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On October 7-8, the 7th Seoul ODA International Conference (SOIC) was organized in Seoul. The event, where JICA-RI Director Hiroshi Kato attended, focused on “Post-2015 Development Framework and the Role of ODA” with an aim of planning effective ODA strategies for the post-2015 era.

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JICA-RI Researcher Presents Interim Report on Inclusive Growth in MENA after the Arab Spring at the Brookings Institution

JICA, since February 2012, has engaged in a three-year joint research project on “After the Arab Spring: Inclusive Growth in the Middle East and the North Africa (MENA) Regions” with the Brookings Institution. For the first-year project, JICA-RI contributed to the research on education in Yemen and other themes, presenting the findings at a seminar in Washington D.C. this January.

In light of this background, during one-month stay in September 2013, JICA-RI Research Fellow [Akira Murata](#), presented an interim report of the study under the theme of “A Comparative Study of Job Preferences among Youth in Egypt and Indonesia.”

At the interim report seminar on September 11, Murata gave a presentation entitled “Designing Youth Employment Policies in Egypt.” In his presentation, Murata highlighted the “Youth Bulge” and high youth unemployment rate among the highly-educated, which were considered as primary factors behind a youth-led democracy movement in Arab economies. He made policy recommendations to promote more inclusive growth: how to involve the highly-educated in the domestic labor market and to incorporate them into further growth of the domestic economy.



[Murata \(right\) Conducted Survey in Indonesia](#)

Young people in Egypt are more likely to apply for public sector jobs than for private sectors' due to higher wages and more secure employment. Murata pointed out in his presentation based on the findings from the survey data by JICA-



[The Student Survey in Egypt](#)

RI together with El-Zanaty & Associates, that if the gap in wages between the public and private sectors were to narrow, there would be still policy options for improvement in the structurally-distorted job preference for public sector employment among young graduates with supports for educational opportunity, information technology, basic infrastructure and medical insurance.

The interim report seminar assembled senior fellows Homi Kharas, Hafez Ghanem, and John Page of the Brookings Institution, World Bank economist Marc Schiffbauer, Ruben Lamdany of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and other partners of the study. They commented that the study provides crucial policy recommendations concerning a pressing issue in MENA countries.

The study has used the discrete choice experiment (DCE) to elicit job preferences among the youth, conducting survey for engineering students at ten universities in six cities of Egypt mainly during the period of July-August 2013. For comparative analysis, JICA-RI also conducted the survey for engineering students in Indonesia, which is one of Muslim-majority nations in Asia, also facing “Youth Bulge.” This survey was conducted at eight universities in five cities of Indonesia in September 2013 by JICA-RI together with Demographic Institute, Faculty of Economics, University of Indonesia (LD-FEUI). The final findings of the comparative analysis between youth in Egypt and Indonesia, drawing on the comments at the seminar, are scheduled to be presented around late January next year.

JICA-RI Hosts GDN-Japan Seminar Inviting GDN President Pierre Jacquet

On September 24, JICA-RI organized a seminar entitled “Challenges in Development Assistance: Research Capacity Building and GDN,” at JICA Ichigaya Building, inviting GDN President Pierre Jacquet, former Chief Economist of the French Development Agency (AFD), as a speaker.

Global Development Network (GDN), starting in 1999 under the leadership of the World Bank, is a network hub to connect researchers and research institutes worldwide. Acknowledged as an international organization in 2008, it works in collaboration with 11 regional network partners. GDN-Japan is one of them, and JICA-RI hosts as its hub institution.

In his presentations, Professor Jacquet drew on his experience at AFD and GDN using evidence-based analysis. Highlighting the importance of local ownership and knowledge, he stressed the need to develop collaboration and communication between researchers and policy-makers, along with enhancement of research capacity building in developing countries, in order to produce good quality of decision-making in development policies.

Subsequently, Professor Jacquet showcased a few key approaches of GDN: fostering researchers’ connective capacity of research skills with policy-making; training high-performing researchers and building the research capacity of the general public in developing countries; and strengthening capacity and research quality.



Professor Jacquet

He continued to explain that in collaboration with 11 regional networks, GDN has supported to date 3,660 researchers in developing countries through research competitions and projects at global and regional networks.

Lastly Professor Jacquet touched on the challenges facing GDN such as: funding for research capacity building; monitoring and evaluation of research capacity building; and development of productive collaboration between policy-makers, civil society, media and researchers.

In a Q and A session that followed the presentation, participants from JICA-RI and other Japanese think-tanks actively exchanged views including: expecting GDN to strengthen the research capacity of developing countries, as well as requiring further commitment to linking researchers in developed countries with those in developing countries through partnerships. The question such as GDN’s efforts toward capacity building of researchers with disabilities and the issue of mainstreaming disability was also raised.



JICA-RI Director Attends ODA International Conference in Seoul, Korea

In preparation for the target year of United Nations Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in 2015, the 7th Seoul ODA International Conference (SOIC) was organized in Seoul, the Republic of Korea on October 7-8, 2013. The event, where JICA-RI Director [Hiroshi Kato](#) attended, focused on “Post-2015 Development Framework and the Role of ODA” with an aim of planning effective ODA strategies for the post-2015 era.

The SOIC was co-hosted by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Korea and the Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA). The conference assembled speakers and panels for discussion from diverse backgrounds: developing institutions, academics and government sectors from both developed and developing countries according to relevant topics. The participants discussed, highlighting the role of ODA in a range of topics related to the Post-2015 development agenda.

In Session 1 entitled “ODA and Other Development Resources,” two speakers gave presentations; Mr. Richard Carey, the former Director of the Development Co-operation Directorate at the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD DCD) spoke on the topic of “Contribution of ODA in



[JICA-RI Director Kato](#)

Achieving the MDGs;” Mr. Dirk Willem Dijkerman, the Special Advisor to OECD DCD gave another presentation on the topic of “Mobilizing Development Resources in the Post-2015 Agenda.” In the Panel Discussion that immediately

followed, Kato explained the contribution of Japanese ODA towards achieving the MDGs, while reflecting the presentations of Mr. Carey and Mr. Dijkerman.

Kato, defining the primary role of ODA as filling the gaps created by ‘market failures,’ explained that the pump priming role of ODA—to attract other funds—would stay unchanged. He also stressed: ODA should disseminate program information to private sector for their cooperation; and it should promote sharing and creating ‘knowledge’ that is as important as funding. Kato lastly introduced a wide range of efforts that Japan has implemented in Asia over the long period, along with giving examples of a series of corridor development projects that Japan is currently implementing in Africa and other parts of the world.