

## IN THIS ISSUE:

### Hot Issue

#### JICA-RI Organizes the First Seminar of JOCV Study: “Review a Half Century of JOCV Program”

On September 19, the institute convened the first series of seminars on “the Interdisciplinary Study of JOCV” with an aim of disseminating the study outcomes and of building a research network.

[READ MORE](#)


### Review

#### JICA-RI Senior Research Fellow Talks about Interdisciplinary Study of JOCV

JICA-RI has been engaged in a research project on the Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers (JOCVs) from a variety of academic fields. Senior Research Fellow Yasunobu Okabe, lead researcher of the project, talks about the study.

[READ MORE](#)


### Review

#### JICA-RI Representative Gives Presentation at an ODI-hosted Event in Ghana

On September 10 and 11, JICA-RI Senior Research Adviser Akio Hosono made presentations at the two-day conference entitled “Financial Regulation in Low-Income Countries: Balancing Inclusive Development with Financial Stability.” The Overseas Development Institute hosted a workshop and an open seminar in Accra, the capital city of Ghana.

[READ MORE](#)

# JICA-RI Organizes the First Seminar of JOCV Study: “Review a Half Century of JOCV Program”

JICA's Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers (JOVC) program, since its inauguration in 1965 by the Japanese government, has dispatched more than 38,000 volunteers to 88 countries around the world. The program, which is to celebrate its 50th milestone anniversary in 2015, includes a range of objectives such as development aid, mutual understanding between Japan and developing countries, and fostering the youth. JOVC program, therefore, has drawn attention not only from its practical aspect but from an academic interest.

In light of the nature of JOVC program, JICA-RI launched a research project titled “the Interdisciplinary Study of JOVC” at the end of 2011, having engaged in the study on the JOVC program from various academic fields—political science, anthropology, business administration, and sociology. On September 19 this year, the institute convened [its first series of seminars](#) with an aim of disseminating the study outcomes and of building a research network. JICA-RI Senior Research Fellow [Yasunobu Okabe](#), who is a lead researcher of this project, and Mr. Yozo Kaneko, President of the Japan Overseas Cooperative Association (JOCA), gave presentations respectively.

Mr. Kaneko started off by tracing the path to the establishment of the JOVC program in his speech titled “Progress of JOVC over a Half Century.” First he explained that Japan already had a vision of dispatch of Japanese youth overseas, a model for the JOVC scheme before the establishment of the Peace Corps by the late US President Kennedy in 1961. Then, both the private youth groups and young politicians embodied the framework of volunteers program. With setting up the Cooperation Volunteers Secretariat as an affiliated agency of OTCA (predecessor of JICA) in 1965, about 40 volunteers were dispatched overseas in the first year. Mr. Kaneko, former executive director of JOVC secretariat, also illustrated the history of JOVC: the foundational period spanning from the launch of the program to



Mr.Yozo Kaneko (left), Yasunobu Okabe (right)

the establishment of JICA (1974); the expanding period of the program (from 1975 to the 1990s); and the post-bubble period of economic stagnation from 2000 to the present. To end his presentation, Mr. Kaneko pointed out that the JOVC program has been striving to develop the program as a national movement within the framework of governmental projects and to utilize the cooperation with external agencies such as JOCA as a driving force.

Senior Research Fellow Okabe's presentation followed Mr. Kaneko, focusing on the history of the foundation of JOVC. He explained it by setting three focal point: 1) the motives to establish the JOVC program; 2) the diverse objectives such as technical cooperation and cultivation of Japanese youth; and 3) the driving force for continuous development of the program. He showcased Japan-US relation under the Cold War, employment issue of the youth in urban and rural areas, and the leadership of the youth groups and politicians as the factors of its foundation. As a factor of diverse objectives, he pointed out that it was a product of compromise among the youth groups, Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. He analyzed the factors of the third point that institutional complementarity worked out because the JOVC program was positioned under ODA framework between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and JICA, as well as the effective checking system by external organizations including the youth groups and politicians. Lastly, Okabe expressed his intention to work further on a comparative study with cases of other Western countries.

# JICA-RI Senior Research Fellow Talks about Interdisciplinary Study of JOCV

JICA-RI has been engaged in a research project on the Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers (JOCVs) from a variety of academic fields including anthropology, business administration, political science, and sociology. With this interdisciplinary approach, the project seeks to understand the international, societal, and historical roles of JOCVs, focusing on how Japanese people should contribute to international society. It also aims to resolve policy issues: effective volunteer activities; the development of global human resources; and contributions to Japanese society by volunteers who returned home.

Senior Research Fellow [Yasunobu Okabe](#), lead researcher of the project, talks about the study.

“JOVC program should be approached from diverse academic fields due to a multiple of aspects including human resource development and international exchange in addition to development assistance. This is why we call the project an “interdisciplinary study.” While I work on the theme from a viewpoint of political science, others work in the eyes of anthropology, business administration, social research, and statistics.

The research on JOVC has roughly two different approaches; one is at the micro-level where the research focuses on individual activities of JOCVs; the other is at the macro-level where it studies the JOVC program as a national institution or a project.

With the micro-level approach, a number of topics for JOCVs’ activities can be listed. A few examples are such as: what individual members learned, and how and to what extent they could develop their capabilities; or what conditions are needed for the JOCVs in order to achieve positive outcomes in the field. Furthermore, what criteria should be used to assess their capabilities and the results of their activities is a difficult but important theme as well. The scope of the micro-level approach

is not limited to the assignment term of JOCV members. To follow up the fields where they found jobs or took academic paths after their return to Japan is a crucial topic for individual members as well as Japanese society. A great amount of attention has been also paid to the experiences and capabilities of ex-members because they have great potential to become global human resources—those who engage in the work abroad or at foreign business. This potentiality will eventually influence their further job opportunities.

On the other hand, the macro-level approach considers the JOVC program as an institution of international volunteer activities. To compare the program at the international level is a quite interesting theme, for example. Outside Japan, the US and the UK have traditionally promoted international volunteer programs, and South Korea likewise. Systematic comparison with those of other countries helps us understand the originality of the JOVC program as well as the common features among the programs.

We are also conducting a perception survey for JOCV members, using questionnaires. The survey had been planned before the research project was launched. All the team members shared their ideas, working out the questionnaires after the project’s kickoff. We initially distributed printed survey questionnaires, but now we are conducting more than half of them on the website. We set up three points of time: (1) before the dispatch to their respective host countries; (2) after about one-year at their post; and (3) upon their return to Japan. By asking the same members at the three different points, we try to compare how individual members’ perceptions and ideas changed over time.

Lastly, all the team members hope that our study outcomes will be useful for the future JOVC program and individual JOCV members.”

# JICA-RI Representative Gives Presentation at an ODI-hosted Event in Ghana

On September 10 and 11, JICA-RI Senior Research Adviser (SRA) [Akio Hosono](#) made presentations at the two-day conference entitled “Financial Regulation in Low-Income Countries: Balancing Inclusive Development with Financial Stability.” The Overseas Development Institute (ODI) hosted a workshop and an open seminar in Accra, the capital city of Ghana.

The event, which was organized as part of ODI’s international research project, brought together a wide range of participants including: Ernest Aryeetey, Vice-Chancellor of the host country’s University of Ghana; Dr. Dirk Te Velde, Head of the International Economic Development Group of ODI; Professor Stephany Griffith-Jones of Columbia University; Dr. Henry Kofi Wampah, Governor of the Bank of Ghana; Dr. Usha Thorat, former Deputy Governor of the Reserve Bank of India; and Dr. Felix Asante, Director of the Institute of Statistical, Social and Economic Research (ISSER).

Hosono SRA, one of the presenters, spoke under the theme of “Development finance for structural transformation and inclusive growth: Asian experiences,” where he first overviewed roles of development financial institutions in East Asia. He pointed out that the East Asia governments created financial institutions to provide long-term loan with low interest rates, helping their countries promote economic development through industrialization and



Open Seminar on September 11

infrastructure building. They at the same time encouraged inclusive development by providing credit to agriculture and small and medium firms. Next he explained about industrialization in Asia using prominent cases that in Japan, Korea and Taiwan, development banks played an important role in industrialization. On the other hand, in ASEAN countries where industrialization coincided with the expansion of foreign direct investment and financial globalization, public financial institutions in general stimulated inclusive growth, supporting mainly small and medium industries and agriculture.

Furthermore, Professor Griffith-Jones together with researchers from Ghana, Nigeria, Kenya, and Ethiopia pointed out the need for further development of the financial system in Sub-Saharan Africa, stressing that the financial institutions in the region should take initiative in enhancing inclusive development. They also addressed that African governments can learn lessons from the experiences of East Asia and India despite the different backgrounds.



Workshop on September 10