

The Role of the Community for the Ageing Society

Experiences in Japan and Zambia

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Japan has achieved the highest longevity and lowest infant mortality in 1977 and enjoyed the healthy society. This improvement has been done mainly after the 2nd world war. For instance, the infant mortality of Japan in 1947 was 78/1,000 live birth and reduced 10/1,000 in 1975. Although the economic development and introduction of health system such as health insurance have done great contribution to those improvements, the role of the community to improve the sanitation to protect from the infectious diseases and to promote the good health should be emphasized.

When Japan hosted the 5th Tokyo International Conference for African Development (TICAD5) in June 2013, presidents or prime ministers from 47/54 African countries participated. Post MDG after 2015 is the agenda of the conference. Universal Health Coverage (UHC) and Non-Communicable Diseases (NCD) are the important agenda since the epidemiological and demographic transition affects the whole society after African countries improve the health status after the achievements of the MDGs.

On the meanwhile, the low fertility rate caused the rapid increase of the proportion of the elderly peoples. Japan is a leading country for Ageing. The proportion of the 65years or older exceeded 23.0% in 2010 and exceed 25% in 2013. Japan introduced the Long-Term Care (LTC) insurance system introduced in 2000 to support the elderly people in the society, and the role of the mutual support in the community is also needed.

“Kominkan” (public-private-halls) is developed in Japan and legalized in 1947 as the social education act and institutionalized as Japanese system in the community for the platform of the Community Based Organization to promote the community participation. Out of 47 Japanese prefectures, the longevity of Nagano is highest and healthy. One of the factors is the active social participation in the community at Kominkans.

This Kominkan system has been modified and introduced as Community Learning Centers (CLC) in Asian countries by UNESCO. Currently, Kominkan model was expanded to African countries in Lusaka, Zambia to promote the Education for Sustainable Development (ESD). The model of Kominkan/CLC would be helpful social

resource for the coming ageing society in Africa.

References

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