



# OFFICIAL DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE AND HUMAN SECURITY IN FRAGILE STATES FOCUSING ON MIGRATION FROM MYANMAR

TAKAMATSU Kana

## I. Introduction

Human security is to protect the vital core of all human lives in ways that enhance human freedoms and human fulfillment. Human security means protecting fundamental freedoms—freedoms that are the essence of life. It means protecting people from critical (severe) and pervasive (widespread) threats and situations (Commission on Human Security, 2003: 4).<sup>1</sup>

However there is a divergence of approaches, the concept of human security is highly significant in the sense that it has opened up possibilities for efforts to be made on behalf of people and domains to which scant attention has previously been paid.

The human security of citizens who live in “fragile states” is under severe threat. Fragile states refers to states which do not have the capacity or will to perform basic and indispensable functions for their populations (World Bank, 2003: 9),<sup>2</sup> and there has been a strong tendency to hold development assistance for these countries down to the lowest possible level based on a notion of “selectivity” derived from an appraisal of the good governance concerned. Nevertheless,

following 9/11, assistance to “fragile states” as hotbeds of terror has become the central paradigm of development assistance. The result has been that assistance to fragile states has taken the form of coordination of development assistance with the diplomatic and defense sectors (the whole-government approach), and has come to be discussed more actively.

However, the upsurge in the discussion of fragile state assistance does not represent disentanglement from the established framework of “selectivity.” Rather, it can be said to be a further reinforcement of “selectivity” in which the selection criteria of the country providing the assistance have been broadened to include the diplomatic and defense sectors. In other words, as ever under the strong influence of “selectivity,” this is no more than the state of the government rather than the needs of the people being considered as the central criterion. Especially for countries which hold no particular interest for the donor countries, there is no active discussion of assistance. This is in contradiction with active efforts for “human security,” which should have

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the needs of individual people as its main concern.

The purpose of this paper is to examine the problems of assistance for the achievement of human security in fragile states. We focus here especially on the issues involved in bilateral cooperation. For this purpose, the official

development assistance (ODA) policy of Japan, which upholds human security as one of its basic policies, and Myanmar, where the safety of people has been under severe threat, are taken up as case study for the examination.

## II. Japan's ODA Policy and Human Security

The ODA Charter of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan<sup>3</sup> was revised in 2003 in order to comply with the new development goals, human security being upheld as a basic policy. However the definition of human security was not mentioned, new charter indicated the perspective of “Human Security” as follow.

In order to address direct threats to individuals such as conflicts, disasters, infectious diseases, it is important not only to consider the global, regional, and national perspectives, but also to consider the perspective of human security, which focuses on individuals. Accordingly, Japan will implement ODA to strengthen the capacity of local communities through human resource development. To ensure that human dignity is maintained at all stages, from the conflict stage to the reconstruction and development stages, Japan will extend assistance for the protection and empowerment of individuals. (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2003: 2)<sup>4</sup>

In February 2005, a new ODA mid-term policy was formulated, in which concrete methods

for implementing ODA were indicated. The mid-term policy states that human security, “(...) means focusing on individual people and building societies in which everyone can live with dignity by protecting and empowering individuals and communities that are exposed to actual or potential threats.” Further, in order to reduce the vulnerabilities faced by people, communities and countries, the mid-term policy states that Japan will address the four priority issues of “poverty reduction,” “sustainable growth,” “addressing global issues” and “peace-building” bearing in mind the perspective of “human security.” (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2005: 2)<sup>5</sup>

Also, supporting self-help efforts of developing countries indicated as one of the basic policies of Japan's ODA. Japan respects the ownership by developing countries, and places priorities on their own development strategies. In carrying out this policy, Japan will give priority to assisting developing countries that make active efforts to pursue peace, democratization, and the protection of human rights, as well as structural reform in the economic and social spheres. In this sense, Japan's ODA shows certain selectivity for assistance.

### III. Myanmar as a Fragile State

Myanmar is one of the countries chosen to be on the International Development Association's (IDA) list of fragile states. Fragile states is the term used for countries facing particularly severe development challenges, such as weak institutional capacity, poor governance, political instability, and frequently on-going violence or the legacy effects of past severe conflict (IDA, 2007),<sup>6</sup> and which require assistance from the international community. Further, Myanmar is described as a least developed country (LDC) and is a country which is weak not only in economic terms but which also has healthcare, gender, educational and various other problems.

A factsheet published by the OECD examines ODA flows to fragile states, listing countries requiring monitoring and responses under four categories. Myanmar is listed as a country having a high necessity for assistance, but is also listed as a country with weak governance or low government capacity, where increased assistance (more positive aid efforts) may not be warranted, but where coherent international engagement is nevertheless required (OECD, 2007).<sup>7</sup> We can say that this viewpoint indicates that the country has a large number of development problems, but that the political background indicates that assistance should be restricted to the minimum level possible.

Looking only at 2009, the UN has been actively involved a number of times in Myanmar. In February, the Secretary-General's Special Advisor Ibrahim Gambari visited Myanmar. In May, the President of the Security Council issued a press statement expressing concern over the continuing confinement of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, at the same time stressing the importance of the release of all political prisoners. In June, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon visited Myanmar and held meetings with the military government concerning important issues such as the release of all political prisoners, including Daw Aung San Suu Kyi. In August, the High Commissioner for Human Rights, Navanethem Pillay, issued a statement expressing regret over the 18-month extension of house arrest of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, calling for her immediate and unconditional release. Thus the UN has indicated strong concern over issues in Myanmar, but the Myanmar problem mainly consists of political and human rights issues.<sup>8</sup>

The international community sees that the greatest need of the Myanmar people is democratization, but is not a development issue as serious as the priority given to political concerns? What kind of life are many people of Myanmar facing on a daily basis?

### IV. Statements from Persons Experiencing Migration from Myanmar

In April 2008, the bodies of 54 Myanmar who had suffocated in the back of a truck were discovered in Ranong Province, Thailand. The people had suffocated in the truck while trying to enter Thailand for work.<sup>9</sup> This incident was taken up by the media and attracted some degree of attention in

Thailand. Yet cases of Myanmar migrant workers being involved in incidents or accidents have occurred on several occasions.

The International Labour Organization (ILO) reports that many unskilled workers in Thailand are illegal workers from neighboring countries,

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some 80 to 90% of these being Myanmar (ILO 2005).<sup>10</sup> Since there are cases of people starting out as spontaneous economic migrants ending up as victims of human trafficking, considering the trends in population movement in the Greater Mekong Sub-region (GMS) countries, it can be estimated that the proportion of Myanmar among human trafficking victims is extremely high.

In an interview survey conducted in northern Thailand,<sup>11</sup> it was pointed out that the human trafficking issue is especially serious for ethnic minority women. As a result of the conflict between the Myanmar military and ethnic minority groups, ethnic minority peoples unable to find safe living conditions attempt to escape to Thailand, many paying bribes at the border or crossing into Thailand through the jungle. It is pointed out that since they do not have the economic means to exist in Thailand, the women are especially prone to deception by human trafficking agents. Further, along the Thai border there are numerous reports of cases of human trafficking and people being inducted into domestic and related kinds of work without pay.

During interview surveys conducted in the Bangkok area,<sup>12</sup> it was pointed out that the movement of people is occurring from all areas of Myanmar and is not limited to ethnic minority peoples. There are even cases of people traveling from Rakhine State (adjacent to Bangladesh) and Chin State (adjacent to India). It was also pointed out that the great majority of Myanmar migrants cross the border for work purposes, and even though their intention may be to engage in temporary work, this may result in long-term entry due to the practical difficulties of making a living inside Myanmar.

In an interview inside Myanmar,<sup>13</sup> it was mentioned by a local NGO in 2005 that the areas from which human trafficking was originating were moving inland from the Thai border areas

and that human trafficking within Myanmar was increasing. Further, the background to making the original decision to migrate was given as food shortages, 65%; loss of domicile, 14%; both of the previous answers, 15%; loan problems, 3%; and no response, 3%. It was also learned that nearly 60% of the decisions to migrate were made as family decisions, and nearly 40% were individual decisions, showing that the role of decision making in the family is an important factor in migrating.

### ***(1) Interviews with Myanmar Migrant Workers***

An interview survey was conducted with Myanmar migrant workers in Samut Sakhorn Province in order to consider the situation directly from the experience of the migrants.

Samut Sakhorn is a major fishing port and is an important area for the fish processing industry, which relies on cheap labor. The industry in the province formerly relied on labor from Isan (northeast Thailand), but securing the labor force has been difficult in recent years, the current situation being that the industry relies heavily on migrant workers, largely from Myanmar.

The interview survey to Myanmar migrant workers was conducted in July 2009.<sup>14</sup> It is not possible to build up a profile of the entire migrant work force from just 14 interviews. However, by focusing on the lifestyle of the migrants in the interviews, it was possible to obtain a grasp of the situation under which the migrant workers are living.

### ***(2) Profiles of the Interviewees***

Of the 14 interviewees, there were 9 women, and 5 men, 13 of whom were employed following illegal entry and one employed passport holder. The interview with the passport holder was conducted as a comparison

Table 1. Profiles of the Interviewees

case	gender	State or Division of Origin	Ethnicity	Age	Year of Entry into Thailand
A	F	Mon State	Karen	28	1995
B	F	Mon State	Burman	31	2001
C	F	Mandalay Div.	Burman	47	1997
D	M	Magwe Div.	Burman	33	1999
E	M	Mon State	Burman	37	1995
F	F	Tanintharyi Div.	Dawe	34	1995
G	F	Kayin State	Burman	40	1995
H	M	Kayin State	Karen	35	1995
I	M	Bago Div.	Burman	32	2005
J	F	Mon State	Burman	33	2005
K	M	Mon State	Burman	37	2000
L	F	Mon State	Mon	21	2005
M	F	Mon State	Pa-O	21	2005
N*	F	Chin State	Chin	55	1997

\* Passport holder

with the 13 persons who had entered the country without a passport. The profiles of the 14 interviewees are as shown in the following Table 1.

Let us look first at the 13 illegal entrants. Looking at the states or divisions of origin, many of the entrants come from states bordering Thailand, but some are also from inland areas such as Mandalay and Magwe Divisions. Looking at ethnicity, many are Burmans, and so it is apparent that various factors are at work in migration, not only the repression of ethnic groups pointed out by many researchers. Regarding age at entry into Thailand, there was a range of ages from 14 to 35, but those arriving in their teens are limited to women. This may be related to educational level.

The educational system of Myanmar is an 11-year 5-4-2 system from elementary to high school. Age of entry to school is 6 and grade

10 is completed at 16. Of the women, one had not had any school education at all (by M). The reason for failure to attend school was always given as inability to pay (7 out of 13 people), and this was clear from cases where the livelihood of the whole family became untenable due to sickness of a family member and the fact that it was especially difficult for members of female-only households to go on to higher education.

Differences in educational level were apparent among both male and female migrants. Although there was a tendency for both men and women of households with insufficient financial means to leave school early, the reason why overall the women tended to have a low level of education was that men had the choice of continuing their education by either becoming monks (by D) or soldiers (by I and K).

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### **(3) From the interview results**

Why did the migrants choose to come to Thailand in the first place? The reply to this question was the unimaginably grave poverty of the rural areas in Myanmar. The migrants had moved not only to fulfill material desires such as the purchase of land or a house, but simply in order to be able to live a daily life. The daily life environment of the interviewees was extremely harsh, consisting of those whose daily life had collapsed due to the illness of a household member (by F, G, and L), or those who had experienced the death of a family member due to inability to pay for or to find a place for treatment (by E and J).

The best-paying jobs in the local areas were heavy labor work such as on construction sites, but this work was irregular, few women were assigned to such work, and the means of securing cash income was especially difficult for women (by A, B, F, G, J, L, and M).

The problems of life in an ethnic people's village were pointed out with regards to a Karen (an ethnic people) village; not only was the daily life very poor, but the Myanmar army carried out such activities as conscripting villagers as porters and collecting money in the village (by H).

Further, as background to the decision to migrate were such things as the family's hopes, various kinds of intra-household pressure (by A, E, F, J, and M), and the reality that it was impossible to find opportunities to sustain the livelihood of the whole family in Myanmar except by migrant work (by B, C, G, H, and L). It can thus be seen that there was a high degree of coercion involved in migrating for the purposes of labor.

All except one of the 13 migrants who crossed the border by land route paid a border crossing fee to an agent. Since the fee is

actually "repaid" after obtaining employment in Thailand, the border crossing results in the burden of a debt. The agent's fee paid was in many cases 12,000 to 15,000 bahts. At the actual rate of exchange in Myanmar, this would amount to 360,000 to 450,000 kyats. According to research by Kurita et al. (2004)<sup>15</sup> since the average annual household income in rural areas was 184,000 kyats, or an annual income of 36,000 kyats per individual household member, it is clear that the agent's fee represented a large amount of money.

Regardless of the amount of money paid, there were cases of having to experience a dangerous border crossing journey, even after having paid an exorbitant agent's fee (especially by E). In addition, 2 women who were in their teens when they underwent the journey were organized into a female-only group which was first introduced to domestic work (by K and L). There is a tendency for young women to be allocated domestic work, and it is presumed that there is a tendency for young women to undergo a different border crossing method and to be introduced to different kinds of work compared to other migrants, including the way in which the group for the crossing is organized

All migrants had experienced several jobs after arriving in Thailand. Various kinds of problems can be pointed out from statements made by interviewees. Cases reported include being arrested by police inspecting the place of work and being deported back to Myanmar (by B and E), being forced to engage in dangerous work on a ship (by K), running away from domestic work due to being shouted at because of inability to understand the language (by M), and becoming unwell because of very long work hours which allowed an average of only three hours sleep per day (by L).

In order to deal with the illegal worker issue, the Thai government has introduced a registration system<sup>16</sup> and has adopted measures permitting work for a certain period of time. Both those persons currently holding work permits and those who had previously held work permits were asked how much they had paid for the registration fee. Registration fee is 3,800 bahts per person while the amount generally paid between 4,500 and 5,000 bahts.

Statements were made concerning arrest and so on due to not holding a work permit, but even the holding of a work permit does not guarantee the status of a person. As a rule, a work permit allows freedom of movement within the issuing province, but cases were also pointed out where in actuality one could be apprehended by the police for being in a different area even if still within the same province. Further, if a person holds a work permit, it is possible to claim for non-payment of wages, but in fact it proved to be impossible to request an improvement in treatment. These are some of the ways in which Myanmar workers are placed in a very unstable position.

In this way, the migrants have no option but to lead a life facing continual risk, enduring poverty inside Myanmar, lack of

safety during migration, and an unstable daily life in the country of destination. Under such circumstances, all migrant workers expressed a wish to return to Myanmar, although realistically the situation was that they had no prospects for life inside Myanmar and could therefore not return.

Concerning daily life inside Myanmar, it was characteristic that, except for a former soldier, no one voiced dissatisfaction with the current regime. It is thought that this was because there is an awareness that criticism of the regime cannot or should not be voiced, but at the same time, in the life of the rural areas, which many of the migrant workers have experienced, the reality is that before fomenting criticism of the military regime people are too busy making the maximum effort to live from day to day.

How, then, should we perceive the current situation where waves of people are flooding into neighboring countries because they are unable to make a living in their own country? When directly perceiving a situation where the safety of people is under threat, what kind of response is required of the international community?

## V. Concerning Assistance to Myanmar

Since 1971, the government of Myanmar has taken an active diplomatic policy based on the principles of independence and neutrality as its basic guideline (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Myanmar). However, problems such as the undemocratic nature of the military regime, the forced labor issue, and the problem of the house arrest of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi has caused deepening antagonism with the international

community, especially the western countries, Europe and North America imposing sanctions upon Myanmar. In addition, the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) countries, represented by the EU and the US, have also become negative with respect to assistance to Myanmar.

Of the cooperation with Myanmar in 2005, Japan was in first place with 25.49 million US

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dollars, followed by Australia with 10.96 million US dollars, the UK with 10.58 million US dollars, Norway with 5.85 million US dollars, and Sweden with 4.49 million US dollars, amounting to a total of 77.83 million US dollars.<sup>17</sup> Comparing

Japan's ODA with the CLV countries (Cambodia, Laos, and Vietnam), who are also late developing ASEAN countries, this is an extremely small sum, but Japan is still the largest donor.

## VI. Japan's Policy towards Myanmar

The Japanese government has not formulated a country assistance plan for assistance to Myanmar, but the Japanese government's basic guideline for ODA to Myanmar is indicated in the "ODA to Myanmar" by the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs.<sup>18</sup> In view of the situation following the confinement of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi by the government authorities of Myanmar on May 20, 2003, the guideline states that measures have been taken to basically forgo any new economic cooperation initiatives. On the other hand, regarding initiatives having great urgency, that are truly humane and that nurture human resources that will contribute to democratization and structural reform of the economy, and those intended for the CLMV countries (Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar and Vietnam) or ASEAN as a whole, it stated that the Japanese government will implement these in order of priority having given careful consideration to the content of the initiative and while continuing to keep a careful watch on the political situation inside Myanmar.

Following the repression of the demonstrations of September 2007, the government decided in October to further narrow down the number of projects in Myanmar. The result was that it was decided to halt the "Construction Plan for the Japan-Myanmar Center for Human Resources Development" which had been finalized by the

cabinet in July 2007, and for which the Japanese government was arranging an opportunity for the signing and exchange of official papers with the government of Myanmar.<sup>19</sup>

This incident in Myanmar became the basis for various questions in the Japanese Diet concerning Japanese policy and sanction measures for ODA to Myanmar (Question No. 144, submitted on October 23, 2007, Question No.191, submitted on November 7, 2007, and others).<sup>20</sup> Especially detailed questions were asked in Question No. 47, submitted on November 7, 2007, entitled "A question and cautionary note on ODA to Burma and the promotion of democratization." The main points were the indication that grant assistance cooperation for grass roots human security was being provided to an approved organization of the military regime, and that ODA to Myanmar was possibly not giving due consideration to the principles of the ODA Charter concerning the promotion of democratization and the guarantee of basic human rights and freedoms.

In its Written Response No.47 (December 16, 2007), the government replied that it had not investigated the Union Solidarity and Development Association since it was unaware that it was an organization that carried out active suppression of democratization activists.

## VII. The “Need for Assistance” and the “Reality of Assistance”

The Question No.47 mentioned in the previous section raised the important point. The issue for many donor countries is that by seeing the destination of the assistance as the government of Myanmar, they are concerned that the ideology of assistance for enhancing human rights and democratization will collapse.

Enhancing human rights in development assistance is mentioned in many international conferences,<sup>21</sup> and OECD/DAC emphasizes the relation between human rights and development assistance in their policy paper (OECD/DAC, 2007).<sup>22</sup> Human security complements state security, enhances human rights and strengthens human development (the Commission on Human Security, 2003, p. 2).<sup>23</sup>

Although the humanitarian assistance has not been totally excluded from assistance to Myanmar, it is necessary for the sake of ideal implementation to clear the hurdle of ensuring that the people on the ground as the final beneficiary. In Myanmar, and in many fragile states, it is simply not easy to carry out assistance that directly targets the people on the ground. It is precisely these circumstances that have caused the diversion from a discussion on needs-centered assistance to Myanmar.

Whether it is bilateral cooperation, multilateral cooperation, or NGOs, it is exceedingly difficult to exclude government interference from assistance activities in the current situation of Myanmar. To give an example, the WHO Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (WHO/GFATM) is carrying out extremely important assistance, in view of the needs of the people of Myanmar, in aiming to eradicate these three great infectious diseases, but GFATM decided to suspend assistance and withdraw from Myanmar in 2005 due to interference in assistance activities

by the military regime.<sup>24</sup> The interference in the assistance activities by the military regime was in the form of the Myanmar government’s newly introduced regulations on the movement of people, which the Fund judged in advance would place great restrictions on entry by Fund personnel to the assistance projects’ implementation sites and making it impossible to implement effective financial donations. These restrictions by the Myanmar government were not specific restrictions applied only to GFATM, but were conditions that were imposed on all international organizations and NGOs. Very few organizations withdrew from Myanmar following the introduction of the restrictions.

The Global Fund’s decision to discontinue the grants in Myanmar is not caused by the technical issues only. There seems to have pressures from U.S. (Tiaji, 2006: p. 8)<sup>25</sup> and other donors (Strefford, 2006, p. 49)<sup>26</sup> to withdraw the grants in Myanmar. The gap between these needs and the implementation of assistance can be grasped from a viewpoint concerning an undemocratic state.

The difficulties of dealing with the government of Myanmar were once again made clear during the provision of emergency humanitarian assistance from the international community at the time of the cyclone in 2008. A cyclone struck the Myanmar coastline on May 2 and 3, 2005, causing immense suffering, but the military regime did not announce acceptance of overseas assistance until May 25. The UN and international organizations and state governments came forward with assistance for Myanmar, but the deployment of this assistance was blocked for several weeks following the occurrence of the cyclone.<sup>27</sup>

At that time, a number of countries, such as Thailand, Indonesia, China, and India, which

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had previously been involved in Myanmar in a relatively constructive manner, and which had maintained special relations with Myanmar, were able to dispatch assistance personnel and deploy material donations before the military regime announced acceptance of overseas assistance. Additionally, the Thai government acted as mediator to bring about the acceptance of assistance from international organizations on May 25.

The Japanese government, which has made human security a basic guideline for ODA, and which is the top assistance donor to Myanmar, decided upon and implemented the granting of emergency material assistance at an early point after the occurrence of the cyclone. However, it proved to be impossible to implement a rapid dispatch of assistance personnel to locations requiring an emergency response.

## VIII. Conclusion

From the interviews to migrant workers, serious poverty inside of Myanmar especially in rural area, lack of safety during migration, and an unstable daily life in the country of destination are indicated. Technical assistances for improving a food security, preventing widespread starvation and humanitarian assistances for health sector are required.

Although there is a necessity for assistance in fragile states, in view of the needs of the people, the country is not made a target for assistance because of the nature of the government, which disallows it from being a target of assistance. The provision of official development assistance for the citizens of fragile states contains extreme difficulties in practice. As a concept overcoming these limitations, the difficulty of securing the safety of individual people should be, or should

It is easy to imagine that the reason why the government of Myanmar has thus far not permitted humanitarian assistance from the UN and western countries that have continued to impose sanctions for the reasons of the political situation is out of concern for the intervention in domestic political issues that might occur as the result of the acceptance of humanitarian assistance. On the other hand, the partner implementing the assistance perceives that assistance and the promotion of human rights and democratization to be inseparable parts of a single package.

From the point of view of democratization, neither the mainly western sanctions nor the constructive engagement centering on ASEAN, have resulted in any concrete progress. Political pressure from the international community has been little more than a sideshow.

have been, seen in terms of human security. Thus human security plays only a philosophical role in official development assistance policy.

However ODA targets different type of countries, ODA is not so flexible to meet the need of different type of countries. The Japanese government, which has made human security a basic policy for ODA could not have the way and enough reason to persuade public for implementing assistances, even humanitarian assistances, to fragile states. The discussion has not yet begun.

### Acknowledgements

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## Notes:

- 1 Commission on Human Security. 2003. *Human Security Now :Commission on Human Security*.
- 2 World Bank. 2003. *Low-Income Countries Under Stress :Implementation Overview*, SecM2003-0560.
- 3 <http://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/oda/index.html> visited on September 16, 2009.
- 4 Ministry of Foreign Affairs, *Japan's Official Development Assistance Charter*. Economic Co-operation Bureau, 2003. <http://www.mofa.go.jp/POLICY/oda/reform/revision0308.pdf> visited on September 16, 2009.
- 5 Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Japan's Medium-Term Policy on Official Development Assistance (Provisional Translation). February 4, 2005. <http://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/oda/mid-term/policy.pdf> visited on September 16, 2009.
- 6 International Development Association, Operational Policy and Country Services (OPCS) and Resource mobilization Department (FRM), June 2007. *Operational Approaches and Financing in Fragile States*.
- 7 OECD, "Ensuring Fragile States are not Left Behind," *Factsheet*. December 2007.
- 8 <http://www.un.org/apps/news/infocusRel.asp?infocusID=134&Body=Myanmar&Body1> visited on September 16, 2009.
- 9 <http://www.thaivisa.com/forum/54-Burmese-Migrants-Suffocate-Thai-t179485.html> visited on September 16, 2009.
- 10 ILO, *The Mekong Challenge : Employment and Protection of Migrant Workers in Thailand : National Laws/Practices Versus International Labour Standards?*, 2005.
- 11 An interview survey was carried out on January 6, 2006 with an NGO active in Thailand. Since this organization is opposed to the government of Myanmar, we are not able to publish its name here.
- 12 Interview surveys were carried out with one organization in January 2006 and with four organizations in February 2009. The names of these organizations cannot be published here, but the organization surveyed in 2006 is an organization supporting democratization in Myanmar (the organization uses the term "Burma"). The four organizations surveyed in 2009 were an organization supporting democratization in Myanmar, an organization providing support for female migrant workers, not limited to Myanmar, an organization supporting Myanmarese from a legal standpoint, and an organization supporting migrant workers.
- 13 Interview survey conducted in 2005. The organization, whose name cannot be published here, was an international NGO whose activities focus mainly on women and children.
- 14 Since many of the interviews were with Myanmarese migrant workers who had entered Thailand illegally, various conditions were required. In a preparatory meeting with the accompanying person (the interpreter, a Myanmarese doctor), we promised not to take either still or video pictures, and not to allow any of the recorded voice sounds to be heard by any person not connected with the research. Further, since it was possible that the Myanmarese migrant workers might feel uncomfortable talking to a foreigner (the author), questions were prepared in advance, but in the event the interview survey turned out to be one of drawing out the stories of the Myanmarese migrant workers. The following explanations were first made to the interviewees : (1) Affiliation of the interviewer (the author), the interviewer's experience of visits to Myanmar, and the fact that the survey had no connection with the government of Myanmar; (2) The purpose of the survey; (3) That no information in the survey results that could lead to the identification of a particular individual would be published; (4) That no questions of a political nature would be asked; and (5) The position of the Myanmarese doctor (the interpreter). The author undertook full responsibility for the management of any information included in the survey, such as village of origin of the individual, family composition, date of birth, and so on that could be used to identify a particular individual. The following can be mentioned as limits and problems of the interview survey. (1) Finding time to conduct interviews was difficult since Myanmarese migrant workers receive almost no vacations. Interviews were conducted during vacation periods when many factories are closed. (2) A great deal of care was necessary to create an environment where the individual interviewees would relate their experiences. Firstly, employing a female Myanmarese doctor as interpreter made it possible to create an environment which made it easy for female migrant workers to talk even about their medical problems. Further, in order to allay suspicions that the interpreter was in some way connected to the government of Myanmar, the author requested the services of a doctor affiliated to an NGO and who had had experience in examining migrant workers. (3) Some interviewees became unable to continue to speak during the individual interviews. In these cases, care was taken to rephrase questions and so on. (4) In cases where a married couple agreed to be interviewed, the husband and wife were interviewed separately. (5) During the survey period, there was contact from Thai agents concerning the implementation of interviews with Myanmarese migrant workers. Since advance notice of the actual survey was given to officials of the Ministry Public Health and the Ministry of Interior and the police in visits five months before the actual interview survey was conducted, it was communicated to the agents that they should request details from government officials.
- 15 Kurita, Kyosuke, Okamoto, Ikuko, Kurosaki, Takashi, and Fujita, Koichi, August 2004, "Policy Prioritization of the Increase in the Production of Rice and the Rural Economy: Focusing on Income Analysis of the Household Budget Survey Data from Eight Villages," *Asian Economies*, 45.8, JETRO, Institute of Developing Economies, pp. 2-37 (Japanese).
- 16 In order to regularize the employment of illegal workers, the Thai government has introduced a system making it possible for migrants to receive a work permit and to engage in employment for a certain period of time by registering with the authorities. The system was being implemented in 2004, 2006, 2007, and July 2009. Migrants are required to pay a 3,800 bahts registration fee per person.
- 17 [http://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/gaiko/oda/shiryō/kuni/08\\_databook/pdfs/01-09.pdf](http://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/gaiko/oda/shiryō/kuni/08_databook/pdfs/01-09.pdf) visited on September 16, 2009.
- 18 [http://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/gaiko/oda/shiryō/kuni/08\\_databook/pdfs/01-09.pdf](http://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/gaiko/oda/shiryō/kuni/08_databook/pdfs/01-09.pdf) visited on September 16, 2009.

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- 19 <http://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/area/myanmar/josei.html> visited on September 16, 2009.
  - 20 Question No. 144, submitted on October 23, 2007, entitled “A question and cautionary note on our country’s policy towards Myanmar” (submitted by Diet Member Suzuki Muneo), containing ten question items, makes the point that Japan’s assistance to Myanmar is of no effect, suggests that the recent decision to cancel the construction project of the “Center for Human Resources Development” is insufficient as a sanction measure, and indicates that further sanction measures may be necessary. In the reply to this question (November 2, 2007), it is stated that based on the confinement of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi in May 2003, measures were taken to freeze new economic cooperation initiatives, but that the Japanese government will implement initiatives having great urgency, that are truly humane and that nurture human resources that will contribute to democratization and structural reform of the economy, and those intended for the CLMV countries or ASEAN as a whole in order of priority having given careful consideration to the content of the initiative and while continuing to keep a careful watch on the political situation inside Myanmar. In addition, it was stated that it was considered that economic cooperation had obtained a certain degree of effect in line with the purposes of the projects.
  - 21 Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action (1993), UN Millennium Summit (2000).
  - 22 OECD/DAC (2007) *DAC Action-oriented Policy Paper on Human Rights and Development*.
  - 23 The Commission on Human Security. 2003. *Human Security Now : The Commission on Human Security*.
  - 24 *Asahi Shinbun*, August 22, 2005, p. 4; *Mainichi Shinbun*, August 20, 2005, p. 2.
  - 25 Tiaji, Salaam-Blyther, 2006, “The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria: Progress Report and Issues for Congress April 25, 2006.”
  - 26 Strefford, Patrick, “The Response of International Donors to Myanmar’s Escalating Health Crisis,” in *Ritsumeikan Annual Review of International Studies*, ISSN 1347-8214, Vol.5, 2006, pp. 37-57.
  - 27 [http://www.un.org/News/briefings/docs/2008/080506\\_Myanmar.doc.htm](http://www.un.org/News/briefings/docs/2008/080506_Myanmar.doc.htm) visited on September 16, 2009.