

IN THIS ISSUE:

Hot Issue

Exploring the Relationship between Violent Conflict and People's Perception in Africa

Visiting Fellow Yoichi Mine leads a team for a research project on the prevention of violent conflict in Africa. Focusing on structural factors which lead to armed conflict, this study seeks preventative measures based on the results of an extensive consciousness survey in target countries.

[READ MORE](#)



No more tragedy – children in Uganda

Photo: Koji Sato (JICA)



Reviews

JICA-RI, the World Bank & ASEAN Host Symposium for the *World Development Report 2011*

JICA-RI, the World Bank and ASEAN co-hosted a symposium in Jakarta on April 5 as input for the World Development Report 2011. JICA-RI Director Keiichi Tsunekawa shared his views on state-building and the role of government in economic development. The WDR 2011 framework will be finalized in autumn of this year.

[READ MORE](#)



Reviews

Responding to a Need: Aiding JICA in Aiding Indonesia

Research Fellow Megumi Muto illustrates JICA-RI's unique role in supporting JICA operations. She also updates us on her current joint project with the Indonesian government and IFPRI on poverty reduction in rural Indonesia. She discusses the project's recent publications including five JICA-RI working papers and a presentation at a UN Development Program event.

[READ MORE](#)

Exploring the Relationship between Violent Conflict and People's Perception in Africa

Regarding violent conflicts as a threat to human security and a hurdle to socioeconomic development, JICA-RI considers “Peace and Development” as one of its principal research areas and explores ways to prevent and manage violent conflict in pursuit of post-conflict peace-building. Within this area, Visiting Fellow Yoichi Mine (Doshisha University, Graduate School of Global Studies) heads the research project “[Prevention of Violent Conflicts in Africa](#)” in collaboration with a team of JICA-RI Senior Research Fellows Shinichi Takeuchi and Yuichi Sasaoka, Research Fellows Mari Katayanagi and Satoru Mikami, and outside experts.

The purpose of this project, Mine says, is to ascertain how differences in political institutions can affect the perceptions and behaviors of people in various African countries and determine how these influences are connected to social instability and violent conflict. “We want to derive policy measures that prevent resurgence of conflict which the international community should adopt,” says Mine.

The project focuses on the “structural causes” that breed violent conflict and the “processes.” Within structural causes, there exist in society “horizontal inequalities” (inequalities among groups with similar ethnic or religious identity, etc.). Changes in political institutions can be regarded as a part of the processes. Mine adds that when members of a group are highly aware of horizontal inequality, the situation can deteriorate into a very volatile state.

Research approaches taken include: 1) a comparison between political decentralization

and centralization of power, 2) a survey on people's perception of changes in political institutions and inequality, and 3) a comparative analysis of paired countries with contrasting characteristics. The awareness survey is being conducted in eight countries including Ghana, Nigeria, and Zimbabwe. Comparative studies are ongoing in four groups of target cases including ones in Rwanda and Burundi.



Yoichi Mine, JICA-RI Visiting Fellow

On March 31, the first workshop of the research project was held in London. Along with the JICA-RI researchers, Professors Frances Stewart of the University of Oxford, Sakiko Fukuda-Parr of the New School (USA) and Thandika Mkandawire of the London School of Economics participated as advisers and discussed the direction of the research. The outcome of the project will be published as a series of JICA-RI working papers this fiscal year.

JICA-RI, World Bank & ASEAN Host Symposium for *WDR 2011*

Today, Asian countries for the most part have overcome major conflicts and have achieved relative stability with a few exceptions. Because of the relative successes in state-building and peace-building, many feel that lessons from the “Asian experience” can be applied in other parts of the world. This was the consensus at a regional consultation co-sponsored by JICA, the World Bank and ASEAN held in Jakarta on April 5 and 6.



Keiichi Tsunekawa on the “Asian experience”
Photo courtesy of the World Bank

The event, the second of two co-sponsored by JICA and the World Bank with the [first held in Tokyo](#) on April 2, was intended to provide input to the World Bank’s *World Development Report (WDR) 2011*, scheduled to be released next year. Sarah Cliffe, WDR Special Representative and Director, attended to solicit feedback from the international community.

Expanding on the talks of the Tokyo event, the Jakarta event also centered on conflict, security and development – the focus of *WDR 2011* – but also incorporated the perspectives of a wider audience giving additional angle to the discussions. Direct stakeholder nations like

Cambodia and Timor-Leste attended to voice their opinions to the audience of scholars, practitioners and policy-makers. Nations like Indonesia and the Philippines were represented by not only policy-makers and academia, but also military officials who were involved in recent conflicts.

As part of his contribution to the WDR background data and the event, JICA-RI Director Keiichi Tsunekawa presented policy implications based on East Asian socio-political trends. From the Asian experience, he discussed the dualities of competition, coercion, patronage, identity and self-help within a political leadership and state-building context, elaborating on the conditions where these factors have proven advantageous and fruitful. He also stressed government roles in establishing economic technocracy, and emphasized further need for economic development to enhance people’s self-help capacity.

Other discussions emphasized the economic integration of Asia, thereby underscoring the roles of organizations like ASEAN in stabilizing the region; here, comparisons were drawn to African socio-economic development.

In his speech, Kenzo Oshima, JICA Senior Vice President, mentioned that although major conflicts in Asia are subsiding, there remain other potential factors to destabilize the region such as population explosion, rapid urbanization and climate change, all of which necessitate greater regional cooperation.

Oshima is scheduled to attend a meeting in September in Beijing during which the WDR framework will be finalized. JICA-RI has also provided background information for the WDR through a recently-published [working paper](#).

Responding to a Need: Aiding JICA in Aiding Indonesia

Among JICA-RI's main functions is to provide necessary analytical support for JICA operations. This involves assessing the needs of partner countries to develop improved methods of future assistance. An example of this unique role JICA-RI serves is in a project led by Research Fellow Megumi Muto.



Megumi Muto

In collaboration with the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) and the Indonesian Center for Agriculture Socio Economic and Policy Studies (ICASEPS), Muto and her team are conducting

household and village-level data collection on the service delivery of infrastructure to gauge the efficacy of JICA programs in Indonesia and monitor the effects of the global financial crisis on farm households in rural villages. The project has been providing crucial information to JICA and assessing the post-crisis needs of Indonesia, helping the country to rapidly grasp the effects of the crisis, thereby allowing donors to quickly align their activities toward post-crisis priorities.

What enables the team to derive empirical analyses on the current conditions of rural Indonesia – infrastructure, human capital and agriculture situations among others – is a comprehensive panel data set extracted from long term surveys. “JICA has been financing rural infrastructure projects in Indonesia for many years,” says Muto, “No other dataset has captured rural infrastructure from such a micro-level point of view.” Data collection consists of periodical surveys on almost every aspect of life, ranging from production/employment

and education, to expenditure and location information.

Through this data set, Muto and team have already contributed to the *World Development Report 2009* published by the World Bank and, more recently, published five [working papers](#) on topics related to poverty alleviation and infrastructure. Project findings are also expected to be included in this year's JICA millennium development goals (MDGs) review report.

The team has also presented findings at a workshop sponsored by the UN Development Program and the Indonesia National Development Planning Agency (BAPENNAS) on March 23 and 24 in Jakarta. In her presentation, team member Shinobu Shimokoshi identified specific crops vulnerable to export market prices, thus putting farmers who produce such crops most at-risk to post-crisis effects.

Amid the financial crisis, Muto says that policy-makers are beginning to look ahead at how to redesign the social safety nets of Indonesia and revise those policies in preparation for future risk. Such social safety nets aimed at the poor include government-subsidized food provision, health insurance, cash transfer and rural infrastructure.

Muto intends to respond to this need by providing the necessary analytical information to JICA and the donor community. She points out that contributing to the process of knowledge creation for the international community supports the progress of the MDGs.

Data from this study was used in a recent publication by the Asian Development Bank, [available here](#).