

IN THIS ISSUE:

Hot Issue

For a Deeper Grasp of the Changing World of Islam

Globalization has been transforming Southeast Asia's Islamic world, bringing about changes likely to affect development assistance. JICA-RI is conducting research to track these changes and understand the implications, and has discussed the findings at a recent workshop.

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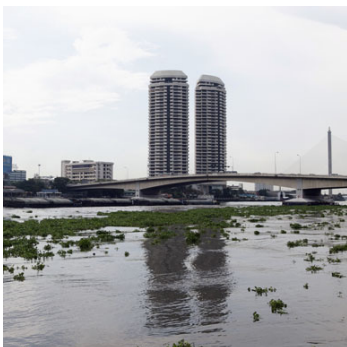
The JICA-RI research team on Islam and globalization



Review

Identifying Causal Impacts of JICA Projects

For precise impact evaluation of JICA projects, JICA-RI is conducting a research project employing an evaluation technique known as *randomized control trial* (RCT) and other micro-econometric methods. The progress of the "School for All Project" in Burkina Faso, one such project under analysis, is reported in this story. [READ MORE](#)



Review

Quantifying the Damages: New Findings on Climate Change Impact on Asian Coastal Cities

JICA-RI Research Fellow Megumi Muto will soon publish the results of her research, which derives city-level estimates of climate-related impacts on and associated damage costs to Metro Manila. Her research, a collaboration with the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank, was presented at a recent conference in Australia. [READ MORE](#)



Special

Examining the Effects of China's Economy on African Economic Growth

JICA-RI has published a working paper entitled "Will China's Recovery Affect Africa's Prospects for Economic Growth?" written by Research Fellow Jean-Claude Maswana. In the paper, he investigates how China's economy, which has been recovering rapidly from the global financial crisis, will affect the growth of certain African economies. [READ MORE](#)

For a Deeper Grasp of the Changing World of Islam

Globalization has been transforming Southeast Asia's Islamic world, creating changes within its societies, politics and institutions. Such changes will inevitably affect how development assistance should be provided to these countries.

Addressing the need to track these changes, JICA-RI is conducting research to determine evolving Muslim responses to transnational norms, institutions and secular ideas. In the [project](#), based on a collaboration of JICA-RI, universities and organizations across the region, both Muslim and non-Muslim experts carry out research individually, the results of which will provide input for more informed policy decisions that take into account distinctions of Islamic societies.

In July, JICA-RI held a two-day workshop at the institute to review and critique current findings for inclusion into a planned publication.

At the workshop, JICA-RI researchers Satoru Mikami and Kohei Yoshida presented interim findings of a survey conducted in Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines and Thailand. The team reported some interesting, statistically-significant correlations among variables such as religion, identity, gender, democracy and *jihad*.

The first session focused on activities of Southeast Asian Muslims in reaction to globalization. Discussions emphasized the need to pay attention to the role of religious study done overseas, and the impact of global networks of Islamic leaders on a country's political trends. Talks also ensued on negotiation complexities in reaction to a global level framework proposed for the Mindanao peace-building process.

A subsequent session focused on nation-



states and the role of national policy. Topics included the Philippine Moros who have been marginalized as a result of globalization, as well as the violent attacks on "sacred spaces" (religious places, symbols or people) observed in southern Thailand. Points were also raised on the complexity of secular policy, taking Muslim-majority Indonesia as an example.

The final session on Muslim responses to globalization featured a profile of an Indonesian militant leader which reframes militant society as a vibrant, complex world of social dynamics. To this, one member commented that "... *jihad* cannot be abolished, but violence can." The final study evidenced globalization in Southeast Asia through internationally-funded mosques, burgeoning Halal industries and other undeniable signs of change.

Following the workshops, the research team participated in a [public symposium](#) to expand on their findings and solicit feedback from a general audience.

All individual research findings will be compiled into a single book, aimed at JICA and other development practitioners whose work requires a deeper grasp of the changing Islamic world.

View the [workshop agenda](#) here.

Identifying Causal Impacts of JICA Projects

Research leading to improvement in aid effectiveness is one of the most important activities at JICA-RI. While historical assessments of ODA play a part in this as was mentioned in [JICA-RI Newsletter No.13](#) last month, research conducted simultaneously in conjunction with ongoing JICA projects, too, is a main pillar. A quintessential example of such a project is “[Impact Evaluation Analyses for the JICA Projects](#),” led by Yasuyuki Sawada, JICA-RI Visiting Fellow.

In order to precisely analyze the causal impact of a project, it is necessary to compare conditions with project implementation to that of a “counterfactual” condition that would have resulted without project intervention. Unlike in natural science, however, it is almost impossible to obtain counterfactual data in the real world where controlled experiments are not necessarily feasible.

Therefore, to measure these impacts, one usually compares conditions before and after project implementation while also comparing these with the changes observed for the same period in control groups sharing similar conditions as the intervention group.

However, there is an inherent danger of selection bias in this method in that the samples in the pre-intervention groups and/or control groups do not objectively represent the samples that would have been included in the counterfactual data. To eliminate such biases, development economists have started using Randomized Controlled Trials (RCT). Originally developed as a method of efficacy and effectiveness evaluation in medical services, this tool is becoming a mainstream evaluation method of development intervention, with the Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology as one of its strong advocates.

Using this method, JICA-RI’s research on the “School for All” project in Burkina Faso ([JICA-RI Newsletter No.6](#)) is now under way. At the core of this cooperation project is the establishment of school management committees, or COGES. To date, COGES have been created in 334 schools within two target provinces. In this process, the order of COGES establishment



Class in session at a public school targeted by the project

in a region has been randomly determined to eliminate selection bias and to assure accurate measurement of project impacts.

Given these subjects, the research team will compare the changes in conditions of schools and villages before and after the establishment of the COGES. The team will also look at the differences of schools and villages with and without COGES, as they are set up in different villages in different phases. Making these “before and after” and “with and without” comparisons under the RCT, one can expect to make plausible causal inferences on how the establishment of COGES actually leads to various outcomes. This autumn, more COGES will be established in the target regions of the cooperation project. Research will continue on these schools and villages as well.

There is strong interest and expectation for this research project among the officers of the Ministry of Education, municipalities of target regions, and school staff in Burkina Faso. The team intends to actively provide project data and analysis results to these parties for future improvement of projects. The team also intends to share the obtained knowledge as international public goods. This form of impact study, which requires close linkages between field projects and research, leverages the core competence of JICA’s research institute.

JICA-RI is conducting research projects on impact analysis employing similar analytical methods of econometric program evaluation on such projects as maternal and child health care in Indonesia and participatory forest preservation in Ethiopia.

Quantifying the Damages: New Findings on Climate Change Impact on Asian Coastal Cities

JICA-RI's research project on Climate Change and Adaptation is in its final stage.

[This study](#), co-led by JICA-RI Research Fellow Megumi Muto, derives city-level estimates of flood damage costs in the Asian coastal megacities of Manila, Ho Chi Minh City, Bangkok and Kolkata. The majority of Asia's future high growth centers lie in its coastal areas, and according to an Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change report, these areas are among the most vulnerable to adverse effects of climate change.

To address this inevitable threat, this JICA/ World Bank/ Asian Development Bank joint research project has been conducting a quantitative simulation analysis which combines various flood-related disciplines (e.g., hydroanalysis, storm surge, etc.) with global climate data to create downscaled, local flood scenarios for the next half-century.

Aggregate flood damages of up to 24% of Metro Manila's gross regional domestic product could result within half a century if adequate infrastructure improvements are not made, according to a worst case scenario projected in the research.

The practicality of Muto's data lies in the estimated costs of tangible direct losses (e.g., buildings) and indirect ones (e.g., income loss) produced from flood simulations based on geographic information systems.

Muto presented such findings recently at the 2010 Climate Adaptation Futures Conference in Gold Coast, Australia, where the project's comprehensive methodology linking climate scenarios and damage cost was greeted with approval from the audience. The results of all city studies will be compiled into a synthesis report complete with policy recommendations to be

published later this year.

This project is part of JICA-RI's effort to guide policy with research. The findings will be instrumental in producing and implementing comprehensive adaptation guidelines and measures against climate change. These results, in fact, have been supporting ongoing JICA flood control projects in the Philippines, and the findings will also be used by the ASEAN+3 research group on the fiscal and financial impact of climate change.

Special

Examining the Effects of China's Economy on African Economic Growth

In July, JICA-RI published a working paper entitled "[Will China's Recovery Affect Africa's Prospects for Economic Growth?](#)" written by Research Fellow Jean-Claude Maswana.

In the paper, Maswana investigates how China's economy, which has been recovering rapidly from the global financial crisis since 2009, is affecting the growth of certain African economies (i.e., Botswana, Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria and South Africa).

Using aggregate GDP and nonlinear co-integration tests, Maswana found that the adjustment responses of their economic output in response to downturns surpass similar responses to upturns. Other findings suggest that these economies will benefit from a China-led global recovery, though at varying rates for different countries depending on whether their exports contribute to China's production or consumption chains.