



Japan Education Forum VIII

Collaboration Toward Self-Reliant
Educational Development

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Table of Contents

Foreword	1
Opening Session	2
Opening Remarks by Kan Suzuki , Senior Vice-Minister of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, Japan	
Opening Remarks by Yutaka Banno , State Secretary for Foreign Affairs, Japan	
Executive Summary	4
Keynote Speech “Educational Development and Participation of Local Community” Abou Diarra , Chief of Education Decentralization/Deconcentration Bureau, Ministry of Education Literacy and National Languages, Mali	8
Keynote Speech “Contributions of Local Communities to Realize Better Education –A View from Japanese Educational Policies” Ikuyo Kaneko , Professor, Graduate School of Media and Governance, and Faculty of Policy Management, Keio University	13
Questions and Answers Session with Keynote Speakers	17
Panel Session	24
“School Improvement and Roles of Local Community” Moderator: Waraiporn Sangnapaboworn , Head of International Education Section, Office of National Education Commission, Thailandka	26
Panelists: Gerald W. Fry , Professor, College of Education and Human Development, Department of Organizational Leadership, Policy, and Development, University of Minnesota, USA	29
R. Govinda , Vice-Chancellor, National University of Educational Planning and Administration, India	33
Ibo Issa , National Coordinator, ONEN(Organisation Nigérienne des Educateurs Novateurs), Niger Principal Coordinator, JICA School For All Project	38
Noriaki Mizumoto , Associate Professor, College of Education, School of Human Sciences, University of Tsukuba	43
Questions and Answers Session	46
Concluding Discussions	54
Appendix	59

Foreword

The paramount importance of and urgent call for universalizing quality education is widely shared by the international community in both developing and developed countries. Japan launched its new education cooperation policy at the High-level Plenary Meeting of the sixty-fifth session of the General Assembly of the United Nations (the UN summit on the Millennium Development Goals), expressing that it will actively promote educational cooperation as an indispensable component for realizing human security through an integrated approach for ensuring human rights, sustainable development and world peace. Japan is also leading the international community in advancing the commitments to strengthen international educational cooperation made on the occasions of G8 Summits and TICAD.

The Japan Education Forum (JEF) is an annual international forum established in March 2004 through government and academic collaboration as part of Japan's educational cooperation. Its purpose is to provide an opportunity for open and frank exchanges of opinions and ideas by officials in the public sector, practitioners of international development and NGOs, and scholars, on ways of promoting self-efforts of developing countries toward sustainable educational development, and of effective international cooperation in education. The forum also offers an opportunity to present Japan's own experiences in educational development and its international cooperation in practice.

Local community plays multiple roles in educational improvement and its importance is widely recognized all over the world. Participation of local communities in school education has been emphasized by the UK, US, Japan and other developed countries. In developing countries, communities participate in school construction, financial issues and in-kind contribution to school activities, and school management and decision-making. These show active involvement by the local communities with education promotion, resource mobilization, and quality improvement for school autonomy. Community participation in educational improvement either takes place as a part of decentralizing education administration, or is introduced in the education project assisted by aid agencies, or is advanced as a proactive local initiative concurrently aiming at community empowerment.

It is important to discuss various case studies, effectiveness and challenges regarding relationship between local communities and educational improvement against the backdrop that basic education has been rapidly expanding and the focus of educational development in developing countries has been now directed into improvement of its quality.

This 8th JEF features on the theme of "Educational Improvement and Roles of Local Community" and discusses self-motivated community involvement in the improvement of school education. We warmly welcome all the participants to actively join the discussions.

[Opening Session]

Opening Remarks by **Kan Suzuki**

Senior Vice-Minister of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, Japan

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to all the participants in this 8th Japan Education Forum (JEF). On behalf of the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT), one of the organizers of the program, I would like to extend a warm welcome to all of you.

This forum has been held annually since 2004 with the objective of supporting the self-reliant development of education in developing countries to achieve the “Millennium Development Goals” (MDGs) and “Education for All” (EFA), toward which the international community has been making concerted efforts.

This year we focus on the relationship between educational development and local communities. By introducing Japan’s “community schools” initiative, which seeks community-based management by adequately reflecting the opinions of local communities and parents, we hope that this forum will contribute to the efforts to achieve “School for All” to improve education in developing countries through joint efforts of schools, local communities and governments.

In post-modern societies, the states’ social systems alone cannot effectively address diversified social challenges such as the healthy development of young people and prevention of delinquency. Local communities have become important partners in this effort. There are now high expectations of “community schools,” in which parents and volunteers in local communities become school supporters and collaborate with teachers to improve the school administration and management and help teachers develop their professional skills.

Together with Professor Ikuyo Kaneko, one of the keynote speakers at today’s forum, I proposed the concept of community schools in Japan. After making various efforts, we were able to make the concept a reality when the Local Educational Administration Law was revised in 2004 to institutionalize community schools. Since I was appointed Senior Vice-Minister of MEXT, I have made further efforts to promote *jukugi* (careful contemplation and lively discussions) among people in local communities and the “new public commons school” so that community schools will be widely introduced in Japan.

Building a good relationship between schools and communities is imperative to achieve “good schools and good education.” This is true in both developing and developed countries.

For example, the School Management Committee Support Project, which Japan is promoting in Africa through the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), also emphasizes the importance of the school-community relationship. The project supports in making school management committees functioning properly, in order to improve the educational environment and enhance the quality of basic education.

Professor Kaneko is a pioneer in introducing community schools in Japan. I am sure his lecture will be a thought-provoking one for those who are promoting local communities’ participation in schools to improve education in developing countries, too.

Another keynote speaker, Professor Abou Diarra, from the Ministry of Education, Literacy and National Languages of Mali, is in charge of the School Management Committee Support Project that I mentioned earlier in his country. I expect that he will introduce to us various undertakings in Mali.

In addition, we are also honoured to have four panelists from Japan and abroad. Different countries have different social backgrounds and different needs and ways for local communities in participating school management. I am sure that there would be lively discussions and informative presentations in the afternoon. I hope that the session will provide us useful input for their future activities.

In closing, I would like to thank all of those who gave their time and effort to organize this forum. I sincerely hope that today’s forum will be a productive one to promote the self-reliant development of education by developing countries and the educational cooperation that supports such endeavours.

Thank you

[Opening Session]

Opening Remarks by **Yutaka Banno**
State Secretary for Foreign Affairs, Japan

On behalf of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to all the participants from all over the world who have been contributed to international efforts on the key subject of education, for attending the Japan Education Forum (JEF) VIII.

In Japan, February and March are known as the “Season of entrance examinations” when parents and children become more aware of the future as well as the issue of quality and quantity of education, in experiencing entrance examinations.

Here in Japan, people discuss the quality and quantity of education on this occasion, but such worries may seem fortunate from the international or global viewpoint. Many children all over the world face challenges and difficulties even before the initial stage of education, where the quality and quantity of education cannot be measured. Moreover, recent developments in the Middle East including Egypt make me wonder how children live under such circumstances.

Prime Minister Kan aims at a society in which human suffering is reduced to a minimum, and social injustice is removed. In order to realize such a society, education would be a key tool. I believe that education is the greatest weapon for us to solve global issues confronting each country, including terrorism, poverty, and hunger. In this context, I pledge that Japan will make utmost efforts for supporting children who are facing difficulties in gaining opportunities for education.

I sincerely hope for the great success of this forum.

Thank you very much.

Executive Summary of The Japan Education Forum VIII (JEF-VIII)

- Collaboration Toward Self-Reliant Educational Development -

Japan, in agreement with the international community, including both developed and developing nations, acknowledge that universalizing quality education is of paramount importance. In September of 2010, at the UN summit on the Millennium Development Goals, Japan launched its new education cooperation policy, committing itself to educational cooperation as a key component for realizing human security in terms of human rights, sustainable development and world peace. The Japan Education Forum (JEF), an annual international forum was established in March 2004, facilitating collaboration between government and academic sectors as part of Japan's educational cooperation. The purpose of this forum is to promote the open and frank exchange of opinions and ideas among a range of stakeholders. The forum is jointly organized by Japan's Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT), the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA), Hiroshima University and Tsukuba University. The Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) provided support for this year's forum.

This year's 8th edition of JEF took place at the National Center of Science Building in Tokyo on Feb. 3, 2011. Its theme was "Educational Improvement and Roles of Local Community" and focused on creating a dialogue on the ways in which self-motivated community involvement plays a crucial role in the improvement of school education. The morning session featured two keynote speeches. The first keynote speech was given by linguistic researcher, Professor Abou Diarra, who currently holds a post as the Chief of Education Decentralization/Deconcentration Bureau in Mali's Ministry of Education, Literacy and National Languages. His speech was followed by the second keynote speech, given by Professor Ikuyo Kaneko, Professor at the Graduate School of Media and Governance, and Faculty of Policy Management at Keio University. The afternoon session consisted of a panel discussion, which concentrated on the theme, "School Improvement and the Roles of Local Community". Following the panel discussion, this year's forum was concluded by open floor discussions, and a question and answer session in which attendees from more than ten countries fielded questions and comments. In total more than 110 participants attended this forum including diplomats, development cooperation agency representatives, university faculty members, NGO/NPO's, local school and community members and the general public.

Keynote Speech by Professor Abou Diarra, Chief of Education Decentralization/Deconcentration Bureau, Ministry of Education, Literacy and National Languages, Mali

Professor Diarra's speech was entitled "The Development of Educational Systems and the Participation of Base-Level Communities: The Mali Case" in which he argued that in Africa, the centralized organization and education systems, which were born out of colonial rule are no longer adequate in meeting the needs of quality universal education. Instead, school management competencies and responsibilities should be transferred to local schools and/or authorities, who are in closer proximity to the main beneficiaries of educational services and can take into account the needs and concerns of those constituents. Thus, the decentralization of education is an important key in reaching the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in the field of education. Community schools were adopted in Mali in 1990. These schools are run by School Management Committees (CGS) which are managed by the Mali government's "School Management Committees Support Project" (PACGS) in collaboration with the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA). PACGS outlined three main approaches to make the CGS functional: democratic elections of CGS members, school management technical training of CGS members and the establishment of a sustainable CGS monitoring and supervising system. Thus far, 456 schools have been targets of this project and Mali intends to expand that number to

1,000 next year. Professor Diarra firmly believes that communities, with the help of partners at all levels can support effective school management.

Keynote Speech by Professor Ikuyo Kaneko, Graduate School of Media and Governance, and Faculty of Policy Management, Keio University

In his keynote speech titled, “Contributions of Local Communities to Realize Better Education: A View from Japanese Educational Policies”, Professor Kaneko provided us with an engaging presentation on some of Japan’s current educational policies, and presented a documentary filmed at Nishi-Mitaka School to illustrate the ways in which these policies are being implemented on the ground. He began with outlining some problems Japan as a country faces such as a decreasing population, economic polarization of Japanese society and the increase of disadvantaged Japanese youth. Though Japan is often credited with providing good education for all children in all areas of the country, Professor Kaneko contends that the top-down approach and hierarchical nature of the Japanese public school system is not adequate in the context of the present. A Japanese law was enacted in 2004, which allows boards of education to establish community schools, which are governed by a community school council. These community schools allow for parents, local residents and local teachers to share authority in administrative decisions as well as participating in day-to-day school activities. The documentary shown during the keynote speech highlighted the ways in which the community school approach supports the students and community as well as makes the school’s administration more transparent.

At the conclusion of both keynote speeches, a question and answer session moderated by Professor Kazuhiro Yoshida, Center for the Study of International Cooperation in Education, Hiroshima University, was held. Questions were fielded from audience participants from Malawi, Cameroon, Morocco, Angola, Albania and Japan. Topics included how to evaluate educational quality, how to ensure quality community participation, how to adapt community participation to a pre-school context, sustainability and the competencies acquired by Japanese students as a result of community participation.

Panel Session

A panel session was held in the afternoon and the theme was “School Improvement and Roles of Local Community”. Dr. Waraiporn Sangnapaboworn, Head of International Education Section, Office of National Education Commission, Thailand served as a presenter and was also the moderator for this session. Experts in issues dealing with the decentralization of education in developing countries from India, Niger, the United States and Japan were called upon to participate as panelists.

Dr. Waraiporn began the session with a presentation centered upon Thailand’s 1999 National Education Act, which aims at facilitating the collaboration of what she termed, “The Three Pillars of Thai Society”: the home, school and temple. Through the decentralization of power in the education sector, these three entities have been placed with greater authority in local schools through the formation of a school council, which supervises and supports the management of each school. In her presentation, she outlined the stages of progress of the act from its inception to the present. Though the roles of each of the three entities were somewhat unclear in the beginning, it has evolved into a successful collaboration.

The second panelist of the day was Professor Gerald W. Fry, Department of Organizational Leadership, Policy, and Development, College of Education and Human Development, University of Minnesota. Professor Fry’s presentation focused on the rural northeast area of Thailand, which has historically “lagged behind” other regions. Fry contends that government reforms in education should be guided by the following five principles: fiscal neutrality, equity, equality,

empowerment and putting the last first. These can be promoted through the decentralization of education and increased community involvement. However, there must be genuine commitment from the government to both empowerment and equity for these goals to be achieved. Namely, Professor Fry contends that *compensatory* distribution of resources should be given to disadvantaged communities.

Next, Professor R. Govinda, Vice chancellor of the National University of Educational Planning and Administration (NUEPA), New Delhi, presented some critical issues in community participation and school improvement in India. The involvement of the community in school management stems from three rationales: democracy rationale, social justice and equity rationale, and economic rationalism and free market principle. Community participation can help to facilitate improved enrollment, improved infrastructure and facilities, additional supplementary resources, oversight of development projects and improved social watch. In terms of student enrollment, Professor Govinda contends that community oversight is extremely important as only those who can see the reasons for student dropout firsthand can help solve the problems on the ground. He concluded by stating the need to bring the potential diverse range of community participants onto a common platform, and the need for all parties, from the government down to be ready for a long term consistent engagement.

Mr. Ibo Issa, National Coordinator, NGO ONEN and Principal Coordinator, JICA/EPT Project introduced the experience of Niger's educational development through community participation. The presentation gave a pragmatic analysis of the achievements of school management committees in Niger known as COGES. With assistance from JICA via its "School for All" project (EPT), the COGES scheme in Niger was transformed from an ineffective policy to one which has achieved tangible success. Its success was due in part to three key components: democratic elections of its committee members, integrated monitoring system and 'school action plans'. This approach has gained the attention of neighboring countries, Mali, Burkina Faso and Senegal, which have sent delegations to Niger in order to implement this strategy in their own countries. Through continued development of this policy, Niger's Ministry of National Education seeks to further improve the quality of education in the areas of study hours, learning environment and the quality of teaching/learning.

The final presentation of the session was made by Professor Noriaki Mizumoto, Associate Professor at the College of Education, School of Human Sciences, University of Tsukuba in which he discussed the role of community in schools in the case of Japan. Professor Mizumoto contends that although the community has historically had close ties and played a major role in Japanese schools, the changing climate of education from local as well as global perspectives has caused Japan to reevaluate the role of the local community in schools. Due to recent government policies to decentralize education, local schools have been required to deal with complicated issues on their own initiative. Thus, schools must rely on the local community for human resources, extracurricular opportunities and improved safety measures. In the context of Japan, collaboration between the school and community must be promoted through activities to support children rather than school governance as many of Japan's local constituents are not interested in school governance, but rather student activities. Finally, to better manage schools, stakeholders must be able to design venues for collaboration, facilitate active communication, organize discussion and make democratic decisions in order to improve schools in the future.

An open floor question and answer session with the panelists took place following Professor Mizumoto's presentation and was moderated by Dr. Waraiporn and Professor Mizumoto. Following a brief recap of each presenter by Dr. Waraiporn, the floor was open to participants of JEF in which questions and comments were fielded from participants from Indonesia, Angola, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Cameroon, and Japan. Participants addressed topics such as the economic importance of decentralization, difficulties in facilitating cooperation in multicultural communities, long-term sustainability of local projects, and the degree to which the community should get involved.

Finally, Professor Kazuhiro Yoshida, Hiroshima University, moderated the concluding discussion in which he invited each panelist and keynote speaker to briefly add any additional comments to the discussion. Following their comments, Professor Yoshida stressed that regardless of the country or community, the mutual relationship between the community and school is not only a classic issue but also an important current issue. This forum provided a good opportunity to address various issues related to this topic. With that, JEF VIII was concluded.

[Keynote Speech]

“Educational Development and Participation of Local Community”



Abou Diarra

Chief of Education Decentralization/Deconcentration Bureau,
Ministry of Education, Literacy and National Languages, Mali

Abou DIARRA is a linguistic researcher who graduated from the Linguistic Institute of the Science Academy of Moscow. He has worked for the Ministry of Education for over 18 years, mainly in the National Pedagogic Institute and the National Center of Education. He has been successively put in charge of various tasks at different levels of responsibility. He is one of the leading contributors to the development and implementation of the Ten-Year Program for Development of Education (PRODEC) which is the current education policy in Mali. Also, he is now Chief of the Education Decentralization/Deconcentration Bureau (CADDE) which is currently running the “School Management Committee Support Project” with the help of JICA. He has deep knowledge and a wealth of experience in the Malian educational system.

“Educational Development and Participation of Local Community”

Abou Diarra

**Chief of Education Decentralization/Deconcentration Bureau,
Ministry of Education, Literacy and National Languages, Mali**

Introduction:

From independence in 1960 until the 1990s, organizational and managerial policies regarding education systems remained heavily inspired by the colonial system in most developing countries; this was particularly so in French-speaking African countries. The education systems of these countries are characterized by, among other things, elitism and an extremely centralized style of management.

From the World Conference on Education in Jomtien, Thailand (1990) to the World Education Forum in Dakar, Senegal (2000), significant progress has been made towards reaching Education For All (*Ecole pour tous*, or EPT) goals in most developing countries. These results were made possible thanks to tremendous efforts made by the states themselves, as well as to their technical and financial partners.

Despite the encouraging progress achieved in these countries—notably concerning children’s access to education and teaching quality—one is forced today to acknowledge the limitations of these organizational et managerial policies, this at a time when the local communities are aspiring to greater democracy and calling for their share of responsibilities in the management of educational institutions.

In this context, governments and their partners in development have grown increasingly cognizant of the fact that one of the keys to reaching the Millennium Development Goals(MDGs) in the field of education resides in the decentralized and de-concentrated management of education systems.

Indeed, today the old forms of centralized organization and management of education systems can no longer meet the enormous needs of quality universal education. On the other hand, if school management competences and responsibilities are transferred to the level of local authorities or schools—in other words, closer to the main beneficiaries of education services—school management and the quality of education service will improve and take increasingly into account the needs and concerns of those beneficiaries; thus the importance and validity of decentralizing education.

I. STATE OF THE FIELD:

The analysis of the education system carried out by Mali while the country was elaborating its PRODEC showed a lack of partners related to and working for schools. The orientations of the Education Sector Investment Program (*Programme d’Investissement Sectoriel de l’Education* or PISE) implemented to make the PRODEC operational confirm the engagement of the Malian government to bring to order a decentralization and de-concentration policy regarding education through the transfer of necessary competence and resources to local authorities and to De-concentrated Government Services.

Regarding the delegation of competences from state to local authorities, under the terms of Decree #02-313/P-RM of 4 June 2002, 19 competences were transferred to *Communes*, nine to the Council of *Cercles* and eight to the Regional Assembly. Under the terms of Decree #02-313/P-RM, local authorities and local communities can now exercise several functions, including the construction, outfitting and maintenance of primary schools, the management of human resources made available to them and the organization and operation of school lunch programme

Regarding community-based school management, let us remind the reader that the introduction of community schools was adopted in Mali in 1990. Today, there are more than 2,000 community schools at the primary education (i.e. almost a third of all primary schools). A community school is a school established and managed by the community. The creation of such schools contributed greatly to the amelioration of the schooling of Malian children. Local communities have displayed great willpower and unflagging commitment to the promotion of children's education. They demonstrated their capacity and potential to play an important role in the development of Mali's education system.

Drawing lessons from the results obtained by community schools in school management at local level, the National Education Ministry—in concordance with decentralization legislation and within the framework of the education sector policy (PRODEC)—judged necessary the establishment of a consensual structure in all Malian schools, to be achieved via the School Management Committee (*Comité de Gestion Scolaire* or CGS). In order to make it easier for local authorities to exert their jurisdiction at the school level, Decree #04-0469/MEN-SG (April 9 2004) regarding the creation, organization and operating modes of School Management Committees (CGS) was adopted. CGS are managerial organizations that engage the community in a genuine partnership built around the school. The CGS constitutes an extremely important tool for local authority- and community-based school management. Every primary school in Mali has a CGS. Nevertheless, one is forced to acknowledge that most of the established CGS are not functional: this due to the system of electing members, to the lack of training available to these members regarding techniques of participatory school management, to the actors' lack of appreciation of their roles and responsibilities, and finally to the fact that there is no monitoring mechanism in place.

To make the CGS functional the Ministry of Education, Literacy and National Languages of Mali initiated a project entitled "School Management Committees Support Project" (*Projet d'Appui aux Comités de Gestion Scolaire* or PACGS) in collaboration with the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA). Initiated in May of 2008, PACGS is today in its first phase. PACGS targeted 156 schools during the first year of implementation and 300 more during its second year. In total, the project targeted 456 schools during its first two years of implementation.

PACGS applied three main approaches to make CGS functional:

- 1. Democratic establishment of CGS members through secret-ballot elections:** compared to other methods of selecting CGS members, this process makes it possible to choose people that are trusted by the community.
- 2. CGS member training in participatory school management techniques:** training themes revolve around the roles and responsibilities of the CGS in school management, the elaboration of the school project and the action plan, the mobilization of resources, the execution, monitoring and evaluation of activities, administrative management as well as financial and materials management.
- 3. Establishment of a sustainable CGS monitoring and supervising system:** PACGS organized training sessions in order to strengthen the capacities of de-concentrated and decentralized government services in terms of implementing and operating the grouping together of the different CGS within a *commune*, as well as in terms of supervising dialogue regarding the grouping together of the different CGS within a single Pedagogical Activity Center (*Centre d'Animation Pédagogique* or CAP).

According to the experiences of the 456 target schools of the project, communities actively carried out activities contributing to the improvement of learning conditions. This materialized notably in areas such as building classrooms out of *banco* (a type of mud-brick), building and fixing school desks with attached benches, building latrines, digging wells, transporting drinking water, implementing school pharmacies, buying school supplies, building accommodations for teachers, organizing night classes, planting trees, planting school gardens, carrying out public awareness campaigns regarding girl's education, building school fences out of *banco*, recruiting a property manager, etc.

In total, **1351 activities** have been carried out by the 387 CGS (i.e. an average of 3.5 activities per CGS); all of

these activities were programmed and carried out by the communities themselves. A total of **145,881,125 Fcfa** were invested by the 387 CGS (an average of **376,954 Fcfa** per CGS).

Other results of the project worth noting:

- **456** CGS were established democratically through secret-ballot elections;
- Based on voting lists, an average of **100.12** voters per school participated, of which **58 %** were men and **42 %** were women;
- Out of fourteen elected members per board, an average of **four** women were elected;
- **29** CGS presidents are women;
- 412 CGS (**90.4%**) elaborated a school project and 426 CGS (93.4%) elaborated an action plan;
- 387 CGS (**84.9%**) have produced an annual report.

Monitoring/evaluating missions of PACGS made possible the following observations regarding functional CGS coupled with community participation in educational development:

1. Amelioration of access to education: development of school infrastructures and furniture (building classrooms, latrines, water extraction points, etc.); public awareness campaigns, particularly regarding girl's education (daily local awareness activities); monitoring of student attendance.

2. Amelioration of educational quality: teacher support (help with lodging, salaries, teacher training, support for Teacher Training Communities); improvements in school performance (organization of supplementary classes, rewarding outstanding students, purchase of textbooks and of school supplies); monitoring of teacher attendance.

3. Improvement of school management: better management of funds from the "Direct Support to Improve School Performance" plan (*Appui Direct à l'Amélioration des Rendements Scolaires* or ADARS), granted by the government and the World Bank; better management of school infrastructure maintenance and furniture; better management and maintenance of textbooks; better communication with authorities and with school administration; active participation in the management of school cafeterias.

Regarding participatory school management in French-speaking African countries, Japan International Cooperation Agency's support began in Niger in 2004. Seeing conclusive results there, JICA progressively extended its collaboration to Senegal in 2007, Mali in 2008 and Burkina Faso in 2009. JICA supports the initiative of these four countries to meet and share their experiences once a year.

It is in this context that a sub-regional workshop on decentralized school management, initiated by the governments of the participating countries and by JICA, was organized in Bamako in February of 2010. This workshop on decentralized school management, which included Mali, Senegal, Niger and Burkina Faso, enabled experts from these countries to share their experiences.

II. PERSPECTIVES: The progressive generalization of the functional CGS model is included in phase III of Mali's Education Sector Investment Program (PISE). During the third year of the program the extension of functional CGS will target 1000 schools located throughout all regions of Mali and in the Bamako District. In total the project will cover 1469 schools. Activities for the generalization of the functional CGS model are scheduled to start in all primary schools of Mali in the last quarter of 2011. Perspectives will principally concern the enormous challenges to come in the progressive generalization of the functional CGS model to all schools in Mali. It will mean, among other things, a rereading of the Decree relative to CGS operating modes in order to integrate all of the approaches applied by PACGS.

III. CONCLUSION: Mali, through PRODEC, has committed itself to deepening decentralization and de-concentration and to realizing a transparent management/decentralization/planning of education, giving greater responsibilities to local authorities and local communities.

These communities are developing a wide panel of activities, all geared towards improving learning conditions in schools. A great potential for solving school problems at their root lies within these communities and through these activities. From the experience acquired in Mali through community schools and particularly through PACGS, we strongly believe that local communities can participate effectively in school management. In spite of the great potential of these communities to solve current school problems, one is forced to note that communities alone cannot solve all of them: That is why it is essential that actors and partners as a whole, at all levels, make synergistic efforts to support and reinforce the local community actions in school management.

[Keynote Speech]

“Contribution of Local Communities to Realize Better Education -A View from Japanese Educational Policies”



Ikuyo Kaneko

Professor, Graduate School of Media and Governance, and Faculty of Policy
Management, Keio University

Ikuyo KANEKO is Professor of the Keio University Graduate School of Media and Governance and since October 2009 has also served as Executive Director of the Keio Research Institute at the Shonan Fujisawa Campus. He graduated from Keio's Faculty of Engineering and obtained a Ph.D. from Stanford University. He was Associate Professor at the University of Wisconsin and Professor at Hitotsubashi University before taking up his present position in 1994. He concurrently served as Principal of Keio Yochisha Elementary School from 1999 to 2002. His fields of research include information organizations, network studies and community studies.

Contribution of Local Communities to Realize Better Education -A View from Japanese Educational Policies

Ikuyo Kaneko

**Professor, Graduate School of Media and Governance,
and Faculty of Policy Management, Keio University**

1. Japan's declining birthrate and aging society

The population of Japan is rapidly decreasing and aging. As page 2 of the handout shows, the population has been decreasing since peaking in 2005. Japan's society is also aging (page 3). The number of elementary school-age children has decreased by half over the last 50 years (page 4).

The international community has given a high evaluation of the public education in Japan, but major concerns have been voiced, particularly in recent years. As page 5 shows, i) students are less motivated or willing to study, ii) there is a tendency for students to do relatively well on problems that have clear-cut answers while doing less well on problems that test reading comprehension and logical or creative thinking abilities, and iii) as the social divide in Japan is actually widening, there is a growing tendency for parents' economic and education levels to have ramifications across generations. As for the third concern, page 6 shows a clear tendency. The 2007 national standard test and life survey showed that test scores and family situations were strongly co-related.

Education has become increasingly important for Japan, with its limited natural resources and land and now a declining population.

Japanese education has gained a certain reputation in the international community, but parents and the general public seem to be more dissatisfied and distrustful of public schools. Responding to this situation and to the changing society, innovative educational reform has been taking place from two different directions. One is the approach from the outside or the top-down approach to vitalize school education by introducing a kind of market principle, which calls for competition, evaluation and accountability. The other is the approach from the inside or the bottom-up approach to bring about change by promoting decentralization, school autonomy and participation by local communities to respect the opinions of the recipients of education. In other words, this bottom-up approach is intended to change education from the inside by making schools more autonomous while promoting school-community cooperation.

The "contribution of local communities" of the title of this presentation, refers to the latter approach. Past surveys and observations have shown that by effectively utilizing the approach from the outside, such as the widely introduced school evaluation required by law and the national standard test (now changed from a complete survey to a sample survey), and the support of local communities and their active participation in school management can make schools that tend to be "closed" more transparent and foster a sense of ownership among parents and local communities. This contributes to the vitalization of schools and cultivates a better school-community relationship, which results in improving school education (page 8). In fact, a survey of all the elementary and junior high schools in Adachi Ward, Tokyo, indicates that the participation of communities in classrooms and in school events brings about positive changes in the school-community relationship and that a key factor in bringing about these changes is the participation of communities in school management (master's thesis by Ayako Umegae, Keio University, 2003).

2. National Commission on Educational Reform and community schools

As I mentioned, although the international community has recognized that Japanese public education is at a relatively high level, dissatisfaction with and distrust of public schools are growing. Various social and economic

developments are behind this. With rapid globalization, Japan has made a radical shift toward a competitive society in which the economy is given the highest priority. As society has become more information-oriented, the concept that the country's society and economy are led by individuals has become dominant, rather than the traditional concept of group initiatives, in which Japan is said to have excelled. With these changes, there is a stronger tendency to demand self-responsibility. The social divide has widened as well.

Today, a wide range of information is easily available to anyone anywhere. Children are exposed to an environment full of different stimuli. In some cases, they get into bad company without their parents knowing it. Due to the lower birthrate, the high expectation of parents and society puts pressure on children. In our society, while anyone who is energetic and quick to seize opportunities can succeed, there are an increasing number of apathetic children who give up from the beginning. As family ties and community bonds weaken, existing institutions including schools are losing their authority. The traditional authority that has, for better or worse, placed limits on children's behavior is also weakening. Due to these changes, children's living environment and their ways of thinking are undergoing drastic changes, and the educational administration system seems to be unable to keep up with these social changes.

With the National Commission on Educational Reform in 2000, the Japanese educational policies began to change in line with the changing society. The final report submitted by the commission made 17 proposals for school reform, which aimed at transforming the existing bureaucratic pyramid system of educational administration from two different directions: by vitalizing it from the outside and by promoting changes from the inside.

The second subcommittee of the National Commission on Educational Reform made specific proposals in each of the following five key areas for improving school education: i) to create a system in which teachers' enthusiasm and efforts are rewarded and evaluated, ii) to create schools that are trusted by their communities, iii) to introduce the concept of "organization management" into schools and boards of education, iv) to make lessons easy to understand and effective from the children's standpoint, and v) to establish new types of schools (such as "community schools"). Many of these proposals made by the subcommittee were institutionalized over the years. In many ways, they anticipated the subsequent direction of Japanese school reform.

The introduction of community schools, an approach from the inside, is symbolic of the policy changes that have taken place since 2000, granting more independence to schools and communities (and calling for more accountability) by promoting the decentralization of education, allowing more autonomy to schools, and promoting school-community cooperation.

Community schools are a mechanism by which parents and local residents participate in school management with a certain authority and responsibility. Local school boards designate community schools and form community school councils at these schools. Compared to the existing public school system, this is an extremely decentralized system as the national and prefectural governments do not take the lead. The law stipulates that the community school council shall include representatives of parents and local residents, that the council has the authority to approve the annual school management plan, and that it has the right to express its opinions to the authority over personnel issues and recommend teachers to be assigned to the school. The law also says that the authority must respect the council's recommendations. All these imply that the members of the council, as well as the school principal are responsible for school management. As of the end of 2010, more than 600 community schools had been established in Japan.

3. Case study in Mitaka: community schools that offer unified primary and lower secondary education

Mitaka, a city in Tokyo, has formulated its educational policies based on its own guiding principles. One of the key policies is to establish one community school which unifies elementary schools and a junior high school in each junior high school district. In fact, by April 2008 the city had designated all the municipal elementary and junior high schools

as community schools, by establishing a community school called *gakuen* (meaning school or campus) in each of its junior high school districts. In this way, Mitaka has introduced unified primary and lower secondary education in all of its junior high school districts.

According to the survey on Nishi-Mitaka Gakuen, the first community school that offered unified primary and lower secondary education in Mitaka, the school achieved positive results from the first year. The community school council conducted evaluations and hearings on the establishment of *gakuen* that offered unified primary and lower secondary education and found that many students, particularly those in the sixth grade (at the two elementary schools) and the seventh grade (at the junior high school), gave positive answers to the questions related to good collaboration among the three schools, good collaboration of the teachers between the elementary schools and the junior high school, and the availability of more elective subjects. The sixth and seventh graders are the students who have more opportunities to interact under the unified-school system. The interaction between elementary and junior high school students was found to be particularly effective. Many students gave positive answers to the questionnaire. The report said that the three schools acted in concert on promoting greeting to teachers and among students, cleaning campaigns and in other activities, and that the elementary school students learned from what the junior high school students were doing and started volunteer activities at nearby kindergartens. The report also said that the junior high students participating in community events outside school took good care of younger children. The principal of the *gakuen* and the staff in charge of school collaboration also said that there were significant positive effects on teachers, as the elementary school teachers and the junior high school teachers came to stand on an equal footing and achieved consistency in giving far-sighted guidance to the students. This tendency coincides with the results of the nationwide survey on schools that offer unified primary and lower secondary education (master's thesis by Risako Toyama, Keio University, 2007).

The community school, which offers unified primary and lower secondary education, has also had a positive effect on the efforts of the parents and the local community to support schools. About 30 parents and local community residents became members of the community school council and actively participated in school management, carrying out school evaluations and other activities. The membership of the school support group increased from about 250 in 2006 (school year) to about 320 in 2007 (school year). The total number of person-days for these support activities increased drastically from about 890 to about 2,300. As for teaching support, the total number of person-days increased from 630 in 2006 to 1500 in 2007. Nishi-Mitaka Gakuen is a joint organization of three schools, but the community collaboration has become extremely active. This is thought to be a positive effect of establishing a community school offering unified primary and lower secondary education.

Nishi-Mitaka Gakuen carries out a thorough school evaluation. The evaluation of the second year showed improvement in almost all items compared with the first year. For example, in the first year, 44% of the parents answering the school evaluation said that they were not satisfied with the unified curriculum and with the classes. In the second year, the dissatisfaction rate decreased to 33 percent. As for the interaction between the elementary schools and the junior high school, more students answered positively in the second year than in the first year. More parents and local residents also participated in school-support activities in the second year, as I mentioned earlier.

Aside from community schools, in order to respond to social trends, there are an increasing number of educational policies and systems that promote decentralization to encourage community participation and local autonomy. It is important to consider that these policies and institutions, including community schools, are only "instruments" to bring about "good schools." What is important is will power and actions by parents and local residents as well as teachers for the betterment of local schools.

[Questions and Answers with Keynote Speakers]

Kazuhiro Yoshida (Professor, Center for the study of International Cooperation in Education (CICE), Hiroshima University)

Thank you Professor Kaneko for your interesting video and presentation. At this time we will take questions to the speakers, who we again invite to the stage.

Question 1: Aki Yonehara (Research Fellow, JSPS)

My question is for Professor Diarra, who spoke about education evaluation. When it comes to evaluation, I believe that it has more to do with the number of persons who participate in the seminars and the physical aspect of who is involved in education. That being said, however, I don't think that the quality of and satisfaction level with education, which we are promoting, can be quantitatively evaluated. Therefore under such circumstances, I think that it is still insufficient to evaluate education at this time. In the case of Mali, the Professor had shown an index used to evaluate education, so I would like to have his advice on how we would be able to do that.

Question 2: Vyda Yakobe (Teacher, Ministry of Education, Malawi)

First of all, thank you, Professor Diarra, for a wonderful presentation. I also commend the Government of Mali for putting in various strategies to improve the quality of education. You mentioned about the transfer of resources. What measures is the Government of Mali putting into place to ensure equity in the distribution of resources?

Question 3: Bihina Philomine (Ministry of Basic Education, Cameroon)

This is a double-barreled question posed to Professor Diarra. First of all I have some worries: I wonder if the 'community approach' is not the state essentially giving up its responsibility to provide basic education for all children. Second, given the demands for quality that we can make at the community level of project management, how did you identify and determine the quality of human resources needed for the community approach?

Abou Diarra (Chief of Education Decentralization/Deconcentration Bureau, Ministry of Education, Literacy and National Languages, Mali)

Thank you for the questions. First of all, in answer to the last question, I don't think that the state is giving up its responsibility by asking the community to take charge. True, the state has a duty to offer quality education to all the children of the country, but for a long time we felt that the state could do all of this alone. However, even though it is the duty of the state to do this, our experience shows that the state simply does not have the means to do everything regarding education by itself; the task must be shared. So it is important not to ask the state alone to take care of teaching and education. The state and the beneficiaries of education, the people, must work hand in hand and this is what the community school aims to be.

The communities ask the state for structures that would suit the children. Well in our countries the reality is that the states do not always have the means and the communities are not going to sit on their hands, waiting until the state can give them the resources. This is why in Mali we decided that the communities that wish to and can afford to create schools have the right to do so. I showed that some things such as teachers' salaries must remain with the state; but the communities can take care of the maintenance of schools, as this can usually be done with local materials. Yes, the state has the responsibility, but cannot do it alone; hence the need to share.

In reaching the conclusion that the community school was the best option, we first tried to sensitize the population

so they could understand what the schools could bring to them and understand what we wanted to do through this community approach. Then we had the school management committees put in place. We explained to everybody the different roles and responsibilities, after which we wrote the action plans and looked for resources. Finally, we came up with a follow-up mechanism in order to see whether these committees were working or not.

The second question was asked about the transfer of funds from the state to the communities. We understood that centralized management of resources had a limiting effect in that the state was not in a position to appreciate the needs of the users. The users know their needs much better, which is why whatever the limited means the state has, these resources must be put into the hands of the beneficiaries so that they can use them in the most efficient way. This is why we decentralized, so that competencies and money could be handed over to the communities.

We apply a financial law to the distribution of resources. We have the specific criteria based on the size of the structure, for example, a school with a small number of children will receive less and a large school will receive more, taking into account the number of people working there. There are additional criteria on which we base the sharing of resources between all the different projects.

Now I'm not sure that I understood the first question. Was it about the evaluation of the quality of education? Could the person who asked that question be more specific? Are we talking about evaluating schools and the participation of the communities in the development of schools or are we talking about the evaluation of the quality of the teaching in general?

Aki Yonehara (Research Fellow, JSPS)

My interest is in actually in both areas, but my question was about the policy-making for example, with the participation of schools; how you value the satisfaction level as well as the quality. I would also like to hear from you about [evaluating] the teaching in school from those perspectives.

Abou Diarra (Chief of Education Decentralization/Deconcentration Bureau, Ministry of Education, Literacy and National Languages, Mali)

Thank you for that clarification. Regarding the transfer of resources to the local communities; today local communities can exert their authority regarding maintenance and building of schools. We have, for the first time, assessed the work done by the local communities and the quality of services for constructing schools is not satisfactory because the procedures that have to be followed in order to implement these works are not being followed. So we believe that the community has to be supported from the technical and administrative perspectives. We have to follow up to see how classes are being built. So this is just a start and local communities have started to take it upon themselves to provide these services. However, they still need to be supported so that the quality becomes as good as or better than what it used to be when the state was responsible for doing everything.

In terms of the evaluation of education in general, we have the traditional service to make assessments in terms of educational quality, but it's not only about the teaching, but also the school environment in its entirety that needs to be assessed in order to allow children to be educated under the best circumstances. We have the inspectors, but in my country the reality is different to that of Japan. There are logistical issues in that the inspectors need to go into the field on a regular basis to assess and support teachers. So we are trying to make the areas smaller so that inspectors can provide reinforced support to the teachers.

Kazuhiro Yoshida (Professor, Center for the study of International Cooperation in Education (CICE), Hiroshima University)

Thank you very much. So we have had the question about if and how well education has improved as a result of community participation. Second we had the issue of resources transfer and how it is affected by distribution criteria and decentralization to the community. I think Professor Kaneko, that the question about the community level issues was also posed based on your part of the presentation. Therefore, if possible, I would appreciate your comments on this.

Ikuyo Kaneko (Professor, Graduate School of Media and Governance, and Faculty of Policy Management, Keio University)

As I said, on the surface the community schools in Mali and Japan appear similar in the idea or the basic philosophy, but I think in reality, they are quite different. With community schools in Japan, there is only a tiny transfer of authority. There is no transfer of money or any basic material. However, I think that in countries such as Mali, facilities and resources need to be transferred at the same time as the authority. In Japan, as I said the governance of education has traditionally been very hierarchical and it was very successful in the past, but there is a big hole open, which may show some direction for the future. We do have to consider that we share philosophy, but the methods have to be different in other countries. Thank you

Question 4: Lahoucine Rahmouni (Counselor, Moroccan Embassy)

First of all I'd like to thank the hosts of this forum. This is very important, I believe, because education plays a very important role in our societies and notably in the societies of developing countries. I would like to thank the Japanese government through the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology for the support that they have provided to the developing countries and especially our region in Africa. I would also like to thank Professor Diarra for a very clear presentation and I would like to commend you for this pilot experience, which may encourage other countries to follow in your footsteps. It is in that perspective that I would like to pose my question. Do you have any similar programmes or ideas with regard to pre-school education? I believe that if community collaboration starts at an early stage, people will understand it easier and the children will grow up through primary school being used to it, which I think is very positive. Once again, thanks very much.

Question 5: Yuriko Kameyama (Save the Children Fund)

Thank you for this opportunity to ask a question. I represent Save the Children and I very much appreciate your invaluable presentations. My question is to Professor Kaneko, about the quality of community school. What have been the effects on these students in terms of descriptive and comprehension ability; areas in which Japanese students tend to rank lower? With the introduction of community schools, have there been any positive effects in these areas?

Ikuyo Kaneko (Professor, Graduate School of Media and Governance, and Faculty of Policy Management, Keio University)

First of all I would like to say that in Mali they have been doing a tremendous job in changing the situation there and I commend their government for that. I have much less to commend the Japanese government for in this regard (Laughs). I think the power of the people is doing that and the government has created a framework that makes these things possible.

There are two major problems in public school education in Japan. One is the so-called "first grade problem" in which new pupils face adjustment trouble when they transfer from kindergarten to 1st grade. The other is the

seventh grade problem caused by transition from elementary to junior high school. Elementary school education is more intimate; person to person, and as soon as one gets to junior high there tends to be more formulae and rote memorization, the result of which is that many students tend to fall behind, especially in Math and Science. It is the so-called “seventh grade problem”.

Going back to the pre-school, we have a large number of private kindergartens. Those who can afford to pay for these kindergartens are very limited. In families where both parents work, as well as single-parent families, children tend to go to the public nursery schools, and there is a long wait for children to get into these schools for which there is a greater demand due to their lower fees because these nursery schools are subsidized by taxes. There are supposedly one million children waiting to get in. At the same time, with the decline of Japan’s economic situation, there are many more families in which both parents have to work. Many children cannot go to public nursery schools even if it is their hope, while at the same time, many children spend a long time apart from their parents. There is a great need for the Japanese society and government to cope with this situation, which is yet to happen.

To the second question, the community schools on a whole started recently, and as such there hasn’t been sweeping conclusive social change. Nevertheless, one very salient result occurred for example in the city of Mitaka (Tokyo), where they adopted the community school scheme at the same time as a nine-year comprehensive programme of elementary and junior high school, partly to cope with the transition to junior high schools. The teachers of both levels communicate with each other and exchange classes. As a result, there has been a very clear tendency that the satisfaction level of sixth graders and seventh graders, those two years that are more in contact with the teachers of the different schools, is very high compared to the children in other grades.

Students’ ability to comprehend or provide descriptive answers is particular to a school or region, so I don’t think there is any uniform positive or negative result in the community schools. However, there is a case in which one of the schools that was very troubled with violence, negligence and so forth, became a very good school in which students can study calmly by adopting the community school [approach], and by doing so were getting more support from the local residents. This doesn’t mean that all community schools are successful in creating that situation, but the community school provides a slight chance for the improvement of the school system in Japan and in that sense it is successful.

Abou Diarra (Chief of Education Decentralization/Deconcentration Bureau, Ministry of Education, Literacy and National Languages, Mali)

I would like to respond to that question on community schools. In Africa the concept of community school is linked to the relationship between community and schools. Schools are a foreign institution to our societies; brought by colonization. The state has taken upon itself to organize schools and to the people it seems that this is something for the state and by the state. Public schools are there in the village, but children don’t go to school and people are unconcerned. Buildings become dilapidated and no one cares because this is something that belongs to the state. However, when the people started to understand that schools have to be developed and created for the children, things started to change. They started to take ownership. When the communities have built the schools by themselves things have changed. Even when school is not in session, the community takes care to maintain the school buildings. Parents have contributed for the children to go to school, so they are concerned about whether their children actually attend school or not; whether they are benefitting. This is different from when the state was in charge.

Parents have started to understand that schools are their concern also. In Mali an assessment was conducted on academic performance in community and public schools. The performance in some community schools was better than that of the public schools. We have asked ourselves whether it was because teachers are better trained in community schools or is it because they have better teaching materials, or a better teaching framework than in public schools,

but it was none of these. We found that public school teachers were better trained, had more teaching materials, and were being visited on a more regular basis by inspectors and other support staff. The difference was that parents have taken ownership and they are present. This was the determining factor. So even though the teacher may not be highly qualified, they are more concerned for and take better care of the children. I'm not saying that all community schools are good schools and all public schools are bad schools. Rather, the fact that the people are thinking that they have to monitor, look after and pay the teachers and maintain the buildings makes a big difference. If it's anything that has to do with the school: school lunches, the cafeteria, it's very important that they take ownership. This is the attitude that we wanted to take from community schools and introduce in public schools through the CGS. So the government in 2004 decided to create CGS in public schools as well. These used to have PTAs, but the PTAs were not visiting schools every day, only being present when there were issues, whereas CGS are found in the field every day. The community has a role to play in public schools as well as in community schools.

In answer to the comment from my Moroccan colleague, I would like to say that I share his view. The experience that I presented was actually started in Niger and before starting our own project we went to Niger and had a look at what they were doing. Of course this was done with the support of JICA, but we saw in Niger how things were going and we worked very closely with Niger and JICA.

Every year JICA has a meeting with all the countries that are doing the same kind of experiment, which are Senegal, Burkina Faso, Niger and my own country. We share our experiences. At last year's meeting in Mali the delegations from Niger, Senegal and Burkina Faso went into the field to see how things were working and to have exchanges with the committees. This year we will be in Burkina Faso to see how things have been implemented in there. It is important to share these things because we have similar realities as French-speaking African countries.

Question 6: Maria Teresa Félix (Cultural Attachée, Embassy of Angola)

I really appreciate the opportunity to speak here. I liked being here to enjoy the opportunity to learn about people and the world. When I look at the presentations of both professors, I see real differences: children in Africa really enjoy and crave the chance to have an education; children in Japan have the chance, but some of them don't want to go, based on what Professor Kaneko presented. I also see similarities: in Africa where some countries are really trying their best with these community associations. Before colonization, education was informal, conducted in houses and by sometimes by starlight. Then we changed to a different system that is still not accessible to everyone. What can we do to bridge the gap between these two worlds?

Question 7: Kentaro Fukuchi (Sudan Support for Special Education)

My questions are directed to Professor Diarra. The first is with regard to equity in the transfer of resources. There was an earlier statement to the effect that with regards to the equitable provision of funds by the government depends on the size of the school. However, isn't it also true that apart from the size of the school, how much funding can be sent to schools may depend on geography? Even if the size of the school is the same, if it's a rural or an urban school, the amount of funds that can be provided may vary.

The second relates to sustainability. Usually at the start of a project there is support from the World Bank and the government. In some community schools, after the pilot scheme is completed, how are the resources gathered so as to ensure the continuity of the community schools? What are the methodologies that have been employed?

Question 8: Andi Demo (Embassy of Albania)

I have a question for Professor Kaneko regarding school curriculum. In the past years there has been a tendency

favoring decentralization in Japan. Where does the government draw the line between decentralization and state control? I want to make a simple example which is the adoption of several rather controversial history textbooks by a few Japanese schools. Thank you.

Question 9: Eizo Shinohara (School/Community Coordinator - Saitama Municipal Shiwasaki Elementary School)

Thank you for providing me with this opportunity to ask a question. I serve in Saitama City as a local community/school coordinator. In the schools positive reforms have been happening since the mayor opted to introduce ‘Challenge Schools’, which are basically schools offering after-school or weekend activities that promote the relationship between the school and the local community. Now, Professor Kaneko, in Mitaka the school has volunteer parents who can support the class in terms of providing materials and giving attention to individual students. How are the activities being coordinated between the parents and these schools?

Ikuyo Kaneko (Professor, Graduate School of Media and Governance, and Faculty of Policy Management, Keio University)

Thank you very much for the questions. As I said in the first part of my speech, Japanese people tend to think that we are facing big problems, but these are very tiny problems of rich countries. We can do a lot more than we have been doing, according to Japanese society, who is more interested in education. I think today is a good opportunity for me to learn that we share the same philosophy, even while methods are different because the conditions are different. So it’s not only that other countries can learn a lot from community schooling in Japan, but we can also learn a lot from other countries; for example with the four countries in Africa getting together to exchange experiences. These things don’t happen in Asia. For example, we have few discussions between Japan and Korea, but we usually end up reconfirming each other, or just re-emphasizing that our systems are different. So I think we have to learn a lot from these [other countries’] practices.

I should mention that last year Japanese students’ international achievement exam scores increased slightly due to the fact that many schools and teachers put a lot of effort so that students would learn more creative thinking. Besides that, the fact that these children tend to be monotonous and not very responsive could be a result of the very vertical structure of the Japanese teaching system, which does not give opportunities for them to think by themselves.

There is a risk associated with decentralization. Parents and amateurs getting together to choose textbooks, for example, could create problems, but I don’t believe that using central authority could choose the right textbooks. We, various types of people, must have an opportunity to think for ourselves. Schools, regions and local governments will have to have the responsibility and at the same time the attitude to think for themselves. They will make mistakes, but they should have the opportunity and experience to correct themselves. I don’t think it is OK when the central authority says to do this and that. There is a very complex problem about textbooks in that the government says that it doesn’t assign textbooks but government actions have a procedure to influence this process. So there has to be more careful consideration on the textbook matters. I am of the opinion that you have to delegate the responsibilities as well as the authority to the people closer to the schools and education field so that they will make a choice in response to their situation and at the same time more accountable for what’s happening. Thank you very much.

Abou Diarra (Chief of Education Decentralization/Deconcentration Bureau, Ministry of Education, Literacy and National Languages, Mali)

I would like to respond to my friend from Angola about what we should do today in order to move forward in Africa. I do not know so much about the case of Portuguese-speaking countries in Africa, but looking at the history of

school in French-speaking Africa, we started with a centralized system where the government took all decisions and managed all human, financial and material resources for education. From independence until the 1990s, we maintained this centralized management of schools and we found out in the end that this kind of system was resulting in the training of elites. However, most of the children were dropping out and with this we were losing children and skills in countries where we lack skills and resources. So we had to think about how to most efficiently use the scarce resources that we had.

I think that the situation is changing with the democratic governments that are being set up in Africa as we saw recently in Tunisia, where the population is rising up to change the situation. We had the same thing in Mali a few years ago with the same popular movements that were saying that we do not agree with the governments that are set in place or with this centralized system. We want to be accountable for managing our own affairs, including schools. Therefore the constitutions that were set up after these popular uprisings were actually trying to answer the wishes of the population. We wanted to have a shared management. This is why we had decentralization. We wanted something that was efficient. We wanted the beneficiaries themselves to have some kind of responsibility in this management. This is why today if we want to improve our education system we need a shared management system; a decentralized system. Of course the state will have some authorities and competencies, but we also want involvement on the grass roots level. This is how the school will really answer the needs of the population and this is a system that will also help to find and train resources for the work market. This is why it is absolutely necessary to have a shared approach to the management of schools.

We started resource transfer two years ago and while I'm not saying that everything is working perfectly, we have adopted the principle, transferred resources and are now trying to manage the associated problems. It is true that we have to see which resources go where – I talked about the size of schools for example – but we have other criteria, including the economic potential of the communities. The communities themselves try to generate resources, but all local authorities do not have the same resources. For instance in the region nearer to the south of the country, close to Guinea or Côte d'Ivoire there are usually more resources, resulting in a better tax base, but in the North there are less means and they do not manage to raise funds from the population. So we have to take all these criteria into account in order to arrive at an equitable distribution of resources. It is up to the local authorities to make efforts to raise funds because the government, by itself cannot do this. We need to do this together and local authorities have their part to play.

Kazuhiro Yoshida (Professor, Center for the study of International Cooperation in Education (CICE), Hiroshima University)

Thanks very much to Professor Kaneko and Professor Diarra. Please give them a round of applause. With this we will close our morning session.

[Panel Session]

“School Improvement and Roles of Local Community”



Moderator:

Waraiporn Sangnapaboworn, Head of International Education Section, Office of National Education Commission, Thailand

Panelists:

Gerald W. Fry, Professor, College of Education and Human Development, Department of Organizational Leadership, Policy, and Development, University of Minnesota, USA

R. Govinda, Vice-Chancellor, National University of Educational Planning and Administration, India

Ibo Issa, National Coordinator, ONEN(Organisation Nigérienne des Educateurs Novateurs), Niger

Principal Coordinator, JICA School For All Project

Noriaki Mizumoto, Associate Professor, College of Education, School of Human Sciences, University of Tsukuba

Moderator and Panelists for Session

Waraiporn SANGNAPABOWORN is Head of International Education Section, Office of National Education Commission, Thailand, graduated and obtained a B. Ed in secondary education from Srinakarinwirot University, M. S. in Education Administration from the University of Wisconsin - Madison, and Ph.D. in Fundamentals of Education from the University of Tsukuba. Her study in Japan during the period of education reform movement substantially contributed to the achievement of a comprehensive education reform initiative of Thailand. In the process of the reform plan implementation she served as a project director of a pilot study on school-based management, which was a part of the Ministry's effort to decentralize the power of education administration to local authority, community and schools. In 2004, she joined Graduate School of International Development, Nagoya University, as a visiting research fellow and wrote a research article on "Education Reform in Thailand during 1999-2004: Success, Failure and Political Economy of the Implementation".

Gerald W. FRY is Distinguished International Professor and Professor of International/ Intercultural Education at the University of Minnesota. He has a Ph.D. in International Development Education from Stanford University and a M.P.A. from the Woodrow Wilson School at Princeton. He was also a Pew Fellow in International Affairs at the Kennedy School, Harvard University. For the past five decades he has been doing research on Thailand, focusing on policy issues related to education and development. Among his numerous publications on Thailand are three books: "Evaluating Primary Education: Qualitative and Quantitative Policy Studies in Thailand"; "Synthesis Report: From Crisis to Opportunity, the Challenges of Educational Reform in Thailand"; and "Thailand and Its Neighbors: Interdisciplinary Perspective". Among his many articles on Thailand are three that appeared in the "Harvard International Review". He has also done considerable research on education in Cambodia, Laos, and Vietnam. He was Director of the Center for Asian and Pacific Studies at the University of Oregon.

R. GOVINDA is Vice Chancellor of National University of Educational Planning and Administration (NUEPA), New Delhi. Previously he has worked in the Institute of Education, University of London, M.S. University of Baroda and International Institute of Educational Planning (IIEP), UNESCO. He is a member of several national and international bodies. He is on the editorial board of the 'Global Monitoring Report' for 'Education for All'; is a Consultant Fellow to International Bureau of Education; member of the Central Advisory Board of Education; and member of the National Advisory Committee on Right to Education of Government of India. His research interests include primary education and literacy, decentralized management, programme evaluation, and reforms in higher education. He has published widely on these issues in several books and journals.

Ibo ISSA graduated from the Education Department at Abdoul Moumouni Niamey University in Niger. He worked for 9 years as a mathematics professor, after which he entered the INDRAP (National Institute for Educational Resources, Research and Teaching Method) and worked there over 11 years as Head of the Mathematics unit, and then the Science department for developing teacher training programs and school textbooks. He is now National Coordinator of the NGO, ONEN (Organisation Nigérienne des Educateurs Novateurs) and Principal Coordinator of the JICA project, Projet Ecole Pour Tous ("School for All" Project) supporting the School Decentralization Policy in Niger. He has been consulting as an advisor for 7 years and is one of the main contributors to the research on the approaches and strategies in the community-based school management field. He was solicited in 2007 and 2008 in Mali and Burkina Faso to share Nigerien knowledge and experience in that field. He is the co-writer of ten school textbooks, the book "Reinforcing the Partnership School-UNESCO/IIEP/PLAN" and other training guides for the establishment and the capacity development of the COGES (School Management Committee).

Noriaki MIZUMOTO is Associate Professor at the College of Education, School of Human Sciences, University of Tsukuba. He obtained a Master of Education from the Graduate School of Tsukuba University. His areas of specialization are "school administration and management" and "education for human coexistence". His research interests include "educational collaboration and innovation at schools". In 2009, he served as chairman of the Promotion Committee for Better Practices of the Japanese Association for the Study of Educational Administration (JASEA) and established "Criteria for School Principals as Experts 2009". He is currently working on joint research on the "teaching profession as emotional work" as chairman of the JASEA's Research Promotion Committee.

School Improvement and Roles of Local Community: The Case of Thailand

Waraiporn Sangnapaboworn

**Head of International Education Section, Office of National Education Commission,
Thailand**



Schools and community in Thailand have been close partners in the provision and development of education. School, temple and family are regarded as the three pillars of Thai society in which family foster children with love and care, school provides education to develop learners physically, mentally, intellectually and socially, while temple or other religious institutions cultivate moral values.

However, due to the centralization system of education administration and the rapidly changing society, the educational roles of family and temples decline and the two institutions were pushed apart from school.

The 1999 National Education Act, which was aimed at the reform of education, stipulated that educational provision shall be based on the continuous development of the quality of education, the provision of lifelong education for all Thai people, and all segments of society participate in the provision of education. Article 9 of the law also provides that the principles of education operation and management shall be a collaboration of family, community, community organization, local administrative organizations, private organization, professional organization, religious organization, entrepreneur, and others. Moreover, in order to give school more autonomy, the Ministry of Education shall decentralize the power in education administration to schools and there must a school council in every school to supervise and support the management of school. The school council shall be comprised of representatives from parents, teachers, local administrative organization, community, alumni of the school, Buddhist monks and those of other religious institutions and scholars.

In order to materialize the education reform policy, Office of the Education Council launched a Research and Development Project on “The Whole School Reform for the Development of Learners” with a sample group of 250 schools. Concerning the decentralization of power in educational administration to school and the empowerment of school-based management, at the beginning of the project it was found that school council did not understand their roles and duties and school merely expected school council to give donations and mobilize resources from community. Nevertheless, after working together under the guidance of the researchers, school council came to realize the significance of their roles and duties and were able to perform them better than before. School also found that the school council and community had more resources than money. Above all, they had ideas, creative thinking, knowledge, wisdom, expertise, networks, technology, equipment, labor, learning sources, all of which could be useful to school improvement.

In the first decade of education reform in Thailand (1999-2009), several changes could be seen in the development of school-community collaboration. For example, monk teachers are assigned to teach Buddhism and morality in school and get paid by Office of Buddhism. Students learn Thai arts, music, agriculture, handicrafts, Thai herbs and medicine, and other Thai knowledge from local wisdom experts. Students are encouraged to learn out of school by using learning sources available in community. Learning can take place in any learning sources – rice field, forest, temple, market, seaside, all kinds of museums. Students enjoy learning outside and get hand-on experience. In many cases, community people dedicate their labor to schools in construction work. Besides, stakeholders such as temples, alumni, parents, and community people provide scholarship and donate for school improvement. According to the survey conducted by Office of the Basic Education Commission In 2006, about one-third of budget used in school come from other sources

than government budget, which confirmed the significant role of community in extending financial support to school.

Although schools are under the jurisdiction of Ministry of Education while local administrative organizations are under the Ministry of Interior and an attempt to decentralize the power of education administration from the Ministry of Education to local administrative organizations is still far from reality, there is a tendency that the number of local administrative administrations which strongly support schools keeps increasing. I would like to refer to the case of Surplur Tambon Administrative Organization (TAO)¹, which has been recognized as a best practice in operating school-community collaboration for educational development.

Surplur District is situated in Udonthani Province, the northeastern part of Thailand. There are five primary schools and one secondary school in the district. The case began with a discussion among local leaders from three agencies – Surplur District Administrative Administration, Educational Service Area, and schools. These leaders were concerned with the low achievement of education in the 6 schools of the district, the decreasing enrolment and popularity. Parents lost their confidence in schools and decided to send their children to study in city schools, leaving local schools downsized.

After several meetings with community people, the leaders of the three parties agreed to sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to improve the quality in the six local schools. They called it the Surplur Model in which collaboration among the three hosts is closely connected. The model of school, family, and community partnerships locates the student at the center.

Five steps were introduced for the collaboration according to the MOU – thinking collaboration, planning collaboration, implementing collaboration, evaluating collaboration, and appreciating collaboration. Each party identified its mission and key performance indicators and agreed to carry out their duties accordingly to their fullest potential.

The key performance indicators set by Udonthani Educational Service Area are comprised of 7 items. First, schools provide education that meets the national standard and community needs. Second, teachers are qualified according to the professional standard. Third, school curriculum is appropriate with the context of community. Fourth, budget allocation and resource mobilization are adequate according to school needs. Fifth, teaching force is sufficiently provided. Sixth, the system of supervision, monitoring and evaluation is efficient enough to support the development of school education. Seventh, school teachers are given morale and motivation.

Regarding the Surplur District Administrative Organization, there are 16 indicators under the 4 categories. First, health and hygiene (lunch, milk, water, individual's hygiene, medical care). Second, sanitation (toilet, canteen, health clinic). Third, environment and utilities (landscaping and maintenance, electricity and maintenance, water supply and maintenance, building and equipment, playground and sport instrument). Fourth, the promotion of education, religion, and culture (scholarship, travelling expense or bicycles, manpower support, teaching aids and media, promotion of sports, religious and cultural activities).

As for schools, there are 16 indicators that they have to achieve which include school curriculum, teaching, desirable characteristics, co-curricular activities, quality assurance system, participative education administration, providing basic educational service for all students in the age group, student care and help, mobilizing resources for education, in-service training for teachers to meet the professional standard, school annual report, school safety system, guidance and counseling, community learning service, school assets maintenance, joint promotion of sports, religious and cultural activities with TAO and community.

Surplur Model is not different from others in terms of local community's contribution to school improvement. Temples and other stakeholders donate fund and scholarship. Monks come to teach Buddhism and morality in schools. Local wisdom experts demonstrate and transmit their Thai knowledge and wisdom to students. Perhaps, an initiative

¹ Tambon means "District" in Thai language

that made Surplur Model different from others is its education volunteers who actively participate in many activities to improve schools and students.

Education volunteers take part in identifying the desirable characteristics of school children in Surplur TAO and set them as the expected outcomes of education. That is Surplur students must love the nation, religion, and king, be honest, disciplined, concentrate on learning, self-sufficient in living, committed to work, love to be Thai, be public-minded, modesty and respectful, creative and expressive in a positive way, be able to solve conflicts by peaceful means, be obedient to parents and teachers, be healthy and cheerful, be able to reckon, read and write according to their age, be able in integrated learning, be able to use computer and have necessary ICT skills for searching knowledge and communication. These education volunteers also help teachers and parents look after students to assure that they will be properly nurtured to achieve the expected outcomes or desirable characteristics.

In addition, schools in the Surplur Model gained support from various public and private agencies concerning the supply of school lunch. Department of Fishery provides fish breeders and advice on how to increase fishery production from fishery and aquaculture. Department of Agriculture Promotion provides seedlings and technique on how to grow vegetables and fruits. Department of Cooperatives Promotion gives advice on the operation of School Bank and accounting. Private Companies provide chicken, ducks, pigs and feed, and gives advice on how to increase the productivity. All these activities not only supply enough food for students' lunch in rural areas but also cultivate in students the understanding of the philosophy of sufficiency economy which was introduced by His Majesty the King of Thailand.

After two years of the implementation of Surplur Model, better communications, interactions, and exchanges across these three important contexts yielded several fruitful results.

Several changes have occurred. Firstly, parents and community people are satisfied with students' better behavior, good manner and eagerness in learning. Their academic achievement is not yet significantly changed but expected to improve in the next national test. Secondly, teachers move from clerical work to classrooms and concentrate on teaching more than before. Thirdly, Surplur Tambon Administrative Organization changed its priority from construction to supporting education. They are quick to respond to schools' needs according to their roles and responsibilities for the benefit of teachers and students. Fourthly, Educational Service Area succeeded in mobilizing people from all segments of community to collaborate in providing quality education for all students in the target group. By the year 2015 it expects to be able to have all students of the age group to attend schools which means the achievement of Education for All Goal set by the UNESCO and international community. Lastly, community people are proud of their schools and have more confidence in their quality. Moreover, whenever schools or students are awarded for their high achievement in any academic competition, they regard it as the whole community's achievement and success that everyone involved must share.

This model demonstrated that local community can play a very significant role in school improvement. However, the main reason for their partnerships is to help all youngsters succeed in school and in later life. If school and community recognize their shared interests in and responsibilities for children, they will work together to create better programs and opportunities for students. A caring community will form around students, and this is a key factor for success in creating such partnerships.

At present Thailand is implementing the Second Decade of Education Reform policy (2009-2018), and school-community partnerships is one of the major measures in achieving the goal of providing quality education for all students who are placed as the heart of education reform.

“Improving Local Education: The Quest for Empowerment and Equity, a Thai Case Study”

Gerald W. Fry
Professor, College of Education and Human Development,
Department of Organizational Leadership, Policy, and
Development, University of Minnesota, USA



My Key Value Premises and Assumptions:

Black Gold (social justice, equality, equity, access for all)

Yellow Gold (cultural preservation, cultural democracy; development of cultural intelligence, competency; development of “software of the mind”)

Blue Gold (sustainable development, sufficiency economy, clean air and water)

Green Gold (preservation of forests, social forestry, development of green campuses, Mahidol, e.g.)

Quality education and human resource development are central to a nation’s international competitiveness.

There is much unrealized human potential in Thailand’s Northeast and remote rural localities; talent not being discovered.

Some Key Conceptual Frameworks Related to the Role of Local Communities in Improving Education

James Scott’s “seeing like a state” and “weapons of the weak”

Ben Anderson’s “imagined communities”

Ramírez & Casteñeda (cultural democracy)

Vavrus & Bartlett (vertical case studies)

Geertz’s local knowledge

Genres of Local Communities:

Parents of students

Local political bodies (TAOs)

Local politicians

Government officers

Religious communities

People with local wisdom (e.g., Association of Elders of Pimai, ancient architectural site in Korat area)

Local power brokers (Jaw Por)

Community members without school children

Local business interests (e.g., contractors)

Key Principles

Fiscal neutrality: educational quality should not depend on where you live.

Equity (Rawls): systems should be fair; there should be no differential treatment

Equality (Rousseau): educational quality should not depend on the socioeconomic status of your family
Empowerment (Freire): the voices of those in local areas need to be heard
Putting the last first; listening to voices in remote disadvantaged areas (Chambers); H.R.H. Maha Chakri Princess Sirindhorn's identification of 15 most disadvantaged groups in Thailand
Background on Thailand

Siam never colonized; diverse external influences
History of centralization starting with major educational reforms of the Chulalongkorn era
"The Five Faces of Thailand"
Persisting regional inequalities with the Northeast (Isaan) lagging behind; issue of "internal colonialism"; high V (coefficient of variation) for regional inequalities
1998 National Education Act guiding reform; an elegant statement of progressive educational ideals and principles
Recent Developments and Issues

Dr. Thaksin's controversial policies and his innovative populism (Thaksinomics); popularity in north and northeast, especially among local rural populations. Dr. Thaksin as a polarizing figure.
Dr. Thaksin's program neither stressed education nor targeting.
Assessing educational reform after 12 years; how much actual implementation at the local level? Rashomon effect (Kurosawa; Akutagawa): look at the same data and see different things
Case Studies of Local Communities' Engagement to Improve Education

Islam Lam Sai Environmental School
Community-school collaboration in addressing deforestation issues (MOE-Michigan State University project, McDonough, Wheeler, 1998)
Role of Wat Suanmokk (in Chaiya)
UNDP/Florida State project emphasizing role of school boards
Integrated Pest Management (IPM) case study
Various *setakit popieng* (sufficiency economy) cases; e.g., school gardens
PDA innovative project to link corporations with local communities to enhance local capacity and reduce rural-urban migration

Potential for university (especially Rajabhats), community, and school collaboration, but universities must be mindful not to dominate and not to be patronizing
Major Issues Related to Local Communities Role in Improving Education

Critical issues of quality and relevance
Fiscal versus budget decentralization
Local educators' resistance to giving TAO's control of local education
Local Education Areas (LEAs): recentralization at the local level?
Development of local curricula (NEA); 33% of curriculum can be local
Promotion and preservation of local cultures and languages
School-based management; involvement of parents in school management; parents' awareness of what their children

need; do parents really know what their children need? role of parents in school oversight; role of community in fund raising

Gamage and Pachrapimon's survey of Thai school board members

World Bank Indonesia study of community participation in schools (SBM best practices)

Tetrahedron Model of Genres of Educational Decentralization

Four genres of decentralization:

Fiscal decentralization

Budget decentralization

Fiscal and budget decentralization differ in important ways. In fiscal decentralization local areas are expected to fund education, but with budget decentralization national funds are allocated to local areas to manage. The former tends to lead to great inequality in countries with serious regional disparities

Personnel decentralization

Curriculum decentralization

Major Problems in Northeast (Isaan) Education

Low levels of cultural, human, and intellectual capital (Bordieu, Lin) (cf. Bangkok or Korea)

Inadequate incentives for being a teacher in a remote disadvantaged area (Khamman, "The Rural School Teacher")

Lack of targeting most disadvantaged areas for compensatory funding; need incentives for local communities to become engaged with education

Limited educational and life chances

Debt burden of teachers

New Policy Developments

Aphisit government's commitment to increase decentralization (increase in percent of government budget going to local level) and improve education

Articulation of the *pracha wiwat* (people's agenda) philosophy; responding creatively to people's needs

National Reform Assembly (chaired by Dr. Prawase) key recommendations:

land banks, community land ownership, community justice, welfare measures to assist the elderly, migrant workers...

Promotion of financial literacy (could lead to more investment in human capital rather than material consumerism)

Critique of social rice-roots activist, Ms. Krarok Pongnoi

Excessive top down control

Money driven development

Need to make localities bigger and central government smaller

The Future of Community Involvement in Improving Education

Need for genuine government commitment to both *empowerment and equity*

Need for effective *compensatory* targeting to give disadvantaged local communities resources with which to work

Need for genuine commitment to human resource development as the key to the nation's future

Need to foster effective *partnerships* among diverse stakeholders such as corporations, universities, local pools of wisdom, religious communities, schools, and communities to realize the ideal of "all for education"

“Community Participation and School Improvement Diverse Perspectives and Emerging Issues”

R. Govinda

**Vice-Chancellor, National University of Educational Planning and
Administration, India**



Move towards involving the community members and empowering them to govern the schools currently finds a prominent place in education policy documents in almost all countries. In fact, community participation in school management has a long history. After all, the first schools were founded and even funded solely by local community groups. The State entered the scene much later in the history of schooling. Initially, role of the school had been to wean the individual away from the emotional world of the home in order to socialize in the outside world and for introducing young men and women to the rational world of knowledge and learning. With the onset of industrialization along with the emphasis on compulsory schooling, and education for informed citizenship and economic development becoming the main goals, national governments began to take the responsibility of funding and organizing school education. This, in some ways, set the stage for distancing the home and the community from school organization. With the evolution of ‘national systems of education’, governments began asserting their authority and control over the system of schooling as fully legitimate. Today, all over the world, it is the prerogative of the national governments to determine the shape of the school system as a publicly funded phenomenon.

Seen in the above evolutionary perspective, the current focus on participation of the community in school management is actually an instance of ‘coming round full circle’. Perhaps, one has to unscramble and understand what this return of the community to school means, in rhetoric and in reality. Why are we promoting community participation? Does it represent a genuine interest of the State to reconfigure its relationship with the school and the civil society in a more democratic manner? Or is it the political and economic expediency that is pushing the governments to take recourse to such actions? What can community participation do for improving schools? How do we institutionalize and sustain community participation? How do we address diversities within community in mobilizing their participation in school management? These are some of the critical questions to be examined.

Why Community Participation? Diverse Perspectives

What are the motives behind the on-going movement for involving community in school management? Following are some of the broad motives that provide the rationale for bringing community participation for school improvement in different countries. *Democracy Rationale*: One view on the recent reforms sweeping different countries and bringing community to school management is that it is prompted by a genuine desire on the part of the governments to broad base decision making and to promote democratic principles of participation. Some also link the move towards democratization to parental activism in many countries for obtaining a larger role in decision making. *Social justice and equity rationale*: Where the society consists of multicultural settings and diverse socio-economic groups, it is considered that parental participation on a democratic basis in school governance will contribute to goals of social justice and equity. In fact, throughout the 1960s and 1970s a major force behind the development of increased parental involvement in the United States stemmed from concerns about social justice and equity. In many developing societies with wide differences in economic capabilities, the argument finds great favour among policy makers. This indeed is

one of the main factors that has influenced the recent adoption of the Right to Education Act in India with significant importance attached to the role of school management committees. *Economic rationalism and free market principle:* Traditionally education system has remained very little affected by the development in the world of economy and production. However, this phase of protective isolation appears to be coming to an end as economic rationalist and corporate managerialist policies have been sweeping the public sector provisions in all sphere of life. Governments have come under severe pressure for restructuring the bureaucracy to achieve greater outputs for the given inputs. Devolution of authority to the schools and to the community members seems to be a part of this larger restructuring process. This emphasis on managerialism in education seems to be both structural and ideological with notions of efficiency, productivity and accountability becoming the driving force for the reforms.

What can Community do for Improving Schools?

Though original schools were the creation of local community groups, throughout much of the world public education has largely become the preserve of bureaucracies. Apprehensions are often expressed many on the appropriateness of pushing parents into school management. Whether such reservations are justified or not, one has to accept that community participation is not a panacea for all the ills of the school system. Research explorations and field experiences point to five broad areas of school management in which community participation could add significant value. (a)*Improve enrolment and retention and regularity of attendance:* Despite significant improvement in levels of student enrolment in most developing countries, regular participation of children in schooling and completion of the elementary cycle of education continues to be a problem. Even though school authorities and teachers could address this issue, field studies and experimentations clearly indicate that the problem can be addressed effectively only through involvement of parents and community members. (b)*Improve infrastructure facilities in school:* Improving the physical conditions, particularly through better maintenance, including basic academic facilities in the school is another area that community members could collectively take care of. In fact, in several countries, the school management committees are vested with the responsibility of receiving and utilizing funds towards physical infrastructure improvement and maintenance. (c) *Mobilize supplementary resources:* Even in the best of the conditions, financial resources provided by the Government or raised through student fees are never adequate for attempting substantial improvement in the quality of the processes and outcomes of schooling. Local community as the primary stakeholder could contribute towards this goal. In fact, studies have shown that supplementary finances from the community and quality of learning are closely linked. (d)*Monitor implementation of development projects:* Proper utilization of resources and implementation of development efforts supported by the Government or other agencies need close supervision. This necessarily has to be done on a continuous basis and parents and local community are best suited to do this task effectively. (e) *Play the role of a social watch:* A long standing complaint of the common tax payer has been that the education system is, in general, run in a nontransparent manner and the people managing the system have no direct accountability to any one though the system is dependent very heavily on state funding. Involvement of the community in school governance is seen as an answer to this criticism. With adequate representation of the parents who are the direct stake holders in school governance, it expected that the system would become more open and accountable. This is also expected to significantly improve the efficiency of every school.

Institutional Framework for community participation

Theoretically and in legislation the issue of community participation seems to be a settled one. However the

contours of participation in practice seem to be still in a process of flux. More specifically, the question of 'How do we operationalise community participation?' continues to perplex. While everyone appreciates that a top-down model prescribing community involvement in school governance through official diktat is inimical to the basic idea of participation, how do we adopt a bottom-up grassroots model. Experience from an Indian Project demonstrates that it is possible, but requires enormous commitment to building democratic processes at grassroots level.

The basic assumption is that capabilities for self-management among the community members evolve through practice rather than prescription. Therefore, the Project began vesting in the community the responsibility of determining the demand and preparing local education development plans based on concrete empirical explorations. Through this approach, the attempt was to create a system of management from below by laying great emphasis on the formation of village teams. A core team of the block level education management committee functioned as a spearhead for the purpose, using participatory school mapping and other aspects of micro planning as a method of people's mobilization. It is the villagers themselves who carried out field surveys and prepare an education map of the village indicating the status of every child in the village. An important feature of the approach is its focus on issues equity by ensuring the participation of traditionally excluded sections in the process of institution building, which is very critical in a state which has still a long way to go in reaching the goal of universal elementary education.

How can such initiatives of 'building from below' be sustained? There is no clear cut answer. However, it is important that, whatever be the institutional structure, acceptance of these structures and their functioning by the State as well as the community is critical for their sustainability and effective functioning. As experience shows many institutional structures such as village education committees and school management bodies created through executive orders from the state have never taken roots in the absence of acceptance among the stakeholders. What is required is to work towards convergence between the state perspective and that of the grassroots level stakeholders.

Community Involvement in School Improvement: Emerging Issues

The new management framework with active community involvement effectively responds to several criticisms of the traditional approach. But it brings with it new issues and challenges. New actors are introduced into the task of governance with which they have very little familiarity. While the new actors acquire the necessary skills and orientation, old actors are required to change their mindsets and reconfigure the relationships. Authorities have to be willing to shed some of their prerogatives and powers while parents and teachers have to learn to discharge their new found responsibilities effectively. The new school based actors do not have the scope to pass the buck and put the blame on the ubiquitous 'systemic problems' which are beyond their purview. Some of the emerging issues are discussed in the following.

- (a) A major manifestation of a widening of parental involvement, through legislated representation on school committees, is that it provides parents with greater voice in school policy, planning, governance and administration.² Several issues in this connection need to be examined: (i) How much or how little power and influence are exercised by parent representatives in the various decision making groups; (ii) The extent to which elected parents on school councils can and do represent diversity of interests, values and views of the parent body as a whole; and (iii) Is this a genuine attempt to embrace parent and community involvement in democratizing school decision making, or an

² O'Donoghue, T.A. and Dimmock, C.A.J. (1998) *School Restructuring: International Perspectives*, London: Kogan Page. (pp. 167-168)

attempt by the governments to avoid criticism on themselves.

- (b) As noted earlier, building a system of accountability has been one of the driving forces behind the move to involve parents and the community in school management. But accountability cannot be seen in a fragmented manner in terms of administrative efficiency and professional capabilities. To whom should the school be accountable - to the Government or the Parents or the Public (tax payers)? It is found that parents in general are interested in their children's education and that they wish to be informed about their progress and prospects. ... But it is the experience of many schools that parents have no wish to interfere in professional matters relating to the organization and management of internal affairs.³ Evidence suggests that they are more interested in outcomes than in processes. There has been a similar lack of enthusiasm to take part in the new accountability procedures through which parents can question the school's performance and possibly take corrective action. While school management committee can become the main body for decision making with respect to general management issues, questions of academic and professional management has to be independently dealt with by professionally trained personnel. Community members' role in academic decision making cannot have a uniform prescription as it depends on the profile of the members constituting such management bodies and the mutual confidence that the teachers and the members of the committee enjoy.
- (c) An important rationale for the restructuring policies emanates from the concern shown by many governments to cut public spending and to secure greater efficiency and value for money in education. This pursuit of economic, rationalist policies in education has led to criticism from parents and teachers that governments are placing more responsibilities on schools while failing to provide adequate resources. This cannot be considered as mere activist posturing. It calls for examining if the policies are merely passing over the burden to the already burdened common man. Following two issues are at the core of this argument. (a) There is an issue of equity in the expectation that local communities and parents will contribute directly to the human, physical and financial resources to school. (b) Some parents may consider that the payment of taxes entitles their children to an otherwise cost-free, publicly provided education.
- (d) Though most countries in the developing world advocate community participation as an important component of their efforts to improve the education system, two significant questions are being raised particularly in the context of developing countries.⁴ The first apprehension is that, under the low state of educational development in many countries, such extreme localization of authority may make school the locus of unwarranted power struggle undermining the basic concern of improving school efficiency. This is well illustrated by the studies of school management committees in several parts of India.⁵ The second apprehension is more global in nature. Many fear that handing over school control and management to local councils and boards may in the long run lead to deprofessionalisation of school administration and even cut into the authority of the school heads. In fact, scholars investigating the effects of school autonomy reforms in some of the industrialized countries point out that this may gradually erode the power and authority of the school itself and lead to further central control on vital matters of schooling such as curriculum, learner evaluation, personnel management and so on.

Even though several issues remain to be tackled, studies also reveal that active participation of the community in school governance has added substantial value in terms of effective school functioning. However, lack of clarity and

³ Cave, E. (1990) "The changing managerial arena", in Cave, E. and Wilkinson, C. *Local management of schools: Some practical issues*, London: Routledge, pp. 1-14.

⁴ Govinda, R. (1998) School Autonomy and Efficiency: Some Critical Issues and Lessons, Paper presented at the ANTRIEP Seminar on Improving School Management, Colombo, Sri Lanka, December 1998.

⁵ A.K. Singh, National Study of Village Education Committees in India, NUEPA, 2010.

internal contradictions in the system tends to undermine the contribution of parental involvement in school governance. It has been found that that school governing bodies in which parents are prominent are making a valuable contribution to the functioning of the system as a whole. ... But governing bodies work under several conflicting pressures and demands. Four central dichotomies are identified: (a) Elitism versus pluralism - elite models of distribution of power present public institutions as largely dominated by ruling groups. (b) Centralization versus devolution; (c) Professionals versus laity; and (d) Support versus accountability.⁶

Conclusion

In summary, the policy of community involvement in school governance has resulted in changes in three basic areas. First, there is a widening and diversifying of the forms of parental and community involvement, particularly in school decision making. Second, tighter public spending policies are redistributing responsibilities for the resourcing of schools with consequent ramification for parents and other non-government sources. Third, emphasis is placed on improving learning outcomes for all students, a policy which involves increased expectations of both parents and schools.⁷ But these changes may be transient unless the policy is pursued with consistency and commitment by all concerned.

Dynamics of transforming centralized and hierarchical management structures steeped in bureaucratic rigidities into a people friendly system is not just a technical exercise. Nor can one expect that a few rounds of exhortations to the community members through participatory processes will suffice. Changing the framework of power sharing in any public system can never be a simple process. It requires everyone concerned – the political leadership, the bureaucracy, school authorities, and parents – to imbibe a new ‘world view’ that underscores mutual trust and confidence. When such a transformation of the system is linked to empowerment of the people it makes it doubly complex and challenging. But there is no alternative. It can only be pursued through continued strengthening of democratic processes in school governance.⁸

⁶ Pascal, C. (1989) “Democratized primary school government: Conflicts and dichotomies”, in Glatter, R. (Ed.) *Educational institutions and their environments: Managing the boundaries*, Milton Keynes: Open University Press. pp. 82-92

⁷ O’Donoghue and Dimmock Op cit.

⁸ Govinda, R. (2000) “Dynamics of Decentralized Management and Community Empowerment in Primary Education: A Comparative Analysis of Policy and Practice in Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh”, in Malberg, L., Hansen, S. and Heino, K. *Basic education for all: A global concern for quality*, Vaasa: Abo Academy University.

Presentation summary

Ibo Issa

National Coordinator, ONEN(Organisation Nigérienne des Educateurs Novateurs), Niger
Principal Coordinator, JICA School For All Project



1. Presentation of Niger

Located in the Sahel region in the heart of the continent, Niger is one of the largest countries in Western Africa. It occupies an area of 1,267,000 square kilometers, three-quarters of which are quasi-desert. The country faces serious natural handicaps: landlocked (the nearest port is more than one thousand kilometers from the capital Niamey), with an arid climate, drought and poor in natural resources, Niger struggles to meet basic social needs (such as education and health), which often leads the country to request the aid from donors.

Basic social indicators reveal a low level of human development. According to the Human Development Index (HDI), in recent years the country has consistently ranked amongst the bottom five in the world.

The low level of principal education indicators partly explains the country's position in the HDI ranking: in 2002-03, the gross admission ratio (GAR) was 51%, gross school enrollment ratio (GER) 45% and school completion rate 25%. These numbers hide significant disparities between girls and boys on one hand and between urban and rural areas on the other.

Faced with this situation, Niger undertook an analysis of its educational system. This analysis revealed that the principal causes of the poor educational situation were linked not only to the lack of resources invested by the state for the educational development, but were also and especially a product of the extreme centralism of a school management system that rendered the school a 'school IN the village'; that is to say, an institution considered by the community as something belonging exclusively to the state, and of which the development is not at all up to the community. The Parents' Association (*Association des parents d'élèves* or APE), charged with maintaining communication between school and community, did not work either.

2. What measures were taken by the government of Niger?

To overcome the identified problems, the Ministry of National Education (*ministère de l'éducation nationale* or MEN) elaborated and implemented a decade-long program of educational development (*Programme décennal de développement de l'éducation* or PDDE, 2003-2012) with the principal strategy of decentralizing school management through the institutionalization of community based organizations called the School Management Committee (*Comités de gestion des établissements scolaires* or COGES). The idea was to delegate certain authorities of school management to the community at the most basic level.

The Ministry of National Education was thus aiming, through the introduction of the School Management Committee (COGES), to establish functional organizations that could promote the community participation for the educational development; then the school was supposed to be a 'school OF the village', a school belonging to the village, for the community.

Unfortunately, when creating the School Management Committee (COGES) the Ministry of National Education did not consider what approaches would allow these organizations to function. Consequently, the School Management Committees (COGES) were as inactive as their predecessors, the Parents' Associations (APE).

3. How did Niger make the School Management Committee (COGES) functional?

To overcome the situation described above, in 2004 JICA's "School for All" project (*Ecole pour tous* or *Projet EPT/JICA*)—in partnership with the Ministry of National Education (MEN)—introduced an approach that allowed the School Management Committee (COGES) to function; this, in turn, encouraged greater community participation in improving education in Niger. This approach is based upon the "MINIMUM PACKAGE" with three key components:

▪ Democratic elections (by secret ballot) of committee members

The base of community participation lies in the choice of the community through the vote with a secret ballot. That generates a greater transparency in the establishment and the management of the COGES.

First, it is necessary to remind the reader that the various community based organizations which existed before in Niger consisted of the people appointed by a village chief, a religious leader or another influential person against the will of the majority. Consequently, these organizations couldn't mobilize the community members at all, because they had never won their confidence. Today, thanks to the democratic process initiated by JICA's School For All Project (EPT project), all School Management Committees (COGES) in Niger (approximately 13,000) have been established by secret ballot: these elected committee members represent the will of the people.

▪ Formulation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of 'School Action Plans'

The school action plan initiated by JICA's EPT project is based on the participative process and constitutes the *very frame for community participation and communication amongst community members. The plan is also the embodiment of transparency in the implementation of School Management Committee (COGES) activities.*

Unlike classic action plans, the specificity of this school action plan can be summarized in four points:

-All decisions are made at the general assembly of the village (the general assembly to identify problems and seek out solutions, to ratify action plans and to assess the annual results). In other words, the entire process requires the community participation and consent of the entire community (self-management).

-Communities choose the activities that can be realized by themselves: the activities programmed in these action plans are thus always completed.

-Resources necessary to the implementation of action plans are mobilized by the communities themselves. - Communities carry out the self-assessment

▪ Integrated monitoring system

The monitoring system established with the technical cooperation of JICA's School For All Project (EPT project) is unique in that it involves local education administrators while at the same time giving responsibilities to the community. It is a two-level system: the monitoring of the COGES (first level) is carried out by a community based organization called the Communal Federation of the school management committees (*fédération communales des COGES* or FCC) which are established in the democratic way by the representatives of all the School Management Committees

(COGES)in a municipality, “commune”-the lowest administrative unit in Niger. The Communal Federation of COGES (FCC) carries out the monitoring of COGES activities through its General Assembly, organized periodically by the Communal Federation itself. These General Assemblies serve as a venue for sharing the experiences among the COGES as well as for monitoring and evaluation. Expenses for the General Assembly are covered by funds of both the COGES and the Communal Federation of COGES (FCC). In turn, the monitoring of the Communal Federation of COGES (FCC) (second level) is carried out by the education administrators.

The “MINIMUM PACKAGE” guarantees the transparency in the activities of community based organizations. It also provides the community with substantial capabilities of planning, implementing, monitoring and evaluating their own activities.

4. Examples of the results of School Action Plan activities

The introduction of the “Minimum Package” led to a substantial community mobilization, one that has resulted in the implementation of numerous diverse educational improvement activities. These activities are spread across several fields. An analysis of SchoolAction Plans in Niger shows the completion rates by field. This distribution, as demonstrated in the chart below, reflects priorities in terms of school/community needs.

Fields	Percentage of Activities Realized	Comments
Infrastructure and furniture	29.71%	This rate can be explained by the critical lack of classrooms, leading communities to construct straw huts.
School performance	27.19%	The improvement of school performance is still weak.
Hygiene and health in school	9.73%	
School safety	6.60%	
Environment	4.05%	
Practical and productive activities	4.28%	Strengthening the bond between school and its environment; profitability
Promotion of education		
Functioning of COGES	13.92%	Operated by COGES themselves.

The implementation of these activities was successful thanks to a substantial financial mobilization. For example, in order to carry out their activities communities in the regions of Tahoua and Zinder invested 349,525,795 f CFA in 2006-07. To economically advanced countries this amount may appear insignificant; however, in the context of the standard of living in Niger it represents a large contribution to the resolution of school-related problems. In fact, the minimum monthly wage in Niger has not yet reached 30,000 f CFA. Incidentally, the monthly salary of a contract teacher is 59,000 f CFA. *These results simply show that, with functional organizations, communities are capable of a very high level of mobilization when it comes to tackling educational challenges.*

5. Did the community participation/mobilization have an impact on education in Niger?

The graph of the evolution of indicators brings to light a correlation between the evolution of the three indicators (the gross admission ratio GAR, the gross school enrollment ratio GER, and the school completion rate) and the evolution of the number of functional School Management Committee (COGES) in Niger. What the graph reveals clearly is that the different ratios increased significantly after the advent of the functional School Management

Committee (COGES). Furthermore, one can see that the leap forward was substantial from 2006-07, from the year of the generalization of 'functional School Management Committee (COGES)'. For example, Niger reached 98.69% of GAR and is aiming for 100% by 2015. Thus, the existence of functional School Management Committee (COGES) enabled Niger to significantly improve its principal educational indicators.

The community participation in educational development actions has greatly contributed to the improvement of the principal indicators used to measure education in Niger.

6. What alternatives exist to promote greater and more efficient community participation?

While it is true that the activities carried out by School Management Committees (COGES) through their School Action Plans have had a visible and positive impact on education in Niger, in order to further maximize mobilization and increase impact at the regional level communities have developed—with the support of JICA's School for All Project (EPT project)—a strategy called the “forum approach.” This approach gives communities the possibility of exchanging/sharing ideas, over the course of a whole day, related to a specific educational topic with all the other actors involved in the education field: school administration, municipal boards, administrative authorities, traditional chiefs, religious leaders, teachers unions and associations in the field of education.

- An example of the outcomes of such forums on girl's education in the Tillabéri and Maradi regions: in 2008-2009, both regions organized a forum respectively on girl's education. The efforts at the awareness raising by the communities have brought the gender parity ratio from 0.742 to 0.8831 in Maradi and from 0.868 to 1.001 in Tillabéri. Here we must specify that the goal set by Tillabéri was to reach a gender parity ratio of 1 (i.e. the same number of girls and boys in school), so the results exceeded expectations.
- Outcomes of forums in the Zinder region: the region organized two successive forums (2008 and 2009) on the improvement of the final exam results. Communities carried out activities such as organizing remedial classes, evening group tuitions, mock exams, monitoring of pupil's school attendance, etc., thus enabling substantial progress: the regional pass rates exceeded 13.9 % the national average in 2008, and then again 14.2 % in 2009. The goal of the two Zinder forums was to bring the region to the top in terms of exam results; in the end, the region obtained the highest scores in Niger over the past two years. That shows how fruitful this strategy is.

Results attained by different regions in Niger allow us to say the “Forum Approach” is a valid option for greater and more efficient community participation in the development of education.

7. Factors in the success of community participation in Niger

The triggers of success in promoting community participation for the improvement of education in Niger are:

- Creating community based organizations that are trusted by others members of the community (democratic elections of the board members of COGES)
- Capacity development of the members of those organizations (training them in the fields of planning and monitoring/evaluation)
- Community initiatives maximizing the mobilization of all actors (forum strategy)
- Training approach adapted to the society (these communities being mostly illiterate, the training is done in national languages using materials such as images and role-playing)
- Applicability: the applicability of the minimum package is now certain. In fact, after having experimented with this approach in 23 schools it was progressively applied to all schools in the Tahoua region and then in the entire Zinder region. The external evaluation sponsored by the Ministry of National Education (MEN) confirmed the

effectiveness of this approach (short time needed for training, high cost-effectiveness). It is exactly for this reason that Niger has generalized this approach to the entire country. This approach also has been applied in other Western African countries. We were personally invited to Mali and Burkina Faso in order to share this approach with actors working towards the decentralized school management. Today, the forum approach is used in all the regions of Niger and has produced good results. That is why delegations from Senegal and Burkina Faso came to Niger to follow this forum strategy with the prospect of applying it in their respective countries.

8. Conclusion

Niger's experience allows us to assert that communities can be the very leading actors for the development of education in their own country provided that they are formed into functional organizations.

9. Perspectives

Now that the access to education has increased significantly, communities in Niger decided this year to tackle the challenges in the quality education. In order to do so, all COGES in Niger have elaborated the School Action Plans for improving the quality of the education. The main activities of these plans aim at having an impact on the three factors that influence the quality: study hours, learning environment and the quality of teaching/learning.

School Improvement and Roles of Local Community: Japan's Past Experience and Future Outlook

Noriaki Mizumoto
Associate Professor, College of Education,
School of Human Sciences, University of Tsukuba



1. Japanese schools: historically accumulated practices of school-community collaboration

1) Approaches of schools to local communities and families

Japanese schools have a long history of building ties with local communities and families. In many cases, these efforts continue on a routine or regular basis. We must not overlook these day-to-day efforts when considering the school-community relationship in Japan.

First, schools provide information to communities and families, using various newsletters on the school, grade and class levels and on different topics such as health and school lunches. In some communities, school newsletters are distributed to or circulated among all households in the community. Second, in order to have a better understanding of the students' homes and communities, teachers visit their homes periodically (usually once a year) or on an as-needed basis, for example, when students have problematic behaviors or when they are not attending school. When students are caught shoplifting or involved in other crimes, teachers sometimes get involved. Third, in order to deepen people's understanding of schools and to facilitate communication between teachers and parents, schools have open house days when they invite parents and local people to observe classrooms and educational activities, and homeroom teachers meet with parents. Fourth, schools try to promote regular and periodic exchanges of information through "communication notebooks," report cards and meetings with individual students and parents, discussing how students are doing at school and how they are growing. Fifth, by organizing PTAs, schools promote mutual understanding between teachers and parents through meetings, seminars and study trips. PTAs support school activities such as cleaning and improving school grounds. In some cases, not only parents but also local people become PTA members. Other activities include inviting local elderly people to school on sports days, brass-band performances at community events, and other school-community exchanges at various events. Gymnasiums, school grounds and other school facilities are also offered for community activities. These undertakings have allowed local people to become more familiar with schools.

2) Communities' support of children's growth and collaboration with schools

Communities have also created various organizations to carry out activities to support children's growth.

Children are given roles at traditional festivals and other events, and they play an important part in community activities. Children's associations and sports clubs have served as venues where children are brought up together in their communities through recreational events, volunteer activities and sports. Welfare and social education facilities, such as nursery schools, schools offering after-school childcare, community centers and libraries, have also contributed to bringing up children in the communities, providing places for children to go to and feel secure.

Communities have also contributed to students' educational activities in many ways such as offering farm land and other resources for educational activities and supporting students' cultivation of crops. Historically, schools were established and maintained by communities with local resources. Therefore, schools are regarded as common community assets.

2. Today's situation: increasingly complicated educational challenges at schools and changing communities

As Japanese society has become economically affluent and now faces environmental issues and social changes such as globalization, the situation surrounding schools and communities has also changed drastically.

In order to survive in this uncertain and complex age, schools are required to foster PISA-type academic skills, which emphasize students' ability to think and communicate effectively by applying their knowledge. As the society has become more multicultural, and the economic disparity has widened, parents' expectations have become more diversified. Due to population mobility in urban areas and the decreasing and graying population in rural areas, maintaining communities as they were has become more difficult, and their educational functions are weakening.

At the same time, decentralization of education has been promoted. Therefore, schools have to deal with complicated educational issues on their own initiatives. In order to improve the quality of education, schools must constantly pursue various ideas and endeavors and put them into action. For this purpose, schools must strengthen their organizing powers. Both schools and communities need to be revitalized by redefining their roles and rebuilding their relationship.

3. Roles of communities in improving schools

1) Providing learning resources and opportunities

Recently, communities are offering more diverse resources to schools: first, human resources to support activities within schools. Some local governments have hired more temporary full-time and part-time teachers than the national standard in order to increase the number of homeroom teachers and subject teachers and to facilitate team teaching and small-group teaching. Some schools have hired local people as special part-time teachers to teach subjects or other areas of their expertise. Recently, there has been a notable increase in "school volunteers," whose functions are extremely diverse, including supporting integrated-study classes, helping students with special needs, promoting international understanding, supporting library activities and reading books to children. In some cases, these volunteers allow teachers to devote more time and energy to each student, but in other cases, teachers have become even busier in order to collaborate with the volunteers.

Second, communities are providing students with learning resources and opportunities outside schools. They accept visits from students, providing hands-on activities and helping teach students in the field in such subjects as life-environment studies, integrated studies and social studies. Work experience programs are offered by some companies to support career education.

Third, welfare and social education facilities are being combined with schools. In these complex facilities, students can have hands-on learning experiences at welfare facilities and use libraries to study.

Fourth, communities provide resources to ensure children's safety and for risk management. Local people's homes and business establishments such as convenience stores post signs stating that they will provide refuge to children in emergencies. Local people carry out safety patrols in their communities to protect students on their way to and from school. There are also people who carry flags or put up stickers to indicate "safety patrols" when they take a walk or drive their cars. An elementary-school principal asked elderly citizens who enjoy walking in the community to come to the school a few times a week and walk through the halls when they take a walk. As a result, the atmosphere at the school became more relaxed, and the children became kinder to older people.

2) Creativity and emotional support through collaboration

Fostering creativity and mutual understanding, and providing emotional support underlie the collaboration between schools and communities.

First of all, future visions of the school and children and of the community must be identified through collaboration between local people and school staff. In fact, some of the “community schools” have already clarified their visions through community participation. Local people’s participation has the benefit of broadening the perspectives of the whole school. Different perspectives within the school lead to many good ideas for school management, educational activities and school events.

Through these interactions, mutual understanding is fostered between schools and communities. Parents and people in the community do not really know about school or about teachers’ work other than teaching. They rarely know that in addition to teaching, teachers are assigned many duties for school management and paperwork and engaged in many research activities, as well. In this regard too, it is important for communities to understand the actual situations at schools. Schools, too, must have a better understanding of people’s lives in the community and what parents and local people expect of them. Emotional understanding and support are also important. Teaching is an emotional job. In recent years, an increasing number of teachers are suffering from mental illnesses. It is important for communities to understand the emotionally difficult jobs of teachers and support them.

In any case, collaboration enables teachers and local people to learn, change and be renewed. We must understand that schools and communities are not interacting as fixed entities but emerging together out of their collaboration. Communities supporting children’s growth means the socialization of education, a shift from just leaving education in the hands of schools or mothers.

4. Management of venues and coordination of school-community collaboration

In order to bring about collaboration as such, we must create venues for school-community collaboration and coordinate the various people and activities involved.

In order to do this, we must first learn from our society’s accumulated experience of building day-to-day relationships between schools and communities and revitalize it. Constant communication between schools and parents/local people using various media provides the foundation for school-community collaboration.

This alone, however, is not enough to promote school-community collaboration today. Depending on the actual situations in communities and schools, we must also utilize school management councils, school counselors, school support regional headquarters and other institutions. The establishment of school administrative councils and school councilors is considered for school governance, but parents and local people may not always be interested in school governance or administration. In fact, many of them are more interested in the community activities to support bringing up children and in educational activities at school. Therefore, these bodies must not be too focused on school governance but recognize the importance of educational collaboration centered on children’s growth. In order to promote collaboration, we must make use of human-resource data banks at school support regional headquarters and at boards of education and ensure coordination of various resources and activities.

In order to promote collaboration in this way, we must redefine the leadership at schools. Leadership here does not mean that one person or a few in management present visions and goals to lead people. It is the ability to design the venues for collaboration, facilitate active communication, organize discussion and make democratic decisions. In other words, management of venues and facilitation will be needed to improve schools in the future.

[Questions and Answers Session with Speakers]

Waraiporn Sangnapaboworn (Head of International Education Section, Office of National Education Commission, Thailand)

Let me briefly summarize the information that we have been given so far. Professor Fry gave us his philosophy on why decentralization of power in educational administration is necessary. He emphasized equity, with particular concern for the relatively poorer Northeastern part of Thailand, urging the Thai government to give more empowerment to local community and schools.

I presented the micro-level case studies of work in the Udonthani Province, which showed that school and local community collaboration is possible if they understand and help each other well, and if their implementation efforts are centered on the quality of education, that is, the benefit of students.

Professor Govinda told us why India promotes community participation, suggesting the things that the community can do for improving the school, ranging from infrastructure development to enrolment and mobilization of resources, but not academic improvement. In acknowledging that community involvement can contribute to more effective functioning of schools, he pointed out that it is not easy to change the power structure; everyone must be involved - from the political leadership and the bureaucracy to schools and parents. With India being famous for its democracy, he proposes that we can sustain or improve the school-community collaboration through the democratic process.

Mr. Issa gave us experiences of educational development through community participation in Niger. He told us about school management committees (SMC/COGES) supported by the JICA EFA project, which were successfully implemented because they used the democratic process. He gave examples of school action plan initiatives and activities; the results of which were very satisfactory. We were very pleased to see the increase in the enrolment of girls and the improvement of exam results that resulted from these SMC projects. He concluded that communities could be leading actors if the community organization itself functions properly.

Professor Mizumoto demonstrated Japan's experiences in good practice of school-community collaboration. From both sides there was exchange, help and assistance in various ways. Due to social changes in recent years he suggested that there was also the need for a paradigm shift in school and community collaboration. Specifically, collaboration should be centered on the children's growth.

Altogether I found that decentralization of power in educational administration from the central bureau to schools and the local community has taken place in every part of the world; ranging from Thailand to India, Niger and, as we heard this morning, Mali.

At the school level we call it the Site Based or School Based Management (SBM) System, where there is an organization called the School Council, School Management Committee or other names. These organizations function very well in linking communities with schools to work for the benefit of students, teachers and the community as a whole. The SMC is comprised of various stakeholders including parents, teachers and the community. The level of contribution to education from this type of community participation can be very high and take many forms.

Japan has various types of communication between schools and the community. Through collaboration, they mobilize resources and support school lunch programmes. The community can help to improve facilities, enrolment, teaching, school performance, health and monitoring. In addition it can function as a social watch and work for school safety.

In India, Niger, Thailand and Japan the results of the collaboration were seen first in students. Students' access increased, there was a better quality of education and parents had a voice in school policy. Through the work of the school committees the school and teachers felt more accountable to the community and are functioning more effectively.

Yet, India showed a lot of concern or apprehension about emerging issues of whether the power will be concentrated in the school and bring another problem at this level. Also, the differing backgrounds of stakeholders at the school level may give rise to another issue.

We found some other key factors for success such as democracy. This can be used to solve some problems, as was the case in Niger, where after the election the committees were better recognized. Another key factor is capacity building. If the school management committee isn't functioning well, it is a matter of training, so that members will realize their roles and participate more effectively.

At this time, then, we will open the floor for question or comments.

Question 1: Abdul Rashid (Visiting Professor, CICE, Hiroshima University)

I would first like to talk about the policies. In Malaysia we have more policies than we know what to do with. Policies keep on changing, but the old ones are not being done away with. In secondary schools there is much of what has been mentioned here. We have the PTA, Sports Day, Parent's Day, Fundraising, etc. At least on the surface, it appears to be very communicative. Many schools do this as a matter of fact or because of orders from higher up or because it is trendy. The school's principal can be seen to be doing something novel. It is nice to invite senior citizens in to reminisce or to have athletes showing their prowess, but at the end of the day community involvement should first be about benefitting the children, before benefiting the community. We should be bringing in the community if it benefits the children, not just for the sake of doing it. Within this context, research shows that the most effective schools are those that have the most effective principals. My questions therefore are:

What and whose purposes are we serving?

Who is at the centre of the issue, the principal, the teachers or the community?

Where are we taking education to with community involvement?

Are we trying to solve old problems in new ways or new problems in old ways? Thank you.

Waraiporn Sangnapaboworn (Head of International Education Section, Office of National Education Commission, Thailand)

I agree that we should do these collaborations for the benefit of the learners, not for ourselves. We should put students at the centre of collaboration.

Gerald W. Fry (Professor, College of Education and Human Development, Department of Organizational Leadership, Policy, and Development, University of Minnesota, USA)

Just one point about that. We talked a lot about stakeholders, and this is a good question. I think it was in Niger where, as part of the school committee, they had representatives of students. I remember in Thailand where there was a forum organized, I believe by the Ministry of Education, at which children articulated their ideas about education. So I think that maybe, as this is a very innovative forum, we might want to think more, at every level of education, about the extent to which the voices of the children should be heard.

R. Govinda (Vice-Chancellor, National University of Educational Planning and Administration, India)

I think we should avoid treading on the role of the headmaster. As Professor Rashid said, the principal has a very important role to play in the process. Sometimes we are overly enthusiastic with community participation and we subject the principal to the control of the community, resulting in the erosion of his/her autonomy, which is not good.

Secondly, success will come if there is trust between the school staff on one hand and the community on the other.

It will not happen if we simply create and thrust community management at the principal. If the school has no trust in the community and regard them as only creating unnecessary interference, then the process will not work. One local [Indian] parliamentarian commented of the education committees that these would become the “Village Interference Committees”. It is important to recognize this and create balance between the two sides.

Waraiporn Sangnapaboworn (Head of International Education Section, Office of National Education Commission, Thailand)

From my own experience, I agree with Professor Rashid that effective principals are very important in starting the process of collaboration. In my pilot project, those principals who had very effective leadership were those who had instructional leadership; they would think about teaching and learning before any other administrative matters. They were the ones who invited community people to participate in the school. Theirs was a very important role.

Question 2: Maria Teresa Félix (Cultural Attaché, Embassy of Angola)

I am lucky to have found the answers to my questions spread out over all the presentations. However, I still have one issue: We have to be results-oriented and communities are not in charge of planning. So what is the connection between these ideas for having the communities participating in the education of their children and fact that it is really the government that decides the direction of the education system?

We heard of one Japanese experience from Professor Kaneko, in which the educational objectives are shared with the volunteers. We didn't discuss the real skills of these volunteers. My concern, then, is that the cost of education may be underestimated because the volunteers' time, which also has value, does not seem to be taken into account anywhere.

How can we make sure that community participation helps education to meet the future economic and social development objectives of our children?

R. Govinda (Vice-Chancellor, National University of Educational Planning and Administration, India)

Community participation will not solve all the problems of a country. However, I firmly believe that we should break the alienation that exists in many countries between the government, the school and the community. The community very often thinks that it [education] is someone else's job. This, I think is the fundamental reason for bringing the schools and communities together. It can, as in the case of Japan, contribute to the improvement in the quality of teaching and learning. But in most other countries it will at least contribute to improving the functional efficiency of the schools; bringing and retaining more children in school and maintaining facilities for a better learning environment. I believe in this more modest expectation of education, rather than that all the problems will be solved.

Ibo Issa (National Coordinator, ONEN(Organisation Nigérienne des Educateurs Novateurs), Niger Principal Coordinator, JICA School For All Project)

In terms of the community's participation, I think it is important to put things in perspective. Some schools are sometimes abandoned: inspectors don't go, so no one knows if teachers are actually there. In these cases, the only ones who can ensure that the teachers are at school are the local people.

Now as to what communities can bring to schools, we shouldn't forget that communities can do things that states cannot. You can have billions of dollars and the best-trained teachers, but if a mother thinks that it is better to keep her daughter at home for other purposes and you have no children in the schools, then it is meaningless. So what is important is to bring in the community to ensure that children go to school. It is a misconception to think of education as only a matter of money. The state has money, but there are things that only the community can do. For example in Niger,

if the teacher does not come for 10 days, it's up to the community to find out what has happened. The local community should show ownership of the schools.

If there are no schools, then there will be no basic development. We have to make sure that schools become useful for the community and in our own way, not in the way that has been colonially inherited. The idea then is that if you bring children to school it is not because you have to, but that it is because it is good for you. You have to be open and frank with the community. Education is a right in any religion or community. It's not just in terms of money. We have seen so many projects by the World Bank, but that's not enough. We need to change things and do them in our own way.

Gerald W. Fry (Professor, College of Education and Human Development, Department of Organizational Leadership, Policy, and Development, University of Minnesota, USA)

I shared with you a quotation from Somsak in *The Kingdom of Thailand* and he emphasized so much dialogue. To me the really important aspect of school/community relations is providing a forum for creative dialogue, free from constraints and from hierarchy. And then in each community - we saw the great diversity in India, the great diversity in Indonesia, considerable diversity in Thailand - the outcomes will vary. The Ministry of Education cannot define a single outcome. The needs are so different, so out of this creative dialogue among the stakeholders at the local level, I hope that we can have education that really meets the needs; and if it meets the needs then the children will come to school.

Noriaki Mizumoto (Associate Professor, College of Education, School of Human Sciences, University of Tsukuba)

With regard to who determines the objectives of education, in the discussion today, we are talking about the centralized [system] versus the decentralized; how we can delegate the authority. The context was whether the central government or the local community should determine the objectives. However, I think there is another context. Should the objectives of education really be determined only by the education sector – the Ministry of Education, the Board of Education and the school? The education sector was traditionally the only player related to making decisions about education, but I think community also encompasses other sectors and other factors. So I think we should eliminate the barriers between the education and non-education sectors. This is another perspective in this discussion.

Waraiporn Sangnapaboworn (Head of International Education Section, Office of National Education Commission, Thailand)

In my presentation we saw that educational volunteers in the community set up their own indicators for deciding the characteristics of students, who are their own children, in the community. This is a part of the role of local people who can initiate their own ideas of what they want their children to be like, of course within the framework of the law and National Education Act. It is not different from the government's initiative. We would see the same initiatives, ideas and policies from the state level to the school level, if we concentrate on children's benefits.

Question 3: Benson Banda (Student, Hiroshima University)

From the perspective of cultural dynamics within communities, pilot interventions tend to be successful, due to focused intervention or attention. How can we ensure that the roll out of SMCs can survive beyond the pilot stage? It may not be only SMCs, but most interventions seem to suffer even when they have been very successful in the pilot phase. So I feel we need to go beyond that and think about what we can do to sustain them.

Question 4: Elizabeth Nkoma (Women Affairs, Gender and Community Development, Zimbabwe)

Looking at the results in Japan I feel that community approach could produce fruits in developing countries.

However, in developing countries like most African countries the first thing that has to be addressed in Africa is the training of teachers themselves, before we go to the community. Another problem in developing countries is that the communities don't even know the value of the education of their children, possibly because they themselves are uneducated. I therefore believe that we should start from the ground up, so that the aims of community participation can be achieved.

Question 5: Bihina Philomine (Ministry of Basic Education, Cameroon)

Thank you. My question is to Professor Govinda. India is known to be a country with multiple cultural traditions, so I would like to know how community collaboration is actually managed in a multicultural context.

Gerald W. Fry (Professor, College of Education and Human Development, Department of Organizational Leadership, Policy, and Development, University of Minnesota, USA)

The sustainability of interventions may be one of the most complex problems in education development assistance. We find many cases where the projects are not sustainable. Once the World Bank or Asian Development Bank leaves, the money dries up and it's very hard to sustain the intervention.

I think the answer may be that when we design the pilot interventions we need to make sure that these projects are not special, that they can work even if JICA/WB is absent. I think that improves the probability that they will be sustainable.

Waraiporn Sangnapaboworn (Head of International Education Section, Office of National Education Commission, Thailand)

In addition to that, in order to sustain the development we must ensure that the innovation is assimilated into daily activity and adds value to what the community is doing. I think that having a group of leaders who understand and can continue the development would also be helpful. It is important to find some persons who understand the project and will champion its continuity.

R. Govinda (Vice-Chancellor, National University of Educational Planning and Administration, India)

Another important point is that in societies with multiple hierarchies creating a 'one community' feeling among them is itself a big project. We have to recognize that in many of our societies, we are divided on ethnic and language considerations. So a very important requirement, as the moderator has already said, is to find local champions, rather than bringing in outside experts to try to create this. Outside experts are not likely to achieve this because when they disappear, so will any initiatives that they support.

Second, the process that we adopt should be simple enough and endogenously generated, not from outside. Don't make it sophisticated, so that it will work only as long as the experts are there.

A third very important point for sustainability in community participation is that you have to hold it long enough. Very often the projects come and the organizers think that they will achieve everything in 3 years and the situation is likely to change. This is not the case. Societies have their own rhythms and cycles of change. So holding the project long enough is more likely to ensure success.

I would also like to say that even in communities where the population is less educated we need to have faith in the basic democratic concerns of the people. I think that if we don't have faith in basic democracy, community participation is not likely to work. We should have faith that the parents are concerned with the education of their children and while they will make mistakes it is better that the mistakes are made by them and not by the state.

On the last point regarding managing in a multiple tradition situation, it is a very tough job that we in India have. We have consciously developed every school as a secular public space, so that the concerns of a particular culture, religion or language should not interfere there. That is the way we are trying to develop. I will not say that we have had one hundred percent success, but over time perhaps we will achieve this.

Ibo Issa (National Coordinator, ONEN(Organisation Nigérienne des Educateurs Novateurs), Niger Principal Coordinator, JICA School For All Project)

I would like to mention about pilot sustainability. In Niger, we are not in the phase of experimentation, but implementation. In the beginning with JICA the community did not like the project, being used to working with other models from entities such as UNICEF. We wanted to change things, to share experiences and see how the communities could organize themselves. The JICA approach was different in that we decided to do training, but not talk about money. Money means training with public servants and implementation comes after this; then one speaks of follow-up and money becoming necessary in terms of needing transportation for the ones doing the monitoring to access the villages. This will not work and will not be sustainable. However if you do it with the community, you have to do it in the field. With the community approach, from the very beginning at the general assembly of the COGES (*Comités de gestion des établissements scolaires*) everybody decides what and who will be sent and what money will be needed. Everything is decided from the grassroots level. We now have approximately twelve thousand action plans and we didn't need money for that. This was achieved because each community was doing it. If you do it on the field, in each village, then it's possible.

In Niger, there are inspectors who meet the committees to see where things are. This means sustainability is integrated into the everyday activities that have already been decided and adopted by the general assembly. Of course in the beginning it is not easy because one has to change mentalities and the old way of doing things, but if one is really persistent and if one really wants to go in this way, then it works and we have seen some changes in Niger.

Noriaki Mizumoto (Associate Professor, College of Education, School of Human Sciences, University of Tsukuba)

I think there was a question about the difference between Japan and developing countries. In Japan in the Meiji era when the school was established, the community took the lead, organized the school and hired teachers. One important thing was that there was a leader at the community level and at the same time, teachers themselves became the leaders of the community. The competence of teachers is also important. In the case of Japan there is inter-school training, which is more focused on the research of teachers. This means that there is a system that allows the teachers themselves to learn. This also goes back to the Meiji era when, for example, some teachers would visit the neighboring schools to see what they were doing. This kind of training would not require any budget and hence is a self-help type of education that enhances the teaching level of such schoolteachers.

Waraiporn Sangnapaboworn (Head of International Education Section, Office of National Education Commission, Thailand)

I think it is also important to identify best practices on the community. For example in the Surplur District model that I introduced, we encourage our communities to take the initiative in collaborating with each other, that is, producing ideas and best practices from the bottom up. If we can identify them we will ensure that they are doing it correctly and we will share the best practices with other parts of the country.

Shinji Ishii (Chairman, Hiroshima City Board of Education)

The discussion on community participation, centralization or decentralization, and the relationship between the two is something very close to me, because I myself am faced with such issues. As Professor Mizumoto mentioned we have more moderate centralization. While keeping this in mind though, education historically has had more to do with the home and community level and at the same time the school. Those three parties were responsible for education because in order to nurture its successors the community had to provide the education. However the society structure in Japan has changed and many people who have grown up and received their education from the rural communities are now leaving their hometowns for Tokyo and other metropolitan areas. Therefore some people started to say that it was better to transfer this responsibility to the prefectural level and as such Japan is now facing the weakening of educational power at the community level. In the last decade or so, the committee from the central government started to promote co-work, not necessarily collaboration, which means that the community level would have to be engaged more; otherwise education would not work. This means opening up the schools, for instance by utilizing the internet to create their schools HP and send out the message about what is being done in the schools and soliciting the opinion of the various stake holders involved about the education provided in schools. The results, as Professor Mizumoto mentioned, are not only schools volunteer programmes, but also assistance in commuting to and from school.

Therefore in one area there is a lot of progress, but the major issue that we are facing is two-fold. First and foremost there are some people who wish to help, but whose help we do not necessarily want. These people are very vocal about what to do and what not to do, to the extent that parents are pointing fingers at the teachers to quit school because the teachers are not performing well enough. Those people do not have the assessment capability or power, yet are intruding very much into school management. Therefore in some cases it is better that the community does not help us; and that's one problem that we're facing.

The second issue is that the people in the community sometimes become too egocentric and I think this is something that is lingering from the long past of Japan. However, I am hoping that these community people would be able to feel the joy of becoming a part of formulating education; meaning that I want these people to see the bigger perspective that they are helping out the future of Japan. Therefore sometimes, if you think the needs of the community have to be met, then education as a whole is not going to work well. That is the perspective that I have.

Waraiporn Sangnapaboworn (Head of International Education Section, Office of National Education Commission, Thailand)

Professor Ishii has told us of another aspect of the Japanese system in which the community becomes egoistic, and this is something we have not heard before.

R. Govinda (Vice-Chancellor, National University of Educational Planning and Administration, India)

I also think that it is very important to avoid the de-professionalization of school management. School management should be done by people who understand the school. The school has a very important and unique role to play and every community member may not fully understand role of the teacher or the kind of curriculum that has to be used. Too much interference by the community can be disruptive to all these processes.

Waraiporn Sangnapaboworn (Head of International Education Section, Office of National Education Commission, Thailand)

Yes, look for people on whom you can lean against, who are with the school. That's a good idea.

Noriaki Mizumoto (Associate Professor, College of Education, School of Human Sciences, University of Tsukuba)

We have to make the right selection of committee participants from the community. When we talk about community school, I believe that it is the community *per se* that is learning and the community school is for the service of the community. In this process of learning the residents and the schools enhance their ideas of what it takes to serve the needs of the community. In other words, there are some needs that must be served in the community, and the issue is not whether to serve them or not, but rather the issue is that we have to ensure that the community is able to learn sufficiently.

Waraiporn Sangnapaboworn (Head of International Education Section, Office of National Education Commission, Thailand)

I agree with you, Professor Ishii, which we should look for a moderate kind of decentralization or centralization. We have to make sure that the community is ready and prepared for self-management and that the state understands the meaning of decentralization. I am, however, worried about Japan's tendency to re-centralize the power to the prefecture or ministry because of rural-urban migration because Thailand has been following in Japan's footsteps in terms of decentralization. We are trying to transfer the power of administration from the ministry to TAOs or district administrative organizations so that local people will take care of education, but we now have problems of conflict between the Ministries of the Interior and of Education. Through Japan's experiences I have learned that we should be neither too centralized nor decentralized, but is very difficult figure out how to strike a good balance.

Ibo Issa (National Coordinator, ONEN(Organisation Nigérienne des Educateurs Novateurs), NigerPrincipal Coordinator, JICA School For All Project)

I want to make a comment on the choices made by the community and those made by the government. I don't think that they are mutually exclusive. Of course the training of teachers is one thing and the training of the community is another, but we can and have to do both at the same time. Further, I don't think that one can be done without the other. One can train teachers and train the community or try to have more awareness of the community. I believe they are complementary.

Waraiporn Sangnapaboworn (Head of International Education Section, Office of National Education Commission, Thailand)

Thanks to our panelists for their comments and responses. With that I think we have clarified the remaining questions.

[Concluding Discussions]

Kazuhiro Yoshida (Professor, Center for the study of International Cooperation in Education (CICE), Hiroshima University)

Ladies and gentlemen, distinguished panelists, thank you very much for your great engagement.

In concluding this session, we want to make sure that we all understand that there are diverse approaches to the engagement of the community for the betterment of education. We have to clearly identify the purpose of community involvement, what can and cannot be done, diverse approaches as well as culturally, historically and regionally defined differences. It is important to enhance our awareness of all these aspects.

Even though we have not had a chance to discuss about community, I think it's also good to define what we mean by 'community'. In Japan if you live in a condominium in a large metropolitan area it is often the case that you don't even know your next-door neighbor. Yet if you talk about community building maybe such persons would still insist that they are engaged in some form of community activity. Well, is that really community activity? So this is also an interesting aspect, in that people may have different definitions of community and community involvement.

We have had rich discussion about this very important topic and I would like to ask our distinguished panelists to make any additional comments that they may have about today's forum.

Abou Diarra (Chief of Education Decentralization/Deconcentration Bureau, Ministry of Education, Literacy and National Languages, Mali)

Thank you very much. I really liked the way our interventions were summarized by the moderator. Of course every country has a different reality, and while we are talking about the same thing, let's remember that on the ground things are all different.

The idea of decentralizing means that we share prerogatives, naturally between the state structure and the local structure, and with territorial collectivities, and everything's got to do with how much we share. We usually succeed when we have pilot projects, but then the project organizers go, we are left on our own and the experiment crashes. In my country when there is an experiment we try to be really strict about looking at every aspect, and as soon as we succeed then we think that's it, which doesn't work. The experiment is important because then we can see what everybody's responsibility is, but that learning phase has to be done very well and after that one really has to work in order to generalize the experience.

Managing the schools along with the communities is another aspect of paramount importance. First, let's look at what the community thinks about the school. There is the money factor of course, but certainly the most important factor is that communities realize that schools matter and that they can do something at that level. This is when the community can start working with the schools. These are the elements that I wanted to underscore.

Waraiporn Sangnapaboworn (Head of International Education Section, Office of National Education Commission, Thailand)

Thank you Professor Yoshida. I would like to speak about efforts to achieve education for all according to the Jomtien (Thailand) Declaration on EFA. Incidentally, Jomtien will again host this [Educational for All] conference from March 22 – 24 of this year. After 20 years we review how successfully countries have been able to increase enrolment in basic education.

The three main purposes for reforming education in Thailand are: to improve the quality of education; increase access to school for children and mobilize resources in communities for improving schools. We encourage every part of

the country to initiate its own way of reforming or collaborating between school and community. The successful methods are designated best practices. We learn lessons from success or failure and we organize forums for teachers, schools and communities to share their experiences. There must be a central organization to coordinate these forums; otherwise the actors will not come to meet each other. What we have used is the knowledge management or KM technique, meaning that you share the knowledge of your success. And thus we can learn from each other about what worked or not and there is sincerity in working together to improve the quality of education in our communities. Of course achieving EFA is not the sole responsibility of schools, but requires participation from all parts of society, especially parents. Compared to other stakeholders, parents always come first and are direct stakeholders in education. So with regard to domestic implementation, Thailand provides many platforms for practitioners to share their experiences.

I would like to go beyond the boundary of Thailand. When I hear of the successes from Mali and Niger it inspires me to think that we should also have this international collaboration. In SE Asia, we can share experiences and expand to wider areas of the region. With the approach of the ASEAN community in 2015 in which we are expected to expand many areas of economic, political, cultural and social cooperation, I think educational cooperation is one of the leading activities that we should embark on. So for me, nowadays we can look not necessarily to other continents, but to our near neighbors in terms of how we can co-exist harmoniously through educational cooperation. My former advisor, Professor Yoko Murata, who is present at today's forum, taught me about international cooperation for education development and I think that I would like to implement her suggestions before I retire. So we will start our cooperation with our neighboring countries and I am thinking about exchanging experiences with other African countries such as Mali, Niger and Zimbabwe. We don't need to meet physically, but can make ample use of ICT. I also think JICA can help by organizing a forum for us or facilitating this cooperation; and I'm happy to say that we won't need much money.

I found this forum meaningful and useful and wish its continued existence. I wish also to thank the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Hiroshima and Tsukuba Universities and JICA for organizing this form and allowing me to learn so much from it. Thank you very much.

Noriaki Mizumoto (Associate Professor, College of Education, School of Human Sciences, University of Tsukuba)

With innovation, generally speaking, it is sometimes not clear to the innovator what the purpose of the innovation is. What is important is to identify the main purpose, called 'sense-making'. In the pilot phase, maybe there is sense-making and it is found to be significant. Now, if it is to be implemented more generally, it should not simply be copied from the initial pilot phase, but its relevance to a particular community needs to be considered; why a school has to be involved with the community or *vice versa*. I think that should be the major outcome of research in innovation in education. In building the relationship between the community and the school it is necessary to identify where in the overall phase one is located and for what objective the implementation is being carried out. It is also important to have a diversity of perspectives. There may be differences in opinions among the stakeholders, however we should capitalize on the conflict, and should not try to contain, but reveal it. There is the need to overcome these conflicts in the process of sense-making.

So today we have been able to share the various experiences and discuss this matter from a diversity of perspectives. This has been a very good process of sense-making and I think it is necessary to continue this kind of process in order to make schools better. Thank you very much.

Gerald W. Fry (Professor, College of Education and Human Development, Department of Organizational Leadership, Policy, and Development, University of Minnesota, USA)

First I would like to thank my new colleagues who have helped me to better understand the impressive change

taking place in India, Mali and Niger, and would like to share just a few final reflections.

At the end of our discussion I really liked the ideas brought by Professor Ishii and Dr. Waraiporn about moderate centralization or moderate decentralization. In my country we have too much decentralization and this has resulted in extreme inequalities.

I would also strongly emphasize the two 'E's as really crucial issues: Empowerment and Equity. There has been a lot of discussion about financial responsibility; we have to go beyond binary thinking. Education is so important that we have to maximize both national and local financial contributions for improvement in the quality of education.

This morning Abou Diarra very much stressed to idea of shared responsibility, which is a concept I like. So many people should share responsibility for education, not just the government.

Professor Govinda has shared with us how much remarkable linguistic and cultural diversity exists in India and I think decentralization can contribute to the preservation of linguistic and cultural diversity.

My final point is about the two 'Cs': Creative Collaboration is crucial among all the key local stakeholders in order to realize this wonderful ideal from the National Education Act of Thailand: All for Education and Education for All.

Thank you very much for the distinguished participants' very insightful and informative questions.

R. Govinda (Vice-Chancellor, National University of Educational Planning and Administration, India)

Let me thank Hiroshima University and the Government of Japan for giving me this very special and unique opportunity. I treasure the learning that it has imparted to me in my professional life, through listening to the variety of ideas that have been discussed.

I will take four messages from this conference. First, in listening to the experiences of Japan and Thailand, I realize that they are far ahead not only in terms of using community involvement for improving logistics, increasing resources and getting people together, but they have also looked at how the community can be impacted by its own involvement in education. This is something that can be examined further. We probably won't be able to implement this everywhere, but even in India, there are some school settings in which some of the experiences of Japan can be usefully implemented.

Second, I think listening to our friends from Africa has been very enlightening to me. Discussions within and outside of today's forum have given me the opportunity to listen and understand with greater insight about what is happening in both countries and also, very importantly, how Japan has been investing in educational development there. I would say at this juncture that I also have a selfish interest in knowing more about this, as at the moment my university had been charged by the government of India with the responsibility of establishing an institution like ours in Africa to serve the pan-African interest. So listening to what has been happening in Africa and how Japan is investing its time and resources for the development of education in Africa has been of great interest to me. I look forward to working together not only with our African friends, but also our Japanese colleagues as to how we can collaborate particularly in the policy planning and management aspects of education investment in Africa.

Third, I think listening to the variety of experiences about what works or doesn't work in the different countries reminds me of one important lesson, which is that governments always come up with only one policy for the entire country, but community participation shows that this does not always work, one size does not fit all. The contexts are different in different places and we must be conscious of this. We may need to look at developing a pluralistic approach in formulating relevant policies for community participation.

The last message that comes to my mind is that the modern school is a very peculiar place. It's a place where everything is standardized. All teachers will have to acquire the same kind of qualification. They have to go to the classrooms at the same time. The school works at the same time all over the country and they have to teach the same curriculum, which is prescribed from outside and they have to conduct the same type of examinations. In the midst

of this we bring in the community, which is a very uneven animal. The community members do not come with the same kind of qualifications, backgrounds or expectations, and this is not easily to deal with. School administrators and teachers are all used to seeing the same thing being followed by everyone at a given point in time. When community comes, it disturbs the routine that teachers are used to. What is really required, therefore when we speak of 'capacity-building'? Most often the capacity-building only deals with some sort of skills and knowledge: what ought to happen, how it should happen, how to conduct the school management committee meetings and such. However I think the most important message that I have received is to bring for ourselves an element of appreciating diversity. We should learn to celebrate diversity, not just tolerate it. Invariably teachers and headmasters feel that they are only tolerating the parents coming into the school. They don't want them to come, but they tolerate them. I think we should begin to celebrate diversity. The day that we begin to celebrate diversity is the day we will realize the importance of the community's role in schools. Thank you very much for giving me this opportunity.

Ibo Issa (National Coordinator, ONEN(Organisation Nigérienne des Educateurs Novateurs), NigerPrincipal Coordinator, JICA School For All Project)

Thank you. Today's discussion has showed that in all cases, community participation is a necessity and it needs to be adapted according to the realities of the place where it is instituted. This is because when we think of community participation, unless it reflects the communities themselves, it does not make sense. Within the same country people may not have the same needs and so if we try force standardization on the community I don't think it will work. At any level, regardless of the country, I think that communities can always contribute.

The opposite point of view has not really been dealt with today. Our experiences have shown that teachers were, at first, very reluctant. They were being very centralized and they thought that the community's participation was going to be an obstacle to the school. This can be yet another major issue because the teacher is a very important actor within the school. In some schools where communities tried to take part in the cafeteria, for example, there was significant resistance from the school staff. However, I think people have begun to understand and this is an irreversible movement. After assessment of this situation, the ministry had to step in and now there is a director within the school council. It has been said that the teachers are not allowed to be the directors of these committees. That is how we were able to resolve this question; otherwise it would have been very difficult to manage.

I would like to reiterate that in two weeks we will be meeting again to exchange information on West African countries. This is going to be an extension of today's symposium and we will be bringing many novel ideas from today's forum to feed that discussion. I would like to thank our hosts today and we would like to keep on expanding discussions like these because the educational issue is a socio-economic issue that impacts all countries. So we really have to try to find solutions. Thank you very much.

Kazuhiro Yoshida (Professor, Center for the study of International Cooperation in Education (CICE), Hiroshima University)

Thank you all very much. It takes a village to raise a child. Hillary Clinton popularized this proverb, widely thought to be of African origin, in the title of a 1996 book. In the context of this forum it means that wherever a country is in the world, the mutual relations between the community and the school have become the classic issue and at the same time the new issue.

The question arises as to who the community members are. I would say that each person here is a community member. Therefore, from that perspective we all need to think about how to tackle these very important issues that each country is facing. I believe that today's forum has provided us with tremendous ideas on how these issues can be

addressed.

With that we would like to close the eighth Japan Education Forum. On behalf of the four organizers I extend appreciation to Professor Diarra and all the panelists for their active involvement. Thanks also to all the persons who have participated fully in this session especially our simultaneous interpreters who have helped us with what has been a very long day. Thank you all very much.

Appendix

Presented by

Ikuyo Kaneko

Professor, Graduate School of Media and Governance, and Faculty of Policy
Management, Keio University ----- 60

Waraiporn Sangnapaboworn

Head of International Education Section, Office of National
Education Commission, Thailand ----- 62

Gerald W. Fry

Professor, College of Education and Human Development, Department of
Organizational Leadership, Policy, and Development, University of Minnesota,
USA ----- 67

R. Govinda

Vice-Chancellor, National University of Educational Planning and Administration,
India ----- 72

Ibo Issa

National Coordinator, ONEN(Organisation Nigérienne des Educateurs Novateurs),
NigerPrincipal Coordinator, JICA School For All Project ----- 75

Noriaki Mizumoto

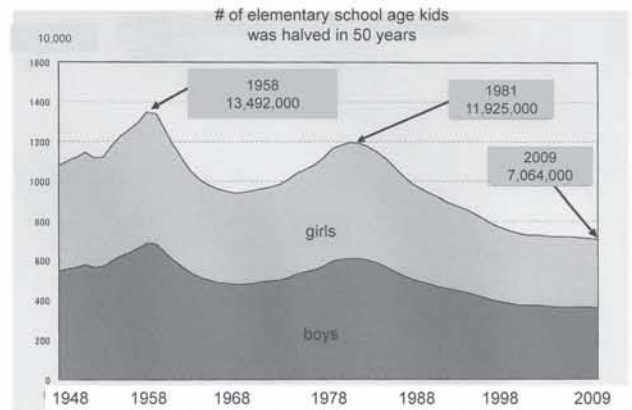
Associate Professor, College of Education, School of Human Sciences,
University of Tsukuba ----- 79

Japan Education Forum VIII
 Collaboration toward Self-Reliant Educational Development

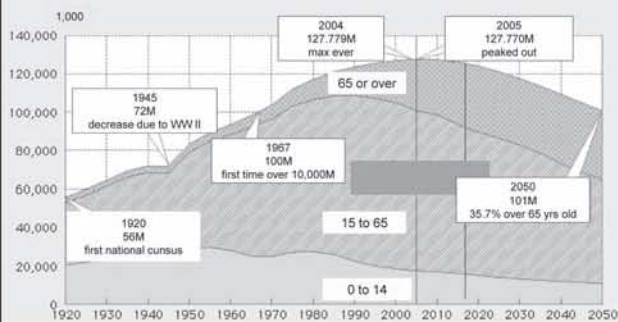
Contributions of Local Communities to
 Realize Better Education
 --- A View from Japanese Educational Policies---

Feb. 3, 2011
 Prof. Ikuyo Kaneko
 Graduate School of Governance, Keio University

Decreasing elementary school age children in Japan



Population is rapidly decreasing in Japan



Concerns about education in Japan

◆ Decreasing motivation and time devoted to study

City of Fujisawa, Kanagawa prefecture (9th graders)

	1965	2005
want to study more	65.1%	24.8%
can keep up with class	39.7%	19.7%
almost no study at home	1.6%	14.1%

◆ Capacity of logical and/or original thinking is lacking

average % of correct answers (all 8th graders in a certain prefecture)

	multiple-choice	descriptive	comprehension
sociology	55.8%	39.2%	45.2%
math	62.5%	55.4%	17.4%
science	60.4%	37.8%	37.8%
English	73.9%	67.1%	37.9%

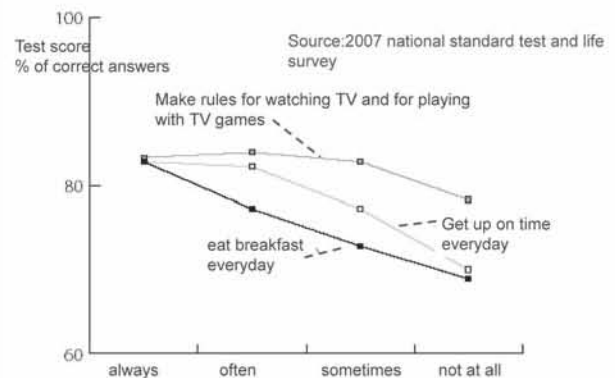
◆ Propagation of disadvantaged families over generations

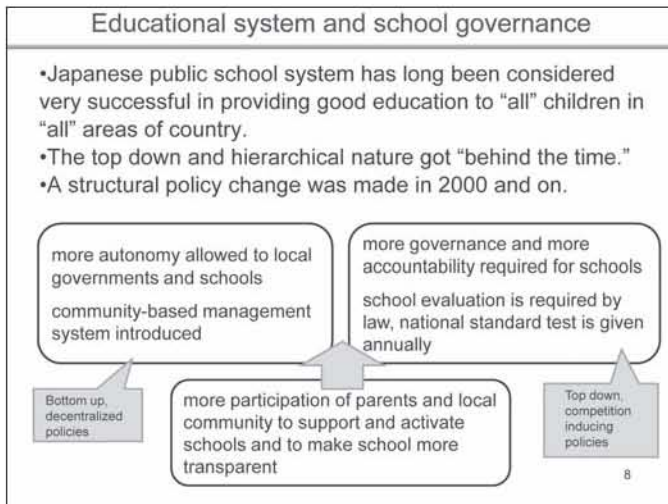
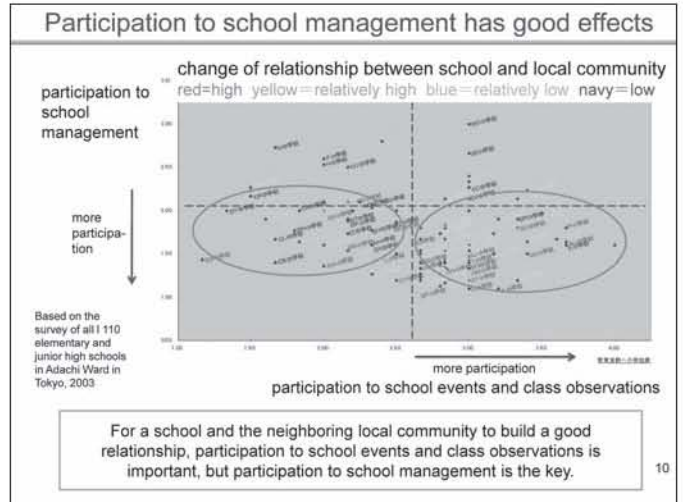
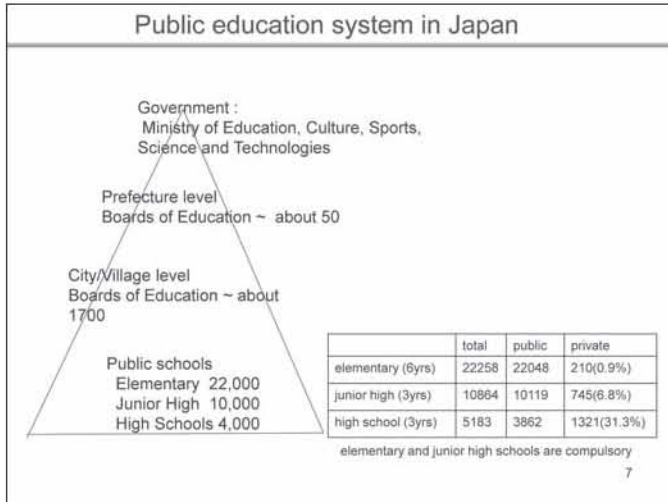
Polarization of society, increase of disadvantaged children
 Parents' economic and education levels limit children's opportunities

Japan is rapidly aging



Test scores and family conditions are strongly co-related



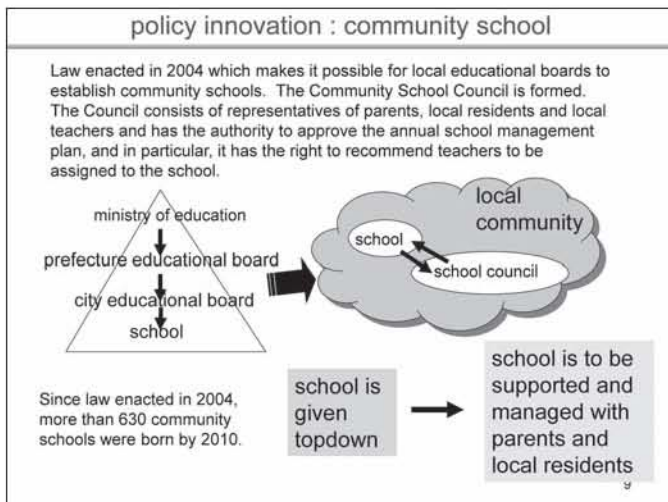


Case of schools in City of Mitaka

Example: Nishi-Mitaka School (established as community school in 2006)···All public schools in City of Mitaka are now made community schools since 2006.

A movie on participation of local community residents to regular class room lectures is shown.

Effects of the policy innovation is discussed.



School Improvement and Roles of Local Community: The Case of Thailand

Waraiporn Sangnapaboworn, Ph.D.
Office of the Education Council
Ministry of Education, Thailand

The Three Pillars of Thai Society

- Home (family) rearing children
- School providing education
- Temple (or other religious institutions such as church, mosque) cultivating religious values

The 1999 National Education Act, the Law for Education Reform

Educational provision shall be based on the following principles

- Continuous Development of the Quality of Education
- Lifelong Education for All
- All segments of society participating in the provision of education (All for Education)

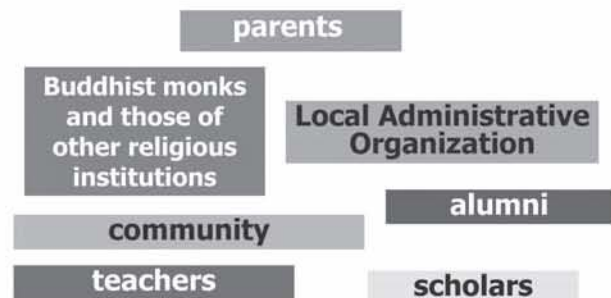
Article 9 The Principles of Education Operation and Management shall be a collaboration of

- Family
- Community
- Community Organization
- Local Administrative Organization
- Private organization
- Professional organization
- Religious organization
- Entrepreneur
- Others

School-Based Management (Juristic Schools)

- Decentralization of power in education administration from the Ministry to schools
- Establishment of school council in every school (9-15 persons) to supervise and support the management of school

The School Council shall be comprised of representatives from



Findings from R&D on "The Whole School Reform for the Development of Learners", conducted by OEC, 2001-2004

At the Beginning

- School Council did not understand their roles and duties
- School only expected school council to mobilize resources from self and community



Through the research project

- School council realized the significance of their roles and duties and performed them better
- School found that school council and community organizations had more resources than money
 - Ideas, creativity
 - Knowledge
 - Wisdom
 - Expertise
 - Networks
 - Technology
 - Equipment
 - Labor
 - Learning Sources
 - Money

Recent Development of School-Community Collaboration in Thailand

- Monk teachers teach Buddhism and moral values in schools or temples



- Students Learn from Local Wisdom Experts



- Learning can take place in any learning sources available in community

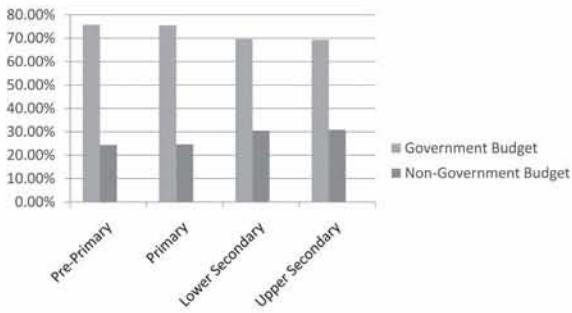


Recent Development of School-Community Collaboration in Thailand

- Community people help in construction
- Stakeholders such as temples, alumni, parents, and community people provide computers, scholarship and donation for school improvement

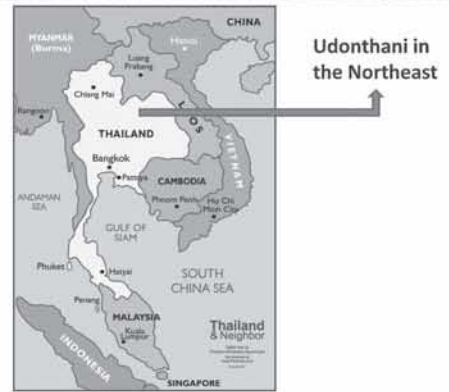


Sources of Per-Head Expenditure



Source: Research on Per-Head Expenditure of Basic Education, MOE Thailand, 2006

A Case of Surplur District, Udonthani



Problems of Education in Surplur District

- Low achievement of education
- Declining enrolment and popularity
- Inefficiency of management of small Schools

Tripartite in Collaboration

MOU – Each party does its best in performing roles concerning the provision of education

- Tambon (District) Administrative Organization (TAO)
- Educational Service Area
- 6 Schools in the TAO



5 Steps of Collaboration

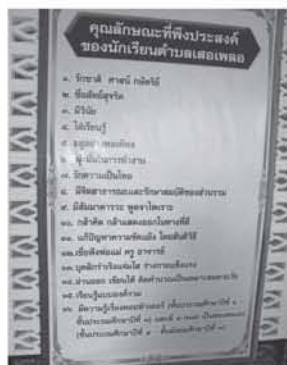
- Thinking Collaboration : identifying school problems
- Planning Collaboration : identifying each party's duties to support education, and their key performance indicators
- Implementing Collaboration : collaboration of teachers, parents, education volunteers according to their duties and roles
- Evaluating Collaboration : monitoring and evaluation
- Appreciating Collaboration : sharing success



key performance indicators set by the three parties

Roles of Local Community

- Temple donates fund, scholarship and monks teach Buddhism
- Local wisdom experts teach and demonstrate knowledge and occupation concerning Thai local wisdom
- Education Volunteers set educational outcomes and help look after students' manner and behavior



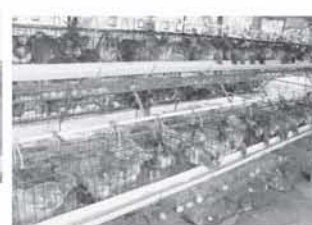
Education Volunteers participate in identifying the desirable characteristics of school children

Public-Private Partnership contribute to Self-Sufficiency School Lunch Program

- Public Organizations :
 - Department of Fishery gives fish and frog breeders and advice on fishery and aquaculture
 - Department of Agriculture Promotion provides seedlings and technique on how to grow vegetables and fruits,
 - Department of Cooperatives Promotion gives advice on the operation of School Bank and Accounting
- Private Companies provide chicken, ducks, pigs and feed, and gives advice on how to increase the productivity



Self-Sufficiency Farming of Vegetables and Fruits



Students learn how to raise chicken, fish, pigs, and ducks for school lunch program and sufficiency



Results of the Collaboration

- **Students** : good-mannered, eager to learn (academic achievement is not yet significantly changed but expected to improve in the next national test)
- **Schools** : teachers concentrate on classroom teaching
- **Tambon Administrative Organization**: gives more priority on education and realizes its' role in supporting education e.g. health, utility, ICT, finance
- **Educational Service Area**: gaining participation from all segments in community in providing quality education for all
- **Community People**: proud of their schools and have more confidence in their quality



Thank you very much
for your kind attention



“Improving Local Education: The Quest for Empowerment and Equity, a Thai Case Study”

by Gerald W. Fry
Department of Organizational Leadership,
Policy, and Development
College of Education and Human Development
University of Minnesota

Paper Presented at the
Japan Educational Forum, Tokyo
February 3, 2011



Yes, you may well doubt, you may well be uncertain... Do not accept anything because it is the authoritative tradition, because it is often said, because of rumor or hearsay, because it is found in the scriptures, because it agrees with a theory of which one is already convinced, because of the reputation of an individual, or because a teacher said it is thus and thus... But experience it for yourself.

The Lord Buddha
The Kalama Sutta

“And words are only words unless they transcend monologue and provide for dialogue. Dialogue between real people is the seed of action.” (Somsak, p. 135)

“Centralization of power is a major obstacle to development.”

Seksan Prasertkul
December 19, 2010

The Critical Need to Make Value Premises and Assumptions Explicit (Gunnar Myrdal, Nobel Laureate from Sweden)

My Key Value Premises and Assumptions

Black Gold (social justice, equality, equity, access for all)
Yellow Gold (cultural preservation, cultural democracy; development of cultural intelligence, competency; development of “software of the mind”)
Blue Gold (sustainable development, sufficiency economy, clean air and water)
Green Gold (preservation of forests, social forestry, development of green campuses, Mahidol, e.g.)

My Key Value Premises and Assumptions

Quality education and human resource development are central to a nation's international competitiveness.

There is much unrealized human potential in Thailand's Northeast and remote rural localities; talent not being discovered.

Some Key Conceptual Frameworks Related to the Role of Local Communities in Improving Education

James Scott's "seeing like a state" and "weapons of the weak"
Ben Anderson's "imagined communities"
Ramírez & Casteñeda (cultural democracy)
Vavrus & Bartlett (vertical case studies)
Geertz's local knowledge

Genres of Local Communities

Parents of students
Local political bodies (TAOs)
Local politicians
Government officers
Religious communities
People with local wisdom (e.g., Association of Elders of Pimai, ancient architectural site in Korat area); example of social capital formation
Local power brokers (Jaw Por)
Community members without school children
Local business interests (e.g., contractors)

Key Principles

Fiscal neutrality: educational quality should not depend on where you live.
Equity (Rawls): systems should be fair; there should be no differential treatment
Equality (Rousseau): educational quality should not depend on the socioeconomic status of your family
Empowerment (Freire): the voices of those in local areas need to be heard
Putting the last first; listening to voices in remote disadvantaged areas (Chambers); H.R.H. Maha Chakri Princess Sirindhorn's identification of 15 most disadvantaged groups in Thailand

Background on Thailand

Siam never colonized; diverse external influences
History of centralization starting with major educational reforms of the Chulalongkorn era
"The Five Faces of Thailand" (need for "meso" thinking)
Persisting regional inequalities with the Northeast (Isaan) lagging behind; issue of "internal colonialism"; high V (1.30) (coefficient of variation) for regional inequalities; 42% of country's money deposits belong to just over only 25,000 people and 70% of country's assets belong to 20% of population (Seksan); Peter Warr's research: Northeast adversely affected by recent global economic crisis
1998 National Education Act guiding reform; an elegant statement of progressive educational ideals and principles



Recent Developments and Issues

Dr. Thaksin's controversial policies and his innovative populism (Thaksinomics); popularity in north and northeast, especially among local rural populations. Dr. Thaksin as a polarizing figure.

Dr. Thaksin's program neither stressed education nor targeting.

Educational corruption

Assessing educational reform after 12 years; how much actual implementation at the local level? Rashomon effect (Kurosawa; Akutagawa): look at the same data and see different things



Case Studies of Local Communities' Engagement to Improve Education

Islam Lam Sai Environmental School
Community-school collaboration in addressing deforestation issues (MOE-Michigan State University project, McDonough, Wheeler, 1998); SFEP (Social Forestry, Education, and Participation)

Role of Wat Suanmokk (in Chaiya)

UNDP/Florida State University project emphasizing role of school boards

Integrated Pest Management (IPM) case study

Various *setakit popieng* (sufficiency economy) cases; e.g., school gardens



Case Studies of Local Communities' Engagement to Improve Education

PDA innovative project to link corporations with local communities to enhance local capacity and reduce rural-urban migration (T-BIRD) Thai Business Initiative in Rural Development

Potential for university (especially Rajabhats), community, and school collaboration, but universities must be mindful not to dominate and not to be patronizing



Major Issues Related to Local Communities Role in Improving Education

Critical issues of quality and relevance

Fiscal versus budget decentralization

Local educators' resistance to giving TAO's control of local education

Local Education Areas (LEAs):

recentralization at the local level?

Development of local curricula (NEA)

Promotion and preservation of local cultures and languages



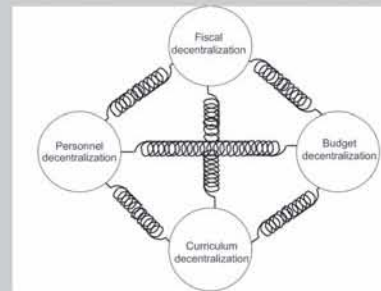
Major Issues Related to Local Communities Role in Improving Education

School-based management; involvement of parents in school management; parents' awareness of what their children need; role of parents in school oversight; role of community in fund raising, 33% of funds for schools now not from government budget (Waraiporn, 2011)

Gamage and Pachrapimon's survey of Thai school board members

World Bank Indonesia study of community participation in schools (SBM best practices)

Tetrahedron Model of Genres of Educational Decentralization



Major Problems in Northeast (Isaan) Education

Low levels of cultural, human, and intellectual capital (Bordieu, Lin) (cf. Bangkok or Korea)

Inadequate incentives for being a teacher in a remote disadvantaged area (Khamman, "The Rural School Teacher")

Lack of targeting most disadvantaged areas for compensatory funding; need incentives for local communities to become engaged with education

Limited educational and life chances

Major Problems in Northeast (Isaan) Education

Limited educational and life chances

Debt burden of teachers

New Policy Developments

Aphisit government's commitment to increase decentralization (increase in percent of government budget going to local level) and improve education

Articulation of the *pracha wiwat* (people's agenda) philosophy; responding creatively to people's needs

New Policy Developments

National Reform Assembly (chaired by Dr. Prawase) key recommendations:
land banks, community land ownership, community justice, welfare measures to assist the elderly, migrant workers...

Promotion of financial literacy (could lead to more investment in human capital rather than consumerism and excessive personal debt); relates directly to *setakit popieng* (sufficiency economy)

**Critique of social rice-roots activist, Ms.
Krarok Pongnoi**

**Excessive top down control
Money driven development**

**Need to make localities bigger and central
government smaller**



**The Future of Community Involvement in
Improving Education**

**Genuine government commitment to both
empowerment and equity**

**Effective *compensatory* targeting to give disadvantaged
local communities resources with which to work**

**Genuine commitment to human resource development
as the key to the nation's future**

**Fostering effective *partnerships* among diverse
stakeholders such as corporations, universities, local
pools of wisdom, religious communities, schools, and
communities to realize the ideal of "all for education"**



Thank you for your attention!

**Gerald W. Fry
Department of Organizational Leadership,
Policy, and Development
College of Education and Human Development
University of Minnesota**

**gwf@umn.edu
612-624-0294**



Community Participation and School Improvement

Some Critical Issues Based on Indian Experiences



R.Govinda
National University of Educational Planning and Administration
New Delhi, India

Why do we promote Community Participation?

- ✓ Participation as a value – democratic principle

OR

- ✓ For its instrumental role – improving efficiency of delivery

OR

- ✓ Is it a ploy of the State to give up its responsibility for establishing and financing schools?

What can community do for improving the school?

- ✓ Not a panacea for all the ills of the school system
- ✓ Community Participation can
 - Improve enrolment and retention and regularity of attendance
 - Improve infrastructure facilities in school
 - Mobilize supplementary resources
 - Monitor implementation of development projects
 - Play the role of a social watch

What can community do for improving the school?

- ✓ But Community Participation cannot
 - Improve quality of classroom teaching and learning, and evaluation and feed back to learners and parents
 - These will have to be still addressed by teachers with help and support from expert professionals
 - Autonomous specialized bodies for School Quality Monitoring could help

How do we get community into school management?

- ✓ Institutional arrangements are necessary
- ✓ Mere project based mobilization of the community does not last long enough

Institutionalizing Participation

- ✓ Enhanced role for Local Governments through decentralization
- ✓ Creation of empowered School management committees, school governing boards, village education committees, parent-teacher associations
- ✓ How are these structures created?
 - Through prescription by top-down official orders – focus on structures
 - Building from below through participatory mechanism – focus on processes

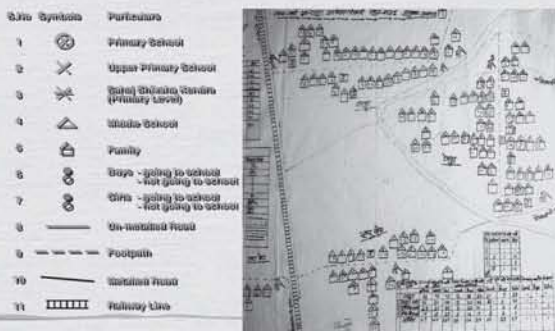
Institutionalising participation

- ✓ Many successful experiences of building from below
- ✓ *Lok Jumbish* (EFA Project in Rajasthan state) in India – unique strategy
- ✓ Participatory mapping of children *in* and *out of* school, by the community
- ✓ Promoting local leaders to champion the cause of education

Institutionalising participation

- ✓ Exploring the Human Face of the Problem
 - Enrollment and drop out are not just numbers
 - These are not mere statistics - There are real children behind them
 - It is only the local people who know the children (inside and outside the school) and can help improve the situation

Locating Children inside and outside the school on a Map



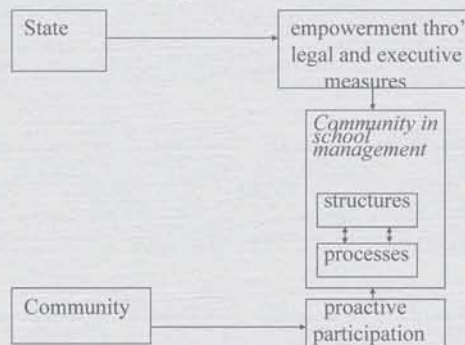
What does such a map do?

- ✓ It gives reliable information that can be understood by all, even illiterates – presents a visual data base
- ✓ It is a means of establishing relationships in the community with respect to the local school
- ✓ It acts as a social instrument for influencing parents

Institutionalising participation

- ✓ Determining the role of Stakeholders from the community and the school in school management
 - Parents,
 - Teachers and school authorities and
 - local community leadership
- ✓ Need to avoid conflicts – enhancing transparency
- ✓ ***Sustaining interest and Continuity of Action – How do we do?***

Need for Convergence and legitimisation



Some persistent tensions and emerging issues

- ☞ Communities are not homogenous units
 - Dealing with divisions within the community – addressing issues of historical inequities
 - Communities are often divided on the basis of caste, race, religion, language and economic considerations
 - How do we bring them all on a common platform?
 - How do we ensure representation for the marginalized groups in school governance?

Some persistent tensions and emerging issues

- ☞ Under low state of educational development – extreme localization of authority may make the school the locus of power struggle – promote obscurantism - improving of school may take a back seat
- ☞ Handing over school control to local boards – lead to gradual deprofessionalisation of school management - subsequent erosion of authority of school heads

Some persistent tensions and emerging issues

- ☞ Mobilization of finances by community members
 - Policies for passing over the burden to already burdened citizen?
 - Does not payment of taxes entitle to cost free, publicly provided education?
 - Expecting that community members contribute financially to the school is likely to aggravate existing inequities in the society

Community participation is indeed part of the solution but ...

Educating all children in a place where traditionally only some have benefitted from schooling and through top-down prescriptive measures is more than an "educational project"

It is an attempt to change the perceptions, beliefs and attitudes of the people. It involves a process of Social Transformation.

It can only be achieved through committed and persistent action, with faith in the capability of the people to change reorganize themselves.

We have to be ready for long term consistent engagement

THANK YOU

Experience of Niger Educational Development Through Community Participation: “The Community Changes the School!”



M.IBO ISSA
National Coordinator, NGO ONEN
Principal Coordinator, JICA/EPT Project

General context: Introduction of NIGER

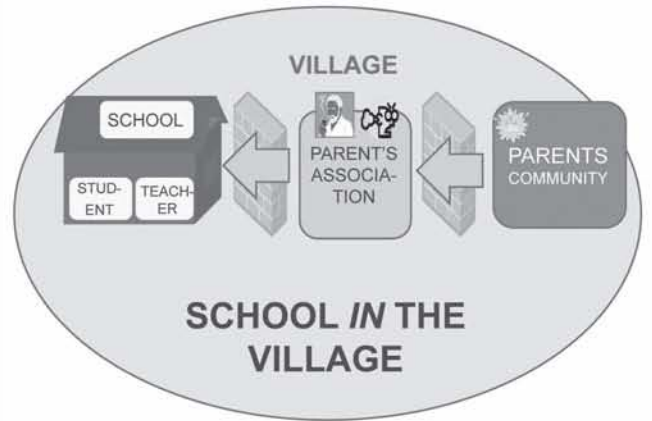
- A country of the Sahel region confronted with serious natural handicaps: arid climate, drought, lack of natural resources and no access to the sea
- A low level of human development indicators (HDI): consistently ranked amongst the bottom five in the world
- Lacks the resources to support social sectors, notably education

Educational situation

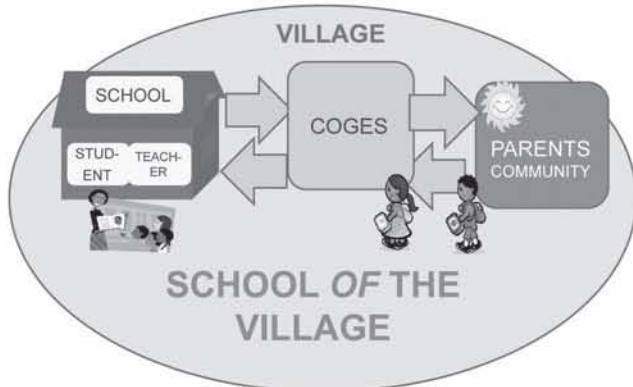
- Low level of principal education indicators in 2002-2003
 - Gross intake ratio in 1st grade 51%; gross school enrollment ratio 45%; school completion rate 25%
- Inequality: Boys and girls; urban and rural areas

		TOTAL	Boys	Girls
TBA	Total	51	59,5	42,5
	Urban	87,1	90,2	83,8
	Rural	44,3	53,6	35
TBS	Total	45,4	54,2	36,5
	Urban	52,7	55,8	49,5
	Rural	42,6	53,4	31,7

Environment around school:



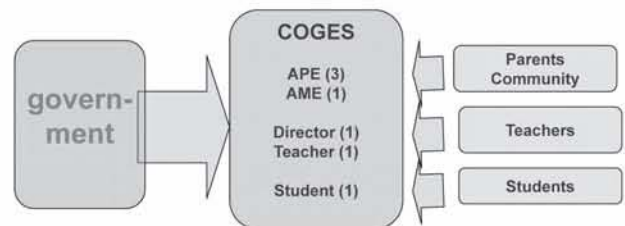
School environment after the establishment of School Management Committee (COGES)



Composition of the School Management Committee(COGES)

Decentralized school management

Community participation



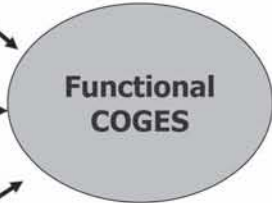
Strategies for functional COGES: Minimum package initiated by the EPT/JICA project

Key Components:

Democratic election of APE et COGES members

Formulation, implementation, monitoring & evaluation of School Action

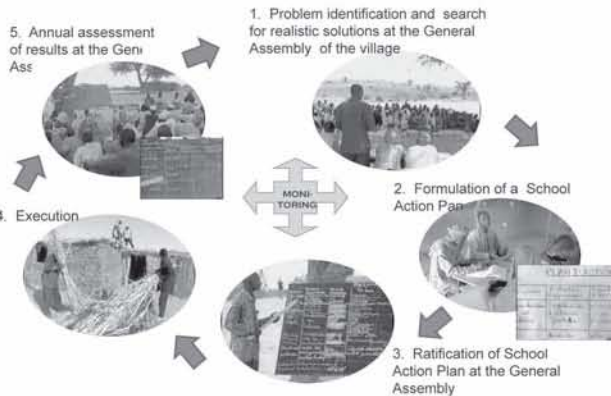
Monitoring of COGES activities by local education administrators & Communal Federations of COGES



Democratic election: The basis of community participation



How does the community participate in educational improvement? The process of School Action Plan



Examples of "School Action Plan" Activities



Infrastructure and furniture



Evening Group Tuition



Promotion of education

Examples of "School Action Plan" Activities



Hygiene and health



School Security

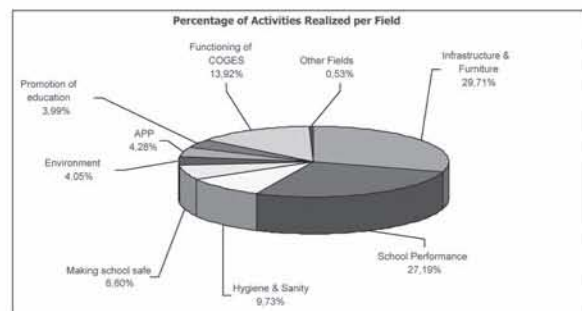


Environment



Practical and productive activities

Results of the School Management Committee (COGES) Activities

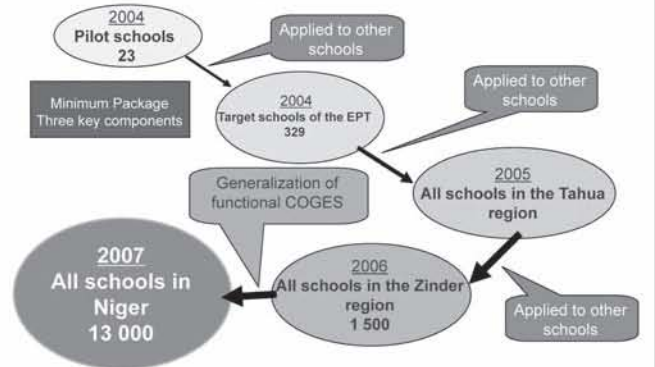


Results of the School Management Committee (COGES) Activities

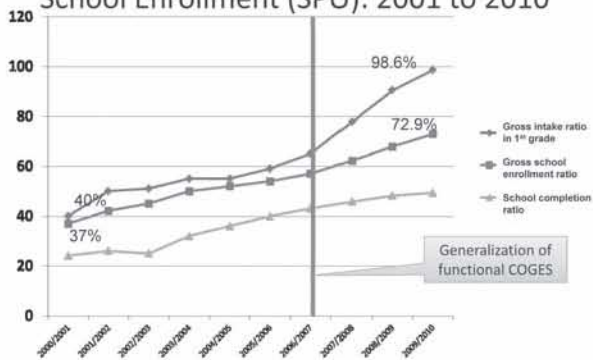
Results of local COGES activities in the Tahoua et Zinder regions (2006 – 2007)

Region	Number of schools (results of action plans)	Number of activities realized	Average number of activities per school	Amount raised (Fcfa)	Average amount raised per school (Fcfa)	Average amount raised per student (Fcfa)
Tahoua	1 061	4 513	4.25	159 377 248	150 214	1 049
Zinder	1 549	4 867	3.14	190 148 547	122 756	1 031
Total	2 610	9 380	3.59	349 525 795	133 917	1 040

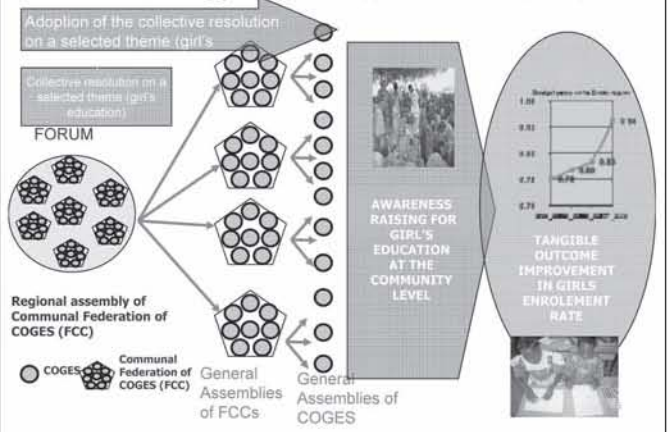
Evolution of the number of functional COGES



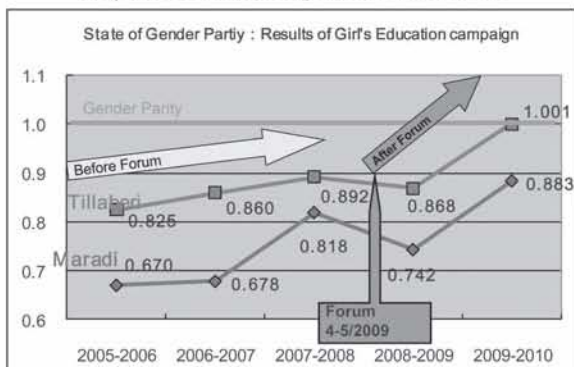
Evolution of indicators: Universal Primary School Enrollment (SPU): 2001 to 2010



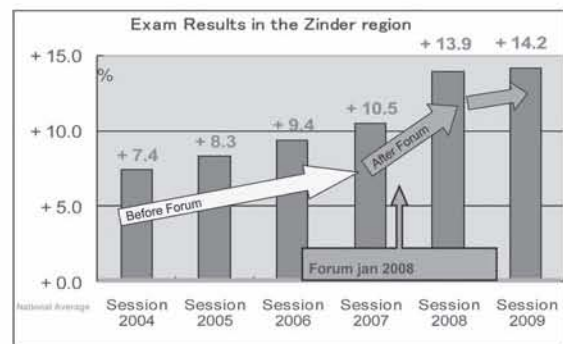
Forum strategy (with the support of EPT/JICA Project)



Example of the Forum outcomes: Improvement of girl's education



Example of the Forum outcomes: Improvement of exam results



Conclusion

- Niger's experience allows us to assert that communities can be **the very leading actors for the educational development** in their own country, provided that they are formed into functional organizations.

***Activate COGES !
Empower the population !
Future for the children !***

Thank you



School Improvement and Roles of Local Community: Japan's Past Experience and Future Outlook

College of Education, School of Human Science,
University of Tsukuba
Noriaki Mizumoto

(nmizumot@human.tsukuba.ac.jp)

Historically Accumulated Practices 1: Approaches of schools to local communities and families

- ▶ **Newsletters** on the school, grade, class, health, school lunches, etc.
In some cases, newsletters are distributed to or circulated among all households in the community.
- ▶ **Home visits**
Periodically (usually once a year) or on an as-needed basis
For better communication with parents and better understanding of the community
When students commit crimes in the community, teachers sometimes get involved.
- ▶ **Class observation, open house days, homeroom teachers meet with parents**
To deepen people's understanding of schools and to facilitate teacher-parent communication
- ▶ **"Communication notebooks," report cards, meetings with individual students and parents**
Day-to-day and periodic exchanges of information for better communication
- ▶ **PTAs**
PTAs promote mutual understanding between teachers and parents through meetings, seminars and study trips. They also support improving school grounds, etc.
In some communities, not only parents but also local people become PTA members.
- ▶ **Invitation of local people to school events and their collaboration**
e.g. Elderly people are invited on sports days and to school plays
- ▶ **Participation of students and teachers in community events**
Collaboration of schools in cultural festivals, sports events and events to show respect for elderly citizens
-School facilities open to local people for public use

Historically Accumulated Practices 2:

Communities' support of children's growth and collaboration with schools

- ▶ **Bringing up children through community activities**
Children play important parts in local festivals and other events.
- ▶ **Children's associations, sports clubs**
Children are brought up together in the community through recreational events, volunteer activities, sports, etc.
- ▶ **Nursery schools, after-school childcare, community centers and libraries**
Bringing up children at welfare facilities and social education facilities, providing places for children to go to and feel secure
- ▶ **Offering resources for schools' educational activities**
Offering farm land, collaborating in educational activities
- ▶ **Concept of schools as "common community assets"**

Today's Situation: Increasingly complicated educational challenges at schools and changing communities

- ▶ **Mature society of Japan**
Achieving economic affluence, facing environmental issues, globalization
- ▶ **Changing concept of academic skills—PISA-type skills**
- ▶ **Changing expectations of parents on education and expanding disparities**
- ▶ **Population mobility in urban areas**
- ▶ **Decreasing and graying population in rural areas**
- ▶ **Decentralization reforms being implemented**
↓
- ▶ **Diversity within schools, need strong organizing powers**
- ▶ **Need redefinition of communities and schools and rebuilding of their relationship**

Roles of Communities 1: Providing learning resources and opportunities

- ▶ **Resources for activities within schools**
Temporary full-time and part-time teachers who serve as homeroom teachers and subject teachers
Special part-time teachers for team-teaching and for teaching subjects and other areas of their expertise
School volunteers who support integrated-study classes, help students with special needs, read books to students, etc.
- ▶ **Resources for activities outside schools**
Venues and teaching materials for life-environment studies, integrated studies, etc.
Provision of knowledge
Provision of opportunities for career education, collaboration in work experience
- ▶ **Complex facilities:** integration of schools and welfare facilities, social facilities, etc.
- ▶ **Resources to ensure children's safety and for risk management**
Local homes and business establishments to provide refuge to children in emergencies
Protection of children on their way to and from school, safety patrols while taking a walk or driving
Elderly citizens taking a walk through school halls

Roles of Communities 2: Creativity and emotional support through collaboration

- ▶ **Identification of visions**
Identification of visions for the schools, children and for the community through collaboration between local people and school staff
- ▶ **Producing ideas**
Broad perspectives and different viewpoints within schools lead to many ideas on school management, educational activities and school events
- ▶ **Mutual understanding**
Communities understanding schools—school issues, teachers' jobs other than teaching
Schools understanding communities—people's lives in the communities and expectations of parents and local people
- ▶ **Emotional support**
Understanding emotionally difficult jobs of teachers (an increasing number of teachers are suffering from mental illnesses), and giving emotional support
- ▶ **Emergence of both schools and communities**
School-communities collaborations enable both schools and communities to learn, change and be renewed.
- ▶ **Socialization of education**—a shift from leaving education in the hands of schools and mothers

For School-Community Collaboration:
Management of venues and coordination

▶ **Importance of day-to-day relationship**

Learn from the historic accumulation of experience and revitalize it

▶ **Utilization of institutions such as school management councils, school councilors, school support regional headquarters, etc.**

Not too focused on governance functions

Collaboration centered on children's growth

Coordination of various resources and activities

▶ **Redefinition of leadership:** Management of venues and facilitation

Leadership means the ability to design venues, facilitate active communication, organize discussions and make democratic decisions.



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1-5-1 Kagamiyama, Higashi-Hiroshima
739-8529 JAPAN
TEL +81-82-424-6959
FAX +81-82-424-6913
E-mail : cice@hiroshima-u.ac.jp
URL : <http://home.hiroshima-u.ac.jp/cice>

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