



## Special Interview: H. E. Ek Sonn Chan, Cambodia

*H.E. Ek Sonn Chan is one of the most renowned water leaders, successfully realized a safe water supply in 10 years as Director General of Phnom Penh Water Supply Authority after the civil war, and led the development of Cambodian water supply. I heard he was retired in last January, so asked for an interview. On July 24, he drove to the hotel where I stayed in Phnom Penh, picked me up, and treated lunch. We talked about his previous and future missions over lunch. (Interviewed by Mina Yariuchi, WaQuAC-NET Office)*

### Achievements and remains during 6 years in MIH (Ministry of Industry and Handicraft)?

There are four things that I have achieved. 1) Establish frameworks for water supply. The procedures and systems were elaborated, especially, the procedure to issue license for private water operators is transparent and accountable to every parties. In Cambodia, there are quite a number of private local water operators. I think it is a great achievement to have a framework for managing and regulating these entities to guaranty the fairness to all. 2) Improve profitability of provincial public waterworks. Finally, 8 provincial waterworks turned their financial situation from deficit to surplus without raising water tariff. 3) Strengthen relationship and cooperation with development partners such as ADB, World Bank, JICA, AfD, etc., and 4) Strengthen administrative institution.

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### Donation from MWA (Thailand) !

WaQuAC-NET signed MOU with MWA for mutual cooperation in August 2012

([Newsletter Vol. 15](#)). In this Sep. we received the contribution of THB 300,000 (about USD 10,000) from MWA! We really appreciate it and was encouraged

for further activities. Wait for the details in the next newsletter.!



I worked to get the approval from our government to upgrade the small Department of Potable Water Supply of MIH to General Department of Potable Water Supply. Anyway, this is just the change in quantity, but the in term of quality, this new institution improves much capacity building. JICA's current capacity building is now for this mission.

There are two points that I feel I could not achieve. 1) People's behavior, working culture and attitudes were very strong and difficult to change. I always say and believe that peoples are determined by the "3H". One H is for "Head", means how is their education, their knowledge? Without the knowledge, people is just know nothing and will lead to the uncertain ways. The

second H is for "Heart", meaning how good or bad is their heart? The people with good heart is away from selfishness. One love their job, love their fellows, their family and their compatriots. To penetrate "heart" is to change the way of thinking, which is far difficult than changing technologies and ways of working. And the third H is for "Hands. The people's hands are for action. No hand means no action. Without action, the theories are just a dream. I fail to build these 3H to my team due to many reasons. No 2) Strengthening the practical capacity of General Department of Potable Water Supply staffs. I could bring up some capable officers, but as a whole, capacity building is still far away from satisfactory. For this purpose, JICA is implementing a capacity building project. The key to success would be that capable personnel should be assigned as C/P of the project.

### **Recent life?**

I resigned from the MIH position and now in a new role that seem to be a pre-retirement scheme. With this new position, while still alive, beside little office works, I have times more time for myself. Now I have more time with my family and golf, a long-time hobby. What has changed in my life after long time hard work is my attention to health. I exercised every day in the morning and evening, and my health was much better than in my working days. It is a big change that I am free from what I have to do event if I don't like, now, I can focus on what I want to do. Everyone should know that health is the most valuable treasure for mankind. I know that Health is the first important factor for me to achieve my mission.

### **For improvement of rural water supply**

My goal is now on my mandate. The desire to contribute to my country's water supply remains

the same. Now, as an individual activity, I am interested in improving the water supply in remote villages. Urban waterworks are large in scale and cannot be impacted by activities at the individual level. With the experiences accumulated from my long time work in water supply sector, I can see that there are still problems in water supply of small villages in this country. The rate of access to piped water in our country is still as low as less than 30% with a big gap between rural and urban areas. This is crystal clear that there is an extremely high demand for actions to achieve Cambodia Sustainable Development Goals 6: Water & Sanitation. I have to say that there is no magic solution beside the absolute strong commitment from every stake holders to use their "3H" for a chance to achieve this goal 6.

For the above purpose, I have to use my "third H" to contribute to this objective as much as I can, within my personal capacity. I did set up a NGO "Water for all" with some of my friends and we are preparing few projects to supply clean water and proper sanitation in remote villages of Cambodia. We are under a process to implement a project at a village of about 500 households located near Thai's border, where residents are using water from polluted ponds and contaminated wells. If we could have only USD 200,000 dollars, we could liberate those villagers from consuming high dangerous water and provide them the 24/7 water service equally with city life, by constructing facilities from intake to treatment and distribution network. We did apply this project to Japanese Embassy to seek their financial support. At the mean time we did prepare also other two project about the same scale and apply to the Department of Water Supply of France. The way of work of our NGO is different from the others. We seek financial support from donors for purely the cost of the

facilities only, while we are voluntary work for free, and we will pay by our own money for others expenses like study cost, travel cost, subsidy on house connection cost, training of local operators and follow up cost to secure the sustainability of the operation etc.... Such costs for technical training and household connections will not be covered by aid funds, so we will pay for it. The key of this kind of project is how to ensure sustainability. It is not easy for village water supply to be sustained, such as obtaining spare parts and responding to technical problems. Our NGO members are highly qualified in water supply technology and management. We are water operator manager, water consultants, water engineers, finance and accounting, and are considering sustainability from various viewpoints. For some projects, we consider improving not only water supply but also hygiene.

I have a human network that I have accumulated so far, and I hope to be able to work with them through mutual support. "The Dream Will Come True For Peoples With 3H".



*He took me to the airport for see off.*

## Member interview

Ms. Khaing Khaing Soe, Myanmar



Since September 2018, four women have attended a master course in University of Tokyo (UT). One of them, Ms. Khaing Khaing Soe, from Yangon City Development Committee (YCDC), Myanmar, was interviewed on 21 August in YCDC Office, while she stays in Yangon for data collection of her research during summer holiday of UT. Ms. Khaing is one of JICA Project counterparts, to which I have been dispatched. (Interviewed by Mina Yariuchi, WaQuAC-NET Office)

### **[Carrier till now]**

**Q: You had your hair cut short, unusual for unmarried Myanmar woman.**

I have just done because I want to concentrate on my data collection survey. Professor told us the next semester will be busier. I am ready for it. Sometimes I miss my lunch while concentrating on my study, then I lost 2 kg recently.

**Q: Health is the best! Don't overdo. Have nice your native food here. But you are not from Yangon, right?**

I'm from Salin Township of Magway Region in central Myanmar. My parents and younger sister still live there. I also lived there until my university days. I came to Yangon because it was the largest city, and would have plentiful chances for good jobs.

**Q: How did you decide to be a civil engineer?**

In Myanmar, girls and their parents want them to

go to medical, educational and engineering departments because they find it easier to get a job. I also wanted to go to the Faculty of Education, but the high school graduation exam score was not enough and I decided to go to faculty of engineering. I majored in civil engineering at Technological University (Magway) and received a master's degree in experimental research on soil properties.

**Q: Why did you enter YCDC?**

With my parents' strong recommendation, I decided to become a civil servant. I am the fourth of my five brothers and sisters, but they are all public servants such as a nurse and a teacher. In my field of expertise, YCDC's Building Department can be considered as a candidate, but I chose Water and Sanitation Department because in Myanmar only civil engineers have chance to study the field of water engineering. At that time, Water and Sanitation Department was seeking many engineers, and I had a master's degree, so I think it helped me for hiring. I was promoted to a permanent staff in April 2013, that only half a year after hiring was unusual. The timing was good.

**Q: You were assigned to Sanitation Division at first?**

Yes, I was assigned to Concrete Pipe Plant, but I had the opportunity to participate in Japan training on water environment in 6 months after my promotion. It was first time for me to learn about water quality and environment as well as meeting Prof. Takizawa and Prof. Furumai of UT there. After that, there were many opportunities such as participating in lectures by an Australian institution conducted at a sewage treatment plant. After that, a JICA expert came to the water supply, and finally moved to the water supply department. But my staff accommodation was still assigned at the sewage treatment plant and

came from there today.

**[Research life at UT]**

**Q: Why to UT?**

I wanted to study abroad, so I collected information and applied for scholarships for various master courses. When I heard about the program, I wanted to go. Nobody can deny to go to the University of Tokyo scholarship program.

**Q: Almost one year past since you arrived.**

For daily life, there is no problem. I learnt Japanese at basic course first, and also attended academic English course. I can speak simple Japanese, but when I try to ask questions in simple Japanese at a convenience store, for example, they answer in fast and complicated Japanese, so I cannot catch at all. I gave up speaking Japanese in such case. However, in supermarket most items and products have their item name in simple English; that are very useful for me.

**Q: What is your relationship with other students?**

We, four women of the same program, is very close and in good relationship. Recently, I have enjoyed a lot of exchange with other international students and enjoyed my student life. Unfortunately, Japanese students don't try to interact with us too much. If we are in trouble and ask for support, they will be kind to us. But they don't dare to chat or go out. In Myanmar, when I see people with that attitude, I guess they are angry or dislike me. Finally, I have come to realize that they are just shy to talk with foreigners. Even Japanese students in UT are very good at English and research. Until I came to UT, all the Japanese people who were around me spoke actively and had exchanges, I found.

**Q: What do you deal with in your research?**

Yangon has a high NRW rate, about 60%. I would like to make a contribution by analyzing the current situation and finding directions for improvement. In particular, we focus on reducing commercial losses that can be improved in shorter term and lower cost. For connections where the meter is broken or the meter is not installed, I would like to replace and install the meter, and verify the effectiveness. According to the trial calculation, if the correct water charges can be billed with an accurate meter, the meter fee will be recovered in 1 year due to an increased revenue. I would like to proceed with this verification through research. In addition, by collecting data on the target households, we expect that the amount of unit consume volume, which was not clear until now, will be clarified and used as basic data for further plan.

There are many things that need to be improved in Yangon's water supply. I would like to obtain practical results that lead to improvements in the field through my studies and research at university.

**Q: What do you want to do after returning to YCDC?**

I would like to continue my research attitude even after taking my master's degree. The research content is directly related to the current work. I always need to think about what I can do to improve the situation. Prof. Takizawa always tells us to have a sense of responsibility to become a leader. And don't trust unverified data (laughs).

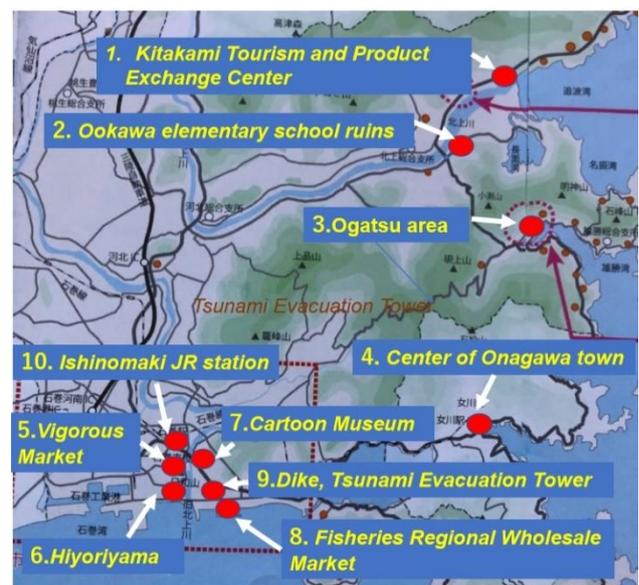
From now on, in order to improve Yangon's water supply, it is necessary to establish and operate laws and regulations firmly, and to delegate enough authority to the water utility. To realize the water utility as an independent organization, I think we should gradually become able to manage especially budget. After returning to Myanmar, I would like to be able to understand the situation, and make judgments with confidence to contribute to the improvement of water supply. To that end, I have to learn a lot continuously.

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**2019 Special Issue - 2**  
***How far the reconstructions have progressed!***

Time has already passed 8 years since the Great East Japan Earthquake occurred in 2011. I wonder how much the reconstruction has progressed. Following “the reconstruction of the water supply in Ishinomaki” that Mr. Tate wrote on [newsletter vol. 41](#), we here make a report of visiting the areas suffered in Ishinomaki City. We visited there in order to see the situation of reconstruction on June 16-17, 2019. The Guides were Mr. Watanabe from Sendai and Mr. Tate from Ishinomaki. Mr. Shimomura, Mr. Igarashi and Yamamoto joined from Tokyo. The visited

places are shown in following map.



**F-1 Visited Places** ●

\*Figures is order of visiting places

## Report from participants

### Part 1: Hope to contact with local people

**Watanabe Kazuhiko**  
**(Sendai City**  
**Waterworks Bureau)**



In the last couple of years, the occasions to guide to the affected areas have obviously decreased.

In the name of rehabilitation / reconstruction, a considerable amount of public construction investment has been invested, including embankments, ports, the relocation to the higher land, the opening of the high-standard roads. The land has been developed for residential and commercial areas, and opening a town or a relocated new station is no longer notable news. There may also be circumstances where it is not uncommon throughout Japan, such as the Kumamoto Earthquake, the heavy rain in western Japan, and Hokkaido Earthquake, which occurred afterwards, although the disaster areas are heartbreaking.

Let's see the reconstruction. Comparing among Ishinomaki City, Onagawa Town, former Kitakami Town, and former Ogatsu Town, we saw examples of success / failure, frankly speaking. Although "build back better" as a philosophy has penetrated, there are institutional barriers to making it a reality; administrative manpower, mayor's leadership, local economic power, PR strategy, negotiation with industry and academia.... Without strong driving force, unfortunately we see the situations here and there that "the breakwater construction and the land reallocation have been finally completed, but the spilled residents already have roots elsewhere and will not return to this town



*Embankment was constructed to obstruct Ogatsu Bay*

anymore".

The problems of private land ownership and vested interests in fisheries are not limited to Tohoku. Not hard to imagine that the Nankai Trough Earthquake, which is likely to occur in the near future, may repeat the same situation if reconstruction is done without enough considerations. The story has gone dark, but the wish of Tohoku is not to repeat this mistake. The towering concrete walls face to a depopulated town are nothing than unusual view. I want you to feel it, including successes and failures. I sincerely hope that many people will visit this coastal affected area and feel it.

This summer, the organization of "Densho Road 3.11" (for keeping memory) was launched. <https://www.tohokuck.jp/notice/20190801/20190801.pdf>

In addition, I would like to introduce Michinoku Shiokaze Trail (by Ministry of the Environment) <http://tohoku.env.go.jp/mct/> and Miyagi Orle (by Miyagi Prefecture) <https://www.miyagiolle.jp/>.

I would like to expect that what we can see through walking slowly, what I can feel through interaction with the local people, the accumulation of these things can be a base to shape the future.

**Part 2: Miscellaneous Thoughts on Field Survey in ISHINOMAKI**

**Mr. Shimomura Masahiro  
(FUJI TECOM Inc.)**



When the Great East Japan Earthquake occurred, I was working at the 4-story “Saitama City Waterworks Headquarters” building, which did not meet the earthquake resistance standards at that time. The building was evaluated to be going to collapse on the second floor in the seismic evaluation at that time because the 4th floor was added to the 3-story building in the later year which was more than 30 years ago. When sitting at my desk in the Public Relations and Disaster Prevention Division office which was located on that second floor, I was hit by a very big shaking I had never experienced before. I felt a lot of fear, but the building managed to endure it. We, who were in charge of disaster prevention, immediately set up a disaster response office and started to collect information through the TV etc., dealing with customer inquiries. We also began discussions on damage investigation activities and countermeasures on it according to the manual.

There were considerable damages on water supply pipe line net-work in our water supply area. So that most of the inquiries from customers for 3 days after the disaster occurred were water leakage reports. After the planned power outage by electric company started, we responded to complaints regarding muddy water and reports of temporary water shortage due to the simultaneous use of water after recovery from the power outage.

Since the discovery of radioactive contamination in raw water, the number of inquiries reached 1,100 per day.

While responding to the internal damage situation that was changed moment to moment, we also immediately worked on emergency water supply support and emergency recovery support for the disaster area. we had dispatched water supply trucks as emergency water supply support activity to some cities in the area. And also, for emergency recovery, we had dispatched vehicles, staff, etc. to Ishinomaki City. In the Ogatsu area of the city, in cooperation with Hokkaido branch of Japan Water Works Association, our support corps was in charge of water leakage investigation.

I myself had been providing logistical support for the support corps. Though, two months later after the disaster, I had been able to conduct an official visit to Ishinomaki city where has been the longest support we had done. And did a courtesy call and an activity report to Ishinomaki City. I also visited the Ogatsu area where the support activities had been carried out.

And then I got the opportunity to visit Ishinomaki City and Ogatsu area again for the first time in 8 years in May this year. At visit of eight years ago, even though two months had passed since the Great East Japan Earthquake occurred, but I have remembered the situation where the miserable nail marks of the disaster still remained, so this time I thought that I was coming to another place.

The first impression in this time was that the reconstruction was progressing steadily. And I feel their action move from the reconstruction



*Temporary houses for evacuees*



*Lunch at diner*

into the next step. While being able to prevent from being weathered huge damage of the great earthquake and tsunami, I was able to feel great impression by the fact that a new step has been taken at the grassroots level to start a new life in the place where the residents lived.

On the other hand, there are concerns that various disparities are becoming apparent. Although it was an inspection survey for only 1.5 days, even within the ultra-short time, the more I saw the current situation, the more I was concerned. We understand that civil engineering-related reconstruction and disaster prevention projects are progressing visibly, but is physical and mental care sufficient for victims and survivors? The feeling of discomfort memorized by the difference between the high degree of completion of the Onagawa-cho reconstruction and disaster prevention project and the ongoing situation in the Ogatsu and Ishinomaki areas. Considering the feelings of the victims, is the measure to separate the sea and the inland with a high seawall a thing that will remain in future generations, and is that really the correct answer?

10 years ago, I was impressed by how I changed my view of life in front of Iguazu Falls in Brazil. No matter how much wisdom you squeeze, I felt it was natural that people cannot control with power. Isn't it possible to create a city that is snuggle up to nature, not a way to suppress that nature? Although I strongly thought that it was a selfish opinion that was not a party, there was myself who could not suppress the overflowing emotions.



*Former Okawa Elementary School*

In such a thought, and while I felt it was bad thing that I was putting myself there, I put my

hands together in front of a flower table at Okawa Elementary School.

### **Part 3: What I felt in Ishinomaki**

**Mr. Igarashi Jin**  
**(Kokusai Kogyo Co.,Ltd)**



I heard that Ms. Yamamoto will visit to see what is being happened at Tohoku region after 8 years since 3.11 earthquake of 2011. Then, I joined her team to visit Ishinomaki City in June 2019. When I was JICA volunteer trainee in Nihonmatsu Training Centre, Fukuoka Pref. in February 2014, I had visited Minamisouma City. That was the first time I saw what happened in Tohoku. At that time, I thought about the towns where no one lived because of the damage caused by the tsunami and the nuclear power plant. Although the place was different, **I wondered how had been in 5 years in Ishinomaki.**

On the morning of June 16, Mr. Tate guided us to see Kitagami, Ogatsu and Onagawa by a car of Mr. Watanabe. What I thought in this time was that the recovery from disaster is not still over yet. There are many construction sites in every town, especially in Ogatsu, there is the wall with a height of nearly 10 meters being built along coastline. It looks like castle wall! I was shocked to see it. I can imagine the wall is able to make the residents feel secure, but wonder that it is really necessary to have such facilities or not. I have seen countermeasure for hardware facilities almost completed there, for example, construction of evacuation tower from Tsunami. But I really hope there will be no disaster again to use such countermeasures facilities.

On the other hand, I was able to see efforts to keep 3.11 in mind, such as the site of the Ohkawa Elementary School and the exhibition of earthquake pictures at Onagawa Station. Immediately after our visit to Ishinomaki, there was very big earthquake in Yamagata. I watched the news from television that people immediately escaped to upper hill side because someone still remembered there was very serious Tsunami damages several decades ago. I felt one again that it is very important for us not to forget always there was Tsunami damages here.



During this **observation tour**, I had the opportunities to listen about Japan's waterworks from Mr. Shimomura, Mr. Watanabe, Mr. Tate and Ms. Yamamoto. It was

really learning trip for me.

In the last, I would like to thank Mr. Tate and Mr. Watanabe to guide us this time.



「石巻元気いちば」で休憩の予定が懇親会に

#### Part 4:ISHINOMAKI again since 2013

Yamamoto Keiko  
(WaQuAC-Net Office)

On June 16, at first, we visited Kitakami Tourist and Product Exchange Center, which is one of the reconstruction projects opened in 2018.



They sell special local products in order to bring up local industry. Next



Visitor Center in Ishinomaki

to it, there is the River Visitor Center. It is a project of the Ministry of the Environment, where people can share the information of the National Park nearby and experience the relationship among forest, village and river for protect local nature. I think the reconstruction policy of the Center would be to learn the importance of living with nature.

At that moment, unexpectedly a staff asked me, "Do you think the teachers at Okawa Elementary School did not lead pupils well?" **As is well-known**, in this elementary school, 74 out of 108 pupils and 10 out of 11 teachers died by Tsunami. It was so tragic event. And later, some parents who lost children filed trials against teacher's "wrong decisions". I couldn't answer her. But she seemed to want to defend the teachers by some reasons. The Okawa Elementary School Buildings destroyed will be remained as "an earthquake disaster remains structure" in order to keep the fear of the tsunami in memory and not to repeat the tragedy.

Next point is Ogatsu Area. The scenery changed from 2013. Ogatsu bay was obstructed by high and long dike. It was very difficult to see the sea from town side. I felt incongruous.

Near the dike, we had delicious seafood lunch and forwarded to Onagawa Town. This town was also destroyed completely by Tsunami. When visiting here in 2013, I went to the hill where many people took refuge from Tsunami. There, I looked down the center of town destroyed and saw a three-story building which lying down sideways.

But now, I couldn't know where was the place I visited, because here is reconstructed into beautiful town. In front of the rail station, there are many small fashionable goods shops and cafes on the both sides of the road leading to the sea and many tourists come. People said here is success case of reconstruction. Onagawa Town was helped by Japan Urban Renaissance Agency and the policy of reconstruction was not depend on the embankment but strengthen the software. The slogan is "run away quickly, when an earthquake occurs". So, Town strengthened the information system and constructs road, places and so on for evacuation. We returned to the center of Ishinomaki. We had a rest with sushi, seafood and beer at GENKI (Vigorous) Market. We enjoyed talking. On June 17, we visited Ishinomaki Fishing Port and Fisheries Regional Wholesale Market reconstructed in 2015. Ishinomaki fishery industry seemed to be reviving as Japan's one of large landing port. After that, we went to the Tsunami Evacuation Tower near the market. It was 14.6m high. There are 110m<sup>2</sup> spaces, solar panel with battery and 2 toilets in the top for evacuated people. On the way to JR station, we looked the reconstructed public housing and reached to the station of final goal. If I have another chance again to come here, I want to listen and talk more to people living here.



*3 stories building remained overturned in 2013*



*Redeveloped Onagawa Station and surrounding area*

## Visiting Bangkhen WTP, MWA Igarashi Jin

As introduced by Ms. Yamamoto to Ms. Sivilai of MWA (Metropolitan Water Authority, Thailand), we visited Bangkhen WTP, the Southeast Asia's largest one, in July. I went there together with Mr. Umeyama, who is stationed in Bangkok, four Thai staff at his company, 6 in total.

Before visiting the site, we were briefed that the production volume was 3.6 million m<sup>3</sup>/day. Since I had ever seen only small WTPs in Kenya and Rwanda so far, I felt it was tremendously huge and unimaginable. Actually, it produces now 4.2 million m<sup>3</sup>/day, and the first impression was overwhelming ...

Bangkhen WTP covers about 70% of Bangkok and its vicinity and takes water from the Chao Phraya River. The average turbidity of raw water is 30 NTU, which varies 100 to 300 NTU in the rainy season. Turbidity is measured twice a day. There are 22 sedimentation basins of 200,000 m<sup>3</sup>/day, which reduces NTU to 2-4, and after filtration is 0.5-0.8 NTU. There are 50 filtration basins of 75,000 to 100,000 m<sup>3</sup>/day, and backwashing is performed every 48 hours. Fortunately, I was able to see the backwash in a timely manner. The concentration of free residual chlorine at WTP is 0.8-1.8ppm, and is controlled to be 0.2ppm or more at the end of the distribution pipe. There are 150 staff members in the entire Bangkhen WTP, and they operate 24 hours a day in a 4-group system.

Water quality inspections are conducted in a WTP laboratory, and carried out every 4 hours by a rotation of 2 people x 4 groups. There are always several interns who helps with the



**1 hour for briefing about WTP**



**Backwashing**



**Water quality analysis seems to be hard work because there are many samples to inspect here from all treated water.**

examination. In addition, about 50 sampling points are set up in Bangkok city. The water quality is constantly monitored online, and the results are published on the following website. Furthermore, various measures have been taken to deliver safe and secure water to the citizens, such as a 24-hour call center to prepare for customer service.

<http://twqonline.mwa.co.th>

This time, visiting the Bangkhen WTP, I am so impressed that all the staff work lively to support the daily lives of the people in Bangkok, and they are very proud and responsible for the work of delivering their water. I felt that it is a key to deliver safe water that each person did their duties firmly, monitor water everyday with proud and rewardings for their job. In many water utilities in Kenya and Rwanda, unfortunately, I did not feel staff seems to work with responsibly. Now I feel I have to consider how we can support

Africans to have the proud of their job as staff in Bangkhen WTP does.

Finally, I would like to thank Ms. Sivilai and colleagues who were willing to accept our visit and for their thorough preparation and careful explanation. Thank you very much.



**After visit (from left; Ms. Sivilai, Mr. Umeyama, Mr. Igarashi, Mr.Somboon, Mr. Somsak)**

**Return to the place of the JICA project in the Central Vietnam, Sasayama Hiroshi**

In June 2019, I visited former counterparts of the Project on Capacity Development for Urban Water Supply Utilities in the Central Region which was finished in 2013.



*The main gate of MOC with Ms. Thao Huong*

I visited the Ministry of Construction (MOC) in Hanoi first to see Ms. Tran Thi Thao Huong. The trip is also for celebrating her retirement in July. Retirement age is 60 for men and 55 for women in Vietnam. This was the first visit to MOC after the project was finished 6 years ago. So I was afraid that I completely forgot the location of her room in MOC buildings. But, luckily I could find her room easily because there was the name plate on each door in the area I remembered. I met her, gave some gifts and talked about common friends. I was really surprised that she showed no change on her appearance from 6 years ago. After that she asked one of her staff member Mr. Quan to take me to anywhere I want because she would be busy for a meeting. Then I and Mr. Quan went to a restaurant well known as "Bun Cha Obama" where the former president



*at Huong Lien restaurant, Bun Cha Obama (left), Obama combo (right)*

of USA visited. I wanted to go there after I watched TV news about Mr. Obama's visiting there. After that, I tried an egg coffee preferred by Mr. Quan. It was very creamy and sweet, really sweet.

I found some changes in Hanoi, such as Uber which is very popular to Hanoi people, vending machines of drinks along streets and Starbucks near MOC!



*Vending machine at Hoan Kiem Lake (left), Starbucks near MOC (right)*

Next day, I moved to Hue where the project site was. It was the first visit to Hue since 3 years ago. The training center for water sector in the central region of Vietnam was closed recently though it was still operated 3 years ago. From the first, the location of the training center was not so easy to let participants come there from provinces of the central region. It must be well evaluated that the training center had been operated for 5 years since the project finished.



*Former training center; it is a branch of College of Urban Works Construction now*

HueWACO, Thua Thien Hue Construction and Water Supply State Owned Company Limited during the project, Thua Thien Hue Water Supply Joint Stock Company now, was the another counterpart organization of the project at Hue. Its head office was renewed and modernized, especially around the entrance. I visited Ms. Tu,

who took care of us, JICA experts since the phase I project. She took me to see Mr. Nam who was the director of HueWACO during the project. He paused an executive meeting and came to see me. He looked very busy as same as before. Then Ms. Tu took me to rooms in the head office and I could meet some old friends there.



*With Mr. Nam (left), With Ms Tu at the renewed entrance (right)*

I had the dinner with lab staff members of HueWACO who had been working with me since the project phase I. At a restaurant near the small island in Huong river, I enjoyed foods and Huda, a local beer, with friends. After dinner, we went a KaraOK as same as before and then drinking at a bar in the city. I was very happy to see many friends. Some of them had moved to other sections and some had moved to different company.



*With lab staff members of HueWACO*

Other night, I had dinner with project secretaries. And I visited Ms. Tam, a former counterpart of HueWACO who worked with me during Phase I and Phase II. She retired 2 years ago and manages her own cafe now.



*Ms. Tam (left) and her cafe (right)*

Hue city is changed for recent 3 years. There are many fashionable coffee shops and tea shops. As I heard, most of coffee shops, including Ms. Tam's cafe, are using espresso machine more than traditional metal filter which I love. The 34 stories hotel, where I stayed this time, is the highest building in Hue city now. I enjoyed nice view of the city better than before.



*View of south west of Hue city (left) and west (right) from the 21st floor of the hotel*



supported by Dutch government.

Dutch government has the diplomatic policy to contribute human security and stability of international community, and also to export Dutch water management expertise that may result long-term profit to Dutch private sector. The Ministry of Foreign affairs is responsible of analyzing target countries, developing the policy, selecting strategic partners and allocating resources. They do not have implementing agency like JICA. Instead, the government dispatch water resource experts to embassies in selected countries, and these experts are responsible of managing bilateral cooperation. In many cases, engineering consultants and research institutions form consortiums to participate a bid and the consortium, which got the highest point win the project. Even though the bidding system is similar to that of Japan, the contents of projects seems to be flexible and the consortium has more control on it in Dutch cooperation. The schemes of cooperation are grant aid, technical cooperation or policy transfer, and Dutch government finance the budget to employ Dutch experts. Dutch cooperation focuses on specific areas, as their budget is limited. Based on their expertise, strategic planning of hydraulic infrastructure together with assistance to policy making is one of the important fields. In addition, Dutch government makes coalition with multi-lateral banks such as World Bank (WB) to secure implementation of projects proposed by strategic plan. In the case of Mekong delta, WB committed 310 million USD loan to Vietnamese government.

### **(3) Japanese cooperation**

In mid 19 century, the direction of Japanese water resource management drastically shifted from agriculture centered and locally managed system to heavy industry centered and central

government controlled system to cope with industrialized powerful Western countries and avoid colonization. It is interesting to note that the Netherlands was the only Western country, which kept trade while Japan was isolated from other nation. Even after the reopening of the country in 1854, Japanese government employed Dutch hydraulic engineers to support nation building of the country. By the beginning of 20th century, Japan became one of modernized country by introducing Western technology and system, and plunged into series of wars. This resulted in invasion to Southeast Asian countries including Vietnam to secure natural resources for Japanese army. The government ended up losing the WWII in 1945, and abandoned all arms under the guidance of the allied nations headed by the U.S officer.

About a decade later, Japan joined the Colombo plan in 1954 to rejoin international community. Furthermore in 1959, the government started to sign on war reparation agreements with Asian countries, which initiated ODA. In the beginning, ODA was sole diplomatic mean for Japanese government, so the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was in charge of implementation. After reparations had been completed, main objective of ODA had shifted to economic development that facilitate trade among Asian countries; therefore the Ministry of Industry and the Ministry of Finance became more influential in decision making process. Further, more actors including other ministries, consulting and construction companies came to participate ODA activities.

Nippon Koei, the consulting firm, which played a key role in early phase of Japanese ODA, was founded just after the end of WWII by gathering engineers and elites who played significant roles in expanding Japanese military occupation in Asia. These consultants worked for Dam

construction in South Vietnam under increasing tension between North and South, and contributed Japanese cooperation. They continued working even under the fire of Vietnamese war to complete the dam project. Reunified Vietnam had been isolated from international community until late 1980's, and then it opened diplomatic relations with western nations. Japanese government resumed ODA activities in 1993 with infrastructure development for agriculture. In 2000's, Vietnamese economy has stabilized and it became very important partner for Japan as Japanese industry needed to shift their factories from China to Vietnam and Thailand because of increasing cost and anti-Japanese movements in China. Japanese government used ODA as inducer of direct investment from Japanese industry in Vietnam, which also fit Vietnamese policy to make country economically strong. In Mekong delta, Japanese ODA is used to build bridge, irrigation infrastructures and improvement of research institution in the region. In this way, motivation of Japanese ODA to Vietnam has shifted from war reparation to "Aid for trade", and the majority of project is in form of hard infrastructure rather than soft cooperation.

#### **(4) Comparison between Dutch and Japanese cooperation**

Both governments aim at achieving sustainable economic development and climate change resilient in Mekong Delta; however, their approaches are different in several aspects. Dutch government provides conceptual goals and institutional arrangement to achieve the goal with long-term (50-100 years) roadmaps. On the other hands, Japanese government provides concrete solutions such as sluice gate construction through technical and financial assistance that may show the results in 5-10 years' relatively short-term future. Experts from

both sides are confident with their own approach and tend to criticize others.

At the same time, officers and researchers in the Mekong Delta, who are counterparts of both governments, are positive about the situation. They find combination of both may be useful for Vietnamese to achieve overall goal. The central government makes decision to arrange budget allocation and tries to make the country attractive destination for foreign investors and ODA. However, this central policy increased the foreign debt to excess 60% of GDP. Also, there are some gaps between central and local governments that limit the effect of development projects.

#### **(5) Conclusion**

In development cooperation, the successful experiences of donors are often applied to recipients without carefully defining how those cases can contribute the benefit of recipient, and sometimes donors profit more than recipients by reproducing their successful stories elsewhere. Through this research, I reacknowledged that success to someone may not be the same to others. For example, the policy to intensify agricultural production may benefit the government and large-scale farmers, but it may accelerate exploitative environment to small-scale farmers. In addition, Japanese cooperation tends to be technical transfer or infrastructure construction without appropriate institutional arrangement to maintain the facility or technology to be used in the context of recipient country. On the contrary, Dutch cooperation is centered by political interventions to different levels without funding necessary facilities. As Vietnamese officers mentioned, both assistance are necessary for recipient and how to combine them is challenge. Considering the multifaceted nature of development cooperation, I realized it

is important to find the way to contribute development cooperation in my future career.

It was really hard to summarize my research to fit newsletter, so if you are interested in original thesis, it is available by the link below. The original has more than 70 pages, detailed reference, analysis of Vietnamese situation and much more.

Link to the original thesis>>

<https://bit.ly/2WTbcRf>



*Thesis defense*



*Can Tho bridge (funded by Japanese gov.) over Mekong River*



*Family picture with classmates on the canal, frozen because of unusual weather*

### Introduction of new members

1. Ms. Akiko Kuniyasu (Japan)

*We welcome new members anytime  
Please contact us*

### **WaQuAC-NET Newsletter Vol.40**

Issued on October 15, 2019

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### Next Activity

Dec 10-15 Study Tour to Myanmar!

Dec 15 Newsletter vol.43 in Japanese

Jan 15 Newsletter vol.43 in English