

The Ph.D. Program in Human Biology is a 5-year transdisciplinary degree program established in 2011 as one of the Leading Graduate School Doctoral Programs funded by MEXT, Japan. For nurturing the future global leaders, who will be able to create a rich and sustainable human society, this program takes unique and innovative educational and research approaches.

Appropriate Technology ~Field Work in East Timor~



As part of 'Appropriate Technology', Takuya Kikuchi and Yuki Miura from Human Biology Program (HBP) participated in Field Work in East Timor, hosted by the See-D Contest for the period from 17 to 22 September 2012. The aim of the See-D Contest is to 'supply needed goods to people in need'. The participants competed in teams for the outcome of their projects in which they planned and developed a new product by connecting Japanese technological strength to the needs in developing countries. The projects can resolve issues existing in those countries. For more details on See-D Contest→ <http://see-d.jp/>

HBP Core Elective Subject : Appropriate technology

Outline: Appropriate Technology provides the opportunity for the students to develop best possible technologies for people from diverse backgrounds, with due consideration of their needs, culture, environment, etc. Through this course, the students should be able to acquire skills to solve problems, engage in on-site activities, and launch a new business. Staff in charge: Kenji Irie (HBP), Hiroaki Umezawa (HBP & See-D), Shan Riku (See-D), Ken Endo (See-D)

Comment from Takuya Kikuchi, HBP student who participated in Field

Before I visited East Timor, I saw a photo of local children standing barefoot. This fostered my enthusiasm to create products that can support those 'poor' and 'pitiful' people's lives. However, as I spent time with them, their abundant energy totally changed my image of them. One day we played soccer together. To my surprise, while they played, they did not seem to care about stones and glass fragments scattered on the ground heated by the sun. During my visit, I was able to find their lifestyles, coexisting with nature and living almost self-sufficient lives. We normally offer those people free products with the intention to raise their current living standards adhering to the values in developed countries. However I found that those products can be easily abandoned in nature when they are broken. I had a doubt about conventional assistance being provided to them such as constructing factories and buildings because they seemed to lead happier lives than we do. During my stay, I had a chance to interview the Japanese staff from AFMET, the NGO, providing assistance in medical services and public health. The staff also cast doubt on development assistance today, which left a deep impression on me. I now realize that rather than attempting to provide people in need with short-term support, we need to pursue ways that cherish their lifestyle, culture, and values but do not destroy their invaluable nature.



With local children



Interviewing local people



Commuting two hours each way to farm

Side effect of development on beautiful beach



Visit to local school

NHK (Japan Broadcasting Corporation) reported our visit to East Timor <http://www.nhk.or.jp/sakidori/backnumber/121202.html>

See-D Contest 2012 Final Presentation and Review Meeting (12/9/2012)

As part of Appropriate Technology, three students and one academic staff from HBP participated in the See-D Contest. On 9 December, the Final Presentation and Review Meeting was held at the National Graduate Institute For Policy Studies and the participants presented their project outcomes achieved over the past half-year.

To view Final Presentation and Review Meeting→ <http://www.facebook.com/seedcontest>

A total of nine teams participated in the contest and all of the participants from HBP were awarded prizes. Team tranSMS, in which Y. Miura joined, won the 'Business award, GOLD' and 'Best Presentation' award. Team 4-d and Team TJM, in which A. Takemura and T. Kikuchi joined respectively, received the 'Senior' award.



- Team tranSMS
Transport support system 'tranSMS' using smartphone and SMS
- Team 4-d
Mobile hot-water supply 'Poppo' to convey 'warmth' to people everywhere
- Team TJM
Hand-operated water pump to make farmwork more efficient



<http://www.facebook.com/team.four.d>

Comment from Yuki Miura in Team tranSMS (Business award, GOLD)

We paid attention to the 'logistical divide' between urban and remote areas in East Timor and devised the transport support system 'tranSMS' using smartphones and SMS to bridge the divide. In East Timor, people in remote areas suffer from high logistics costs, and our 'tranSMS' was introduced for resolution of this difficult issue. For further details, please visit Facebook given below. I was so glad that our work was highly evaluated by many judges and participants, which resulted in us winning the 'Business award, GOLD' and 'Best Presentation' award. The results also encouraged us to build confidence in our own ideas. The contest is over but the project for tranSMS is currently in progress with ongoing fund-raising.

We will be launching the business within this year. Through the contest, I gained insight and inspiration from people playing an active role in industry, academia, and government. I was also able to learn the importance of sustainable business models while we were thinking about the process of converting our ideas into practical application.

<http://www.facebook.com/transmsatreinoirnihonbashi>

