

*Impacts of Globalization concerning Education in Developing Countries: Japan's Educational Cooperation*

# Japan's International Cooperation in Education in the Globalized World: The Case of the Lao PDR

Keiko Mizuno

Education Policy Advisor to Ministry of Education  
and Sports, Lao PDR

Senior Advisor  
Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA)

# Contents

## **Japan's international cooperation in education in the globalized world will be discussed, considering the case of the education sector in Laos**

1. Issues in the basic education sector in Laos and Japan's cooperation

2. Learning from other developing countries to address common challenges

- Triangular Cooperation (North-South-South)

3. Human resource development to correspond to the globalization

- Japan's international cooperation

# Basic Information on Lao PDR



**Area: approx. 240,000 km<sup>2</sup> (equiv. to Japan's Honshu Island)**

**Population: 6.695 million (estimation as of July 2013)**

**Landlocked country, bordered by Myanmar, China, Vietnam, Cambodia and Thailand**

**Rural population: 65% (Agricultural population: 71%)**

**Poverty rate: 27.6%**

**Ethnic groups: 49 (classified into 4 ethno-linguistic families)**

**Adult literacy rate: 81.3%**

**GNP per capita: US\$1,217 (2012)**

**Major industries: agriculture, mining, hydroelectric power generation**

**Major trading partners: Thailand, China, Vietnam**

**Human Development Index: 138<sup>th</sup> (among 187 countries)**

**Human Development Report (UNDP 2013)**

**World Fact Book (US Gov't 2013)**

**Statistical Data for MDGs and EFA (MOES, 2013)**

**ODA Data Book 2012 (Ministry of Foreign Affairs)**

# Development policies in Laos

## 1. Highest priority goals

Rise above its LDC status by 2020

Achieve the MDGs by 2015

## 2. The Seventh Five-year National Social Economic Development Plan (NSED-2015)

- Ensure **poverty reduction** and **sustainable economic growth**
- Maintain political stability, peace and an orderly society
- Promote autonomous and sustainable development to be integrated in the regional economy (Prepare for integration into the ASEAN Economic Community in 2015)

## 3. The Seventh Five-year Education Sector Development Plan (ESDP-2015)

Education is a key sector in developing human resources, which form the foundation for **national development** through promoting **poverty eradication, modernization and industrialization**

**Universal access to basic education and improvement of the quality of education are the highest priority objectives to achieve the MDGs.**

# Challenges in the Educational Sector

## From Midterm Review of the Education Sector Development Plan (ESDP) 2011-15

### ESDP Midterm Review (2013)

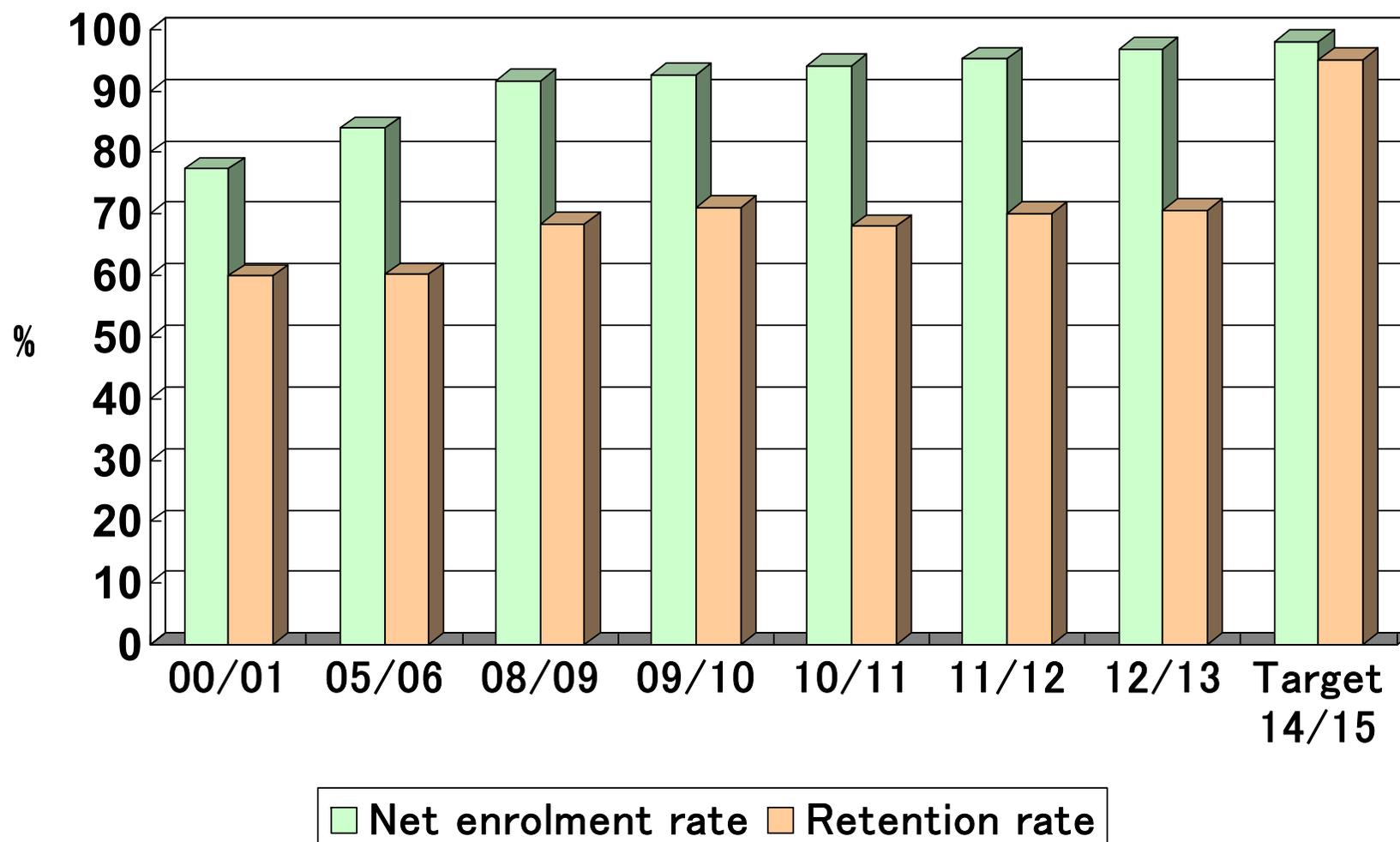
- **The primary education enrolment rate has steadily improved: 96.8%** (2012-13)
- The rate of retention through the 5<sup>th</sup> grade has not improved as expected: **70%** (2012-13)
- The **high dropout rate and repetition rate** are the issues. The first-grade dropout rate (11.37%) and repetition rate (22.8%) are particularly high.
- Students' academic level is extremely low (Assessment of Student Learning Outcomes: ASLO)

Among 5<sup>th</sup> graders, 72.8% are pre-functional in math.

Students' academic level and teachers' knowledge of the subject are correlated.

Further efforts are needed to improve students' learning  
(particularly in math and the Lao language)

# Changes in educational indicators (primary education)



# Challenges in Education Sector

Disparity in teachers' allocation  
Shortage of teachers in difficult areas  
Excess of teachers in urban areas

Geographically disadvantaged remote mountainous areas

Multiethnic/multilingual, gender and poverty issues

Inadequate teacher evaluation, insufficient remuneration and incentives

Inadequate teacher training without reflecting local needs

Shortage in schools  
Incomplete schools  
Issues of multigrade classes

Quality and relevance of curricula and textbooks

**Relevant policy/system design and planning (with sufficient budget)  
Commitment (resources) and capacity-building (skills) for promoting sustainable implementation**

Inadequate support system for schools, principals, teachers and students (financial resources, management and technology)

Inadequate school management (incapable principals)

Shortage of teaching materials and tools

Local people's low awareness of school education

Inadequate teaching skills  
Student assessment, lesson structure, implementation ability, insufficient knowledge of subjects, low quality/unqualified teachers

Inadequate incentives for children in poverty to go to school

# Japan's educational cooperation for the basic education sector in Laos

**Political level: From project outcome to bring about development effect in the sector**

Use outcomes and achievements in the classroom to promote discussion on improving policies and systems. Through this process, build cooperative relationship with relevant departments and development partners.

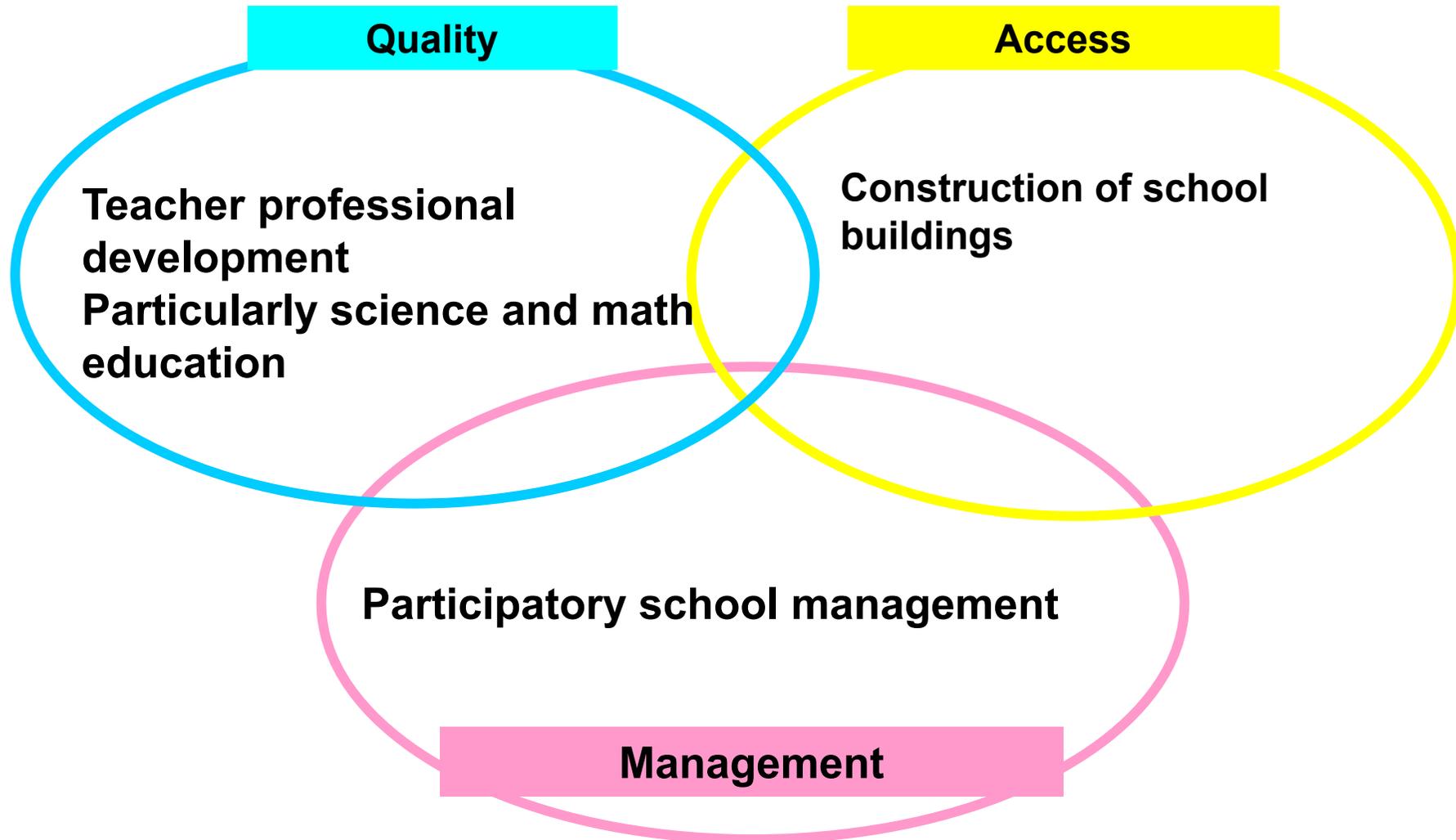
- **Strengthening educational management focused on the improvement of schools** (Community Initiative for Educational Development II – CIED II )

**School planning and implementation and strengthening the system to support schools to facilitate solving challenges faced by schools, based on the community participatory problem analysis**

- **Enhancing school-based training to improve lessons (science and math)**  
(Improving In-service Teacher Training for Science and Mathematics Education-ITSME)  
(Support for drawing up and using teaching plans to introduce student-centered approach)

**Implementation of school-based training, using lesson study and strengthening and enhancing functions of the professional development networks to support efforts to improve lessons**

# Three pillars of JICA's support on basic education



# Common challenge in the world: Improvement of students' academic achievements

## A challenge shared by many developing countries

Link enrolment to actual improvement in students' basic academic skills

**Improve the quality of learning → Improve lessons → Change teachers**

**Continuous professional development of teachers: lesson study**

- Appropriately position it in school/education management.
- Focus on lessons and schools.
- Improve teachers' knowledge of subjects. (Involve teacher training universities.)
- Steadily support the activities at schools and disseminate the method.
- Collaborate with those in charge of policymaking and institutionalization related to schools and teachers.

Learn from the experience and lessons from another developing country (Indonesia), which has been working on common issues

Priority on improving the quality of education—the key is to improve the quality of teachers

Launched **comprehensive teacher reform** in the early 2000s

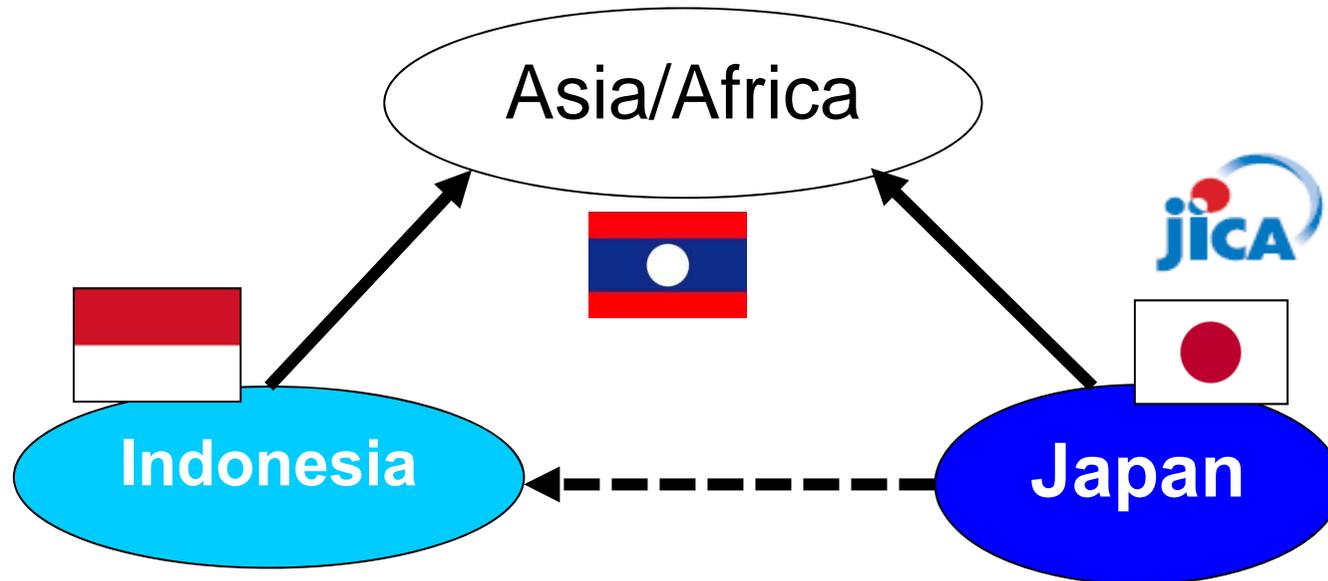
- Teacher Law (2005)
  - Established a requirement for teacher qualification, definition of standards and qualification-linked remuneration
  - Need to strengthen in-service teachers' skills (targeting about 2.7 million teachers)

**Decentralization but lack of capacity** (budget, management, implementation)

### **JICA's technical cooperation (1998-2013)**

- Introduced and disseminated participatory school management and lesson study and supported improvement of quality education at school, in the institution and in policymaking
- Offering cooperation focused on “**schools and communities**” and on “**lessons.**”

# Learning from the Indonesian experience (Lesson study/teacher education)



## **The Indonesia University of Education**

- From supporting the university to building the mechanism to support school-based training provided jointly by the administration and educational institutions
- Restructuring of in-service teacher training, using lesson study
- Currently, the university also conducts **overseas training to supplement the training in Japan** on the theme of improving the lessons and accepts **third-country training offered by JICA's project.**

# Capacity development to respond to globalization

## **Expand the human resources to support sustainable economic development**

Basic education: Essential knowledge base to shift toward post-MDGs

**Outcome of improving lessons to be linked to the improvement of basic academic skills**

- **New approach to improve lessons must be investigated.**
- **A more comprehensive perspective is needed to support efforts to improve the quality of education.**

**Educational assistance will shift its focus to secondary education and higher education to respond to globalization and the knowledge-based society.**

Many projects for primary education shift from the pilot phase to the institutionalization and dissemination phase.

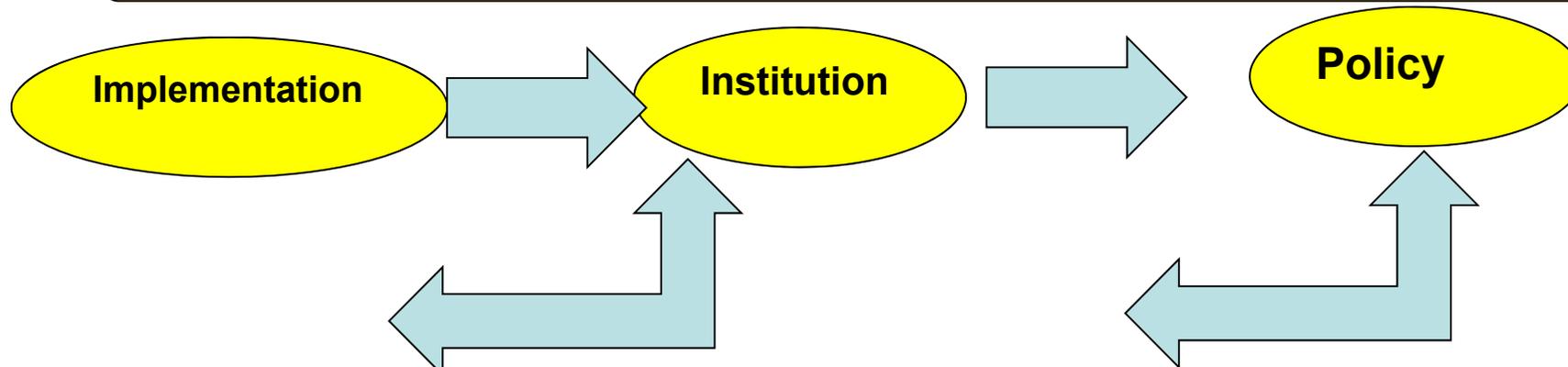
At the same time, the agenda of improving of the quality of primary education remain.

# Japan's educational cooperation

## Common issues of developing countries: Need to improve basic academic skills and learning achievements

- As a result of the cooperation, JICA strengthens the countries and bases to share and convey effective actions and processes to solve issues through implementation and to investigate how to use them strategically (the showcase countries of JICA's cooperation in basic education)
- JICA strategically integrates networking- and triangular-type cooperation to provide a foundation for future South-South cooperation.

### Regional cooperation, networking



# Case of effective use of regional educational network

Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization (SEAMEO)

Established in 1965 among governments of Southeast Asian countries to promote regional cooperation in education, science, technology and culture in Southeast Asia.

Regional centers have been established with the financial support of the host countries to conduct trainings, research, development of teaching materials, etc. to address common issues

Examples:

Quality Improvement of Teachers and Education Personnel (QITEP)  
(Indonesia)

Regional Centre for Education in Science and Mathematics (RECSAM)  
(Malaysia)

**Expected to be utilized as knowledge and information centers on practical approaches and lessons learned to address the common issues of developing countries. They collaborate to give feedback on training content, jointly develop training content, etc.**

Thank you