

Professor YAMAGATA Tatsufumi

Poverty Reduction in Developing Countries



“Poverty reduction” was used as a synonym of “development in socio-economic standards of living and human rights” in the context of the Millennium Development Goals (2000-15) which preceded the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs: 2015-2030). My research covers “poverty reduction” in the above sense.

Employment by Export-Oriented Manufacturing Industries

Many East Asian countries/economies such as Japan, Hong Kong, Taiwan, South Korea, Thailand, and the Philippines initiated industrialization by employing under-educated people in labor-intensive industries in the 20th century. (The textile industry is a typical labor-intensive industry.) Then, industrialization extended gradually to machinery assembling and more high-tech/capital-intensive industries from the labor-intensive manufacturing. Thus, the textile industry was an entry point of industrialization in many countries. Its wage rate, which was low in the beginning, has gradually risen as the economy develops.

I wonder if this strategy of industrialization and poverty reduction works in current low-income countries. In fact, according to the results of some of my studies, Bangladesh and Cambodia succeeded in both industrialization and poverty reduction, which are led by the apparel industry. The apparel industry employs undereducated local workers (mainly female) with a wage rate which is moderately high for poverty reduction, but sufficiently low to maintain competitiveness within the industry. I am currently exploring the following questions: (1) whether Bangladesh and Cambodia can deepen industrialization to become a middle-income country, and (2) whether the same strategy works in some African countries such as Madagascar, Ethiopia and Kenya, which have certain solid bases of export-oriented apparel production.



Other Issues on Poverty Reduction: Disability, Health and International Cooperation

My topics of research cover the following areas as well:

- (1) How can persons with disabilities in developing countries earn money for life?
- (2) Who innovates and distributes medicines and vaccines of infectious diseases such as HIV/AIDS and COVID-19?
- (3) How can developed countries and the international community assist developing countries?



College of Affiliation

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Research Field

Development Economics, International Cooperation, Bangladesh Economy, Textile and Apparel Industry, Disability and Development, Health and Infectious Diseases, Applied Economics, Area Studies

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