

Evaluation of Japan's Education Cooperation Policy 2011-2015 and its Future Perspectives: What Japan's Education Cooperation has Aimed and Achieved

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Based on its own modernization and postwar economic growth, Japan recognized the importance of educational development in developing countries and promoted educational cooperation, tapping its own experience. Japan has worked with the international community to achieve EFA and the educational goals of the MDGs through ODA. "Japan's Education Cooperation Policy 2011-2015," announced at the United Nations summit in September 2010, stated that education was one of the top priorities.

In order to "contribute to achieving the international goals and to addressing remaining challenges" and to "bring about human security through education," Japan's Educational Cooperation Policy 2011-2015 stated that Japan would implement comprehensive cooperation in the educational sector for such priority areas as "quality education for all," "education for a knowledge-based society" and "education for peace and security," based on the guiding principles of "supporting self-help efforts and sustainable development," "answering the needs of marginalized populations" and "respecting cultural diversity and promoting mutual understanding." Japan tried to improve its educational cooperation by 1) maximizing Japan's comparative advantages on the ground; 2) participating in the policy-making process and providing medium- to long-term support; 3) ensuring the strategic application of aid resources in response to countries' needs; 4) strengthening its partnership with the international community; 5) linking education with other development sectors; 6) promoting south-south cooperation and triangular cooperation; 7) strengthening a results-oriented approach; and 8) forging partnerships with actors in Japan. It also stated that Japan would implement monitoring and evaluation at the project, country program and global levels as well as a third-party evaluation of the policy in 2015, the final year of the five-year policy.

Starting in July 2015, the third-party evaluation was conducted by Kazuhiro Yoshida, professor of Hiroshima University, head of the evaluation team; Shoko Yamada, professor of Nagoya University, an advisor; and me and other members from the International Development Center of Japan. The evaluation of Japan's Education Cooperation Policy 2011-2015 stated that the policy was highly relevant in terms of development and that the results were highly effective. It also stated that the process was appropriate to a certain degree. It concluded that overall the policy produced satisfactory results. The evaluation also said that the policy deepened mutual diplomatic relationships and friendships and that Japan's presence in the international community was enhanced under the policy.

With regard to the policy's relevance, JICA presented its Position Paper on Education Cooperation

to clarify its specific strategies and guiding principles based on the policy. As developing countries trust Japan's education, it was appropriate that Japan promoted educational development using its past experience and expertise. In higher education, there were concrete outcomes for promoting the internationalization of Japanese universities, increasing international students and developing human resources needed for Japanese companies establishing businesses overseas. In basic education, it was significant that the policy promoted inclusive education and schools open to the community and clarified Japan's resolve to provide educational support in countries affected by conflicts and disasters. Although Japan's methods and implementation systems had some limitations, the policy stated that Japan would take a comprehensive approach, including working closely with international organizations and NGOs. In fact, Japan provided cooperation through these channels as well.

With regard to the effectiveness of the results, various actions were taken using available schemes based on the policy. Although there were differences in the amount of input in the priority areas, there were concrete outcomes. As a whole, despite a decreasing ODA budget, Japan was able to implement educational cooperation to enhance human security by contributing to the educational development of developing countries from the viewpoint of promoting human rights, development and peace by comprehensively addressing educational issues of basic education, post-basic education and education for peace and security. This was accomplished through not only bilateral cooperation but also by collaborating with international organizations and NGOs. Particularly in Sub-Saharan Africa, in which Japan had a great deal of input in the area of basic education, Japan was able to contribute to the effort to achieve EFA and the MDGs. In this way, Japan's educational cooperation based on the policy produced expected outcomes.

The actual amount of Japan's bilateral educational cooperation from 2011 to 2014 was \$3.4 billion. Japan's cooperation through international organizations was \$220 million. Japan had already fulfilled its commitment of \$3.5 billion of cooperation, targeted by the policy, by the end of 2014. The target was to reach a total of 25 million recipients, and as of the end of 2015, Japan had provided cooperation for a total of 27.86 million people. On the other hand, expenditures on educational cooperation declined by 44 percent: from \$1.29 billion in 2011 to \$570 million in 2014. Of the total amount of expenditure on educational cooperation, 93.9 percent went to bilateral cooperation, and 6.1 percent was distributed through international organizations. This means efforts were made to cooperate effectively on priority areas by capitalizing on Japan's strength in educational cooperation based on the policy.

With regard to the appropriateness of the process, the policy was formulated based on extensive discussions among the Ministry of Foreign Affairs; the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology and related agencies; persons in charge from JICA and its experts; academia; NGOs, and international organizations. Therefore, the process to formulate the policy was highly appropriate. Those involved in the evaluation of the preceding policy, the "Basic Education for Growth Initiative"

(BEGIN), also participated in the discussion, and the policy was formulated based on the recommendations made in the evaluation report as well.

In order to enhance the effectiveness of cooperation pursued by the policy, various efforts were made to formulate and implement each program and project, including using Japan's strength on the ground, strategic input of aid resources, strengthening partnerships, and promoting result-oriented approaches. Therefore, the implementation process was also highly appropriate. During this period, however, Japan was not able to participate fully in educational policy formulation or in promoting mid- to long-term cooperation. Japan must enhance its ability to promote discussions on the GPE and the post-2015 development agenda as well as to advance policy dialogues and to coordinate cooperation among the implementing bodies. This is imperative for promoting financial assistance initiated by multiple countries.

The policy included monitoring and evaluation, and a third-party evaluation was actually implemented based on the policy. This was highly regarded, but the evaluation timing should be reconsidered. If a mid-term evaluation had been conducted to check the progress and to identify inhibiting factors, necessary measures could have been taken, and practical lessons could have been learned for formulating the new policy.

Finally, the policy was not well known to other cooperation agencies or developing countries. It was appropriately used as a policy paper mainly at Japan's cooperation policy level and among relevant implementing bodies. It is strongly recommended that the information and message of the succeeding policy be effectively communicated in Japan and abroad.