

'G8 Dialogue' at UNU/IAS, Tokyo; April 16, 2008

Think Piece :

Global Health: What is Necessary to Make it Possible?

Kiyoshi Kurokawa, MD

Professor, National Graduate Institute for Policy Studies, Tokyo

Science Advisor to the Cabinet of Japan

See also <www.kiyoshikurokawa.com/en/2008/04/visit-to-washin.html>

Explosion of human population from 1.6 to 6 billion in mere 100 years in the last century represents our progress over millennia. With it, nonetheless, there emerged pressing issues in the new century that include ever increasing energy needs associated with climate crisis, shortage of water, food and other natural resources, widening North-South disparity of the world. Inequity is everywhere in our society and global health had become a focus. Indeed, four (1, 4, 5, 6) of eight Millennium Development Goals (MDG) directly reflect health issues.

G8 Summit represents a major international political forum which addresses global issues and this year Japan will be the host. It is of particular importance for Japan since Japan will also host this year 4th Tokyo International Conference of African Development or TICAD, the region which suffers most in this globalized and connected 'flattening' world. In addition, this year is the mid-term of UN-MDGs projected to reach its goals by year 2015.

Japan hosted last G8 Summit in 2000 with its remarkable leadership inviting for the first time, heads of African States and created Global Fund to combat HIV/AIDS, Malaria and Tuberculosis. Can Japan take a leadership again as the second largest economy of the world?

In the ever flattening world, various global issues have become widely recognizable. To describe the major issues of the globalization in short, the Nobel Peace Prizes of the last two years illustrate the reality and possible means for our collective steps forward.

The 2007 Prize was given to IPCC and Albert Gore. The IPCC has provided for

years science-based warnings on global warming, which had not been widely recognized; but the effort by Al Gore has made it widely recognizable, thus, to a politically viable agenda.

The 2006 Prize went to Grameen Bank and Mr Yunus who provided microfinance to impoverished women of Bangladesh to become independent, a hallmark of social enterprise or social entrepreneurship. This system has now adopted in more than 60 countries.

While Global Health has captured a global attention, recent movements further addresses various underlying and associated factors like nutrition and social issues closely linked to global health. And, feeding is another core of the matter as recent rises in crop price reflecting in part wider introduction of biofuel hitting hard poor people and nations. Here, the issue can be stated as '2Cs and 3Fs', ie, Climate Change and Fuel, Food and Feed.

Many countries provide aids to poor and developing countries, or ODA, through own national programs and projects and through various international organizations. Typical examples of the latter are those through UN and its agencies such as MDGs, Commission of WHO for Social Determinants of Health, and Decade of Education for Sustainable Development by UNECSO. Also, International Monetary Funds, World Bank, Regional Development Banks and others play important roles. These national and international programs are top-down and often known to be inefficient.

A distinct activity emerged in flattening world is civil society movements with numerous NGOs and, more recently, social entrepreneurship. I will call this movement 'Globalization 1.0', and they are bottom-up engagements. More than half of NGOs of the world are led by women. One interpretation is that women may have more than men, empathy on human sufferings.

Another emerging movement 'Globalization 2.0' is represented by the Gates Foundation. More philanthropies and foundations are addressing their focuses on poverty, global health and other global disparity issues. Often being more effective, their engagements catalyze the top-down national and international aids and bottom-up NGO movements more effectively toward common

objectives. Many and new billionaires have emerged in global market economy and many of them hopefully address their interests to those poorest billion of the world.

Another movements 'Globalization 3.0' underlies the intangible values becoming the major portion of corporate values, thus pressing corporate social responsibility to a new dimension. Stated in another way, corporate is valued not only by its shareholders, but by the stakeholders in the global community.

One of the best examples of Japanese corporate is Sumitomo Chemical, which invented and provides BedNet, the most effective and innovative mosquito net lasting for 5 years, leading to a rapid decline in malaria infection. The BedNet is licensed to and produced by a Tanzanian company more than 30 million a year and the business model has also created many thousands of jobs in Tanzania and elsewhere.

Human development is the key to the future. In this regards university plays a critical role to nurture future leaders. Many leading universities of the world have become cores of global community, 'Globalization 4.0', developing various programs and curricula attracting faculty and students to study and work on global issues including global health. Many future leaders will study and work in poor nations and become engaged in global challenges as future leaders in every sector of the global community.

Development of multi-stakeholders movements of 'Globalization 1.0- 4.0' of the flattening world may not have emerged or developed in Japan yet, a country where the government with strong ministries tends to dominate policy development, implementation and execution. We will see how effectively civil society groups, private sector and academic community could play each role in shaping and executing TICAD, G8 and other national, international and global agenda on behalf of Japan this year and beyond.