

Report of the Study Tour in Thailand

3-14 September 2017¹



¹ This English language version of this report was published without formal editing.

Programme/Schedule of the Study Tour

Day	Activities	
1	Arrival in Bangkok via Beijing	
2-5	Visit to Parliament Building, Limestone Temple (Wat Pho), Royal Temple + Royal Palace (Wat Prakeo and Emerald Buddha)	
	Group lunch at a local restaurant	
	Sightseeing of poverty affected areas from a local Thai boat trip	
	Shopping at local shopping center – to learn about commodity price standards in Bangkok	
	Exposure to local street vendor Thai food – experiencing local Thai food culture and ambience	
	Visit to the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for the Asia and Pacific (ESCAP)	
	Visit to International Labour Organization (ILO)	
	Visit to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)	
	Visit and participatory learning at the ex. JICA ODA project, Asia-Pacific Disability Center (APCD), learning disability human rights, disability mainstreaming, barrier-free environment and income generation project of APCD-Yamazaki Bread Company run by disabled people	
	Sightseeing of barrier free park from the bus window	
	Visit to the famous Thai multi-cultural street, namely, Khaosan Road - Learning about the challenges and opportunities of the tourism industry, as well as the diversity and co-existence of various cultures in Thailand	
	Free time for individual learning and local exposure in the evening	
	United Nations Educational, Cultural and Scientific Organization (UNESCO) visit	
	Education Sector, Literacy Sector, Culture Sector, Information Sector visits and plenary discussion with UNESCO staff	
	Group lunch at a local restaurant	
	Visit to Thai Culture Center constructed by Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) with its Official Development Assistance (ODA)	
	Shopping and dinner at the hotel	
	Departure to visit the UNESCO Historic City of Ayutthaya	
	Visit to three UNESCO World Heritage Temples in the Historic City of Ayutthaya	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wat Pra Mahatat • Wat Pra Sushisanpett • Wat Chaiwatanaram 	
	Group dinner at a local restaurant	
	Visit to the project site of Japanese NGO The Organization for Industrial Spiritual and Cultural Advancement (OISCA) - International – studying the project of education on sustainable development and environment and tree planting project	
	Planting of plane trees by students, in memory of the 2017 Nagoya Gakuin University visit	
Return to Bangkok		
Meeting and study at hotel		
6	Departure by bus	

	Visit to Bumrungrad International Hospital and learning about the contribution of Thailand's medical tourism sector to economic development and its international cooperation	
	Group lunch of Thai Sukiyaki – famous Thai local food exposure	
	Visit to a Thai cultural center and learning a some Thai traditional dancing and greetings in Thai language	
	Return to the hotel for rest	
	Departure by bus	
	Viewing a traditional Thai dance show and appreciating Thai traditional culture and food	
7	Departure to Pattaya Beach (famous tourist destination)	
	Check in at hotel in Pattaya and group lunch	
	Visit to Redemptorists for Persons with Disabilities (RFPWD), a Christian affiliated NGO, and learning about disability rights and Thailand's South-South Cooperation with Indo-Chinese countries	
	Talking with disabled people and learning about their leadership	
	Individual exploration of Pattaya town to study the positive and negative aspects of the tourism industry to economic development	
	Visit to the famous Thai trans-gender dance show – appreciating Thai popular culture and learning about the full participation of transgender artists	
	Individual study at the hotel	
	Discussion about the economic contributions of minority people	
8	Check out of the hotel and breakfast	
	Exploration of Pattaya town– individual learning	
	Group lunch at the Elephant Village, watching trans-gender dance show	
	Eco-tourism – visit to the Elephant Village Pattaya to study eco-systems, Man and Biosphere and behavior of elephants	
	Visit to the local Aquarium to learn about marine creatures – learning about Sustainable Development Goal 14 Life Below Water - focused on marine ecosystem protection	
	Back to Bangkok – informal learning of some Thai language and greetings	
	Dinner at the hotel	
	Group discussion about the visit to Pattaya	
9	Departure from Bangkok to Kanchanaburi	
	Arrival in Kanchanaburi – group dinner at the famous restaurant overlooking the Kanchanaburi “Death Railway Bridge” (“Bridge over the River Kwai”) constructed by a Japanese military battalion during World War II	
	Visit to the JEATH War Museum of Japanese Military Force during the Word War II, Kanchanaburi War Cemetery of Allied Force soldiers during the World War II, memorial monuments and the “Death Railway Bridge” to discuss war, peace, human security and safety	
	River boat ride to enjoy Thai eco-tourism and nature	
	Return to Bangkok	
	Individual dinner and report-writing at the hotel	
10	Morning group discussion with Prof. Kimura, the Dean of Nagoya Gakuin University and brief group presentations	
	Group 1 – Poverty alleviation and ODA	
	Group 2 – Private sector's economic contribution and globalization	
	Group 3 - Human rights of the Disabled and Minorities	

	Group 4 – Role of the United Nations and Non-governmental Organizations	
	Group 5 – Culture, World Heritage and UNESCO	
	Exploration day – based on individual interest, explore and learn about Thailand	
	Free Day	
	Individual study and discussion time over dinner	
11	Early breakfast and check out from the hotel	
	Visit to Thailand's largest slum community, Klong Toey - walk through the slum, guided by a Japanese NGO, Shanti Foundation for Volunteers, Japan	
	Visit to the Shanti's Thai counterpart NGO, Sheekat Foundation headquarters and its library and literacy project	
	Learning from Shanti and the Sheekat Foundation about the poverty situation in Thailand and their poverty alleviation project	
	Visit to a vocational training facility for poor women and shopping at Sheekat Foundation Fair Trade Outlet	
	Experiencing buying water bottles in the slum – talking to Slum residents	
	Walking through the slum back the bus	
	Small group second visit to UNESCO Bangkok to learn about the five sector programmes of UNESCO and lunch with Japanese staff	
	Last group dinner at a local hotel	
	Second visit to APCD with the Dean to learn about its barrier free infrastructure, and discuss the modality of the transition and sustainability from JICA project to Thailand's national ownership	
	Discussion with Thai disabled leaders	
	Group photo – farewell to APCD	
	Second visit to APCD Bakery project and outlet with the Dean	
	Individual exploration of Bangkok's Chinatown to feel the energy of the Chinese immigrants in Thailand	
	Dinner box in the bus to airport	
	Check in at the airport – departure back to Chubu Airport in Japan	
12	Transit at Beijing Airport	
	Group meeting at the airport lobby	
	Individual exploration at the Beijing Airport and practicing Chinese language guided by a Chinese student	
	From Beijing to Chubu International Airport	
	Back to Nagoya and departure to home	

This following is a brief report (English version) on the study tour that was organized by Nagoya Gakuin University, Faculty of Inter-cultural Studies. The tour took place in Thailand, 3-14 September 2017. The tour was headed by Prof. Kozue Nagata. This report was published in 2018.

The total of 21 students participated in the 11-day study tour, geographically covering the capital city of Bangkok, Pattaya (tourist beach town) and Kanchanaburi (known for eco-tourism and Japanese war legacy). The students, under the guidance of Prof. Kimura, prepared the Japanese version of this report. This English translation was made available thanks to Prof. Nagata.

Chapter 1

Foreword – Importance of “Seeing, Doing and Learning”

by Prof. Koshin Kimura, Dean of the Inter-Cultural Department, Nagoya Gakuin University

This is the final report on the 2017 Study Tour in Thailand, organized by the Department of Inter-Cultural Studies of Nagoya-Gakuin University. The Tour was planned and carried out mainly by Prof. Kozue Nagata. Prof. Nagata accompanied the Group of 21 students for the entire period, assisted by Mr. Nagase from the International Center. The Dean, Prof. Kimura joined the Tour for the last three days to discuss the mid-point progress and provide the students with guidance about further learning. Prior to the study tour, one full semester course was dedicated to learning the geography of Thailand and acquiring basic knowledge about international organizations, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and non-profit organizations (NPOs), that would be visited during the tour. In the preparatory course, the students also learned methods of conducting field research as well as the protocol and etiquette needed during field visits.

Thailand, particularly its capital Bangkok, is among the most developed and highly international places in the Southeast Asian region. Thailand is a regional hub of international organizations and it is a key part of a regional network with other Asian countries. Through visiting and learning about the work of the regional offices of international organizations, we could learn the importance of developing countries in our global society. This type of paradigm was incorporated in the program of the study tour.

Furthermore, Thailand is among top tourist destinations in the world. Nowadays, tourism goes far beyond merely visiting sights; tourism promotes the exchange of goods, services, and human talent. Such exchanges of human knowledge and experience are vital elements for setting up new global regimes. We hope that our students became more open-minded and better understand such processes of globalization. Due to time pressure and limitations, we could not cover Thailand’s natural environment, including the Mekong River, Northern Thailand and ethnic minority villages. However, we were exposed to the great diversity of Thailand, including Bangkok and its suburbs, natural landscapes, protected animal species, huge agricultural areas, oceans, and cultural heritage sites.

The purpose of this tour was to learn the importance of respecting diversity and differences among us, through traveling to new places and seeing diverse peoples. It was designed in such a way that the students could learn that human beings living in this globalized world follow a range of cultural and religious practices and life styles. We must respect and cherish, without prioritizing or ranking, this diversity in cultures, religions, history, ethics and life styles of all sorts of people. We hope that each participant will take this opportunity to become a truly mature and independent global citizen, taking full advantage of the lessons learned during the study tour. (*March 2018*)

Chapter 2
Orientation and Programme of the Study Tour
by Prof. Kozue Nagata

Orientation

During the Spring Semester (April – July) of 2017, an intensive orientation course was offered by Prof. Nagata, as a prerequisite for all registered participants (students). The students were mandated to learn very basic facts about Thailand prior to the trip. The course was an intensive preparatory course for the participants, and they were expected to work on this report upon their return from Thailand. In 2018, this report was published bilingually – in Japanese and English. The orientation course contents included the itinerary and study programme, in addition to basic manners and courtesy required in Thailand. A multi-media modality was used in the course. The full detailed programme is annexed to the Report.

Departure, arrival and return to Japan

The Group took an international flight on a Chinese carrier from the Chubu (Nagoya) International Airport via Beijing to Bangkok and returned to Japan also via Beijing. In Thailand, the tour covered the capital city of Bangkok, Ayutthaya, Pattaya and Kanchanaburi and a bus was chartered for domestic transportation. The whole trip was as it was planned, and we felt comfortable with the arrangements throughout the tour.

Itinerary and highlights of the tour

The itinerary and programmes of the tour are attached. In Bangkok, we visited three United Nations agencies, namely, the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for the Asia and Pacific (ESCAP), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and International Labour Organization (ILO) located in the same premises, namely, the United Nations Building. The students got very excited about visiting that building that houses regional and country offices of several United Nations agencies. The United Nations Building was given to the United Nations by the Thai Government as its “contribution in kind”.

To study Japanese Official Development Assistance (ODA) and projects provided by the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), we also visited a project for disabled people in Bangkok, namely, the Asia Pacific Center on Disability (APCD). APCD was originally established as a JICA project but it was phased-out after 10 years and handed over to Thailand. It is now being implemented under the auspices of the Thai Government (Ministry of Social Development and Human Security). APCD provides South-South assistance to the low-income neighbouring countries of ASEAN, such as Cambodia, Lao People’s Democratic Republic, and Myanmar. At APCD we saw the face of active Thailand. Thailand became an ODA provider, having graduated from the status of a mere beneficiary. Our students were stimulated to see that disabled people themselves are actively engaged in the APCD project as “agents for social transformation”. They are trainees and employees of APCD. We also visited the regional office of a United Nations Specialized Agency, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and learned about its basic work-programmes including the culture sector such as its focus on the protection

of World Heritage, literacy and education sector, and information and media sector. Resident Japanese UNESCO staff kindly made themselves available for us and offered to brief the students in Japanese, which made it easier for them to grasp the basic facts about UNESCO with no translation. Several students raised a series of questions and made relevant comments.

The Group proceeded to visit a prominent international hospital, namely, Bumrungrad Hospital, in NaNa, off Sukhumvit Road in Bangkok. Bumrungrad Hospital is very famous. It takes pride in having achieved the top-class international medical standard (the first hospital in Asia to be granted accreditation by the Joint Commission International and Global Healthcare Accreditation with Excellence for Medical Travel Services status) and it offers a wide range of services for patients from all over the world. The hospital is a profit-based private entity and number one and most well known in Thailand's medical tourism sector. The students were very impressed with the hospital's contributions to meeting global medical needs. The facilities and services looked outstanding in the eyes of the young participants (students). Over 40 per cent of the hospital's patients are non-Thai.

Also, the Group visited another town, slightly north of Bangkok, Ayutthaya, where the Ayutthaya Historical Park is located, part of which is one of the UNESCO World Heritage sites of Thailand. There, we visited three temples that were designated by UNESCO as World Heritage. In the afternoon of the same day, we also visited a project site of a Japanese NGO, namely, OISCA and saw the ongoing activities on environmental protection and education for sustainable development (ESD). Those activities are run by OISCA's local partner agency, a school). The vice-mayor of the district kindly welcomed all of us, and we enjoyed their hospitality including tea and snacks as well as a cultural performance by local children. On behalf of Nagoya Gakuin University and as a memory of our visit, we donated two seedlings to the environmentally friendly garden attached to the school. Our students planted them in the open air despite the heavy rain shower and stormy weather.

Upon our return to Bangkok the next day, we visited another Japanese ODA project site, namely the Thai Cultural Center building. This was a large-scale Japanese construction (infrastructure) project executed by JICA and it was completed a decade ago. The students had an excellent opportunity to discuss the impact, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability of Japanese ODA. To more comprehensively learn about Thai culture, in the evening, we enjoyed a Thai traditional dance performance and Thai cuisine. On the next day, we participated in active learning of Thai traditional dances at a cultural school in Bangkok but we could master only one Thai traditional folk dance. Also, we learned very basic Thai language and greetings.

On the following day, the Group moved to another nearby town, Pattaya, which is famous for beach loving tourists. Tourists come to Pattaya from all over the world to enjoy the sunny beach and other attractions. In Pattaya, we visited a local Christian NGO focused on disability, the "Redemptorists Foundation for Persons with Disabilities (RFPWD)" and took the opportunity to learn about disability rights and barrier-free tourism. This NGO is also engaged in South-South cooperation. On the second day in Pattaya, we went to the Pattaya Elephant Village and Underwater World Pattaya (an aquarium), and we reached Bangkok very late in evening.

Upon return to Bangkok, on the next day, we were busy. We moved to a mountainous Province named Kanchanaburi, which is very well known for its eco-tourism and the legacy of Japanese occupation during the World War II. We tolerated a four to five hour-long bus ride from Bangkok. The Group visited the famous “Bridge Over the River Kwai” (from a famous movie about this bridge) and the suburbs of the town of Kanchanaburi. We had an opportunity to think about Japan’s responsibility for its role and the atrocities committed during World War II. To enhance our knowledge about Japanese history, we also visited the JEATH War Museum, which was built on the historical building (prison) used to accommodate many prisoners of war by the Japanese Military. The prisoners included local Thai people and Westerners (from allied force countries). The students were saddened and disturbed to see the level of atrocities and torture. Also, we visited the cemetery for the war prisoners. Some Western prisoners were just teen-agers when they lost their precious life; some of them, even younger than our students. The students discussed about the negative impact of the War and Japan’s responsibility. On the return trip back to Bangkok in the bus, we took the occasion to discuss various global issues, such as war and peace, security and peace keeping, responsibility to protect (R2P), United Nations Peace-keeping Operations and Article 9 of the Japanese Constitution.

Upon our return to Bangkok, Prof. Kimura joined the study tour, thus, we arranged a morning briefing for him. We took that occasion for sharing with Mr. Kimura, the mid-term review of what the students had learned so far. That day happened to be a free day, and the students were challenged to engage in activities of their own individual interest. They were encouraged to move around in Bangkok totally independently and do what they liked. However, in parallel, a guided tour - a second visit to UNESCO and learning about a city gentrification project - was arranged by Prof. Nagata for those who wished to join. Prof. Kimura and a few students joined this small group tour. This small group enjoyed lunch with Japanese UNESCO staff.

By then, all participants had gained a high level of maturity and independence, so they were able to identify and manage their own activities for one day. Some went to a fair-trade shop, and others went to another show of transgender entertainers. A few of them evaluated the level of physical accessibility of public transportation (Mass Rapid Transit) in Bangkok.

The very last day of this tour was dedicated to a second visit to APCD to evaluate the transition and national “ownership” of this project, in addition to a slum area project. In the morning, we visited the largest slum zone in Thailand, namely, Klong Toey. At the entrance of the slum, a representative of Japanese NGO, “Shanti Foundation for International Volunteers (SFIV)”, greeted the Group. The representative kindly guided us, walking through Klong Toey and finally we reached their partners’ operational headquarters located in the middle of the slum. We saw poverty and many challenges faced by the residents. The lack of a sanitation system and clean water, unmanageable garbage disposal, crowded housing without safety measures, lack of child friendly spaces, men suffering from substance abuse, street people, commercial sex workers, sick and elderly people and so on. We saw examples of a full “poverty package” in life. However, we also saw the resilience to survive of the residents. We saw innovations too, such as gentrification and artistic space).

Shanti Foundation for International Volunteers is a well-known Japanese Buddhist NGO with a global network and it has been operational in many countries since its establishment in the early 1970s. In Thailand, Shanti Foundation is working with their partner NGO, “Sheekat Foundation”, and the latter is now running the project as an independent local entity. After we experienced sweating and an exhausting walk in the slum, we reached the project site. We saw the introductory DVD. We learned the details of the Shanti Foundation - Sheekat Foundation project such as mobile library and education for deprived children. There was a question and answer session, after which we were guided to the fair-trade outlet attached to the slum. There we all enjoyed fair-trade shopping. We learned a lot and spent money on souvenirs, hoping that we could make our modest contribution to the fair-trade operation. It was fun.

The above is the brief outline of our itinerary and study programme. Overall, we had witnessed two sides of Thailand: (i) Thailand as a recipient of ODA and international assistance, and (ii) Thailand as an assertive provider of international cooperation. In the private sector, Thailand offers medical tourism and in the public domain, it offers South-South cooperation ODA through Thai International Cooperation Agency (TICA). Thailand is unique as it is both a beneficiary and a provider of international assistance. Although Thailand’s ODA is still modest in scale, it is regarded as a good practice of South-South and triangular cooperation.

Post-tour learning guidance and reporting

The participants highly enjoyed the study tour. Some did not come back to Japan, and some decided to return to Thailand for a long-term academic exchange with Khon Kaen University in northeastern Thailand. Upon return to Japan, during the fall semester of 2017, the students were asked to share their experiences and learning with others. They started preparing this report (in Japanese) on the study tour. This activity was carried out under the supervision of Prof. Koshin Kimura. By the time we came back to Japan in early September, the students already gained a high degree of independence and they became very assertive and confident. They had grown up. Their confidence was demonstrated by their initiative in transit at Beijing airport, where several students tried to practice Chinese language with Chinese people. Lead by a student with a Chinese passport and another semi-bilingual student, they formed a small guided tour at the airport. They took advantage of the long transit time and actively enjoyed exploring Chinese food culture. They took the challenge of talking to a shopkeeper in Chinese. They became very mature in 11 days. This is impressive. However, it was a shame to see some of the participants sleeping during the presentations of our hosts and local partners. Though they might have been exhausted, this could have been avoided. Better discipline is recommended for next trip.

I (Prof. Nagata) think the tour was highly successful. Regarding international cooperation in general, we learned many aspects such as the United Nations system and its operational activities; Japanese NGO assistance, the Thai Government’s South-South and triangular cooperation; medical tourism; Thai local NGO’s work and eco-tourism potential. In addition, we had an occasion to learn about World War II history, and discussed the issue of peace and security. Some students did not know much about Japan’s war history, so the trip was a good opportunity in this regard. Some students were deeply in love with the wilderness of Thailand and they were convinced of the importance of ecology management. In the field of human rights, the students were impressed by the capacity of Thai people to accommodate the concerns of vulnerable

people including the disabled and lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) persons. Some students became very fond of Thailand. Some decided to come back to Thailand for a longer-term exchange study. Indeed, out of this group, three of them did so (came back in winter or summer 2018). We (faculty) hoped that they would make use of this learning in their own lives. We do hope that they will learn further the values of tolerance, accommodation, respect for diversity and no racial discrimination.

Later the students were given a golden opportunity to share their experiences with a large audience (some 200 peer students) in November, during the fall semester. We hoped that they would be able to articulate what they had learned during this 11-day study tour. Their views are included in this report.

This year, for the first time, we decided to take the challenge of publishing an English version, to make the report bilingual. This English version is made available for a wider range of global readers. It is supplementary to the original Japanese version. You may see how our students articulated their world views in the following chapter, and we truly hope you will enjoy it. We hope this English summary version is of some use for English speaking readers. I would like to thank all (those who assisted us in making this tour successful) for your kind hospitality.

Chapter 3
Reporting by Students
What we have learned and felt

**3.1. Group 1 on ODA and poverty in Thailand - ODA and what is needed to alleviate poverty?
Reported by Group 1, composed of Ms. Ishikawa, Mr. Iwatsuki and Mr. Natsuki**

3.1.1. What is ODA? Reported by Ms. Ishikawa

Official Development Assistance, ODA in short, is international bilateral assistance provided by a donor government to a recipient country. To promote socio-economic development of developing countries, various partners including NGOs offer various forms of international assistance. Among them, tax-based public assistance is defined as ODA. There are two types of ODA, (i) government to government “bilateral ODA” and (ii) “multilateral ODA” offered through the international organizations (e.g. the United Nations). Bilateral assistance includes technical assistance, grants and loans. Other forms such as deployment of volunteers can be a form of ODA too. ODA loans are long-term low-interest rate loans offered by a donor to a recipient country for the latter to execute various national projects such as infrastructure building, manpower development, policy and law formulation.

3.1.2 Positive impact of ODA in Thailand

There are many products of Japanese ODA found in Thailand, including the Thai Culture Center, which was built in 1987 through a Japanese grant. The Center is the first and only theater in the country, fully equipped with modern facility and an excellent sound system. It has been visited by many culture-lovers since its establishment. However, in my view, the sustainability of this center is slightly problematic due to its high maintenance costs.

Another Japanese ODA project we saw is the construction of Bangkok urban subway system (Bangkok Mass Rapid Transit System). The project was started in 2000 and initially was a 20km subway system with only 18 stations. It expanded over time. This project looks very useful for commuters to avoid the peak-time traffic congestion. It improved the level of air pollution in Bangkok too. We saw its positive impact.

Japanese ODA also made a partial contribution to the budget for the construction of the new Bangkok airport, namely, Suvarnabhumi airport. In 2006, this second (and now the main) international airport was officially opened. Thanks to the Suvarnabhumi airport, Thailand can meet the increased flight service demands. It subsequently contributed to Thai tourism and the national economy. We have used this airport as a group of tourists.

For ODA, financial assistance is not the only key factor for success, but it must be accompanied with transfer of know-how and knowledge and maintenance. Availability of spare parts is an issue. Besides, the timing for phasing-out is critical. Too early phasing-out is not good but phasing out too late is equally

counterproductive since it might cause so-called “dependency syndrome” of the recipient country. We must plan well; when to phase out and how to hand over to the recipient.

Is Japanese ODA effective for Thailand? It can be effective, only if the infrastructure is built with Thai manpower, as skills will be transferred. Also, local construction laborers will have jobs. I am curious however - there might be some gap existing between what Japan wishes to offer and what recipients want from Japan.

3.1.3. What is poverty?

Poverty can be defined “a lack or a shortage of basic necessities” such as education, employment, food, medical services, drinking water, housing, energy, etc. --- “a lack of goods and services” in general. In the world, there are over 1.2 billion people who live with the income of less than one US Dollar per day, and another 20 billion people are living with less than two dollars a day. Some people cannot attend school due to low or no income. Those people without education and training will be challenged to find a job or start their own business. Regardless of the global effort to alleviate poverty, there are still many people who are excluded from development. Indeed, income disparity is growing wider and wider. The Goal No. 1 of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) is poverty alleviation. However, poverty is a complex phenomenon and its alleviation can be achieved only through a combined effort for hunger management, education, health, gender equality, and so forth.

3.1.4. Poverty in Thailand

In Thailand, one can find a classy quarter with many high-rise buildings on one hand, and a shanty slum enclave crowded with poor residents on the other hand. The disparity between the “developed” and the “underdeveloped” and “the rich” and “the poor” is large in this country. It is uncertain whether those children living in slum areas will enjoy full access to education soon. Regardless of the United Nations slogan of Nobody Left Behind, poverty still exists in Thailand.

3.1.5. Klong Toey slum

In Bangkok, we visited the largest slum in Thailand, namely “Klong Toey”. The origin of Klong Toey slum dates to the 1940s when the Bangkok Port needed a lot of laborers for manufacturing industry. Coincidentally, many rural people decided to migrate to major cities due to the famines and droughts, desperately looking for a job and income. A new phenomenon emerged, creating the Klong Toey slum on land belonging to the Government at that time. Many poor rural-urban migrants had illegally occupied this space. This shantytown has grown quickly. Cheap and unhealthy houses have been built (out of abandoned materials) like mushrooms in Klong Toey. There was no school for resident children and no space for children to play. A typical job for the slum residents was and still is, either bike-taxi driving or part-time daily labour work at the port. Klong Toey women do supplement their household income by engaging in work at home for cash (with minimum wage), often offered by NGOs or charity agencies. The Government finally made water and electricity service available for the residents; however, garbage disposal and sewage are a big problem. The

slum is full of garbage and waste in open spaces and on the streets and the hygienic condition is sub-standard. It stinks. The risk of fire is another concern of the residents. A fire may spread quickly due to the highly congested living arrangement. The slum's population density is too high, and it is incredibly crowded. There is no safety and security for people living there.

Nation-wide in Thailand, there are some 1800 slums, according to statistics. There are many non-profitable organizations supporting those slum residents, among which is the Sheekat Foundation. This local grassroots NGO is affiliated with, but independent from, the Japanese NGO, Shanti Foundation for International Volunteers (SFIV). The Sheekat Foundation runs a project to promote education for the slum children in Klong Toey. Its activities are comprehensive, ranging from creating a child-friendly space, community library, mobile library, to a dormitory for those who cannot go to high school due to their financial constraints. Since 2017, a new undertaking started focused on vocational training and income generation for poor women living in Klong Toey. Those women are currently being trained on embroidery and handicraft making, using the textile materials made by ethnic minority women in the North. The Sheekat Foundation headquarters building (that we visited) is equipped with a training facility, sewing machines and a small outlet shop downstairs.

They invented a new Klong Toey brand, named "FIMU Klong Toey", which is inspired by a Japanese professional designer and operated by the Sheekat Foundation. The FIMU brand products are to be internationally marketed, including in Japan. There is a big challenge ahead however, as a Bangkok municipality gentrification project is now planned. If this is implemented soon, the residents in Klong Toey must be evacuated. They will be given three options: (i) to move to a substitute land, (ii) to move to public housing or (iii) to receive cash compensation and just leave. For those who have been living in Klong Toey throughout their life, it will not be easy to start a new life from scratch elsewhere. Their entire life has been in Klong Toey and this is their home. Their community spirit will be lost, which may have a negative psychological impact on individual lives. I wonder whether the city authorities will seriously consider the lives of individuals.

3.1.6. What is needed to alleviation poverty

Education is most important for reducing poverty. Basic education is of utmost importance for alleviating poverty for all and subsequently reducing disparities. Primary education should be a top priority. Education will lead to stable employment and income. However, still many Thai children have no access to education. Thus, technical support by non-profit organizations like the Sheekat Foundation is indispensable. If they do not do this job, who will do it? They are providing what are normally public services.

3.2. Group 2 on private sector's contribution to Thai economy and international exchange

This is my first-time travel to a developing country. My first impression about Bangkok was that it was much more developed than what I had anticipated. Prior to our trip, Prof. Nagata said that Thailand is a middle-income country and what I saw in Bangkok fully convinced me about it. Upon arrival at the airport, we saw the partially JICA-financed new airport, which was impressive and convenient. The airport was

designed to be barrier-free. It is a *universal design* to accommodate everyone's needs. A chartered bus transported us to our hotel where we all checked in. We managed to communicate with the hotel staff. We enjoyed their hospitality and kindness. In the late evening, we explored the *sois* (small lanes) around our hotel. We found convenience stores, shops and enjoyed shopping. Cigarettes were almost invisible on the shop shelves due to the strict anti-tobacco campaigns and regulations in Thailand and alcoholic drinks are not sold after a certain hour at night. I found so many Japanese company names and logos. The Japanese private sector is aggressively marketing its products in Bangkok. Thai people are using many Japanese brand products in their daily lives.

On the next day, we went to the King's palace, which was heavily guarded by fully weaponized security guards. We were there during the official mourning period for the late King, thus visitors were dressed in black-white outfits to show respect to the late King. Also, we, foreigners, were provided guidance about the dress code and appropriate behaviour there. Indeed, Thai people are polite and disciplined.

On the next day, we took a tour boat on the main river that runs by Bangkok. The water was polluted and yellowish. We explored a huge shopping complex, MBK. The prices there had been inflated recently, but we managed to find shops that carry relatively cheap items in our standard. We saw a street full of food vendors at night, which is a picturesque scene of Bangkok. However, the Government is trying to evacuate those food vendors for hygienic control. Thailand is developing towards another industrial country, but I wonder whether street vendors are a part of Thai culture and tradition that is to be preserved.

Thailand is a world-class tourism country and Thai tourism is well developed and highly organized to attract a lot of tourists and generate income. Thailand is making a solid effort to improve the quality of tourism, which contributes a significant portion of the Thai economy. We went to Pattaya, a highly developed beach town which attracts many Thai and foreign tourists for sightseeing. We saw tourists from all over the world, many of which are from China, India and Russia (BRICS). Thus, the breakfast at our hotel was international with many options. The beach town offered various water-related sports and entertainment. I was impressed by professionalism of the transgender entertainers/dancers and a high-quality performance at the Theater.

Thailand is blessed with charm and culture, which attracts tourists and meets their various needs. It is a country of "smiles". On the following day, we went to the Pattaya Elephant Eco-village to appreciate nature, wilderness and the life of Thai elephants, which are being protected. We saw monkeys too. We enjoyed learning about the ecology of various species of animals.

About Thai tourism and people's life style, I can list a couple of features that are more advanced than Japan.

i) Credit cards: In Thailand, customers can use a credit card at MacDonal's outlets. The card system was introduced five years ago. In contrast, in Japan, the card was accepted at MacDonal's only six months ago. Thailand is a credit card paradise; ii) My Number ID system: In Thailand, My Number ID was introduced many years ago and all Thai citizens have one (in Japan it was introduced only recently), and it is now used for the daily convenience of Thai shoppers; iii) Smoking: In Thailand, non-smoking is strictly practiced and enforced. Indoor smoking is not allowed, and people have zero tolerance towards smoking. In contrast, in Japan, though serious effort is being made towards non-smoking, there are still coffee shops and restaurants that permit customers' smoking. Thailand is more advanced in many ways.

About private sector and tourism, I would like to highlight Thailand's support for *fair trade*, which is related to the private sector and tourism. How is fair trade defined? It is a system to support sustainable livelihoods and development of grass-roots producers in developing countries, through application of fair pricing. The keywords may be fair prices, livelihoods and fair working conditions. In Bangkok, on the free day, we, a small group, visited a fair-trade shop, named Lofty Bamboo, which is registered under the Asian Fair-Trade Association. Lofty Bamboo ensures a fair return to local producers. We went to see how the fair-trade products were exhibited and marketed at the outlet for potential customers like us. The shop was nicely decorated and colorful with so many handicraft products such as accessories, key holders, stuffed animals, bags, hats, wears, and kitchen items in traditional and modern designs. They also guarantee the quality, using only natural dye such as indigo, which is from plants. Tourists can enjoy shopping in a relaxing manner and feel they are contributing to international assistance.

Tourists and visitors can easily support this type of fair-trade. In mountainous areas of Thailand, historically people developed unique weaving styles, and local producers want to make profit by producing traditional things. However, due to westernized life styles, Thai younger people started wearing jeans, T-shirts and other Western fashions; thus, the demand for traditional products has decreased drastically. One good solution is fair-trade. We, the conscious tourists can contribute a modest share to the income generation of local producers, through fair-trade shopping. We can also contribute to the preservation of tradition and culture of the local communities. One thing I learned about fair-trade is that it is a private sector and profit-making business, but it is also a modality of international contribution. We must understand that the costs may be higher, but we know that a fair-profit will be returned to the local producers. By accepting the system of fair price, fair return, fair pain (on the part of the consumer), we can feel that we contributed happily to international assistance through shopping. It is a win-win solution.

Medical tourism

Bumrungrad International Hospital in Bangkok is the largest private hospital in Thailand. The hospital gained international recognition as it was the first hospital in Asia to be accredited by and to be a member of the Joint Commission International. The Joint Commission International is an accreditation agency for hospitals. This guarantees the hospital's high-quality medical service. Originally, Bumrungrad International Hospital was established for Thai doctors who wished to remain and work in Thailand. Thai doctors were and still are, known to be highly trained with good skills and knowledge. Some of them were trained in England, USA and Japan. Before this hospital was built, there was a brain-drain syndrome. Very well trained Thai doctors emigrated to work abroad where they could apply their knowledge and skills, as they could not find an international-quality hospital in Thailand. Bumrungrad Hospital was built in 1980 by a Thai businessman who wanted to stop this brain-drain. As of today, 40 per cent of the patients are foreigners. The Hospital accommodates 19 languages including English, Japanese, Chinese, Arabic and Cambodian. There is a specialized desk to respond to foreign requests and inquiries and at the airport, there is a shuttle bus service for patients. We were guided around the facilities by the Japanese desk staff. The hospital rooms are mostly private with en-suite bathrooms with a toilet and shower. Many overseas patients visit this hospital for periodical health screening. It is the best practice of medical tourism in Thailand.

Thailand has the potential to expand medical tourism, which can meet the international demands and can offer relatively low-cost and high-quality service to foreigners with a Thai smile. This is also win-win.

Overall, we learned many valuable facts through this study tour. We have experienced and witnessed many interesting issues. We were exposed to foreign people, different forms of cultural and international cooperation. We have seen the transition from a developing country to a fully developed nation. We would like to return to Thailand one day. Finally, we would like to make use of what we have learned in our life experience-building process.

3.3. Group 3 on International Organizations fighting for poverty alleviation

By Ms. Aiba, Mr. Matsuse and Ms. Ishizaki

3.3.1. Introduction

We visited three international organizations (United Nations agencies) fighting for poverty reduction.

3.3.2. International Labour Organization (ILO)

On 5 September 2017, we visited ILO regional office in Bangkok. ILO is among the oldest United Nations specialized agencies, and was established in 1919, immediately after the World War I to develop a set of international standards for working conditions. ILO is a unique United Nations agency with a tripartite representational structure comprised of three entities, namely (i) Governments, (ii) Labour Unions and (iii) Employers' Associations. Each member country's delegation is composed of a representative of the government (Ministry of Labour), labour unions and employers' associations, so the three representatives can decide on one consolidated vote on behalf of that nation. This means that the labour union enjoys an equal status to the government. Other United Nations agencies' representative bodies are composed of only government representatives. ILO is a democratic and inclusive agency.

ILO's mandates are comprehensive including:

- Protection and promotion of international labour standards and basic principles and rights for workers
- Decent employment for all
- Social protection and social security
- Tripartite dialogue (among governments, employers and labour unions)

The International Labour Conference, the ILO's highest legislative body is held annually and it approves the ILO programme budget for a biennium term (2 years). I (Aiba) hope that one day, we will be able to see child labour totally abolished from this planet, and that poor children will not need to suffer any longer.

3.3.3. Visit to UNESCO office in Bangkok

On 6 September 2017, we visited the UNESCO regional office of the Asian and Pacific region, located on Sukhumvit Road in Bangkok. UNESCO is another United Nations specialized agency, established in 1946, with the objective of promoting education, science and culture. One of the main goals of UNESCO is to ensure global peace without repeating the same mistake of war. The General Conference of UNESCO is

held once every two years, and the Executive Board Committee Meeting is held annually. The UNESCO Secretariat, located in Paris is composed of five Departments; namely Departments on (i) education, (ii) natural science, (iii) human and social science, (iv) information and communication and (v) culture. The General Conference is the supreme legislative body of UNESCO, where the important decisions such as on the UNESCO budget and work programme are approved by the Member States. Also, the General Conference has an authority to appoint the Director General of UNESCO (upon election).

The focus of UNESCO's activities include:

- Literacy
- Universal basic and primary education
- Protection of the UNESCO World Heritage sites (cultural and natural heritage)
- Registration of the World Heritage
- Overseeing implementation of the Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions
- Elimination of gender discrimination in education
- Poverty reduction

Due to its mandate of protecting the World Heritage sites, UNESCO is relevant not only to developing countries but also to developed nations like Japan. Thus, I believe that we can start learning about world affairs and international organizations from UNESCO, as it is a user-friendly agency.

3.3.4. United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

On 5 September, we visited the UNDP office, located in the United Nations building. ILO, UNDP and ESCAP all are in the same building. The various United Nations agencies are working together to manage global development challenges and UNDP is the designated focal point for coordinating United Nations operational/development activities. UNDP's operational network covers some 170 countries and its operational modality is to work together with stakeholders to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Also, UNDP established the concept of *human development*, which is now widely accepted as the principle of development cooperation agencies. *Human development* means human-centered development beyond mere poverty reduction and economic development. Also, UNDP has made an important input to the proclamation of the Sustainable Development Goals. UNDP's 2014-2017 work programme strategy is to alleviate poverty while reducing the imbalance and income disparity among and within countries. The focus of its main activities include, among others, sustainable development, democratic governance, climate change and building resilience. In recent years, UNDP's work programme has focused on poverty reduction, HIV and AIDS, renewable and sustainable energy and infrastructure building for communication and technologies. UNDP's headquarters is in New York. We hope that we can extend our international assistance to those countries that have not yet been covered by the UNDP network.

3.3.5. United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP)

On 5 September, we visited the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for the Asia and Pacific (UN ESCAP), and it covers over 60 countries in the Asia-Pacific region, including South Asian nations such as Afghanistan and Pakistan. We were welcomed by an ESCAP senior professional staff from Saudi Arabia, Mr. Osama Rajkhan. Mr. Rajkhan offered an interesting lecture on the wide income disparity existing among countries of the ESCAP region. According to Mr. Rajkhan, although the time-frame for SDGs is 2016-2030, we may not be able to achieve its 17 goals by 2030, and perhaps we will achieve all the goals only by 2050. We were very impressed by Osama's lecture and felt the United Nations very close to our hearts.

3.3.6. Vocational Training School of the Redemptorist Foundation in Pattaya

On 9 September we visited a local Christian NGO, the Redemptorist Foundation for Persons with Disabilities (RFPWD). This NGO runs a vocation training center for persons with disabilities (PWD). Mr. Ryan (from USA) who became disabled due to an accident he had some nine years ago and needs a wheelchair, welcomed all of us. RFPWD was established with the objective of creating an equal opportunity for PWDs. Mr. Ryan said that education is an effective tool for disabled people to exercise their equal rights and to survive in our society. He also said that Pattaya is ahead of Bangkok in terms of barrier-free design and inclusiveness. This was achieved because they had been working hard to make Pattaya a barrier-free model town. Now, they are promoting barrier-free tourism in Pattaya. The RFPWD vocational school accommodates PWDs with ages ranging from 15 to 45. We had an opportunity to talk to the disabled students in training. We also talked to disabled employees of the Center. Most of the trainees are either mildly physically disabled or persons with autism; thus, they can move around relatively independently without the help of others. I (Aiba) felt a little bit uneasy about it.

The following is my personal story. I have an older brother with progressive muscle dystrophy. His impairment is progressive and severe. He is now bound to a respiratory supporting system and his muscle movement is very limited. Indeed, my brother is profoundly disabled. At home, he often shares with me his bitter experiences of discrimination. But he also shares with me his future dreams. I have seen many severely and profoundly disabled individuals in Japan through my brother. Some are bound to their beds all day and others are intellectually disabled. Some have a severe communication disability. I am a good friend with some of those people. However, at this Center, I met only those with mild or moderate disabilities. I did not find anyone with a severe disability. I found none with blindness or an intellectual disability and I did not meet those who need personal assistance for daily living.

I asked, "Do you accommodate any person with a severe disability? Don't you have a system of personal assistance in Thailand?" Mr. Ryan politely replied, "Thailand is still a developing nation and awareness towards disability is at its early stage. In Thailand, there are only five persons who are registered as a Professional Personal Assistant. Thus, it is still a long way ahead." So far, we had seen relatively advanced facilities such as the international hospital, those of the United Nations agencies, APCD and excellent shopping centers in Bangkok. I almost forgot that Thailand is a developing country. Looking back, I have

not seen any disabled man or woman walking in a shopping center or on the street in Bangkok. They are so invisible. This may be evidence that physical and emotional barriers do exist in this country. Perhaps, people may believe that disabled persons should be taken care by their family. Perhaps, severely disabled people who need personal assistance are not even permitted to take the challenge of the entrance exam of RFPWD. Are they eligible? I cannot imagine how severely disabled persons like my own brother manage daily life in Thailand. How are they surviving - especially if the family is not helping them? Yes, Thailand has achieved economic development; however, it has not yet reached the goal of creating an “inclusive and barrier-free society for all”.

3.3.7. Personal view (by Ms. Aiba)

Upon our visit to many institutions in Thailand, I realized that I really do not understand the concept of human rights. I could not explain how the concept is defined. I did not know much about international (United Nations) organizations. I did not wish to make this another “poverty tourism” trip to observe the life of poor people (as a tourist from a richer country). I do not like top-down approaches. I sincerely hoped to overcome and remove my own stereotyped views and prejudice, learning from this study tour. I hope I did learn some things. I do hope that one day I will be able to make my modest input to the betterment of our global society.

3.3.8. Visit to OISCA

On the fifth day, after we visited the UNESCO World Heritage site, we proceeded to the office of the Organization for Industrial, Spiritual and Cultural Advancement International (OISCA in short). OISCA is a well-known Japanese NGO established in 1961. OISCA’s system is very comprehensive and extensive including the affiliated OISCA high school, OISCA specialized school on development cooperation and the OISCA observatory. Once, there was highly controversial press coverage about OISCA high schools, stating that the schools enforced the students to worship at the Japanese Shinto shrine on campus. Also, OISCA was criticized for the old military-style greeting practice of students and military-style graduation ceremony, all of which implied that it was super right-wing. Putting aside such political debate, herewith I will focus on its international development assistance.

OISCA’s activities can be categorized under 4 domains:

1. Overseas development assistance;
2. Promoting the “Forest for Children” scheme;
3. Manpower training;
4. Awareness-raising.

In Thailand, in “Forest for Children”, OISCA promotes (i) agriculture and planting trees and (ii) education on ecology and sustainability through creating community forests. In southern Thailand, OISCA promotes planting mangroves, and develops the areas hit by the big earthquake. In the north, OISCA’s focus is agriculture and manpower development. We were welcomed by staff of OISCA and its local partner, a school in a suburb of Pattaya. We enjoyed the performance of Thai kick boxing by schoolboys and we were guided around the school facilities. We saw a little garden focused on eco-education in the back yard and a

set of garbage cans for recycling, which may be common in Japan, but is still rare and a good practice in Thailand. The students take care of the mangroves that are growing in the little space adjacent to the school campus. They cultivate rice and sometimes go on excursion to nearby mountains to trim wild plants and weeds.

3.3.9. Sheekat Foundation in Klong Toey

In early morning of the eleventh day, we checked out of the hotel and proceeded to Klong Toey to see the large slum and visit the project site of a Japanese NGO, the Shanti Foundation for International for Volunteers (SFIV) and its local Thai partner, the Sheekat Foundation. The Sheekat Foundation was established in 1991 as an independent local NGO, which is affiliated with SIV. “Sheekat” means “education” in Sanskrit language. Its goal is to provide high quality education for children in deprived communities. For children and youth, they run the community library, mobile library, a fellowship programme, kindergarten and dormitory projects. In addition, they are engaged in emergency assistance, community development and vocational training for women living in Klong Toey. We were guided to see all ongoing projects in the three-story building of the Sheekat Foundation. Their undertaking was covered by Thai and Japanese (NHK) television channels and is well known; thus, we are hoping to see an expansion of its coverage and activities.

Conclusion

We learned that each international organization has a clear individual mandate for mobilizing stakeholders for poverty reduction. They all are working together towards this aim. The reason why so many international (United Nations) organizations are in Thailand is perhaps its geographical convenience and reasonable cost of living. Thailand is located at the center of the Asia and Pacific region. The cost performance in Thailand is still very high. The country is highly international and progressive. It is among the richest nations of Southeast Asia. Basic infrastructure is well developed.

We have learnt that poverty alleviation, which is Goal No. 1 of SDGs, is perhaps the single most important one. It may be the overall goal of international development cooperation. However, poverty alleviation cannot be achieved without achieving other SDGs. We must reduce disparities to meet the principle of “nobody left behind”. Through this study tour, we learned that we must adopt a comprehensive and holistic approach to SDGs. This means that all 17 Goals must be achieved simultaneously, and they are equally important. We have learned this point from our own observations and exposure in Thailand.

About the host country, ordinary Japanese people’s impression of Thailand may be that it is just another low-income country of Asia. However, the nice-looking Thai-style building accommodating the United Nations agencies really stands out in Bangkok, which gave me an uneasy feeling. Is the building a symbol of its elite personnel? Or is it reasonable for the United Nations Building to be so nice, as it is a house of several United Nations agencies? The United Nations is a global entity after all. But might this in itself represent disparity, I wonder. We can understand the organization’s need for heavy security, but the luxury of the building may be waste of its budget and resources. Ironically, if poverty is alleviated globally, the

United Nations mandates will no longer be needed and there will be no job left for the United Nations. We hope to see one day, that there is no poverty and that there is no UNDP on this planet.

3.4. Group 4 on Kingdom of Thailand and human rights

By Mr. Nishimura, Mr. Shinno, Ms. Kino and Ms. Kuratate

3.4.1. Living with dignity and human rights

The reason why I participated in this study tour is two-fold; first, to enhance my knowledge about lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) issues in Thailand, and second, to learn the overall human rights situation. However, there is an additional dimension. People's worldviews are very different based on their country of origin, culture, economic background, class and educational attainment. Indeed, the world is full of diversity. This 11-day tour was most exciting and stimulating for me, partially because this was my first overseas experience and, this participatory modality of learning was very effective. I digested it very well.

Thailand is known to be one of the most accommodating countries for LGBT people, who are sexual minorities. We saw LGBTs and enjoyed the world-famous transgender show at the Pattaya Tiffany Theater, where trans-gender people managed all of the arrangements, including welcoming, ticket sales and hospitality service. On the streets of Bangkok, we could easily find LGBT people fully engaged. We had a chance to communicate with them in shopping centers. Some of them are ordinary sales staff. Thai LGBT people are proud of their sexual identity and they do not hide their sexual orientation. Thai people in general tend to be rather generous and accommodating towards diversity in sexual orientation. They do not single out LGBT persons. In contrast, the Japanese understanding about sexual diversity and orientation is limited, perhaps due to insufficient awareness and lack of education in this regard. We Japanese should recognize sexual diversity and see it as an individual characteristic. We should accept LBGT people more naturally and openly.

However, in Thailand, other kinds of the human rights are still problematic. This includes the problems of child labour, no access of poor children to education and shortage of manpower in the education sector. We went to a vocational training center for disabled people in Pattaya. The center accommodates students with ages ranging from 14 to 40. It runs a dormitory for them too. It extends service to disabled trainees from neighbouring countries, such as Lao People's Democratic Republic, Cambodia and Vietnam. Upon return to Japan, I started wondering how I should approach the promotion of human rights of LGBT people. My capacity is very limited due to financial constraints and lack of a human network. Nevertheless, I may be able to make some change. Perhaps, I can raise my voice and advocate for LGBT rights. Through advocating, communicating with others, and disseminating what I learned in Thailand, I can help to raise awareness. Such advocacy requires no cost. This may be the best approach at this stage of my life.

3.4.2. APCD

APCD was established in 2002 as a multi-purpose center for PWD, under the Second Asia Pacific Decade of Persons with Disabilities. It was established through Japan (JICA) - Thailand technical cooperation ODA in close collaboration with nine other ASEAN nations. The main objectives of APCD include:

- to empower PWDs from developing countries;
- to create an inclusive barrier-free society;
- to establish a network with stakeholders;
- to disseminate information;
- to build manpower.

Here, I would like to introduce an interesting income-generation activity of APCD. APCD runs the “APCD-Yamazaki Bread Ltd. bakery project” at a little outlet attached to the premises. The bakery “of” the disabled is run “by” and “with” disabled people. Disabled people own this activity. This project is being implemented in close collaboration with a Japanese commercial bakery company, Yamazaki Bread Inc. in Thailand. Its objective is to provide an income-generation opportunity for disabled men and women in Thailand. It is a good practice of the new concept, “public-private partnership (PPP)” and “corporate social responsibility”. This project has its training wing to train disabled interns on bread-making, sales, marketing, and other operational skills at the outlet. As a part of their corporate social responsibility, the Yamazaki Bread Inc. in Thailand seconds a professional trainer to teach bread-making skills. He and other staff guide the disabled trainees. The company also helps with marketing and placement (employment) of the qualified graduates. Here, we saw various types of disability - physical (e.g. being deaf or blind), mental or psychological, and multiple/combined forms. The interns are expected to work for 8 hours (with a one-hour lunch break) per day and they receive the salary of 6000 Thai Baht per month. In addition, they receive 300 Baht per day as an allowance for lunch and transportation. So far, most of the graduates could find a position in a Yamazaki-bread affiliated bakery. The employment rate is 100 per cent, according to Mr. Jasper, who is a placement officer at APCD.

The project has its own small retail outlet adjacent to the APCD building. We bought bread there, which was very tasty. The shop was run by some graduates and APCD staff, most of whom were disabled. The premises were totally barrier-free, since most of the entire APCD building was constructed with a JICA Grant. We noticed the signs of Japanese ODA. A cute little sticker of the Japanese flag (rising sun) – the JICA logo - all over the premises. We saw the same sticker on every single chair, desk and vehicle of APCD – too many and too projective perhaps? With this kind of aggressive promotion, people are almost forced to appreciate the collaboration between Thailand and Japan, but we were proud of it. This APCD-Yamazaki bakery has just started; thus, its impact is still to be seen and evaluated. One of the ultimate objectives of APCD is to develop sustainable human resources. This initiative of Thai-Japanese ODA should be sustainable. The Thai Government and Thai people must continue it. Thai people must be the agents for social progress. After we visited APCD, I learned the importance of phasing out of ODA and its sustainability. We saw ownership of Thai people concerning this ODA. The smooth phasing-out of APCD and hand-over to the Thai side is a valuable case study on national ownership and sustainability.

3.4.3. Disability rights

What is a barrier-free society? Until I saw APCD and another facility for PWDs in Pattaya, I have never thought about the meaning of barrier-free. What is barrier-free? What is inclusive? For the first time in my life, I thought about disability rights, also. The concept of barrier-free does not mean a mere removal of physical (architectural) barriers. To achieve a barrier-free inclusive society for PWDs, there are four prerequisites:

- (i) removal of *physical barriers*;
- (ii) removal of *communication barriers*;
- (iii) removal of *legislative and structural barriers*;
- (iv) removal of *attitudinal barriers*.

We normally associate a barrier with lack of ramps and/or braille, namely, *physical barriers*. However, it is not easy to modify such physical barriers as it costs money. The easiest one is the last one, removing *attitudinal barriers*. What PWDs expect from us is our understanding and accommodation. They also appreciate our emotional support. Ignoring their needs and pretending not to see them will hurt them. Ignoring PWDs is the worst emotional barrier as it is a total rejection. We must remove our emotional barriers and prejudice. We can do this from tomorrow.

“Disability” does not mean “dis – NOT” ability. Disabled means “differently abled”; it is not about the lack of ability, but it is about a different kind of “ability” or talent. This should be how disability is defined. We need to change the paradigm of our thinking. Discrimination starts with exclusion. Exclusion of people who look slightly different from us or those with different opinions, will create an emotional barrier and a gap. This is opposite to inclusiveness and non-discrimination. We must learn how to accommodate individual differences and respect diversity among us. This is what human rights are all about.

We visited the Redemptorist Foundation for PWDs (RFPWD) in Pattaya (for details see above), where I took the occasion to raise one question. “To what degree do you think the human rights of PWDs have been achieved in Thailand?” The staff’s answer was inspiring. “Though physical barrier-free is still limited in Thailand, PWDs are often helped to a great extent by non-disabled people due to Thai people’s kindness and accommodation”. Also, I learned one interesting point about “claiming human rights”. Pattaya is ahead of Bangkok in being more barrier-free. It is advanced because the NGO in Pattaya has been advocating for it and claiming the rights of PWDs. A human right cannot be achieved without “claiming” it; thus, human rights are limited to humans and not extended to other animals, which cannot claim rights. Of course, we have moral obligations and duties to protect other animals (as appropriate), but they do not claim their rights – as Prof. Nagata explained. The NGO in Pattaya teaches the trainees/students about how to claim disability rights and how to advocate for a barrier-free society. Therefore, the empowerment of PWDs themselves is also an important step towards creating an inclusive society for all. Finally, human rights are fundamental and innate rights for all people, regardless of disability, nationality, cultural background, appearance, ethnicity, and origin. They are universal for all of us, as human beings despite diversity among us, in language, culture, religion, faith, practice and other human characteristics. Global education on human rights is urgently needed for all of us who must co-exist in today’s highly globalized world.

Group 5 on Cultural and World Heritage

By Mr. Furukawa, Mr. Seko, Ms. Takeda, Ms. Hibiya and Mr. Yamaguchi

We decided to take the occasion to study both *intangible* and *tangible* culture. An example of the latter was an UNESCO World Heritage site. As a senior leader of this group, I (Furukawa) would like to start with tangible culture, namely, the UNESCO World Heritage Site, the Historic City of Ayutthaya. Even prior to this study tour, I had always been very interested in the World Heritage; thus, last year I took the challenge of sitting for the World Heritage Exam Grade 4 (administered by the UNESCO Academy Japan) and successfully passed it. The definition of World Heritage used by UNESCO is “outstanding universal value” for humankind. The criterion is applicable to both cultural and natural heritage. To be qualified as a World Heritage Site and be listed by UNESCO, the nominated site must demonstrate an outstanding universal value for present and future generations of human beings. Based on this concept, we must protect the UNESCO World Heritage Sites, and if required, international cooperation may be offered. Under UNESCO, World Heritage has three categories; namely, (i) cultural heritage, (ii) natural heritage, and (iii) combined heritage of both. Thailand has six World Heritage Sites, out of which four are cultural and two are natural.

We visited the Ayutthaya site, which is listed under the “cultural heritage” category. According to what I learned for the above-mentioned exam, the Ayutthaya Empire took over the predecessor, Sukothai Empire in the 15th century and the former merged with the latter as one unified Empire, named Ayutthaya Empire. Ayutthaya civilization had flourished until the 18th century when it was conquered by the army of Burma (now Myanmar). It had been a center of Thai civilization until then (for 417 years). Ayutthaya is a large complex of many temples. In this study tour, we could visit only three temples, namely (i) Wat Phra Si Sanphet, (ii) Wat Chaiwatthanaram, and (iii) Wat Pra Mahathat. All of them are a part of the Ayutthaya Historic City World Heritage Site.

About Wat Phra Si Sanphet, the most significant impression it left on me was the three main pillars and the oratory located on their top. The oratory is used for ceremonies even today. However, the second and third temples mentioned above were more interesting for me. They have been ruins for 417 years since the Burmese army destroyed them in 1767. Among the ruins are with so many damaged Buddha statues. Most of the Buddha heads were stolen and sold in antiquity markets at high prices. This trafficking of antiquities is to outside of Thailand and it is not easy to stop it. This is a very sad history. I would like to conclude this section by sharing my own insights.

I found a challenge regarding protection and preservation of the ruins of Ayutthaya. Some parts are in bad shape and not safe. World heritage preservation is difficult as it must balance its (i) authenticity and (ii) preservation and safety. We need to strike a balance. It is necessary to preserve and reinforce the monuments with modern technology. On one hand, the monument should meet the safety standard for visitors and it must be well preserved. On the other hand, authenticity of the site should not be compromised. It is a part of history that Thailand was once conquered by Burma and the Ayutthaya civilization was destroyed. How to strike the balance between authenticity and efficient preservation? I hope that Ayutthaya heritage will be neatly preserved without its authenticity being lost. Globally, the World Heritage sites are promoted with

technical assistance of the UNESCO World Heritage Center, whose mandates and work-programme will be described by my classmate, as follows.

The details of UNESCO will be covered by me, Yamaguchi. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) was established in 1946 and Japan became a member in 1951.

UNESCO's mandates are comprehensive, and its overall goal is to promote peace and the well being of humankind. Thus, the cultural mandate of UNESCO is to promote the culture of peace by advocating the importance of culture and human civilization. Among its comprehensive activities, three priority sectors are education, natural science and culture. Furthermore, UNESCO has contributed to formulating the 17 Goals of SDGs and its 169 targets.

Concerning SDGs and education sector activities of UNESCO, I (Takeda Hinano) will follow up. UNESCO's education sector emphasizes "Education for Sustainable Development (ESD)". Under the framework of ESD, UNESCO's activities are categorized under two domains.

In the first domain, we must promote human nature and individuality. We must learn self-determination, judgment and responsibility as a set of basic skills for survival in society. Through this learning, we can promote the core values such as respect for human dignity and human diversity, non-exclusion, equal opportunity and environment protection (values stipulated in the SDGs). In the second domain, we must holistically promote individual human development. Based on the ESD targets, we must devise a holistic and academic approach to various aspects of environment, economy, society and culture. All of these domains are integrated and comprehensive. Thus, a *holistic approach* to human development is recommended. However, we may identify a few priority areas, such as improving equal access to high-quality education in the Africa and promoting gender equality through education and raising awareness.

Have you ever thought about education? We took it for granted in Japan, where we are lucky to have education accessible by all. One of the causes of illiteracy and insufficient education in Thailand is poverty. Some children in Thailand have no access to primary and/or secondary education because they are poor. Poverty and lack of education are a cause and an effect of each other. Without education, they will be illiterate. An illiterate individual will face many challenges such as finding a decent job. Without a job, there is no income and he/she will be poor. His or her children will be poor. A poor household means no education for children. At the national level, well-educated human resources are vital for economic development. We must break this education – poverty cycle. One can get out of poverty only if he or she is educated.

Now we (Seko and Hibiya) will follow up. First, I (Seko) will cover Thai food culture. Thai food is characterized with three distinctions – it is spicy/hot, sweet and sour. I ate the famous Thai cuisine, such as "Tom Yum Goong", which is a popular soup served with spices and herbs (e.g. lemon grass). Lemon grass is very expensive in Thailand. Another popular spice is coriander, which can be found even in a Japanese supermarket, today. Coriander is believed to be effective for anti-aging. Thai people love to use a lot of herbs in food. Also, Thailand is a famous rice producing country just like Japan. Rice is the main grain for the diet of Thai people. Thai rice is different from Japanese rice. It is dryer and the grains are longer. Thai

rice is frequently used for curry and fried rice. Thailand's food culture includes famous street vendors. Those vendors sell almost everything, including cooked insects. I had a unique occasion to taste a cooked scorpion, which was crunchy and quite tasty.

I also learned about a unique food recycling system in Thailand. Recycling of food can be seen all over the world for the thrifty. However, in Thailand, recycled food is sold to poor people, which was very shocking to me. I already found out that income disparity between rich and poor, is very wide, but I did not know to what degree. I also learned about the shortage of safe drinking water, which is commonly available in Japan, free of charge. In Thailand, safe drinking water must be bought, and one must buy a bottle. It is not cheap by Thai standards. For the first time in my life, I recognized the value of safe and clean water, to which all Japanese enjoy full access. We are very lucky in this regard, but we must cherish water and conserve it. We must use our water more efficiently. I shall save water (even a drop) from now on for global water conservation. I have made a firm commitment.

Hibiya will follow it up and talk about the "kingdom" of Thailand. Thailand is a kingdom and it is a constitutional monarchy. While we were walking in Bangkok and other cities, we noticed the pictures of the late King, King Bhumibol, all over the country. As King Bhumibol had just passed away one year before we went to Thailand, Thai citizens were under the long mourning period, anticipating the official Royal funeral to take place soon. Most Thai people were wearing the mourning colour black. Many things in Bangkok were black too. I was puzzled about the degree of passion and affection of Thai people (subjects) towards the late King. Why is he so well respected by Thai people? What was the charm of the late King? History can tell us. There are a few reasons for his popularity. In May 1992, there was a serious political conflict between the prime minister backed by the Thai Military and the democracy movement. The late King made a wise intervention and condemned both sides, which in return brought both parties to reach a concession. The King helped to secure stability and peace of the Nation. Also, due to his intervention, the country could enjoy democratic governance until 2014. The late King also helped the country in the event of the Asia Financial Crisis in 1997, when he advocated for more self-reliant and sustainable economic policy with a slogan of "satisfactory economy of Thailand". In 2003, he also made another timely political intervention, when he saw a serious conflict between Thailand and Cambodia. He suppressed the upset citizens' violence and stopped the attempted attack on the Cambodian embassy in Bangkok. He said, "Do not be manipulated by evil people". He is popular due to these reasonable interventions. In a ceremonial event commemorating the sixtieth anniversary of His Majesty's (King Rama the Ninth) reign, the streets of Thailand were crowded with enthusiastic citizens, men and women, children and the elderly, youth, all in yellow shirts. Yellow is a royal colour in Thailand.

The Royal Family of Thailand is highly respected by its people (subjects). There is a royal development project in Thailand, under its auspices. This project is designed for promoting agriculture-based rural development. It aims at stimulating agriculture and the rural economy. The Royal Family has sometimes donated a piece of their land for land reform. Also, they have supported rural development and an artificial rain project. This type of intervention started when the King visited the northern areas of Thailand (e.g. The Golden Triangle) and witnessed the opium cultivation by local villagers. He saw the production of illicit drugs and substances, which is counterproductive to sustainable national development. Thus, he started a

new initiative to guide the villagers and farmers to healthier and more sustainable agriculture. They were offered substitution crops and alternatives for income generation. His generous initiative progressed over time and developed into many sectors.

The King noticed the shortage of water supply in some areas and floods in others. Thus, the Royal Project developed an effective water supply system, and improved the irrigation for agriculture. Also, it helped to convert malnourished soils into good farmland with the supply of fertilizers. It allocated new land to the farmers through the establishment of cooperatives. The Royal Project has another wing -medical services, including a mobile clinic unit, a special medical project and a mobile dentistry unit. The Project also covers organic vegetables and handicrafts for income generation. Now, there are more than 3000 project sites in the country. This Project promotes sustainable economic development in Thailand. It also gives moral support to Thai society and makes people happy. No wonder, the late King gained respect and affection from the Thai people.

So many pictures of the late King in various towns gave me the impression that he was so well respected by not only Thai people (subjects) but also us, the foreign travelers. We recognized that Thailand is a true kingdom.

Now, we would like to conclude with a few final remarks. One of the group members visited Thailand with his parents when he was a child. The late King was still alive then. The Thai economy was still developing and the image of Thailand in the eyes of the boy was simply “dirty, poor and stinky”. In 2017, when the boy reached the age of 20, the image of Thailand was drastically changed. We have never seen a country like this, which has changed so drastically in nine years. Within less than a decade, Thailand has achieved so much. Now, it is almost like another country. Japan and Thailand share one thing in common – kingdom. We both adore our King (Emperor), though the degree of respect may be different. We were fully convinced that soon the Kingdom of Thailand would achieve a similar level of development to Japan, or perhaps it might surpass Japan and others. We strongly felt its potential.

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