CHAPTER 3
Possibilities for Applying Okinawa’s
Experience on Post-Conflict
Reconstruction of Education
in Developing Countries
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3-1  A summary of Post-Conflict Reconstruction of Education in Okinawa

How can the rough stones of practical measures and wisdom Okinawans have extracted be polished into gems useful for other nation’s varied circumstances? In considering this question, Chapter 3 will start by examining the special features of Okinawa’s post-conflict reconstruction in education. It will focus on thirteen themes gleaned from aspects of the Okinawan experience with particular relevance to nations presently making reconstruction efforts; and, based on this analysis, will propose ways to implement international aid to education from Okinawa.

For both the experience of educational reconstruction in Okinawa covered in Chapter 1 and the development of peace education there covered in Chapter 2, the special circumstances of Okinawan society, culture, and politics had profound effects. Therefore, for the reasons listed below, nations embarking on reconstruction today must avoid the mistake of blindly applying lessons from the Okinawan experience.

1. In building cooperation and peace, Okinawa did not experience the difficult problems of developing countries torn by civil wars and regional conflicts today, where there are multiethnic populations with differing religions, languages, and national loyalties, and a need to overcome past resentments.

2. Even limiting the focus to educational reconstruction, only one nation, the U.S., ruled and aided Okinawa, while countries reconstructing today receive assistance from the international community as a whole.

3. As in other areas of Japan, high levels of school attendance and public concern for education before the war prepared the ground for achieving rapid reconstruction in education.

Nevertheless, in all cases, common points emerge from the dynamic process of post-conflict reconstruction. The process through which Okinawans rose from the ruins of war does not only give courage to those facing reconstruction today, but also contains valuable hints for people in developing countries. Lessons can be learned from Okinawa’s reconstruction in education, including negative examples. It is important to convey these lessons while taking into consideration the varied circumstances of countries receiving aid.
3.1-1 Summary

The possibilities for applying Okinawa’s experience of educational reconstruction in developing countries can be summarized as follows: “As part of the rebirth of the community, educational reconstruction proceeded along with the buildup of the U.S. military command, its governmental structures, and related organizations, taking from them the resources needed for this reconstruction. Realistic policies were designed to deal with many issues common to post-conflict societies, including assistance to former child-soldiers, child war victims, and orphans.”

The special characteristics evident in Okinawa’s post-conflict educational reconstruction, appropriately highlighted in this report, are “strength,” “determination,” and “flexibility.” These three key words can be further explained as follows.

(1) Strength: Educational reconstruction as a high priority was indivisible from a rebirth of the entire community.

Efforts for educational reconstruction were responses in the process of rebirth for the entire community, and were part of an overall policy for building peace. Although Okinawa is not a country, having been severed from Japan, its reconstruction was in effect “state-building.” Still, this reconstruction proceeded under U.S. military rule in which the governing system was controlled by a higher authority, so that educational reconstruction within this system was one part of a total rebuilding of the community. Thus, the people themselves specified what was needed for reconstruction, and achieved it. This process of “reconstruction from above” and “reconstruction from below” produced multiple successes as well as many disputes.

(2) Determination: A utilitarian educational reconstruction was achieved through a strategy to secure rights and resources.

With severe shortages of school buildings, teachers, and educational supplies, the higher ruling authorities (such as USCAR) implemented various utilitarian policies. For example, although the purpose of these policies was to maintain the functioning of military bases and to support occupation policies, Okinawans made full use of opportunities for higher education at the University of the Ryukyus, founded by the U.S., and for study abroad in the United States funded by GARIOA scholarships.

Furthermore, a grassroots campaign on the Japanese mainland produced aid in the form of “school supplies of love,” and effective use was made of other kinds of assistance sent from the mainland at a time when Japan had recently achieved its own reconstruction. Developing organizations and movements in this way to gain rights and resources demonstrated considerable skill, and showed that objectives could be realized through peaceful means.
(3) **Flexibility: Efforts for educational reconstruction emphasized realistic measures with immediate effects.**

The emergency measures implemented to secure materials for educational reconstruction in Okinawa offer a wealth of suggestions for policies in developing countries. In particular, with the urgent need for teachers, policies producing immediate effects were emphasized during the early reconstruction period with the introduction of teacher-training programs and the implementation of a provisional system for hiring assistant teachers as a temporary expedient. Furthermore, severe budgetary shortages delayed construction of permanent school buildings, but minimal facilities for education were created from tents and other military surplus materials with help from local communities which provided much of the labor.

In contrast, while some measures in Okinawa to assist former child-soldiers, child war victims, and orphans provide useful models, others must serve as negative examples. As indicated clearly in this report, during the emergency phase just after a conflict, meeting basic educational needs for the general benefit of most children is all that can be done, so specialized education for particular needs in special cases or particular circumstances becomes possible only ten years into the reconstruction period after the end of a conflict.

In judging the applicability of Okinawa’s experience to countries actually faced with the task of reconstruction, it is essential to avoid an over eagerness in applying the Okinawa reconstruction experience to developing countries and to overlook the particular circumstances of each nation or region. Each conflict has its own causes and historical context. And the end of each conflict results from interrelationships among many kinds of people and social groups that have developed through the phases and circumstances of war and peace, leading finally to the present situation. Strictly speaking, post-conflict reconstruction in each case begins from a completely different starting line.

To summarize, in applying this research on educational reconstruction to developing countries, we must not generalize the lessons of Okinawa’s experience and prescribe it or force it on developing countries as a model. Instead, a process is necessary that emphasizes consulting closely with people from these countries and working cooperatively with them and with organizations to determine educational content and methods that are best suited to the circumstances of each nation.

### 3-1-2 A framework for Analyzing Okinawa’s Experience of Educational Reconstruction

This section first presents an analysis of benefits that come from consulting with developing countries, then uses this analysis in reexamining the process of Okinawa’s educational reconstruction to identify points of commonality and applicability.
Table 3-1  An analysis of Okinawa’s experience of educational reconstruction

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<th>process of implementing educational recovery</th>
<th>Quantity</th>
<th>Management</th>
<th>Quality</th>
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<td><strong>Management</strong></td>
<td><strong>Quality</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Phase II</strong></td>
<td><strong>Quantity</strong></td>
<td><strong>Management</strong></td>
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<td>reconstruction period 1952-57</td>
<td>school construction 2</td>
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<td><strong>Phase III</strong></td>
<td><strong>Quantity</strong></td>
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* Number to the right of an item corresponds to the number for this topic discussed in the section that follows
* Dark spaces indicate items emphasized during each period, boldface type indicates special items.

Based on categories from the Introduction and Chapter 1, Table 3 - 1 divides the process of educational reconstruction in Okinawa into an emergency period from 1945 to 1951, a reconstruction period from 1952 to 1957, and a development period from 1958 to 1972.

The special character of the emergency period was the high priority placed on expanding educational opportunity (that is, opening schools, facilitating access to education, and raising attendance rates). The special character of the reconstruction period was advancement of educational governance and formulation of laws relating to education, along with continuing concern for securing and maintaining educational opportunities as emphasized in the emergency period. On the other hand, the special character of the development period was a change in emphasis from expanding and maintaining educational opportunities to improving quality in the content of education.

Following the method of classification in the Introduction, Table 3 - 1 divides the elements of educational reconstruction into three categories: (1) quantity, (2) management, and (3) quality. In this way, the central concerns are clearly indicated for each stage of Okinawa’s educational reconstruction.

Table 3-1 suggests that the process of educational reconstruction in Okinawa went largely according to educational development theory, and that reconstruction policies were implemented strategically. The implementation of educational reconstruction for Okinawa according to this
strategy is something applicable for education in developing countries as well. The special characteristics of educational reconstruction in Okinawa are analyzed below, based on Table 3 - 1.

3-1-3 Special Characteristics of Educational Reconstruction in Okinawa

(1) Phase I: emergency period, 1945-51

Education resumed in the refugee camps of central Okinawa even before organized combat ended in the Battle of Okinawa. However, with many civilians still caught up in the heavy fighting, most components of an infrastructure, including school buildings, textbooks, and teachers, had been destroyed.

Therefore, the first priority for restarting education went initially to efforts at restoring the educational infrastructure, including human resources (through teacher training). Such emergency measures to fill the teacher shortage as teacher training programs and the conditional appointment of “assistant teachers” have been praised as immediately effective responses, and offer ample possibilities for application during emergency periods in developing countries.

Furthermore, with most school buildings destroyed by the war, filling this need was also recognized as an urgent task. Although unable to obtain sufficient understanding and assistance from the U.S. government, local residents and area communities joined actively in determined efforts to restore school structures. Much can also be learned from the example of Okinawa as a place where, in the field of education, it was “reconstruction from below” with community ownership of the reconstruction process.

(2) Phase II: reconstruction period, 1952-57

Concern for education had always been widely shared in Okinawa since before the war, and residents keenly felt the need for educational reconstruction as soon the fighting ended. People also understood from experience that schools are institutions which take in children who have no place to go. Thus, with efforts to expand educational opportunities during the emergency period, school attendance rose to 99% in less than a decade after the war. When regular access to education was secured, the emphasis shifted to maintaining and enhancing expanded educational opportunities by designing various educational systems.

Entering the reconstruction period, civilian administration expanded in Okinawa centering on the G.R.I. which began formulating laws for education and designing other institutional mechanisms. Laws regulating education were indispensable for maintaining the various systems which provided stability and continuity for educational reconstruction. The process of designing an educational system for Okinawa can serve as model for developing countries.

Efforts at securing a stable budget for education remained trial and error, but the introduction of an education tax, even amidst chronic budget shortages, demonstrated the high priority placed on
resources for educational reconstruction. Circumstances in which much of the budget for education relied on outside aid and more than half of it went for teachers salaries are the same in developing countries today.

(3) Phase III: development period, 1958-72

When the expansion of educational opportunities was secured through the formulation of laws and systems for education, the emphasis shifted gradually in educational reconstruction from building and maintaining institutions to improving the quality of educational content.

In particular, entering the period of development, numerous efforts are evident seeking to improve the institutional support system and teaching methods relating to the content of peace education. Many issues of peace education arise in an atmosphere filled with sorrow and hatred prevailing immediately after armed conflict. Peace education must aim to create an environment in which speaking for posterity about victimization in war does not exacerbate feelings of enmity toward the other side, but, instead, encourages reconciliation and contributes to the building of peace. Peace education in Okinawa has been implemented and developed amidst much discussion, but there is not the slightest disagreement about nurturing a desire for peace. This experience in Okinawa provides valuable material both for people in developing countries and for discussions of peace education.

Having examined the special characteristics of educational development in Okinawa, we will next explore actual examples of educational reconstruction in developing countries to consider what points of commonality exist between Okinawa’s experience of educational reconstruction and issues of educational reconstruction and peace education in developing countries.

3-2 Educational Reconstruction in Developing Countries as Viewed from Okinawa’s Experience

This section presents 12 issues from Okinawa’s experience of educational reconstruction and peace education that are relevant to present experiences in developing countries and areas of conflict, and will compare examples from developing countries and Okinawa.

As evident from the examples, it is necessary to explore in depth the specific policies implemented in Okinawa as well as the conditions prevailing in countries and regions receiving aid. The aims of this section are to inform personnel from Okinawa who will work in international aid programs how experiences of educational reconstruction and peace education in Okinawa relate to issues confronting developing countries; and, to stimulate further research.70

70 See 3-3-3 of this chapter.
1. **Restarting education**

Although organized combat operations in the Battle of Okinawa did not end until late June of 1945, an elementary school had already opened one month earlier on May 7. Heavy fighting was still continuing at this time in other areas of Okinawa. Initial encouragement to open a school came from the U.S. military, but the immediate response of local civilians is an important point to focus on for this discussion.

In most places in the Balkans following regional conflicts in Yugoslavia, local residents did not wait for international aid, but moved into the schools, cleaned them up, and began catch-up classes. Local residents’ avid devotion to education can be explained by the importance placed on education in the schools for providing future resources and transmitting ethnic culture, and by the importance given to it as a principle of socialism in the former Yugoslavia. It can also be surmised that, because many school principals held positions of leadership in their communities, it was natural for all local children to go to school.

In societies immediately after conflicts ended, public safety systems were inadequate and children were the easy targets of crime. Orphans without relatives were especially vulnerable. Thus, “education’s protective role” was considered important. Once school started again in local areas, it was possible for the staff to ascertain the problems faced by each child, and to make arrangements for children’s safety through contacts in the community. Furthermore, parents of school age children are said to feel more secure just knowing their children are at school. In countries experiencing reconstruction, free lunch programs encourage children to attend school. It has been reported that, when free lunches are provided, not only does school attendance increase, but students’ academic performance improves as well.

2. **School construction**

One year after the war ended in Okinawa, 80% of the schools that had opened in villages and refugee camps were held in tents or Quonset huts. There were also many “blue sky classrooms.” Six years after the war about 25% of the schools were still in need of permanent buildings. The number of available classrooms was insufficient not only because many schools had been destroyed, but also because many children had returned from evacuation elsewhere and the period of compulsory education had been lengthened. Chapter 1 explains how everyone joined with

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71 Because school was canceled during conflicts, “catch-up classes” were held in which the material to be learned was condensed in order to accelerate students’ advancement into the regular curriculum.
72 Nicolai. (2005) p. 11.
73 Meir. (2005) p. 35 It has also been reported that, when organization in the schools was inadequate to prepare and distribute food for free lunch programs, the responsibility fell on teachers, which had a negative effect on efforts to improve the quality of education.
coalitions of school support groups and child protective associations to build the schools, working with the government to improve the environments for children’s education.

In Afghanistan, where the disruption of war continued for more than twenty years, 80% of the schools were destroyed. With a projected increase in the number of school-age children, about 14,000 schools just for the elementary grades will be required over the next ten years. In Cambodia, the Vietnamese invasion and civil war destroyed 90% of the schoolhouses.

In regional conflicts, schools are often the intentional targets of attack. Because schools play a central role in the community, attacks on them have symbolic significance. As the basis of community organization for local ethnic groups, they are inviting targets for other hostile ethnic groups.

In Kosovo of the former Yugoslavia, reconstruction has proceeded at a rapid rate under the United Nations Provisional Authority with help from international aid, and many schools have been newly built or repaired in a short time. When schools are not built in time, classes begin in tents donated by U.N. organizations or in private homes borrowed for this purpose. Many international citizens aid organizations also participated in the planning. However, because local governmental structures were inadequate, many organizations could not carry out infrastructure improvements for the schools as administrative supervision was insufficient. Compared with Okinawa, local administrative capacity and coordination are seriously lacking in countries receiving aid today.

The recurrent budget for the reconstruction and development of education in Kosovo still relies mostly on international aid. But, with the concern of the international community turning to Afghanistan, Iraq, and the countries of Asia suffering major natural disasters, aid to Kosovo has tapered off. With conditions still lacking for independent and sustained economic growth, measures implemented by local citizens and government along with efforts at self-help are urgently needed.

3. Preschool education

In Okinawa, according to U.S. policy, education often started early with one year of preschool education (kindergarten). “The Ishikawa School,” the first elementary school described in Chapter 1, opened just after local fighting ended, but the U.S. military had initially ordered the operation of a kindergarten. In the capital city of Naha, the Tsuboya Kindergarten started its first semester in 1946.

While American policy in Okinawa promoted preschool education, it is not generally a priority for the governments of developing countries during reconstruction. This can be attributed

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75 The United Nations Mission In Kosovo,(UNMIK) was established in accordance with a U.N. Security Council resolution.
mainly to the International Human Rights Covenant which specifies compulsory elementary education as a basic human right, and to budgetary limitations. On the other hand, international aid organizations and research institutions have vigorously advocated the importance of preschool education for educational reconstruction.

Discussions of reconstruction aid for Afghanistan at the Tokyo NGO Conference on Afghan Reconstruction, held in December of 2001, recommended setting up nursery schools and kindergartens. Preschool education does not only accustom children to school life, but also benefits the local community.

In Kosovo many schools have established one-year preschool programs held in the elementary schools. Some elementary school teachers indicate that “Children suffer psychological wounds in conflicts, and there is a tendency toward violence in the schools. Children who did not receive preschool education tend to cause problems at school.” Also, for the sake of reconciliation among ethnic groups, it is generally better for children to start in preschool.

4. Contents and textbooks of education during reconstruction

The content of education in Okinawa when schools reopened had more the character of guidance for daily life than course-study. Guidance for daily life started with teaching bodily hygiene such as washing hands and removing lice. Also, considering that health was often poor due to food shortages, course-study was limited to basic language skills and math. Furthermore, it seems likely that such activities as telling children's stories and singing songs were conducted not only because course-study was impossible under the circumstances, but also because they gave children a feeling of security. The teaching of ethics, citizenship, and health education began at the next level. The curriculum for educational reconstruction specified by the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) puts a high priority on peace, daily life skills, citizenships, health education, and safety education. Safety education teaches children to protect themselves from the many dangers lurking daily in post-conflict societies. It plays a vital role, making them aware of land mines, unexploded ordnance, and depleted uranium shells left over from the war, and of the dangers of kidnapping and of traffic accidents resulting from unmaintained roads to school.

As for textbooks, two points to emphasize are that efforts in Okinawa to provide them began early and that they were compiled from the local perspective. On the second point, the U.S. military believed that initially textbooks should “relate closely to daily life” and concentrate on “an understanding of the Okinawa region.” The third point to emphasize is that, despite the shock of losing the war, one month later Okinawa’s leaders in education held an “education conference” at which they agreed that the future direction of Okinawan education must be “education that teaches values for a shared humanity.”

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5. Training teachers

In Okinawa one-third of the teachers had died in the war and approximately another one-third could not teach because of wounds they had suffered or acute economic circumstances. War also took the lives of 4,500 from among the next generation of teachers who had been attending normal schools. Schools reopened even though the supply of teachers had ended for three or four years. The policies implemented to cope with these realities were short-term hirings of middle school and high school graduates, and training periods starting at two-months duration, but increasing gradually.

People completing this training were granted teachers licenses for elementary school, and obligated to work in the schools for a minimum of one year. For many of the countries experiencing reconstruction in education, an overwhelming teacher shortage is the most important issue.

Many teachers are killed or wounded when conflicts occur. During Pol Pot’s reign in Cambodia (1975-79), between one million and two million people (25% of the population) were massacred. Intellectuals were especially targeted, and 75% of the teachers were killed. Then, since most of the surviving teachers were hired by the government as public employees after the Pol Pot’s reign, the actual number of teachers has further diminished. In Afghanistan, too, the schools were closed for more than twenty years, and at present there is a teacher shortage of 44,000. Furthermore, 80% of the people teaching in the schools there do not hold teaching credentials. This is especially true in farming areas.

One reason for the low number of teachers has been that the way people are treated in the field of education does not make teaching an attractive job. Even in Okinawa, the income from “working for the military” in jobs on or around the American bases was about three times what teachers earned. With the shortage of jobs in post-conflict societies, it is only natural that people seek jobs with higher salaries to support themselves and their families. When outstanding individuals do not take teaching jobs, it has an impact on educating the next generation, causing a major problem for the society as a whole.

6. The psychological care of children and the reopening of schools

For children, who are especially vulnerable to the abnormal and inhuman events of war, psychological wounds are deep. When schools opened early in Okinawa, children encountered many difficulties in studying and in daily life. At this time the concept of trauma (post-traumatic stress disorder) did not exist. Schools, local communities, and families each seem to have given different kinds of treatment for the psychological wounds of war.

Children in areas of conflict all over the world presently suffer from trauma. Fighting in Sierra Leone between government and antigovernment forces dragged on from 1991 to 2000. Starting in 1999, UNESCO and the local government implemented a one-month program called “Rapid Ed” to treat children in the capital of Freetown for trauma. This program ran in conjunction with education in the schools. Children took basic literacy classes in the morning, and in the afternoon they used their bodies to express themselves through such activities as music, plays, and games.\(^78\) Since few teachers in regular schools have expertise in treating trauma, there is a need for training school personnel how to recognize children suffering from trauma and how to help them.

7. The administration of education

The United States also made efforts to democratize the administration of education in Okinawa from the early reconstruction period. At that time on the mainland a program for decentralizing control of the schools was progressing as the United States introduced a system of education administration resembling the one used in America where school boards were elected locally and budgets were independent of other public finances. In Okinawa, too, school administration was separated from regular government administration, school districts were established as independent agencies, and four of five school board members were elected directly by district residents. And, in the spirit of gender equality, it was required that at least one member be a woman (see Section 1-2-3, “Formulating education laws”).

At present, reconstructing countries and regions are following the international trend in educational development by promoting local control of school administrations. For democratization, improved efficiency, and the ability to consider the special character of each area, localized control of education seems highly suitable, but in multiethnic countries and regions where national unity is an important issue, one must also consider the harm caused by having completely different education in each administrative district, separated from the others according to the ethnic groups living there. Bosnia and Kosovo in the Balkans, Afghanistan, Iraq, Cambodia, and countries in Africa all face this problem. Furthermore, the efficiency of organizations administering education in each district must also be considered. Where administrative efficiency suffers from a shortage of personnel, even district office facilities are severely lacking.

8. Formulating education law

The first education law in post-conflict Okinawa was the “Elementary School Ordinance,” promulgated in 1946, one year after the war ended. In the brief period before establishment of the G.R.I., the provisional Okinawa Island Group Government enacted a “Basic Education Law.” After that, the formulation of education progressed step by step reflecting the limiting restrictions in each period with enactment of the Ryukyu Education Law (1952), by order of the U.S. government, and

\(^78\) Sinclair.(2001) p. 67-68.
proclamation of the “Four Education Laws” (1957), which was civil law written by Okinawa residents (see Section 1-2-3, “Formulating education laws”).

The “Nimitz Proclamation,” declared the continuation of the current laws just after the U.S. forces landing. The total absence of any law would have created serious problems for administrators, so the Nimitz Proclamation can be praised in this regard.

In Afghanistan, a mixture of education laws remain which were written under various past governments, and some districts use education laws from different periods. Drafting of a basic education law has finally begun, but in the absence of a consistent legal basis, an unavoidable state of confusion will probably continue.

9. Education budgets

The education budget’s share of the Okinawa Civil Administration’s total budget was 13% in 1947, but nearly tripled to 38% in 1949. These government budgets did not even include expenses for school construction, which relied on U.S. monetary aid. Half of their annual expenditures were teachers’ salaries, 50% of which were also subsidized by U.S. aid funds (see Section 2-2-2). In the case of developing countries receiving reconstruction aid, most of the development budgets within their education budgets rely on aid, and projected operating budgets seem to disappear into school employees’ salaries.

The governments of countries experiencing reconstruction have generally assigned “education” a high priority in their reconstruction budgets. This is because it is easy to rally public support for a policy of investing capital in the next generation responsible for the society’s future.

Furthermore, during a reconstruction period when civilian jobs are not created, the education sector can be said to contribute to social stabilization as the largest source of public employment. Nevertheless, looking behind government statements, it is difficult to say that education necessarily receives a high priority.

A special feature of the budget in Cambodia is that most is spent for elementary education in comparison with other levels. Expenditures for elementary education are 85% of the total education budget, far exceeding the international standard of 50%. Perhaps because of this, the raw percentages for school attendance are nearly 80%, but inequality between genders and among local areas, along with a high dropout rate, are unresolved problems often seen in developing countries.

In the future, the focus should not only be on the total number of children entering elementary school, but on the efficiency and the equality of opportunity for educational services that raise the education level of all the citizens in a nation.

10. Educating war orphans

In Okinawa, where civilians were caught up in the fighting, many children lost both parents in the war and became orphans. It wasn’t until eight years after the war that a law for orphan welfare was enacted and building began of children’s welfare facilities (See section 1-1-1, “The Battle of Okinawa and education”). However, Okinawans did not wait for governments or organizations to act, and people at local schools worked actively to improve the welfare of those most vulnerable.

In developing countries experiencing reconstruction, too, many war orphans cannot receive an education. The nation might provide welfare facilities where orphans are housed, but either no education is offered there, or only the most minimal opportunities are available for learning. One cause of this problem is an administrative gap that exists because welfare facilities come under the jurisdiction of welfare ministries while education ministries have jurisdiction over the schools, and there is no coordination of orphans’ education between the two agencies.

Furthermore, some children who have lost their parents find themselves responsible for supporting other family members, and it is all they can do to work so they and their siblings can survive, a reality that makes it extremely difficult for them to avail themselves of educational opportunities.

11. Special education

The international goal of “education for all” is widely proclaimed, but what about children with special needs? Special education started in Okinawa in 1951, six years after the end of the war. A law for compulsory education of the handicapped was not enacted until thirty years after the war. One reason for this delay in implementing special education is a low level of public awareness.

When the schools reopened throughout Kosovo just after the conflict there ended, an estimated 40,000 children attended. The number among them of school-age children with special needs, though estimated to be at least 4,000 (1% of all children), was actually presumed to be close to 23,000.80

Access to learning, limited for children with special needs even before the conflict, was all the more difficult after the conflict. On this point, suggestions are offered by the “teacher dispatching system,” begun in Okinawa in 1952, that sent teachers to homes and hospitals where children with illnesses were being treated.

Records in Okinawa show that teachers found ways at their school sites to provide education for children with special needs. It is noted that teachers conducting special education for mentally impaired children who were also orphans created special curricula and teaching materials that focused on learning by experience and guidance for daily life. For example, they taught language by taking children out for walks in natural surroundings, counting trees, and talking about nature. This demonstrates that education for children with special needs must be supported by the united efforts of teachers, administrators, and local communities.

12. **Peace education**

In Okinawa, along with Hiroshima and Nagasaki where many died in the atomic bombings, peace education based on learning from the past is actively developed and implemented.

The content of prewar and wartime education in Okinawa has many points in common with the content of education in developing countries where regional conflicts are frequent. At present, in these countries, “citizens education” has begun in order to build democratic societies. In Okinawa, nurturing the skills, attitudes, and values for citizenship in a democratic society seems to have begun after the war in “social studies” classes.

In post-conflict Bosnia, democratization is being promoted with the backing of the international community. In some schools, independent courses in “education for citizenship” have begun, and the subjects of democracy and human rights are taught as part of the content in already existing courses relating to social studies, such as “history” and “community.” These efforts are not limited only to such courses as “education for citizenship,” but are also applied, for example, to school textbooks for geography and history from which expressions hostile or insulting toward “other” ethnic groups are eliminated. Furthermore, in history education, there is discussion, not only of the history of conflicts, but also of times when ethnic groups coexisted.

Nevertheless, in Bosnia’s schools, stories centering on ethnic heroes are told and an ethnic identity is promoted. The message is still conveyed that, having been the past victims of war, it is only through ethnic solidarity that survival has been possible. This kind of education is reinforced at home and in the local community. Here it is useful to point out that, in Okinawa, even during periods when opposition to U.S. bases after the war had effects in the schools, students were taught not to hate the American “people.”

In Bosnia, teachers who taught history and geography before and during the conflict now form the nucleus of teachers teaching “education for citizens” based on democratic principles. After the conflict, they received brief training to teach new courses in “education for citizenship,” but it is uncertain how fully they understand the points of difference between the pre-conflict education they remember and the new education. Like teachers in Okinawa, it would probably be effective in building a new peaceful and democratic society for them to become involved in peace education and, for those who are interested, to form a network of teachers to conduct research together.

In Chapter 3, citizens’ activities are listed as the third special feature of peace education in Okinawa. It is explained that, since all citizens of Okinawa were caught up in the war, efforts in peace education should not be limited to school and government, but must include all citizens. In Bosnia, too, for example, on the day set by the United Nations for commemorating peace, schools and local communities join in the various events, and the province as a unit has established it as

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81 See 4. in this section, “Contents and textbooks of Education during reconstruction”.

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“Peace Day.” In the future, when building a museum, Okinawa’s experience might be useful. Efforts to build peace must come from every sector of society. Signs of change are beginning to appear in school education, but unless families in local communities share an awareness of the need for these efforts, the effect of peace education in the schools will be diminished by half. It is necessary for citizens’ groups, such as NGOs, local governments, and other community organizations, to participate in the planning of peace education.

3-3 International assistance for education from Okinawa: resources and possibilities

Taking into consideration the above, we will now explore Okinawa’s resources for international aid to education and what specifically it can be expected to offer. First, we will identify resources in the prefecture that are prerequisites for international aid to education from Okinawa.

3-3-1 International Assistance for Education from Okinawa: Premises

Why is it necessary to link international assistance for education from Okinawa to aid for building peace? And, what form of assistance is needed? Answering these questions demands a recognition of the premises for offering international assistance to education from Okinawa. In looking at the special characteristics of Okinawa’s experience of educational reconstruction, the three main premises below can help to answer these questions.

(1) Assistance should not necessarily be provided only during the emergency and reconstruction periods. It is appropriate to consider continuing it for quality improvement during the development period. (In this case, too, it is important to maintain the view of aid as building peace.)

(2) Okinawa has its own experience of educational reconstruction and development, but, since sufficient experience is lacking of providing international aid to education in developing countries, it is appropriate to carry out projects in stages, beginning with the training of education aid personnel to understand the circumstances in developing countries. (It would be effective, for example, to carry out projects jointly between JICA and education agencies.)

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82 However, teacher dispatches to the Okinawan migrant community in Bolivia have continued since 1986.
(3) It is important for the expansion and maintenance of aid programs that, along with benefiting developing countries, they also contribute to economic and social development in Okinawa which will provide the resources for this aid.83

3-3-2 Possibilities of Carrying out International Assistance Projects for Education using Resources and Programs Available in Okinawa

In considering the resources in Okinawa usable for carrying out activities that apply the Okinawa experience of educational reconstruction in developing countries, I have narrowed them down to seven resources below with project possibilities briefly described. Of course, the list below is not comprehensive, and projects which combine several resources are also conceivable.

(1) School boards in Okinawa Prefecture (the prefectural government, education offices, and local city, town, and village school boards)

According to educational policies set by the Prefectural Board of Education for the system of school boards in Okinawa, the Prefectural Department of Education runs the executive office, maintains six education offices in Okinawa as district branches, and provides support for city, town, and village school boards. In the Second Education Promotion Plan for Okinawa (2005-2007), formulated by the Prefectural Board of Education, it is stated policy to “promote global education for joining hands with the world” and to “promote the training of personnel for work in the international community.” In applying this policy, various kinds of education for international understanding, education on the environment, and foreign language education were implemented.

As the example of Okinawa’s educational reconstruction directly demonstrates, the management component is critical for accelerating educational reconstruction quantitatively and qualitatively. As material for aiding the management of educational administration, lectures are possible for introducing Okinawa’s system of academic administration by school boards and its system of training teachers. This kind of activity plays a pivotal role in planning and implementing aid projects. One subject might be how, as the organ that sets educational policy and supervises its implementation, the Prefectural Department of Education can view international aid as an education policy, and work to create a system in which each project contributes to the expansion of education in the prefecture. It can also be hoped that, as the organization supervising prefectural teaching personnel, the Department will give added consideration to encouraging participation of teacher volunteers, to offering aid, and to the treatment of teachers after they volunteer. With a joint project memorandum to be prepared this year by the Department of Education and JICA Okinawa,

83 The merits (multiple effects) of aid resources the prefecture can receive, when carrying out international educational assistance from Okinawa, include allocating time for comprehensive learning, universalizing peace education, promoting education for international understanding, diversifying education, and the corresponding improvements in the quality of teachers.
expansion can be anticipated of organized efforts in international educational aid by the Prefectural
Department of Education.

(2) Okinawa Prefectural Comprehensive Education Center

The Prefectural Schools Education Section of the Okinawa Department of Education manages
this Center which provides opportunities for teacher training and research to improve the
qualifications of school employees and promote education.

Its services include training for teachers in school management, various courses of study,
industrial education, special education, I.T. education, educational methods for practice teaching of
children and pupils, and the development of teaching materials. For conducting specialized
technical research in education, it collects and provides data, furnishes aid for research, and offers
advice. In the field of international assistance, it will likely consider admitting trainees from
developing countries for practical training and for systematic observation of various activities, such
as I.T. education and teaching methods for courses in science and mathematics. It also has great
potential as a place where trainees from developing countries can meet teachers from Okinawa.
This will provide ample opportunities for education in Okinawa to benefit from feedback in the
form of information trainees provide about education in various countries that will improve
education for international understanding. Center personnel who presently conduct educational
training can be expected to make visits as onsite advisors when aid projects are implemented.

(3) Elementary schools, middle schools, high schools, and schools for the handicapped in Okinawa

At present, in 2004, public schools in Okinawa Prefecture are comprised of 281 elementary,
163 middle, 68 high, and 16 for the sight impaired, hearing impaired, and mentally retarded.
Almost all public elementary schools have kindergarten annexes. Working teachers, sent as
volunteers to educational sites in developing countries on programs of international aid for
educational, are a highly promising resource. In addition, experienced teachers who have retired
would also be a valuable resource as senior volunteers. In particular, knowledge from the
generation that directly experienced Okinawa’s educational reconstruction would be an abundant
resource for the educational environment in developing countries, and would have great value.

(4) Universities

In Okinawa are four universities and three colleges. None of the universities has special
classes or research centers in development studies, but many participate in planning the overseas
projects of JICA. There are also many cases of current students who join the Youth Overseas Aid
Corps, and are sent on assignments after graduation.

It is hoped that universities will provide organizational support as training institutions for
student (newly graduated) volunteers. They can also be expected to function as organizations for
systematically and scientifically collecting and analyzing information on education in developing countries provided by volunteers or by trainees invited to the prefecture. Through this process, it is anticipated that personnel specializing in international aid (researchers) can be trained as visiting personnel on a wide range of international aid projects for education.

(5) Community centers and facilities for youth (Boys’ Nature Home and The Home for Young Men)

Public lodging houses and facilities for youth are highly valuable places in local communities for career training and healthy activities for youth where people in the field of education from developing countries seeking to expand education on the citizen-participation model can observe and train. This should also provide opportunities for trainees to meet people in local community.

(6) NGO’s, citizens groups, and youth organizations

In Okinawa there are many small organizations with small-scale activities, and it is important for Okinawan organizations to participate easily in such citizens’ international aid programs as NGO’s, with a perspective of world citizenship, and NPO’s, with a citizens’ perspective.

Furthermore, in Okinawa, where there was much past emigration overseas, the exchange activities of friendship associations with connections to central and South America continue to flourish today, and many members feel no hesitation in contacting trainees from overseas. These associations have great potential for grassroots support of aid programs centered around exchanges with developing countries at the citizens’ level. It can also be hoped that international educational aid will expand through contacts with JICA and other resources in Okinawa to activate grassroots technical aid in the form of events for youth and seminars for visiting students run by NGO organizations and NPO groups in Okinawa.

(7) Peace museums (including Okinawa Prefectural Peace Memorial Museum and Himeyuri Peace Memorial Museum)

As explained in Chapter 2, peace museums play a major role in peace education in Okinawa. When trainees from nations hoping for peace visit facilities and museums dedicated to peace that were built through the efforts and according to the ideas of local governments, community organizations, and local residents, they can get many ideas for recording their own histories of conflict and peace. The value of these museums is not limited to the exhibitions alone.

The organizational know-how required to establish and operate them can be highly informative for people from developing countries who want to build similar facilities.
3-3-3 Toward Expanding “International Assistance for Education from Okinawa”

This report was compiled in the hope that the experience and knowledge gained from Okinawa’s post-conflict educational reconstruction would be informative for international aid to education, especially for projects aiding people and countries seeking to reconstruct from regional conflicts.

This research confirms that Okinawa’s experience of post-conflict reconstruction can contribute much to peace-building and reconstruction aid today; and that ample local resources are available in Okinawa for implementing international aid. It is hoped that, starting now, those resources will be greatly refined through interaction with developing countries, and that the numbers will increase of organizations and aid personnel who can provide assistance.

International aid for education from Okinawa that is “flexible, strong, and determined” will benefit not only developing countries. Recognized around the world as a center for transmitting the message of peace, Okinawa has also become increasingly interactive with the world. In other words, international aid for education from Okinawa has the potential to build ties with developing countries in a win-win relationship for both.

References