

“Educational Cooperation between Africa and Asia – the South-South Cooperation and roles of Japan -”

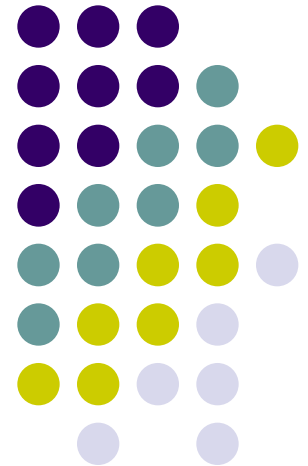
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MITA Conference Hall, Tokyo, Japan

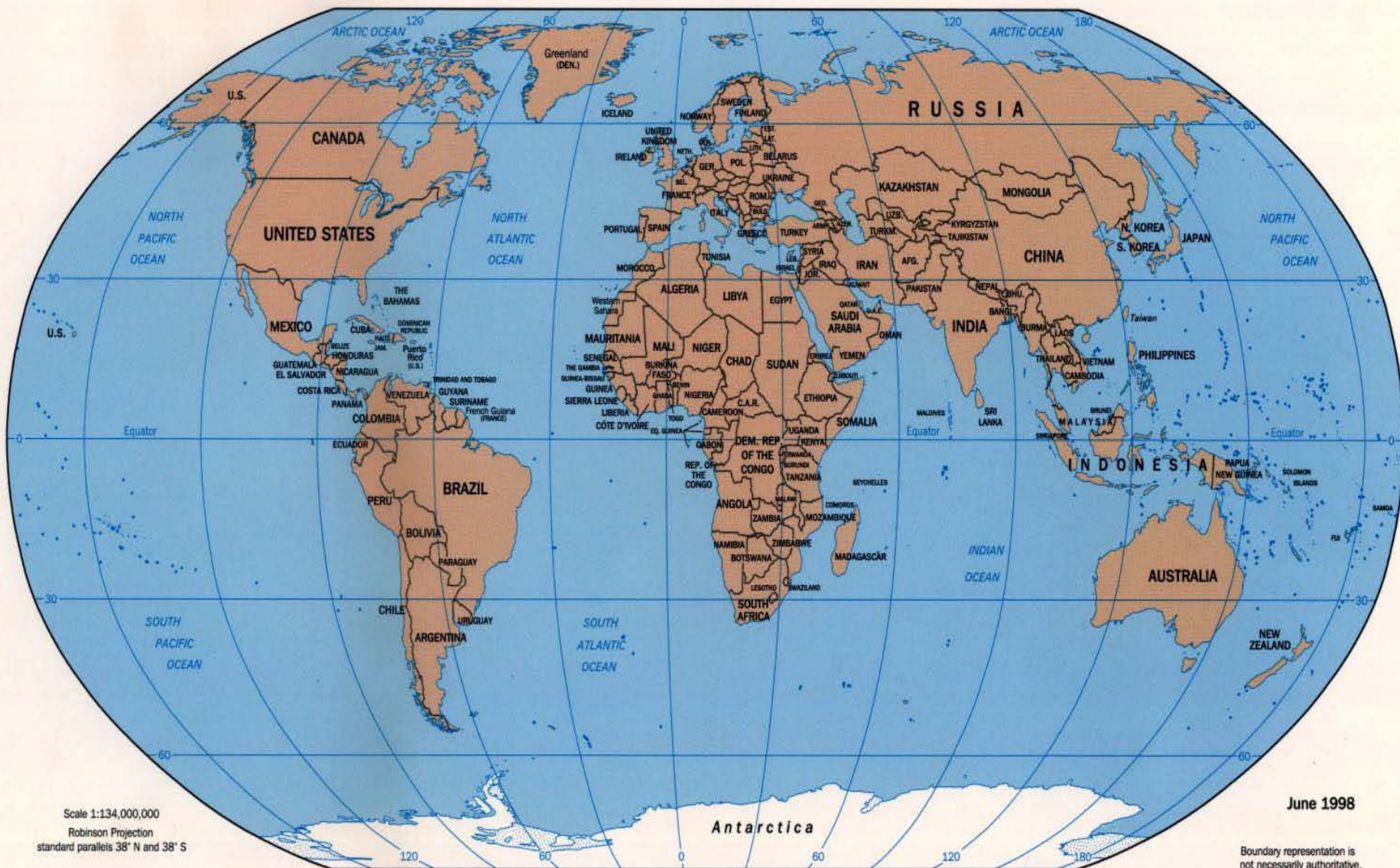
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Introduction



- The development gap between the countries in the North and those in the South is an undeniable reality
- Education for all humanity is hoped to help reduce/remove the imbalance
- No wonder one of the MDGs is the achievement of Universal Primary Education by the year 2015
- But equal education does not necessarily mean equality in education (there are huge quality differences between wealthy and poor nations)



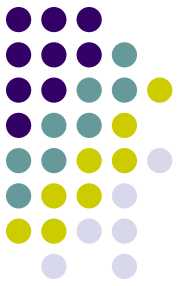
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 Robinson Projection
 standard parallels 38° N and 38° S

June 1998

Boundary representation is
 not necessarily authoritative.

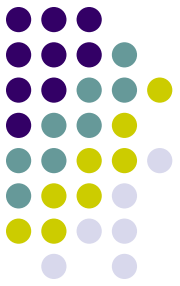
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Trends in Educational Cooperation: Closing the gap?



- **Financial aid** (for most African countries 50% of the education budget is financed by donor aid.)
- **North-South cooperation** (e.g. scholarships, technical expertise from the North...)
- Unfortunately despite the number of researchers and professionals produced by such schemes, their contribution has had a very limited impact on development
- Weakness has been in the lack of ownership, autonomy, relevance and the massive expenses involved (more than 60% retained by the North)
- **South-South Cooperation** (SSC) as a compliment

Rationale for South-South Cooperation



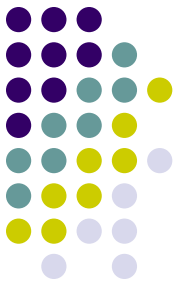
- SSC dates back to the anti-colonial movements after the 2nd World War, but has evolved to respond to contemporary social, economic, technical and political challenges facing the developing world
- Countries of the South are not homogeneous (there are those which have advanced in some areas, that other developing countries can learn from)
- But they also have some similarities (e.g. a common colonial history & challenges such as lack of democracy, population explosion, environmental degradation, HIV/AIDs, corruption...)
- Undertaken as a mutual venture, SSC has the advantage of facilitating the sharing of experience across contexts which face similar challenges, opportunities and/or constraints
- E.g. the E-9 initiative involving Bangladesh, Brazil, China, Egypt, India, Indonesia, Mexico, Nigeria and Pakistan) aimed at using EFA as a tool to curb population explosion

Examples of SSC in Education (Africa-Africa)



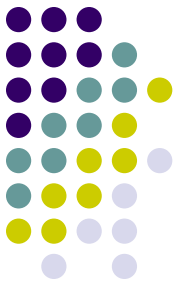
- Since 1998 the Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA) has initiated a process that engages Ministries of Education across Africa to learn from their problems and failures, successes and experiences...
- The Association of African Universities (AAU)
- The University Science, Humanities and Engineering Partnerships in Africa (USHEPiA) aims at human resource development through sustainable capacity-building in the general areas of science, engineering and the humanities

SSC in Education: Africa-Asia



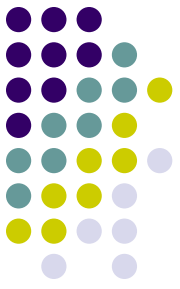
- SSC in education that is purely Africa-Asia is quite scarce
- Yet its potential cannot be overemphasised
- Most Asian countries have been successful in developing basic education of high quality, evidenced in their continued production of students who are consistently among the world's top performers in comparative studies of academic achievement
- Most African countries have expertise in dealing with controversial issues such as post-conflict education, human rights education and HIV/AIDs education, among others.
- Thus, both Africa & Asia bring on board different experiences and can learn from one another
- On a mutual level, Africa and Asia would have massive experience to share in as far as tackling common development problems such as high population growth.

SSC in Education (Africa-Asia): The Role of Japan



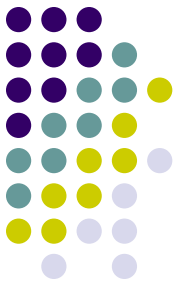
- Japan coordinates and offers financial and technical support to the following SSC involving Africa and Asia:
 - Africa-Asia University Dialogue for Basic Education Development (AA-Dialogue) – Coordinated by Hiroshima University
 - SSC network focussed on the study of University Primary Education (UPE) implementation in Sub-Saharan Africa – Coordinated by Kobe University
 - SSC network focused on quality improvement of primary and secondary education through School-based Teacher Training in Sub-Saharan African Countries – Coordinated by Naruto University of Teacher Education)

Challenges of SSC Involving Africa-Asia



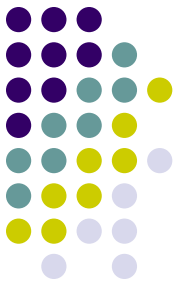
- Lack of resources (physical, human and financial)
- Effective mechanisms and institutions to coordinate and manage SSC by developing countries have not yet been sufficiently developed.
- This explains why most of the known SSCs in education involving Africa and Asia are being coordinated by Japanese institutions.

Way Forward for Africa-Asia SSC in Education: Roles of Japan



- Mobilisation of resources (financial and technical) with no strings attached.
- Developing and building coordination capacity in the South.
- Support human resource capacity building on the Asian and African continent without necessarily doing so in Japanese institutions.
- Eventually, Japan should consider taking up the idea of supporting capacity building in Africa and Asia without necessarily involving her own country's experts and institutions.

Conclusion



- We cannot afford to ignore the fact that the most productive and beneficial SSC efforts would be those initiated and coordinated by the best scientists and institutions in the South.
- Without the full engagement of the South's most outstanding institutions, and most accomplished scientists, South-South Cooperation (whether *Africa-Africa* or *Africa-Asia*) will not make a real difference.
- The A-A Dialogue project mentioned earlier is a good example towards this direction (Africans to a great extent initiate and coordinate their own research, albeit with support from Japan and other international organisations).
- Certainly Japan's support (not only financial, but also leadership and sharing of knowledge) is needed for purposes of nurturing such SSC efforts in education towards greater autonomy and self-reliance.