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Hot Issue

Field Survey Started: “Prevention of Violent Conflicts in Africa”

The research project “Prevention of Violent Conflicts in Africa” is seeking prevention measures for violent conflicts by studying its mechanisms and processes. Project head Yoichi Mine recently visited South Africa to implement a perception survey and instruct enumerators while co-researcher Yuichi Sasaoka travelled to Uganda and Tanzania for a field survey. [READ MORE](#)



A crowded market in Zanzibar, Tanzania Photo courtesy of Y. Sasaoka

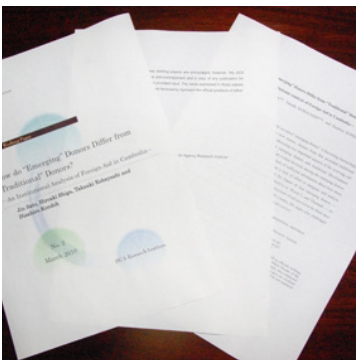


Review

An Event Bridging Researchers and Community

At “Global Festa Japan 2010” held on October 2, JICA-RI hosted a stage event to connect researchers and the community. Four JICA-RI researchers presented respectively on their areas of expertise and fielded questions from the audience.

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Special

JICA-RI Latest Research Findings Published

JICA-RI has recently published the latest findings of its research activities in two new working papers. The aid patterns and motivation of four emerging donor countries are comparatively analyzed in the first paper. In the second paper, a possible source of social unrest within the social strata of an African society has been identified stemming from ethnic consciousness and social inequalities within ethnic groups.

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Field Survey Started: “Prevention of Violent Conflicts in Africa”

The research team for the project “Prevention of Violent Conflicts in Africa” is conducting a survey on citizens’ perceptions focusing on horizontal inequalities in seven African countries. The survey will be conducted in pair studies (eight countries in pairs of four) for comparison across countries, as well as single-country studies (two countries) for comparison over time. The research project aims to contribute to conflict prevention and control by understanding the mechanisms leading to violent conflict. For this study, JICA-RI Visiting Fellow Yoichi Mine (Doshisha University) and JICA-RI Senior Research Fellow Yuichi Sasaoka each travelled separately to three countries.

In preparation for the comparative study of South Africa and Zimbabwe, Mine travelled to Cape Town where he oversaw the training of the survey enumerators.



The survey in South Africa will be carried out by a multiracial team representative of the city’s actual social composition. He found that the enumerators were highly interested and motivated in the contents and results of the survey, and he said that this is, in itself, meaningful that such a perception survey, which includes sensitive questions on race, has come to be possible in the country. Mine realized that the environment that has enabled this very process of these surveys points to the process of democracy taking root in Africa. Twenty years have passed since the release of Nelson Mandela, and celebration of national diversity is fading while majority politics now tends to

prevail. One may detect the subtle changes in race relations from these study results, he pointed out.

Concurrently, Sasaoka traveled to Uganda and Tanzania for the comparative study to exchange views with related parties. He said that these countries share a history of power-concentrating, but contain autonomous regions within their borders. Therefore, it would be meaningful to compare differences in the social situations between the two. Buganda in south central Uganda used to enjoy a high level of autonomy, but now suffers frictions with groups from the northern and, more recently, the emerging western regions. In contrast, in light of the presidential election at the end of this month, Tanzania has been faced with strained relations between the main opposition party of the Civic United Front (CUF) mainly based on the island of Zanzibar – a former independent area – and the ruling party (of the mainland and Zanzibar) Chama Cha Mapinduzi (CCM). Now, a new constitution has been ratified following the past July elections in Zanzibar, and the two parties are expected to form a coalition government. To Sasaoka, in comparison to Uganda, Tanzania seems to be heading toward relative stability in general. The perception survey will start soon in both countries.

Only a few surveys exist on inter-group perceptions in Africa which were concurrently conducted for short periods on such scale as this. According to Mine, the findings from this survey will elucidate the current attitudes of African people on democracy and peace. He says that it is significant that the research can proceed using original, primary data. At present, the surveys are underway in target countries, and intensive analysis will be applied to the data in the next stage.

An Event Bridging Researchers and Community

JICA-RI participated in [an original event](#) on the first day of the Global Festa Japan 2010 held in Tokyo's Hibiya Park on October 2 and 3. With the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) as the theme of the festival, four JICA-RI researchers interacted with the audience by explaining their daily research activities and answering questions.



At the event, Research Fellow Mari Katayanagi who has been involved

in peace building in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Ryutaro Murotani, Research Associate, explained how violent conflicts cast a shadow over people's hearts and impede development. Speaking from experience, Katayanagi said that she always keeps in her mind what development aid can contribute to conflict prevention.

From the viewpoint of a development economics specialist, Research Fellow Jean-Claude Maswana, originally from the Democratic Republic of Congo, informed the audience of the importance of resolving poverty problems and illustrated the significance of MDGs achievement with an example of the still-high Africa infant mortality rate. In addition, Research Associate Kohei Yoshida explained the status of Islam in Southeast Asia and relayed some findings of a countrywide perception survey on identity being conducted in four Southeast Asian countries.

Afterwards, the researchers answered questions from the audience in turn. A university student studying international cooperation asked why conflicts occur and what is most needed to prevent them. Katayanagi cited the danger of propaganda that emphasizes ethnic differences, while Murotani spoke of the

importance of establishing political institutions where people with differences in opinion can seek nonviolent problem resolution. Maswana added the elimination of economic disparity as a sure way to peace.

This event was an opportunity for the general public to have a glimpse of the role of research in development assistance. It also prompted the researchers themselves to reflect on the meaning of conducting research.

Special

JICA-RI Latest Research Findings Published

JICA-RI has recently published the latest findings of its research activities in two new working papers. One paper is the culmination of a comparative research project on emerging donors by former Visiting Research Fellow Jin Sato. The other paper, by JICA-RI collaborator and Cambridge University professor John Lonsdale, explores one facet of an interdisciplinary study on [ethnic diversity and economic instability](#).

In their [paper](#), Sato and co-writer, JICA-RI research officer Hiroaki Shiga, examine the differences and the causal factors among the aid patterns of four Asian emerging donor countries. Such factors include: regional stability, historical ideology, and pressure from international organizations.

Lonsdale makes a socioeconomic, historical [analysis](#) of the relationship between African ethnic consciousness and market transactions. He examines vertical social inequalities within ethnic groups such as between the rich and the poor as a source of social unrest and political pressure, taking two Kenyan ethnic groups as case studies.

[Click here](#) for all JICA-RI working papers