

Preface

This is the proceeding of the International Workshop held by Institute of Developing Economies on 27 January 2000. The workshop, entitled "African Rural Development Reconsidered," was mainly organized by the Africa Research Team in Area Studies Department II. As shown by the number of this proceeding, it was the second international workshop organized by the researchers of the department.

The topic of rural development is simultaneously old and new. On the one hand, this has been one of the most discussed issues among scholars these last 30 years. In spite of the abundant research, the problem of rural poverty, clarified in the famous "Nairobi Speech" by the governor of the World Bank in 1973, always remains for us to tackle, especially in Africa. On the other hand, rural development with new methodology started to take place in the mid-1990s. When the structural adjustment policy had an overwhelming influence on development policies, neither international organizations such as the World Bank nor developing countries could put much emphasis on the issue of rural development. As the methodology of the structural adjustment policy has been criticized and revised, new approaches for rural development are now being broadly discussed. In this context, I thought that it would be timely to examine this topic once again on the occasion of the new millennium.

I wished, as an organizer of the international workshop, for researchers with abundant experience of fieldworks to participate in it. As the structural adjustment policy was criticized because of its uniform and standardized method of intervention, it is now necessary to address the issue of rural development on the basis of a deep understanding of rural Africa that has been clarified by fieldworkers. Fieldwork in rural Africa is not an easy task, and it is difficult to find good fieldworkers, capable of contributing to the issue of rural development. I at first planned to invite three African researchers from Ghana, Rwanda and South Africa. However, two of them could not participate in the workshop due to unforeseen incidents. I am deeply grateful to Professor Marara of National University of Rwanda who sent us his paper, although he could not come to Japan.

In addition to Dr. Kojo Sebastian Amanor of University of Ghana and researchers of the Institute of Developing Economies, many Japanese scholars

participated in the workshop. I express my warm thanks to all participants. Especially, I want to acknowledge the skillful work of the chairpersons, Takehiko Haraguchi (Niigata University of International and Information Studies) and Masao Yoshida (Chubu University), as well as valuable comments by Shiro Kodamaya (Hitotsubashi University), Jun Ikeno (Kyoto University), Gen Ueda (Tohoku University) and Chizuko Sato (Ritsumeikan University).

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