

Foreword

This issue of the publication series of the Center for the Study of International Cooperation in Education, Hiroshima University (CICE Series) is a collection of papers that have been produced by three-year research projects conducted under the framework of the “Africa-Asia University Dialogue for Educational Development” (A-A Dialogue) network.

The “A-A Dialogue” network is an international network of African and Asian universities, which has existed since 2004 when Phase I of the network project was started. Phase I was conducted in cooperation with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the United Nations University (UNU), and the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) with the Center for the Study of International Cooperation in Education (CICE), Hiroshima University, Japan functioning as the secretariat. The nature of this initial stage (Phase I) was a joint research endeavor by African and Asian universities to contribute to achieving the international commitment of “Education for All” (EFA) particularly in Africa. Thanks to the cooperation and collaboration of participating institutions, Phase I was successfully completed with the fruit of more than fifteen research papers striving for possible solutions to various issues concerning EFA which were presented at the concluding meeting in December 2007 at UNESCO, Paris, and appeared in two issues of the CICE journal. Equally importantly, Phase I left another valuable legacy, which was an inter-university researcher-to-researcher network across two continents, Africa and Asia.

The strong willingness and commitment of participating universities has led to the continuation and further strengthening of this collaborative relationship among African and Asian universities. Thus Phase II was officially embarked upon in June 2009 with twenty eight (28) member universities, sixteen (16) from Africa and twelve (12) from Asia, after a preparatory period in 2008. Phase II was also successfully completed in June 2012.

There were at least three distinctive features in Phase II as a development of Phase I.

1) Formalization of the network: In Phase I the network had been driven by researchers’ individual relationships, whereas it was more of a formal nature in Phase II with participating universities officially signing an agreement letter to the network statutes which had been jointly prepared by the universities participating in Phase I. Furthermore since May 2010 the network has been recognized as a UNU-UNESCO UNITWIN program which is an official UNU and UNESCO international inter-university program.

2) Expanded scope of activities: In Phase II activities included academic staff and student exchange in addition to joint research projects.

3) Comparative Study: While in Phase I research collaboration had focused more on issues related to EFA according to individual countries’ concerns, in the new Phase comparative studies were pursued in three broad areas of educational development; equity and gender, quality of education and educational policy, and teacher professional development.

The products of the research projects mentioned in 3) above are presented in three volumes of this series. These three themes had been selected by participating universities themselves considering

their research interests, educational issues their countries were faced with, international concerns, etc. And then each member university created one or more study team(s) on a research theme selected from among the three above. The following is the initial list of universities and themes selected.

A-A Dialogue participating institutions and their research theme

Group A : Gender and Equity		
	Ethiopia	Bahir Dar University
	Kenya	Kenyatta University
	Nigeria	Bayero University Kano
	Niger	University of Abdou Moumouni
	Tanzania	Mzumbe University
	Zambia	Universty of Zambia
	Japan	Kobe University
	Japan	Waseda University
	Japan	Hiroshima University
Group B : Quality of Education and Educational Policy		
	Burkina Faso	University of Ouagadougou
	Ghana	University of Cape Coast
	Malawi	University of Malawi
	India	National University of Educational Planning and Administration (NUEPA)
	Thailand	Chiang Mai University
	Vietnam	Vietnam National University Hanoi
	Japan	Osaka University
	Japan	Tokyo Gakugei University
	Japan	Nagoya University
	Japan	Hiroshima University
Group C : Teacher Professional Development		
	Ethiopia	Addis Ababa University
	Nigeria	University of Lagos
	Madagascar	Ecole Normale Supérieure d'Antananarivo
	South Africa	University of Pretoria
	Tanzania	University of Dar es Salaam
	Uganda	Makerere University
	Uganda	Kyambogo university
	Indonesia	Indonesia University of Education
	Malaysia	Universiti Sains Malaysia
	Japan	Naruto University of Education
	Japan	Hiroshima University

While all the teams pursuing the same theme (in the same research group) did not necessarily conduct exactly the same research in different countries, they all shared four principles that had been kept in mind in doing research. They were 1) comparability, 2) excellence/quality, 3) joint learning, and 4) output and impact. As to comparability, when it comes to more concrete research topics, individual teams conducted different research even if they belonged to the same thematic group. Therefore as one way of ensuring comparability of the studies, each group developed a conceptual framework for its research theme. This framework helped locate individual research topics in an entire conceptual map so that each research can find its relationship with others.

How to conduct quality research was also an important issue for these research projects.

In order to maintain a certain level of quality each research group organized two research group meetings for the three years where members gave comments to each other in a constructive manner on the research design and methodology employed, research organization and progress, etc. These meetings also provided very useful opportunities for mutual/joint learning among the members.

Finally while outputs of the research projects are presented in this publication, we may have to wait and see for a while to know to what extent these studies have some impact on educational policy making and its implementation, teachers, schools, classrooms, students, etc.

Let me take this opportunity to express my sincere appreciation not only to the authors of the papers that appear in this CICE publication series but also all researchers involved in the research projects for their great academic contributions. I do hope this joint research endeavor will further develop.

Professor Norihiro Kuroda

Secretary, Africa-Asia University Dialogue for Educational Development Network.

Director, Center for the Study of International Cooperation in Education, Hiroshima University