

Site Visit of ODA Projects by an Expert and a Celebrity

Ghana

Ms. Kaori Kuroda, CSO Network Japan

Laos and Cambodia

Ms. Kumiko Endo, actress

Since FY2004, JICA has published on-site reviews by intellectual and public figures, in order to advertise JICA's evaluation projects, the effect of ODA projects, and the importance of international cooperation to the public.

In FY2010, Ms. Kaori Kuroda, CSO Network Japan, visited the project sites in Ghana, and Ms. Kumiko Endo, actress, visited the project sites in Laos and Cambodia (p.14) for an on-site review.

* See JICA's website for the full-length version (in Japanese).

http://www.jica.go.jp/activities/evaluation/monitoring_02.html (Ms. Kuroda) <http://www.jica.go.jp/activities/evaluation/monitoring.html> (Ms. Endo)

Selecting Aid Approach of Japan's Comparative Advantage

Ms. Kaori Kuroda



Ms. Kaori Kuroda is Executive Director for CSO Network Japan. After working in the private sector, she worked for the Center on Japanese Economy and Business at Columbia Business School, and The Asia Foundation. Subsequently, she joined CSO Network Japan in 2004. She also serves as a Japanese NGO expert for the formulation of ISO26000 (social responsibility), and a member of the Council on the Promotion of "New Public Commons."

Ghana maintains political and social stability and develops steadily, aiming to become a middle-income country by 2020, and it fulfills a leading role in West Africa. In the meantime, Ghana confronts development issues, including vulnerable economic structure and poverty. The Ghanaian government identifies "private sector promotion," "human resource development," and "governance" as the priority areas for development, and promotes poverty reduction and economic growth. Ghana developed the offshore oilfield, which went into commercial production in 2010. Its private sector grew remarkably, with a rapid increase in private investment.

Japan has long supported the development of human resources in health and medical services/agriculture/education, and economic infrastructure development in Ghana. Presently, Japan's development agenda for Ghana focuses on "vitalization of rural areas" and "industrial development" in order to "reduce poverty through economic growth" in line with the development priorities of Ghana's government. To address these issues, Japan also provides support for "administrative capacity-building and institutional development." On the occasion of President John Evans Atta Mills' visit to Japan in 2010, the Japanese government announced plans to resume ODA Loans, to enhance support measures, such as additional acceptance of technical trainees, and to promote Japanese corporate investment in Ghana.

Meanwhile, there has been impressive progress in aid coordination in Ghana. The sector-wide approach*¹ has taken hold in Ghana, and



The road rehabilitated by the Highway Sector Investment Project. Heaviest traffic between Kumasi and Cape Coast.

general financial support*² for Ghana accounts for 30% of the entire assistance to Ghana. With the rise of emerging donor countries which provide large-scale infrastructure assistance, such as China, the Republic of Korea, and India, Japan may need to select aid approaches in which it has comparative advantage. This site visit provided me with a key to answering this issue.

Technical Cooperation Based on Local Community

Rice is the second most important cereal after maize in Ghana. Ghana depends on imports for 60-70% of the domestic rice consumption, and it is important for Ghana to increase the domestic rice production in terms of food security, saving foreign currency, and improving the small rice farmers' livelihood. JICA conducts the Project for Sustainable Development of Rain-fed Lowland Rice Production, which aims to develop advanced skills in rain-fed rice production and to disseminate the methodology to improve the farming support system for rice production as a model.

Mr. Katsuyuki Ohara, an expert who has more than 20 years of experience in the field, served as the chief adviser of the project. His activities include not only technical transfer in rice cultivation, but also the Japanese type of detailed assistances, including support for the voluntary activities of farmer groups, expansion of the sales channels, and establishment of the dissemination method. Because

Projects for the Site Visit (from February 28 to March 4, 2011)

Technical Cooperation	Project for Sustainable Development of Rain-fed Lowland Rice Production Noguchi Memorial Institute for Medical Research Technical and Vocational Education and Training Support Project
ODA Loans	Highway Sector Investment Project
Grant Aid	The Project for Rehabilitation of National Trunk Road N8 The Project for Rehabilitation of Trunk Roads
JICA Volunteer Program	Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers, Senior Volunteers (Education, Automobile maintenance)

*1 In this approach, a developing country formulates a sector development plan jointly with a donor country and international donors, and the development and assistance are promoted in line with the plan.

*2 An aid approach in which funds are provided directly to the government's overall budget.

Ghana consists of orderly communities under the leadership of traditional chiefs, the approach, which expects farmers and local people to participate in the project, seems to fit the Ghanaian society.

The rice cultivation promoter I met at the model site stated, "While there were some problems with the group activities last year, we overcame those, and we plan to expand rice paddies next year and have many farmers involved." I was impressed also by Mr. Ohara's comment that the idea is not to simply apply the existing model, but to "build up case studies through trial and error with the farmers."



Mr. Katsuyuki Ohara (center) explaining to Ms. Kuroda (right) about the Project for Sustainable Development of Rain-fed Lowland Rice Production.



The well-organized workshop of the automotive repair department of the Cape Coast Technical Institute. The school succeeded to qualify as the Toyota Ghana Authorized Service Shop.

Economic Infrastructure Development in Collaboration with the Local Community

Of the traffic routes linking three areas (the capital city of Accra, the export port of Takoradi, and Kumasi), the Grant Aid project rehabilitated the section of approximately 60km between Assin Praso and Bekwai of National Trunk Road N8 south of Kumasi. Two Japanese companies were contracted for the project: INGÉROSEC Corporation for consulting service, and Tokura Corporation for construction work. In partnership with a Portuguese construction company with extensive experience in projects in West Africa, JICA employed local workers and utilized local resources to bring benefits to the local community.

Tokura Corporation held the company credo to make a contribution to the community during the project. Tokura Corporation was engaged in educational activities on AIDS, malaria and cholera for the local workers, in cooperation with a Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteer (JOCV) dispatched to a local NGO. Tokura Corporation's attempt is a good example of collaboration between a Japanese company, the local community, and JICA.

JOCV Contributing to Comprehensive Program and Private Sector Partnership

Approximately 90 JOCVs and Senior Volunteers are dispatched to Ghana and engaged in a wide range of fields, such as Japanese cuisine lesson, science and mathematics instruction, and activities in local support organizations for people with disabilities. I found two remarkable points regarding the activities of JICA volunteers during the site visit.

One is that the volunteers play significant roles in promoting the comprehensive program of JICA. In the project, Scaling up of Community Based Health Planning and Services (CHPS) Implementation in the Upper West Region, besides Technical Cooperation and Grant Aid, JICA adopted a more comprehensive approach to facilitate access by the poor people to basic health services, collaborating with the grassroots activities by JOCVs. In the region, JICA plans to conduct a maternal and child health strengthening program for the next phase.

The other is that the volunteers can serve as a bridge between the local community and the private sector. Mr. Hiroshi Inoue, a JOCV who used to work for a major company that dealt with maintenance and sales of trucks and buses in Japan, taught the technical know-how for automobile maintenance at the Cape Coast

Technical Institute. He devoted much effort to improve the school with all of the experience and knowledge which he acquired from working nearly 15 years for the company in Japan. By organizing the workshop and smartening the reception area for clients, he improved the work environment and motivated the students. Also, he extended the term of his service to sign the service shop contract with a Japanese company (Afterward, the school obtained certification from Toyota Ghana in July 2011). Recently, more Japanese companies are interested in BOP business which targets the poor people in developing countries, including Africa, and they need human resources familiar with the local situations. There will be more opportunities for people with JOCV experience to be active in various fields of society.

JICA's Comparative Advantage is to Create "Positive Chain Reaction"

The biggest challenge facing Japanese ODA is probably that Japan is expected to implement more effective assistances despite the annual decrease in the Japanese ODA budget.

The strength of Japanese ODA is said to be the progression from Grant Aid to Technical Cooperation and Research Cooperation, and development of human resources through the entire process. Although the approach of Japanese ODA may seem slightly low-profile compared with other donor countries, Japan received assistances from over 160 countries, including Ghana, after the Great East Japan Earthquake, and it can be a sign of trust in Japan and Japanese people, which have contributed to the development of their socio-economies over many years. What I was particularly impressed with during the site visit is that every one of the projects placed much value on forging a good relationship with the local community and the people. JICA establishes relationships with people over a long period of time, achieves results, and then further deepens mutual trust with them. Through that process, JICA creates a "positive chain reaction," and this is truly the comparative advantage of JICA's projects, which cannot possibly be achieved overnight. It is important to be aware of this feature as JICA's strength and respond to new environments and needs based on the strength.

In recent years, it is considered very important to form partnerships with diverse stakeholders for solving development issues. I expect JICA to put more effort into a variety of activities for enhancing not only the partnerships with local governments, community, and people, but also new relationships between JICA and private companies, and equal partnerships with NGOs and private companies. There will be an increase in opportunities for establishing partnerships with "non-traditional actors" in various sectors, with which JICA previously had little interactions. I strongly hope that JICA makes active efforts to establish good partnerships with a wider range of stakeholders.

Enabling Local People in the Country to Move Forward on Their Own

Site Visit in Laos and Cambodia Ms. Kumiko Endo

Ms. Kumiko Endo was born in 1978 in Tokyo. She made her debut in show business in 1995, and appeared in many TV dramas. In September 2005, she interviewed a Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteer (nurse) in Niger for a TV program.

Ms. Kumiko Endo visited the ODA project sites in Laos and Cambodia from February 20 to 26, 2011. After the site visit, JICA's Evaluation Department interviewed Ms. Endo on the visit.



Ms. Kumiko Endo visiting a primary school in Phao Village in Laos, a beneficiary of Grant Aid and Technical Cooperation projects

In your site visit, what particularly stands out in your memory?

I observed firsthand how extensively Japan is connected to Laos and Cambodia through international exchanges. I was struck to see the Japanese people who struggle, ponder, feel conflicted every day, and try to achieve something in these countries.

Do you think that JICA's project and approach to the problems in developing countries are appropriate?

It is extremely difficult to determine why a developing country needs a particular type of assistance. However, I felt that a series of JICA's projects have given local people more options and allowed them to think and live on their own, although they previously had no other options for living. In that respect, I think that JICA's projects are appropriate.

Do you believe that the outcomes of JICA's projects will be sustained for a long time after project termination?

In these projects, JICA didn't just simply construct buildings, but also took account of the future and imparted knowledge and skills to the counterpart of the project. For example, in Cambodia, JICA didn't stop the assistance for the Water Supply Authority until they made sure that the counterpart was able to manage the facilities by itself. If you continue these types of efforts, the people will become able to move forward on their own in the future.

I think that it's necessary to combine material support and technical assistance. It was very impressive to see JICA's experts and Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers (JOVC) enthusiastically teaching the local people how to solve issues, such as water supply, waste problem, and hospital hygiene. I believe that it's one of the responsibilities of developed countries to support, teach, and build

partnerships with developing countries.

Based on your site visit, what is your message to the Japanese people?

I would like to communicate to the Japanese people that Japanese ODA takes shape in a variety of ways by the accumulation of each little effort. While there aren't so many opportunities to see specifically what kind of projects taxpayers' money is spent on, I found that the Japanese assistance is considered very important and much needed, and we can start our support by doing small things at the grassroots level.

Also, I realized that education is extremely important. In the future, more foreign companies will start businesses in developing countries and this will develop their economies more, but I believe that it's still the people themselves that determine the vision of development in their countries. So, they will need good knowledge to think deeply and make the right

decision for themselves. I observed a variety of education projects during the site visit. Thinking of the next 10 to 20 years, or even 100 years, I came to feel even more keenly the importance of education assistance.

Projects for the Site Visit (from February 20 to 26, 2011)

Laos	Technical Cooperation	Supporting Community Initiatives for Primary Education Development in the Southern Provinces The One District One Product Pilot Project in Savannakhet and Saravanh Provinces Lao-Japan Human Resource Cooperation Center
	ODA Loans	Nam Ngum Hydropower Project
	Grant Aid	The Project for Improvement of School Environment in Three Southern Provinces The Project for Construction of Pakse Bridge
	JICA Volunteer Program	Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers (Education, Nursing)
	JICA Partnership Program	Improvement of the Quality of Wheelchair Services and Handover of Operation to NRC (National Rehabilitation Center)
Cambodia	Technical Cooperation	The Project on Capacity Building for Water Supply System
	Grant Aid	The Project for the Improvement of Water Supply Facilities in Phnom Penh The Project for Expansion of Phum Prek Water Treatment Plant The Project for improvement of Kampong Cham Hospital in Kampong Cham Province The Project for Rural Drinking Water Supply in Memot District of Kampong Cham Province Construction of a Bridge Over the Mekong River (Kizuna Bridge).
	JICA Volunteer Program	Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers (Education, Clinical laboratory technologist)