to answer the question on favoritism. I understand this applies to Japan, too, but we see meritocracy versus tradition. Tradition can breed exclusiveness. While tradition encourages diligence, talent produces outcomes. We must incorporate both tradition and talent in the educational system, which should be based on meritocracy. Meritocracy in education is very important. As Prof. Little said, Sri Lanka used to be much more competitive than the Asian tigers. It used to emphasize meritocracy, so it developed. If appropriate measures are taken, competitiveness is fostered, but in some countries, people are at a disadvantage in receiving education just because they are from certain regions or because of religious reasons or because they are women. They cannot enjoy the fruits of education, either. Even if they graduate from school and have obtained a degree, they need connections. For example, if they want to become a university teacher or want a scholarship or want to get a pay raise, they need to be from a certain region or belong to a certain race or ethnic group. In this way, discrimination still exists. So, meritocracy is very important. We must remember that fair competition is impossible unless there is transparency. Unless we introduce meritocracy, many people will continue to be excluded. They cannot get a fair chance because they don't have connections or godfathers or godmothers, or because they practice a certain religion or for gender reasons. As Prof. Little said, where people enjoy equal opportunities, the society tends to be peaceful.

With regard to the last question on depoliticization, although we cannot completely exclude politics from education because of indigenous values, nationalism and patriotism, it is important for us to try to depoliticize education in order to secure transparency in education to promote meritocracy. If politics interferes too much in education, it will have a major impact on decision-making. People in power tend to use their political power to see that certain people go to the best schools or become ministry officials or UNESCO employees. In this way, those in a certain social class monopolize the benefits, and people cannot make professional decisions. There are cases in which teachers are bribed to keep quiet when they are about to go on strike. If education is too politicized, these things tend to happen. So it is important to depoliticize education. Otherwise, we cannot promote meritocracy or equal rights. We must create a fair environment based on meritocracy if we want to compete globally with young people from other countries.

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

Thank you. I was asked about the prospects for the Southeast Asian community, which will be unified. I haven't studied this in detail, but I feel the creation of one community will greatly impact the future growth of the world economy. Potentially the Southeast Asian community will become a new economic development center, which I think will be incredibly important for its economic growth in the global economy. Even in relatively recent history, we had a divided world in the Cold War. As a result of unification, we have now autonomy with the combined power. I think the synthetic power, which transcends individual countries, will contribute to maintaining the political balance in the world and the survival of the world in the future. I also anticipate that with this creation of a unified community, educational transactions will increase enormously among the people, particularly in higher education.

If I may, I would like to comment a little on meritocracy and depoliticization as I didn't have time in my presentation to share with you the recent assessment of Sri Lanka's continuing inability to reap maximum benefits from globalization. This is an assessment done by a Sri Lankan researcher. He acknowledges that the civil war was one factor that has prevented Sri Lanka from enjoying the benefits of globalization, as the war consumed huge amounts of economic resources and held back the country's economic, social and human development. But he points out that the biggest factor was the poor government, which didn't understand the policies and institutional reforms required for globalization. He also points out the endemic corruption in the government and pervasive politicization, which had a demotivating effect on qualified officials in the public sector. They have gained their positions through merit but find themselves working in a system where their daily activities are influenced by nepotism or connections, or politics of one kind or another. They are frustrated and cannot find job satisfaction although they want to work hard and achieve development goals.

When I was much younger, I naïvely believed that politicians made policies and handed the policies over to professionals and technocrats to implement them and they would then be handed over to teachers. And although I respect my colleague, Dr. Mwiria, I discovered that politicians in some countries are not active in policy formulation but in policy implementation. I learned the lesson in Sri Lanka, and it took me a long time to learn it. I saw how politicians could influence the transfer of teachers. Often the Ministry of Education has some very good policies of appropriately assigning teachers across all schools in the country, but if you are posted to a remote, small school and are unhappy there, you may do whatever you can to get assigned to an urban school, using your connections. But in terms of the development of the education system as a whole, and the development of the country, this can have a very negative impact.

The final question was about identity. If there is an overemphasis on the creation of strong national identities, does this run the risk of creating feelings of nationalism? I agree that it does. For many decades, I have been studying and analyzing what has happened in the so-called East Asian tigers. This creation of national identity was very important. From what little I know about the Japanese education system, I think national identity was also very important at a particular point in the history of Japanese education. But today, as globalization of the economy and governance has advanced, we have to look at national identity very seriously. When we think about development, I believe it's good to consider multiple identities. Historically, when we have talked about identity and the contribution of education to the creation of identity, we have tended to focus on national identities or sub-national identities. But in the 21st century, one of the challenges of educational is how to bring up young people to become global citizens who are able to work and contribute in many different areas and at many different stages. We need curricula that will value and foster local identities, national identities, mutual identities, and global identities. I don't think it's beyond the wit and creativity of our many talented teachers and curriculum development experts to think of ways of doing this. I was cautious in the past when I heard some representatives of international agencies pushing the notion of global citizens. Of course this is very important, but it should not be pushed to the detriment of the creation of identities that revolve around young people, who

are members of their families, local communities and their countries. They need a balance between different levels of identity. Thank you.

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

Thank you very much. If there are further questions, please raise your hands.

*Question 4*

**Taeko Takayanagi (The University of Sydney)**

I have two questions. First, I'd like to ask Dr. Mwiria a question. In your presentation, you mentioned how African societies can become competitive in the globalized world. In African cultures, I see many good aspects of social coexistence such as cooperation, mutual understanding, sisterhood and solidarity. What kind of curricula can be introduced in order to benefit from these merits? What kind of education do you think is possible? I'd like to ask another question of Prof. Little. You mentioned "sustainable peace" in the conclusion of your presentation. When we think of post-MDGs and EFA, I think we should include various factors such as peace, gender and minority as cross-cutting issues. May I ask your opinion on this point?

*Question 5*

**Seiko Toyama (International Peace Cooperation Headquarters in the Cabinet Office)**

I have two questions. The first question is for both Dr. Mwiria and Prof. Little. The second question is for Dr. Mwiria. My first question is about educational assistance in countries experiencing conflict. As Prof. Little mentioned, there are many countries in conflict in Africa. Among the 15 peace-keeping operations implemented by the United Nations in the world, eight are conducted in Africa. So my question is what kind of educational assistance will be necessary, especially for these conflict or post-conflict countries? My second question is for Dr. Mwiria. You mentioned the importance of conducting research on non-core subjects such as sports, drama, music and arts. Is it possible to add such subjects as communication skills for conflict resolution, mediation and negotiation in school education? I believe that these skills may enforce peacebuilding in African countries both post conflict and non-conflict area, and I appreciate if I can hear your advice. Thank you.

*Question 6*

**Masayuki Inoue (President, Japan Education Exchanges and Services)**

I worked in Bangladesh from 2006 and 2009. At that time, I had opportunities to meet the ministers of development and of education, among other people. They told me a very interesting thing. In 1947, when Bangladesh became independent from India as East Pakistan, the per capita GNP was higher than that of Thailand, but now it's the other way around. They said political stability was extremely important. I'd like to ask Dr. Mwiria how strong people's determination is to pursue political stability and political leadership in Africa as the highest priorities in the national agenda. My question to Prof. Little is also related to political stability. In Southeast Asia and other regions, I believe Japan's direct investment has played a major role and that educational training and other activities have created a virtuous circle. My question may be related to development policies or investment policies rather than educational policies, but I'd like to ask Prof. Little's opinion on what kind of educational power corporations have.

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

Thank you. I think the questions addressed to me were on globalization and on increasing competitiveness in society, and in particular, on African values and curricula. Globalization and African values are not necessarily contradictory. It is possible to globalize our societies while respecting African values. Strengthening our identities and communicating and sharing our traditional knowledge, ideas and expertise in medicine and other fields are important in the process of globalization. I think at your universities, too, you can invite visiting professors and ask them to teach, for example, traditional African medicine and engineering, utilization of water resources, and conflict resolution. There are of course various problems that should be addressed in Africa, such as malaria and other diseases, irrigation, energy shortages and the lack of technologies to use solar energy. Japan is globalized, but Japan has maintained its traditional values. The same goes for China. China maintains its traditional values, but it is one of the countries that have benefited most from globalization. So, I think it is possible to use what is useful in Africa in other countries, too. We must recognize that we are also members of the global community and build our skills to address globalization. We must update our curricula to cope with the needs we face today. It will be possible for Kenyan people to go to Dubai and get jobs in the labor market, competing with Chinese people and Americans, using Kenyan knowledge. Someone mentioned the importance of communication skills. IT is also important. Everything that is needed to become a global citizen is important. It is often said that languages, particularly English, are also important, but do we have to immediately make English a compulsory subject? Germany is promoting teaching in English. China is trying to use a lot of English materials in classrooms. It is problematic if you put too much emphasis on maintaining tradition and fall behind in globalization, but you can promote globalization while having a good balance with tradition. What is most important is that we cannot be competitive unless we understand what is needed in the world.

With regard to the second question on conflict and education in conflict countries, it is true that 20 nations in Africa are the most fragile states, which means they are extremely unstable under armed conflict. UNICEF is conducting a project called "Peace Education" in 11 nations. This project is based on the concept that education can contribute to the stabilization of these nations, through learning from each other and fostering tolerance of others' cultures. It seems that conflicts occur when people have little tolerance for others or know little about others. There are also conflicts over resources. Conflicts can occur as a result of discrimination, too. Education is important in addressing such issues. Governance is also needed. We do not know when these 20 nations will become stable. The situations are particularly serious in Somalia, South Sudan, and Angola. What is most needed in these nations is not IT but building schools and providing equal opportunities to marginalized people. We must start with addressing these basic needs. It will be impossible for them to become competitive unless we address their basic needs. We must also invest in promoting peace. As Prof. Little said, education is impossible without peace. Governance is important as a major premise. As I emphasized in my presentation, governance is needed to teach appropriate values and to secure stability and coexistence, and to plan on clear visions of the country.

This is related to another question on what African nations are doing to support each other. They commit themselves to regional stability and peace, which are important for the future of their governments. For example, they send PKFs to each other. Kenya is faced with a serious problem related to Al-Shabaab in Somalia and dispatches PKFs to Somalia. PKFs are also dispatched to Sudan and other countries. This is because the African Union believes that governance is important. African nations have also been committed to educational development in Africa for the last twenty years or so. The decade from 1997 to 2006 was a decade of education and governance for Africa. From 2006 to 2015, Africa has put a high priority on development. Africa is not just trying to benefit from its natural resources. It is also endeavoring to develop human resources including top-level scientists, who are needed for the development of the African continent, as well as to secure peace for the better future.

The topic of politicization has been discussed already, but I'd like to make some comments, too. Politicians use their political power to influence where teachers are assigned and where new organizations are established. I think this goes

for every country, including Japan. People tend to speak ill of politicians in every country, but it is also true that we cannot do anything without politicians. It is therefore important for us to try to avoid too much politicization and to elect people in line with the visions we think desirable. Many people complain about politicization, but they do not do anything about politics themselves. Are we electing the right people? We must not just blame others. It is important that we elect people who are truly committed to peace as well as to globalization.

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

Since we are running out of time, I'd like to be brief. There were questions on minorities and post-MDGs. With regard to MDGs, I think the discourse is shifting to disparities, equitable opportunities for education and minorities. When we set the post-MDG targets, we must not leave out access as well as quality. There is a tendency to believe that while access to education has been emphasized, quality of education has not, but I think this is not true. At the World Conference on Education for All held in Jomtien, Thailand in 1990, the importance of the quality of education as well as access to education was discussed. But the discourse has developed and the programmes have focused on access. Now, discourse has shifted to the importance of quality education as if access to education had already been solved. Yet access question is not solved. There are still millions of people, including minorities and girls, who have no access to education. We must not forget about the importance of continuing efforts to expand basic access to education as well as to improve the quality of education when we consider the post-MDG agenda.

Finally, I'd like to answer the question on how to support conflict-affected countries, based on my experience in Sri Lanka. Last year, I had an opportunity to interview teachers who have experienced the civil war. They said that they had tremendous difficulties during the civil war. They ended up in refugee camps, where there were about 250,000 people. Although it was difficult, UNICEF and other organizations found ways to go to these camps. UNICEF officials were able to go to the refugee camps and ask the young people what they wanted. They asked them if they needed counseling. Young people 14 and 15 years old said they wanted textbooks. They said they wanted to take various examinations, including O-level and A-level examinations. They wanted access to basic education. They also said they wanted teachers so that they could continue studying. The teachers told me that there had been many teachers and education officials in the refugee camps, since they had also internally-displaced. The whole society had been dislocated. At first, communities had tried to take desks and chairs with them to set up schools wherever they were displaced. In this way, they tried to continue education during the civil war. When I met some of these teachers after they had returned to their village and restarted their school I asked them what they had needed in the camp besides basic supplies such as paper, pencils and textbooks. One teacher said she needed and asked for a sari. I asked her why. The reason was very simple. She had lost almost everything when she left home. The only things she had was a pair of rubber slippers, a coat and a pair of pajamas. She said if she had to teach in pajamas, she would not have any dignity as a teacher, but if she had just one sari, she could work as a teacher, keeping her dignity, being respected by the children. It is a fundamental point but not one that outsiders might have thought about. I understood that we must not forget various rituals and the importance of their identities as teachers when we consider education. In providing assistance to conflict-stricken nations, emergency assistance is first needed for refugees. And we must continue supporting them to help them rebuild schools and resume teaching when they go back to their communities.

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

I'm sure there is a lot more to discuss, but it's time to close the question-and-answer session. Dr. Mwiria and Prof. Little, thank you very much. They will join us again in the afternoon.