Final Report

UNU Global Seminar

8th Kanazawa session

Group 2

Advisor: Dr. Tani

Baasan Tegshbayar
Enomoto Yuki
Kaginaka Chiaki
Kimura Yuta
Ko Rinrin
Lim Tee Teng Sarah
Noda Mami
Oi Mamiko
Ota Masahiro

2008/11/24
Day One: 2008/11/21

- Linking Local Actions, Research and Policy Making in Hokuriku
- The findings of the United Nations Millennium Ecosystem Assessment and Poverty Reduction

At first, our group have a blur concept of satoyama so we started with the discussion of finding out the definition of satoyama and the importance of satoyama. Sato means human settlement and yama means mountain. So, satoyama means relationship between human being and nature. Satoyama can be more productive with human involvement which leads to sustainable development. Besides, satoyama is also important to protect the wild nature from humans’ exploitation while preserving animals’ habitats and preventing people from being attacked. By preserving satoyama it also will provide employment opportunity to jobless and might be one of the ways to tackle working poor problem.

Then, we went to the second lecture. What is mentioned in the lecture was to protect natural resources for passing to next generations. One suggested that if technology develops, the invention of environment friendly technology would not bring harm, furthermore it might helps to maintain the ecosystem. However, even though the technology develops it takes a long time to spread around the world. For example, African people are still using cars which are already obsolete in Japan. Thus, we can say that technology is significant but does not solve problem, completely.

one of our team member have a doubt on how we classified a country as developed, developing or less developed, also by this classification will it cause any discrimination issues. He mentioned a case that some people get upset by using the word developing because it sounds discriminated. But, after some discussion, we come out with a simple conclusion that the difference of the developed, developing or maybe less developed are used to distinguish or for grouping to provide assistance based on their different needs.

During the discussion, we also have some argument on topic such as the misuse of technology. The suitability of adoption of satoyama in countries which have less natural resources like Tibet and Nepal can be adapted in other countries. Also, we realized there are many approaches for poverty eradication, and different stage of development will face different type of poverty issues and what common issues is that they can share the same experience.
Day two: 2008/11/22

- Case studies from the field
- Addressing poverty to achieve well-being

At first, there is a gap between real field and decisions which are made without any real information. Some aids that NGO or JICA make may be meaningless unless people in real field know how to use equipments supplied. For instance, Japanese government sent rehabilitation equipment to Malaysia; in fact, there is no expert who knows how to operate the machine. Some of us who criticized aids sent by supporting side might not really consider the needs of assistance instead they might have offered assistance due to hidden interest. This interest includes gaining profit, national interest and global recognition.

What we learnt from the lecture is to rebuild community makes a real solution for poor people living in forests from Indian cases. Also, it is very important to support them to be independent from NGO’s help and how to bring awareness on endogenous development which is inevitable to sustainable development. From Indian case, we thought that it can be applied to other developing countries, too.

- Media’s Role in Raising Global Consciousness about Poverty
- Poverty Reduction Approaches in the West and Japan

Mass media’s role is to cover poverty problems. We studied that they provide information to make us think about poverty around the world, and try to remove our stereotype of poverty and danger. Being poor does not necessarily mean that they are unhappy. In fact, more people feel they are happy in the Philippines than people in Japan. Therefore, we can say a lack of material does not effect to one’s happiness. Then, we discussed about definition of happiness. Although, we had several ideas, we could not make one definition. It depends on personal perspective and interpretation.

In the last section, the lecturer addressed the issue of child’s poverty inherited from their parents’ poverty. So, a question either public or private school can provide a better education is picked up. Good point of private school is that it doesn’t have to follow Minister’s rule and make their own, such as teaching music and sports. Also, competition within private schools improves quality of education. However, there was also an idea that it does not have to mean that going public school is bad. Then, we make further discussion on education of other countries and make comparison with Japan education system. We found that private schools were not valued so much in Malaysia, Mongolia, and China.
Day three: 2008/11/23

- Sustainability in developing countries and Japanese villages?
- What is effective assistance from Human security perspectives?
- Education for sustainable development

First, we learnt about Satoyama in Indonesia and recognized that the condition forced workers to destroy their environment even though they know it was harmful to plant banana trees intensively. We recalled the earlier presentation about Indian case and suggest if we could adopt the idea of diversity at the risk of having more alternative economic activities. Unfortunately, we do not have much knowledge of agriculture and are not sure if this idea can be carried out. We also focused that short term income was not important, but long term growth, in other words, sustainable income, is main point for developing countries.

Secondly, the question regarding current humanitarian aid is based on charity instead of human rights, so it is possible to have a paradigm change of humanitarian aid from charity based to human rights based. For instance, for natural disaster victim, the global rescue team should be sent under human right based and the United Nation’s role in securing the victims living rights.

Thirdly, we learnt why Education for Sustainable Development: ESD was important. It’s because now we have many environmental issues, and we have to do some actions to solve that. We talked about how to do ESD in public schools. We thought it’s difficult to do that because public school teachers were too busy to introduce this conception, but we also found that present education activities in public school include this conception, and there’re more and more awareness for this conception supported by UNESCO or other policies. We came to a conclusion that the concept of ESD was similar to the essential part of education, and we can start ESD activities anytime just with our own will.

We also argued on that since we have limited human power and resources, so what the priority to give in supporting is. Anyway, we feel that it does not mean that we have to rank and make decision on the priority but it might go parallel. During the discussion, we got a new term, sustainable happiness.