

Personal Statement

17. July. 2014 Sachi Tomokawa

Previous experiences and achievement

I've been aiming to become capable of conducting researches, education activities and international support activities to improve children's health in both Japan and developing countries. In the master course study of graduate school, I specialized in educational development in developing countries, in particular, school health and health education. While in the my master course study, I participated in the Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteer (JOCV) of the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) and was engaged in the introduction of school health system, training on health education for teachers and development of teaching materials as volunteer in the Niger in West Africa. In the doctor course study, I specialized in health science. While in the doctor course study, I stayed long-term in rural areas of Laos in Southeast Asia to conduct an academic research in order to clarify the risk factors related to children's parasite infection. In addition to the research, I conducted preventive activities for the children's parasite infection. Since volunteer activities in Niger and through the researches and practices in several developing countries, I understood comprehensively the local societies and cultures surrounding the children, and moreover, I learned languages such as French, Laotian and English. Even after getting the job in Shinshu University, I am continuing researches and practices about school health, health education and environmental education in developing countries in Asia (ex. Thailand, Lao PDR and Bangladesh) and Africa (ex. Kenya). In particular, I am conducting school health policy analysis, human resource training, curriculum and teaching materials development, children's health issues assessment, epidemiological researches to improve children's health and its control based on the research results (Photo1), and evaluation research on effectiveness of child to child approach for health-related knowledge transfer (Photo2). Besides, as shown in Table 1, I've been involved in revision of school health policy, teacher training and development of teaching materials related to environmental education and health education in cooperation with government officials and researchers in the local field. In addition, in order to introduce and promote school health activities in developing countries, I've been organizing regional human resource training on school health for government officers, international NGOs and academic researchers in Asia and Africa in cooperation with Mahidol University and London University. I have been building up a school health network by utilizing of the opportunities of this regional training.



Photo1 : Parasite preventive education in rural (Lao PDR)



Photo2 : child to child approach (Niger)

Present task and research

Currently, I am working in teacher training college in Japan. I provide lectures about school health, public health, health and environmental education for students who aim to be a teacher. And I am engaged in development of a health check-up system, including the teachers' training program and teaching materials for training, for the purpose of monitoring and understanding the growth state and nutritional status of children in developing countries (Lao PDR, Kenya and Bangladesh), and so as to develop a growing developmental curve in accordance with the children of the



Photo3 : Health check up in primary school (Lao PDR)



Photo 4 : Water treatment by school children (Kenya)



Photo 5 : Development of teaching materials about garbage and health (Lao PDR)



Photo 6 : Lesson study in Teacher Training College (Lao PDR)

country (Photo3). I have also been conducting researches to clarify effectiveness and challenges of health promotion activities in the school using the child participatory approach (Photo 4). Then, I have been conducting researches for development of teaching materials to improve the quality of environmental education and health education (Photo 5), and lesson studies in collaboration with local teachers and researchers (Photo 6) as well. Moreover, I have been providing evening high school teachers in Japan with teacher training which helps to address health issues of the Japanese students, such as social skills training and health education for the school nurse.

Recent Interest and concern matters

From the experience of the researches and practices on school health, health education, and environmental education in developing countries until now, I feel the need for research and practice based on the following four perspectives.

1) Necessity to clarify the children's health related problems and the needs of teachers and local residents from educational perspective

It was pointed out that the school health was effective in improving health status of school aged children. Therefore, various health services, such as de-worming, micronutrient supplementation, have been provided through the school by medical approach and perspective. However, in many developing countries, children's health status, needs of local people and those of school teachers have not been sufficiently understood because of inadequate need assessment research and lack of statistical data. In such a situation, I think that it needs to focus on educational perspective, which is also my specialty, in order to find out the needs of key persons, such as teachers, students and community members. Then, it needs to summarize the achievements and challenges in school health activities by the practices in both "field activities" and "academic research", and conduct an international comparative study whose results should contribute to school health policy drafting and revising.

2) Necessity to build up a school health network for sharing common challenges and good practices among countries which have similar social and economic context

I have organized regional human resource trainings on school health for government officers, international NGO and academic researchers in Asia (Photo7) and Africa (Photo8), and I have built up a school health network of participants in the training. Through these experiences, I realized that many developing countries had a common problems of the lack of economic and human resources. And I also realized that there were similar research results, achievement and challenges in implementation of school health activities among countries which had similar economic, developmental, religious, and cultural situation. Therefore, if I can utilize my human resource network of regional school health training and previous research activities in Asia and Africa, and utilize network of World Health

Organization as a leading agency in health policy development and implementation in the world, I will be able to summarize common challenges and best practices in school health in developing countries and share them with the persons concerned. Moreover, I think that building up school health networks among the regions and sharing practical information will be quite useful and effective in promoting school health implementation in the future.



Photo7 : Asia school health regional training



Photo 8 : Africa school health regional training

3) Necessity to construct a sustainable social system by analyzing school health policy and by developing human resource training system

Many previous studies targeted at the developing countries focused on children's health problems, for example, parasite infection, anemia and malnutrition. These studies clarified some risk factors that could influence children's morbidity or health status. However, in order to improve children's health status, it needs to establish a school health policy, implement it and strengthen the capacity for policy implementing through the analysis of challenges and teacher training on school health. In addition, development of human resource training system on school health by each country will facilitate autonomous and sustainable development in school health

implementation. Currently, the research team to which applicant belongs is proceeding with the activities of school health introduction, health education and environmental education in teacher training colleges in Lao PDR in collaboration with the Ministry of education and national university of Laos. And we feel a positive response concerning these activities so far. On the basis of the consideration mentioned above, I think that human resource development, analysis of school health policy and practice and research related to the development of the training system are essential.

4) Necessity to disseminate the Japanese excellent experience on school health in the world

Japanese school health activities and related systems, such as enactment of school health law, school lunch, disaster prevention education, nutrition education, school health check-up and allocating school nurse, are quite unique and effective in promoting school aged children's health. Moreover, it is no exaggeration to say that school health activities have been a foundation which supports Japanese long life expectancy. I think that the system and good practice of Japanese school health are worth disseminating not only in developing countries but also in developed countries. After the study abroad, utilizing and developing the experience and network which will be built up through the research and activities in WHO, I would like to conduct the research and evidence based practice to improve children's health in the world. Moreover, I would like to establish a leading core center in Japan for research and practice on school health, health education and environmental education in the world based on the advantage points of Japan. I believe that the dissemination of strong points of Japanese experience on school health is really significant even for Japan.

Table 1 : List of international support related school health, health and environmental education

Duration	Country	Position / Title	Funding Partners	Activities
July 2002- July 2004	Niger	JOCV	Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA)	Introduce School health activities (teachers training, school health club, development teaching materials)
Jun 2006- March 2009	Lao PDR	Project manager	Nippon foundation	Development of preventive strategy for <i>Opisthorchis viverrini</i> infection in children
Aug 2009- Present	Lao PDR	Project manager	Ministry of education, culture, sport, science and technology, Japan	Development of environment and health education curriculum in Teacher training college
March 2009- March 2011	Lao PDR	Project manager	Risona Asia Oceania foundation	Development of environment and health education curriculum in Teacher training college
March 2010- May 2011	Lao PDR	Project manager	The supporting organization for JOCV	Work shop for health and environment education
Aug 2011- Sep 2011	Nepal	Technical Expert	Japan International Cooperation Agency	Revising school health policy and implementation guide line
Dec 2011	Thailand - Nepal	Technical Expert	Japan International Cooperation Agency	Coordination and facilitation for sharing technical experience meeting on school health for government officers
Dec 2011	Lao PDR- Nepal	Technical Expert	Japan International Cooperation Agency	Coordination and facilitation for sharing technical experience meeting on school health for government officers
Feb 2012	Thailand	Technical Expert	Mahidol University, London University(PCD), JC-GSHR	1st Asia School Health Regional Training, planning, management and lecture
Feb 2013	Lao PDR	Technical Expert	Mahidol University, London University(PCD), JC-GSHR	2nd Asia School Health Regional Training, Lecture, management
May 2013	Kenya	Technical Expert	Japan International Cooperation Agency	Health check up Training for school teacher in JICA school health project
June 2013	Ghana	Technical Expert	WACIPAC- ESACIPAC, KEMRI, London University (PCD)	9th Africa School Health Regional Training, Lecture
Dec 2013	Lao PDR	Technical Expert	Mahidol University, London University (PCD), JC-GSHR	3rd Asia School Health Regional Training, Lecture, management
April 2014	Bangladesh	Technical Expert	Japan International Cooperation Agency	Providing manual for school based Health check up
Feb 2014	Kenya	Technical Expert	Japan International Cooperation Agency	School Health club training for teacher/development KAP Survey in JICA school health project.

JOCV: Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteer PCD: Partner for Child Development
JC-GSHR: Japan Consortium for Global School Health and Research