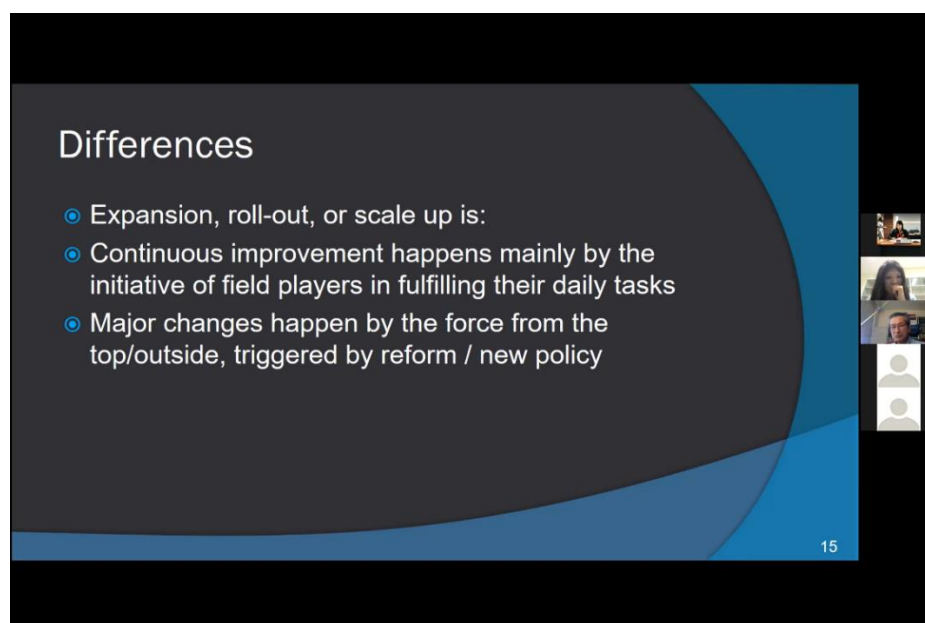29/11/2021 (Mon) Week7 Workshop1 Group1

    The workshop about project-designing started today. It will be conducted in three days, so the participants worked on introductive activities. At first, they reviewed the contents of lectures so far, and discussed proposal projects. In this meeting, Prof. Yoshida did not answer the questions from the trainees, but he made another trainee answer the questions to have them an interactive discussion.

    In the review, Prof. Yoshida said that results-based finance made it hard for the institutions, which have not achieved yet, to carry out projects, and they must achieve even in difficult situations. Furthermore, as an international trend, the educational problem is shifting to improving quality from equity and accessibility, contrary to that results-based finance improve the equity of education but don't improve the quality. After these reviewing, the trainees discussed some questions such as "What is the reason why system and institution cause problems?", and" Did the project change the rolls of the people in institution, if so, did they consider the enough support for such people or not.". Then, they gave presentations about projects which some of them devised, and other participants commented for them. One of the proposal projects aimed at improving teachers' capacities in educational processes of elementary school, and another aimed to develop moral, social & cultural norms in students at campus school. By the questions from the other trainees and discussion, they considered the further detail of the proposal projects. Then, Prof. Yoshida reminded them to confirm that the proposal projects fulfill the basic of project design and talked about the difficulties to continuously improve and produce outcomes. So, he also explained the importance of improving entirely.

Week7 Workshop1 Group2

First, Yoshida sensei made an introduction about the workshop. The workshop was held for 3 days. Then, Yoshida sensei talked about changing aid modalities and new aid architecture. Aid modality favors budget support as the most aligned way of (sector) support and more in favor of results-based financing, though projects survive. Educational issues are shifting from access to quality (learning outcomes). True? The evaluation shows that budget support has helped improve the access and the equity, but has not produced quality improvements on the ground, especially in learning achievement. Has the situation changed?

On the first question, Hanem san shared her idea. Although there is still a problem of access in the rural areas, the focus is shifting to quality in Egypt. Amid san said quality is more important because it is not enough that everyone can just write and calculate.

There are top-down approaches and bottom-up approaches. Hanem san shared an example of bottom-up in her country. They have a project aiming to introduce the Japanese manner system, not the education system. Medison san also talked about the bottom-up approach. In most cases, the top-down approach is taken, but the bottom-up approach is also taken in some other cases. What type of cases is suitable for the bottom-up approach ?

JICA identifies specific sector of issues such as the low capacity of school management, then handles the issue by activities. Why do systems and institutions matter? PBA works based on sound policy. Reforming and making new policies often change system-wide roles. Effective practices on the ground are sustained by institutionalization and systemic support. So, what systems and institutions are needed for learning improvement? Continuous improvement or reform-triggered change? Examples: online classes were newly introduced during COVID-19, and as a result, bullying reduced in their school, and their teaching improved by peer coaching. What is more, community participation in school management increased. In addition, the system of INSET for the new nationwide child-centered approach dissemination is established, and none of the secondary schools is receiving performance-based incentive rewards.

In the group discussion, they were assigned to find and discuss an example for each of continuous improvement and reform-triggered change from the project proposed by their group members. Also, they compared the two cases from the perspective of who initiated it and who are involved in it, and explained how it happens. Hanem san first shared her project. The interesting point was that it combines both top-down and bottom-up approaches. The project was aiming to solve the problem of a large number of students in primary school and that causes a poor quality of learning. Also, teachers' salary is not high enough and they are personally working after school to get money. So, the overall goal is the replacement of private tutoring/centers with public-private sector partnerships.

The next project by Jameel san was aiming to improve the infrastructure and the quality of education in the primary schools of the rural areas of Karachi region through a public-private partnership.