WaQuAC-NET Newsletter

Water Quality Asian Cooperation Network

http://www.waquac.net/english/

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For Safe Water, Do Network.

Vol. 34 Contents

Return from Laos MaWaSU Project

Chief Advisor Mr. Masahiro Shimomura

Mr. Shimomura has just returned home in August after serving as a chief advisor for the project in Laos for five years, contributed articles on his thoughts for the project (WaQuAC-NET Office)

Mr. Shimomura makes a speech at wrap-up of the final monthly meeting

Project MaWaSU

Here, I am introducing Project MaWaSU which was implemented by Laos with support of JICA, and water supply utilities of Japan in Laos. The official name is "the Capacity Development Project for Improvement of Management Ability of Water Supply Authorities", the implementation period was from August 24, 2012 to August 23, 2017 for 5 years. Our counterpart gave a nickname "Project MaWaSU" from the initial name of the English project name.

The project purpose of MaWaSU is shown in its name. Before MaWaSU started, the Water Supply State Enterprises (WSSEs) of 18 provinces, Laos' waterworks utilities, only performed operation and maintenance of their facilities on the ad hoc basis. They were expected to be able to manage their waterworks properly such as not only operation and maintenance, but also development or expansion, large scale repair, renewal of facilities effectively with appropriate long-term perspective for people in their province. To realize it, WSSEs may have limitations due to environment where waterworks is located. Therefore, it is also important to improve the administrative ability of the water administration, which greatly influences the WSSE management. The project activities approach to develop capacity of both two levels of organization.

Approaches of MaWaSU

As a way of approaching the project goal, we firstly carried out activities to improve the management capacity of the three pilot WSSEs, and activities aiming at the ideal form of water supply administration in the central government and pilot provinces. For selecting pilot provinces, there are 18 provinces throughout Laos, and each province has WSSE respectively. As the pilot WSSEs, Luang Prabang from the north, the

capital Vientiane from the central area, and Khammouane province from the south were selected as pilot WSSEs and provinces.

And in the latter part of MaWaSU, 1) we continued developing capacities of the waterworks administration and the pilot WSSEs, 2) we carried out activities to sequentially disseminate MaWaSU initiatives to other water administrations and WSSEs by working with the three pilot WSSEs and waterworks administration as the core, which had become able to understand and work on waterworks activities properly through implementing the activities in the first half of the project, and 3) we worked to design a system how to disseminate MaWaSU activities as nationwide standard of water supply sector after MaWaSU.

MaWaSU's Challanges

The five years of MaWaSU can be said in a word; "a challenge for a new era of water supply sector in Laos". We have made two big challenges.

"Why do we need a challenge for a new era?" The first challenge was to make MaWaSU members understand this point. Especially, it was big challenge for our experts to have the officers of water administration understand. It was because they had pulled the water sypply sector of Laos like a convoy fleet. That is what I am thinking to look back, now that MaWaSU has ended.

The first of the two big challenges was to return to the original starting line of the water supply. We aimed at securing the public health and the comfortable living by the water supply from a long-term perspective, not at tackling immediate issues in short term. This is partly because of background of the country. Since Lao still has a very high infant mortality rate until 5 years old, therefore, it is urgent to realize access to safe

Group Photo at the Closing Seminar

water for all of the Laos people. If we leave the urban area even a little, women and children still take a lot of time to hard work on water drawing, which may be one of the reasons why children do not attend a school, along with agricultural work.

The second challenge was to rebuild the water sector to fit the new era. In the past 20 years, despite the fact that the government had been promoting the development of water supply with many development donors' support, the current water coverage rate nationwide has ended less than 20%. As this shows, it is immediately imagined that the SDG, "Drinkable Water for All" Lao aiming, cannot be realized in the way we had done so far.

Efforts towards clarifying demarcation between administration and WSSEs

As concrete activities toward the second challenge, we worked to clarify the mission and the role of administrative and WSSE respectively so that each could function more effectively and efficiently. This will enhance self-sustainable development of the entire water supply sector in Laos. The national government would realize real decentralization, reforming from the convoy fleet system.

In order to rebuild water supply sector from an over-dependence on assistance of development donors, to an autonomous sector, the national

and provincial governments should concentrate on water administration such as support for WSSE's waterworks operation which includes construction and expansion that WSSE should procced, supervision and regulation work. Moreover, the control of construction project should be fully delegated to WSSE. By close cooperation between the provincial waterworks administration and WSSE, it would be possible to concrete the waterworks activities in the province for a long term, and to promote the diffusion of water supply to the people, and to improve service of water supply. That was what we tried to support.

Management of MaWaSU assistance

In MaWaSU, we set goals to fulfill the mission of water supply, drew the ideal future image of the sector as 10 years later, regarded MaWaSU as the first five years towards there, and set activities and roadmap required, and carried out them. Therefore, we did not be bound by the PDM (Project Design Matrix) which mainly clarifies activities only during the project period. We implemented the project as a professional in the water supply sector that had accumulated experiences, know-how and technologies for operating the waterworks at the front line of the actual works.

As specific activities in the three pilot WSSEs, we have conducted OJT activities for

Working group activities of monthly meeting that became a driving force

administrative staff of WSSE on daily works to be carried out for operation of waterworks. On the other hand, for waterworks administration, we aimed to improve their problem-solving ability. After clarifying the administrative issues, and assigning personnel in charge of each issue, we held regular study meetings with them. Through these activities, we have demonstrated what each member needs to do for what, and how they should be doing while enhancing their motivation.

A belief about developing countries

In support of developing countries, my commitment was not bringing in Japan now. Actually, the current condition of the water supply sector in Laos was very similar to when I entered the waterworks in Japan. So, what has been in Japan at that time? I greatly noted to bring a way of thinking in at that time, regardless of the results in Japan. There was another reason for this. In Laos, power supply was still unstable, and the circumstances of IT were further close to the time when computers were introduced in Japan, and it was often that a workplace did not equip any computers. For these reasons, rather than rely on high-tech system, introduction of manuals and paper-based procedures would be able to do a reliable job that obtains trust from customers. In addition, introduction of manual-based low-tech procedures would make it easy to understand the principle of work. This was an effort based on my belief that when the system would be introduced 5 or 10 years later, it would allow them to work properly and efficiently using the system without being used by the system.

Furthermore, although this is inevitable, the counterpart is the main actor. It is meaningless for our experts to produce results, meaning that our experts would be evaluated only after the counterparts produce results. While tenaciously teaching sitting on their next, we stuck that the

counterparts produce results on their own.

True dynamics of MaWaSU

In addition to activities with individual MaWaSU members, we requested the pilot WSSEs to hold weekly meeting for monitoring the progress of each activities as an effort towards the overall achievement of organizational capability improvement. Furthermore, project members of waterworks administration and WSSE gathered together every month, to monitor progress and adjust activities to achieve the overall goals of MaWaSU.

Subcommittees, finally nine groups, had set up for the issues to be undertaken as all Laos, such as human resource development plan, water supply vision, water supply management guidelines and so on. The subcommittee meetings were held on the occasion of the monthly meeting every month. That kind of periodic gathering of all MaWaSU members raised a kind of competition in a good sense, and cooperation and coordination as well from the accommodating character of Laos, and these harmonies are evaluated as MaWaSU's biggest driving force.

Another aspect of MaWaSU

As another initiative of this MaWaSU, we actively received interns from Japanese university students and graduate students. I welcomed participation in MaWaSU with "I do not refuse to come". I would like Japanese young people including young water employees to understand water supply correctly, to think deeply what international cooperation means, what is necessary to form human relations. I am proud that I could have made a small contribution to the future development of water people, water supply supporters, or international cooperation players.

Toward Post MaWaSU

Finally, I can say that MaWaSU's biggest achievement was that staff of WSSEs and waterworks administration understand perfectly the above thought and approaches, and started daily efforts to achieve the goal. However, officers at the national top level still have an old way of thinking that it would be good to rely on development donors. It caused that actual activities toward real decentralization have not been functioned well until the end.

To make this vicious circle into a virtuous circle, and to make MaWaSU activities a standard in Laos, I am strongly hoping JICA launch the Project Phase II. (end)

Monthly meeting that became a driving force

Closing seminar with the highest excitement

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The 4th Osaka Meeting

- *Presentation by Mr. Saiki on JICA project in Laos-*

Reported by Manabu Sugino

(Osaka Water Supply Authority)

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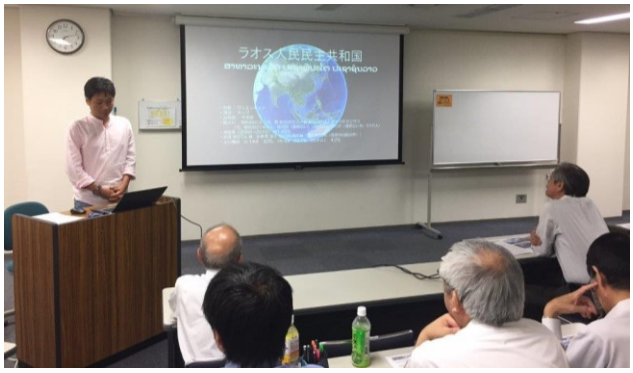
Mr. Sugino

The 4th Osaka meeting was held on the evening of September 1st. Mr. Takashi Saiki from Matsuyama Municipal Enterprise, who had been dispatched to Laos as a JICA Expert from Feb. 2016 to Aug. 2017, gave a presentation about the project. (Mr. Shimomura, who wrote the article above, was a chief advisor of the project.)

The participants were Mr. Saiki, and Mr. Miyauchi, Mr. Nagashio, Mr. Fujitani, Mr. Ozaki, Mr. Kitagawa, Ms. Trang Nguyen, Mr. Hayashi, Mr. Koseki and Sugino from the Kansai region, and Mr. Sasayama and Ms. Yamamoto from Tokyo. The total number of participants was 24 including 12 non-members.

On the opening speech, the representative, Ms. Yamamoto told that she felt the potential of international cooperation in Kansai. She introduced that WaQuAC-NET was awarded 19th Japan Water Prize this July.

After the meeting, friendship party was held. Almost all participants joined the party.



Presentation by Mr. Saiki

Summary

Mr. Saiki came back to Japan just 1 week ago. He joined this Osaka meeting although he was busy in getting back to work for Matsuyama City.

When he joined Osaka meeting 2 years ago, he deeply wanted to be involved in international cooperation again, and had a chance to become a JICA Expert soon. At first, he considered resigning to join the JICA project, since he was a first JICA Expert in his organization. However, Matsuyama Municipal Enterprise dispatched him to Laos as an official staff because his boss considered "it's a big waste to lose such a valuable talent." (See Newsletter Vol.28)

1. Feature of Laos

・Population growth is about 1.5%.

・Approximately 70% of land is plateau or mountains.

・Average age of population is in their 20's~30's.

2. Capacity Development Project for Improvement of Management Ability of Water Supply Authorities.

・5-year project, Aug. 2012~Aug.2017.

・18 Water Supply State Enterprises (WSSEs) are targeted.

・The purpose was to improve management ability of WSSEs based on mid -to-long term vision.

・He worked in the 4th~5th year of this project, and the target was 3 pilot WSSEs.

・He regularly visited these 3 WSSEs in one month, and conducted OJT with short-term experts.

・Many Japanese water utilities had cooperative relation with the project.

3. Activities

(1) Promotion of Data management improvement plan

There was a manual for data management. He built a plan, and promoted concrete activities to improve the data which had not existed for some reasons, or which could not be improved through daily tasks.

(2) Analysis for facility maintenance and management

The issues were recognized by the counterparts through each case study. The counterparts came to be able to explain the issues by classifying them as follows.

STEP 1 Management issues
STEP 2 Facility/business issues
STEP 3 Visualized/quantitative issues
STEP 4 Information issues

(3) Support for planning and implementation of business plan

・He concreted the contents from overall plans to such plans as long-term plan, mid-term plan and budget/financial plan.
・He tried to achieve overall plans by conducting detailed plans surely.
・The staff also built and implemented their own monthly plan.

(4) Business monitoring

・He established the monitoring method using 23 Performance Indicators (PI).
・ PI results had two meanings, one was recognizing present condition , and the other was monitoring the condition.
・Qualitative analysis was also used for business evaluation.
・ Yearly evaluation: Storing information and evaluation should be conducted continuously, and the other PIs are also required.

(5) Cooperation with many Japanese water utilities

・ Japanese water utilities had cooperative relation with the project by many schemes such as JICA Experts, grass-roots activity and JWWA's senior experts.
・ He worked with many experts, and he developed not only his specialty but also his personality.

Comment

We recognized that Mr. Saiki had had sincere enthusiasm for international cooperation since he was dispatched to Cambodia as a Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteer in 2004. And he talked about how to realize his passion for international cooperation vividly. Mr. Saiki expressed 18 months experience in Laos as "enjoyable, hard and fulfilling."

The Osaka meeting, though once a year, is meaningful to share and enhance our motivation for international cooperation. Especially this time, the participants might have been inspired by Mr. Saiki's earnestness.

At the party after the meeting, I was impressed to hear some participants saying, "I also want to be dispatched." (end)

Friendship party

WaQuAC-NET won The 19th Japan Water Award!!

On March 8, 2017, WaQuAC-NET Office received a phone which was called from the secretariat of Japan Water Award Committee for informing that WaQuAC-Net won the 19th Japan Water Award (Minister of Health, Labor and Welfare Prize). On the following day, WaQuAC-NET General Meeting was held and the big news was informed to the members participated. And also, the news was sent to all members by e-mail. Then, we had a lot of happy e-mails from members and friends. They were pleasured and felt proud.

On July 11th, 2017, the commendation ceremony was held with attendance of Highness Prince of Akishino and princess of Akishino at National Museum of Emerging Science and Innovation in Bay Area, Tokyo. Participants from WaQuAC-NET were Mr. Sasaki, Mr. Ono and Yamamoto. Since its start in 2008, our continuous activities of WaQuAC-NET for expanding safe water to developing countries in Asia cooperated by members and other many friends were highly regarded. We would like to mention our appreciation to Japan Water Award Committee, members and friends. After now, we would like to continue working towards the steady efforts with feeling encouragement of the award.

(By Yamamoto, WaQuAC-NET Office)

Attending the Ceremony

Yoshinobu Ono

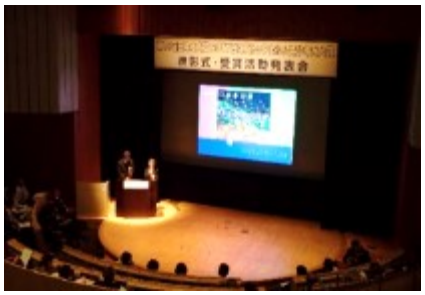
Congratulations!! WaQuAC-NET gets the Japan Water Award, the Prieze of Minister of Health, Labour and Welfare, in 2017. This prize is given to the groups contributing to becoming sound aquatic environment.

WaQuAC-NET enables us to exchange information, discuss problems and learn practical techniques and new knowledge through the internet. This network helps us improve the member's abilities about supplying safe water to the people in their countries.

I attended the awards ceremony. This ceremony was held solemnly with the members of imperial family. Each prize winner made presentation. They were informative for me because each activity was characteristic in the field rerated water (for example education, disaster prevention, watershed management and so on.).

I believe our activity can spread water safety throughout Asian countries. I am very happy and renew my will to support this activity continuously as much as possible. (end)

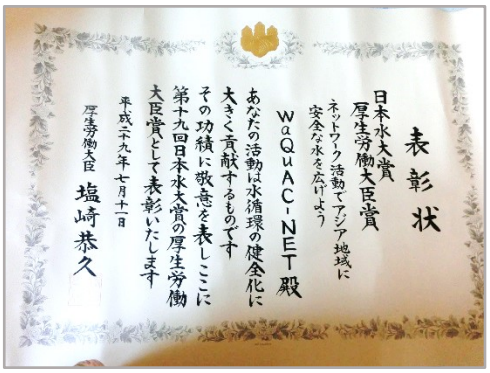
Prize-giving



Presentation on activities

Commemorative photo

(from left) Ono, Sasaki, Yamamoto



What's Japan Water Award?

An award given to individuals, NGOs / NPOs, schools, companies, local governments and etc. who are engaged in activities that contribute to the soundness of the water circulation system and improvement of safety against water disaster prevention, with the whole globe in view of the 21st century. It is hosted by Japan Water Award Committee and Ministry of Land, Infrastructure and Transport. It has come to the 19th times award since its start in 1999. Japan Water Award consists of 1) Grand Prize, 2) Minister of Land, Infrastructure and Transport Prize, 3) Minister of Environment Prize, 4) Minister of Health, Labor and Welfare Prize, 5) Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries Prize, 6) Minister of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology Prize, 7) Minister of Economy, Trade and Industry Prize, 8) Citizen Activities Prize, 9) International Contribution Prize, 10) Future Development Prize, and so forth. From the 4th year, Japan Stockholm Youth Water Prize, which would be selected as the Japanese representative in the "Stockholm Youth Water Award" was established additionally.

Report: participation in 4th Asian Executive Forum

Mina Yariuchi (WaQuAC-NET Office)

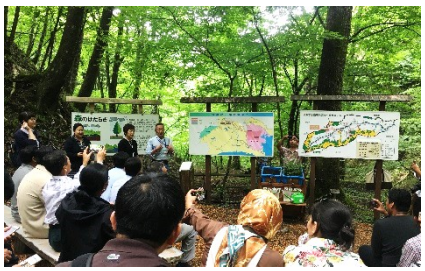
The 4th Executive Forum for Enhancing Sustainability of Urban Water Service in the Asian Region was held in Yokohama on August 1-4, 2017, jointly organized by JICA and Yokohama City. Executives from water supply utilities and administration were invited totally 32 from 13 Asian countries (Bangladesh, Cambodia, India, Indonesia, Laos, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand, East Timor, and Vietnam) and about 280 people (announced by organizers) including ones from Japanese water supply sector participated.

Based on the goal of "Achieve universal and equitable access to safe and affordable drinking water for all by 2030" as stated in the Sustainable Development Goals, the theme was set as "Take action toward the next step – universal and equitable access, finance, and governance"".

After the keynote speeches, Session 1 "Universal and equitable access to safely managed water", Session 2 "Finance", and Session 3 " Proactive improvement of enabling

Discussion (courtesy of JICA)

Group discussion (courtesy of JICA)



Site visit to water source forest

environment (Governance)" were followed. In each session, participants were divided into 3 groups, and discussions on concrete issues and efforts were deepened. After that, the outcomes of the discussion were reported back from each group. Overall summary was compiled after three sessions lasting three days, the contents of which were adopted by participants as "2017 Yokohama Forum Statement".

On the last day, participants made site observation of the water source forest of Doshi Village in Yamanashi Prefecture, which is water source of Yokohama Waterworks Bureau. Detail explanation was made about the mechanism and conservation of the water source forest, and participants were made a lot of questions excitingly.

◎ Impressions of participation

I also participated in the previous (3rd) forum, but this time, I feel the significance of continuation of the forum. The stimulus and learning at the past forums have started being put into practice, the past discussion was referred in many cases. Many participants continuously joined from past forums, and I felt that facilitators and presenters seemed to have come up with key people who are going to prosper in the future water supply sector in Asian. Also, through participating repeatedly, attendees from Asia and Japan increased their visibility to each other, not only promoted the exchange of opinions during the program, but also communicated actively during breaks. In summary, the interactive and content-intensive program could successfully make the participants feel so strong stimulus that "participants would take action for the next step" after returning home. (end)

Communication with participants during break (second from right is Yariuchi)

Participated in the Forum

Yukiko Ohno

The Forum gave me the opportunity to know about struggles, challenges and hopes of Asian water utilities. Although I studied sanitary engineering in university, I have little experience to work in Japan and Asian context.

The most impressive discussion that I audited was the one concerning "water distribution for the poor". I once worked for an NGO in Uganda as a JICA volunteer. Their objective was to improve livelihood of slum dwellers by constructing facilities such as public water taps and public toilet. Majority of fund came from international NGOs and CSR of major company, so those activities were considered to be charity rather than public works. On the other hand in the discussion, there were the mind of users should pay for what they used otherwise they just consume without considering the amount they use and the subsidized area call for poorer people in the end. Both opinions were reasonable but they seemed to be no optimized answer for that kind of issue considering the standard for being poor is deferent depending on the country and area.

In Uganda, most people thought NGO, not Water Utilities should do something for the poor, but the Utilities from Asia seemed to be more involved to the issue. The latter attitude was more favorable to me.

At the reception held at first night, I could meet with my schoolmate for the first time since our graduation, so the forum was fruitful not only as professional, but also as personal view. (end)

Report of 7th SDDC

Hiroshi Sasayama(JWWA)

What is SDDC?

Please search "SDDC" on internet. You can find "Software Defined Data Center". It is a technology on cloud computing. Of course, SDDC of WaQuAC-NET is quite different from that. Unfortunately, SDDC of WaQuAC-NET is not popular yet to be found on internet.

SDDC is a special activity of WaQuAC-NET to exchange information with foreign members. SDDC is a meeting with drinking at a small, dark, dirty and cheap restaurant. The first SDDC was held at Shinjuku, one of famous downtown in Tokyo. There was an alley with a lot of SDDC restaurants. We invited Mr. Ek Sonn Chan, the Director General of Phnom Penh Water Supply Authority at that time, to a restaurant there. He loved such a place very much. Then we decided to continue SDDC with expecting any foreign WaQuAC members love it. Now it is not easy to find a real SDDC restaurant and we choose a small and cheap one but not dark nor dirty.

SDDC at Yokohama

This time, we invited 6 Cambodian participants of "4th Executive Forum for Enhancing Sustainability of Urban Water Service in Asia Region" in Yokohama. We enjoyed talking, drinking and drinking together. Even a member who visited Japan for the first time could join us completely just after drinking some glasses of beer. Not only beer but also Japanese Sake (rice wine) and Shochu (spirits). All of us were in a happy mood as you can see in the picture.

Finally, Cambodian friends gave us a souvenir, Cambodian pepper. Cambodian pepper was called as No.1 in the world before. But trees and farming skills were lost during the civil war and the following Pol Pot era. Recently excellent peppers have been restored by a Japanese, Mr. Kurata and begun spreading to Europe and other countries again. (end)

[back row from left] Sasaki, Sok Hen (PPWSA), Yariuchi, Ek Sonn Chan, Pok Chan (MIH), Chan Sen Hieng (MIH),
[middle row from left] Inoue, Yamamoto, Tomioka, Kamegai, Sim Sitha (PPWSA), Kuth Vuthiarith (SRWSA),
[front from left] Sasayama, Nakanosono (titles omitted)

Mr. Varich arrived at Narita

August 23, 2017, Mr. Varich Boonprasert who is scientist of MWA (Metropolitan Waterworks Authority), Thailand arrived at Narita International Airport in order to take Kanagawa Prefecture Overseas Technical Training. He is going to take 2 months Japanese language training and 5 months technical training by March of next year in Japan. The contents of the training would be water quality analysis, operation of water treatment plant, advanced water treatment technology, WSP (Water safety plan), risk management.

In this Training course, Ms. Oil from Thailand participated in 2014-2015 and Ms. Zainab from Indonesia in 2015-2016. They got OJT at Water Quality Center of Kanagawa Prefecture Government. This year, Mr. Varich will take the training at Dr. Kamata Lab in Kanto-Gakuin University. WaQuAC-NET will support him for making his Japan life smoothly and usefully.

（By Yamamoto, WaQuAC-NET Office）

[from left] Mr. Sasaki, Mr. Zhang Lei Mr. Varich, Ms. Yamamoto

Introduction of new members

○ Mr. Kan Shichijo (Japan)

We welcome new members anytime Please contact us

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URL: http://www.waquac.net

Next Activity

October 23 – 30	Receiving MWA members (for presentation in JWWA conference)
December 10	Newsletter 35 in Japanese
January 10	Newsletter 35 in English