



## North-East Asia Development Cooperation Forum 2015

31 October – 1 November 2015, Tokyo, Japan

### Concept Note

#### *Background*

One feature that distinguishes North-East Asian countries in development cooperation is their experience as both recipients and donors of aid in recent history. Japan, which is now perceived as a “traditional aid donor,” was a recipient of aid, for instance, from the United States Export-Import Bank until the 1970s<sup>1</sup>. The Republic of Korea graduated from the DAC list of ODA recipients in 2000 and became a member of OECD/DAC in 2010, but its experience in aid provision dates back to the 1980s<sup>2</sup>. China has also become a key player in development assistance, while it had begun providing aid before it started receiving aid in the 1980s. Russia, after being one of the largest aid donors during the Soviet era, is re-emerging as a donor following a brief period as a recipient country in the 1990s<sup>3</sup>.

As recognized in the Accra Agenda for Action, improving the complementarity of donor efforts and the division of labour among donors can reduce the fragmentation of aid and improve its effectiveness<sup>4</sup>. Given the wealth of experience gained during their transformation from recipients to providers of development assistance and their growing significance in various forms of development cooperation, cooperation among North-East Asian countries in development assistance will potentially bring significant benefits to recipient countries.

In this context, the first North-East Asia Development Cooperation Forum was held in November 2014 in Seoul to facilitate analytical discussions on policies and practices of development cooperation in North-East Asia as well as potential areas of collaboration among North-East Asian countries. The Forum was organized by ESCAP in collaboration with Korea Association for International Development and Cooperation (KAIDEC), and supported by China International Development

<sup>1</sup> Takagi, S. (1995) From Recipient to Donor: Japan's Official Aid Flows, 1945 to 1990 and Beyond. *Essays in International Finance* No. 196.

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.odakorea.go.kr/eng/overview.History.do>

<sup>3</sup> Larionova, M., M. Rakhmangulov, et al. (2014). The Russian Federation's International Development Assistance Programme: A State of the Debate Report. *Evidence Report 88*.

<sup>4</sup> OECD (2008) Accra Agenda for Action. OECD.

Research Network (CIDRN) and Japan Society for International Development (JASID), as well as Russian researchers on development cooperation. The Forum followed the preceding events ENEA office organized in 2013 - "Seminar on North-East Asian Development cooperation in Post 2015" in collaboration with China Agricultural University and China International Development Research Network.

The Forum brought together researchers and practitioners of development cooperation from four North-East Asian countries, namely, China, Japan, Republic of Korea and Russian Federation. Attendees at the Forum as well as representatives of the networks strongly urged its continuation in the coming years. The second Forum, to be held in Tokyo, is in response to this request.

### *Objectives*

- To create a platform of researchers and practitioners to critically review and analyze trends and policies of development cooperation in North-East Asian countries, based on their own research and experiences.
- To create an international network of academic associations, research institutions, government institutions, inter-governmental organizations, and UN organizations engaged in issues related to development cooperation in North-East Asian countries.
- To identify potential areas of collaboration among North-East Asian countries in development cooperation and assistance.
- To marshal the potential of North-East Asia in making a fundamental difference to the development of Asia Pacific region.

### *Participants of the Forum*

- Members of the network
- International organizations
- Bilateral development organizations or equivalent government office in North-East Asia
- Government officials (at their own capacity)
- Researchers on development cooperation from recipient (partner) countries in Asia-Pacific (selection of countries to be further discussed)
- Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs)
- Interested researchers and development practitioners

## *Partners profile*

**ESCAP ENEA Office** is a subregional office of ESCAP, covering 6 member states (China, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Japan, Mongolia, Republic of Korea, and Russian Federation) and 2 associate members (Hong Kong, China and Macao, China).

**China International Development Research Network (CIDRN)** is a network of Chinese scholars interested in international development from different disciplinary backgrounds such as international relations, development studies, economics and other related fields have formed an informal network to share their research both amongst themselves and with policymakers in China, and beyond.

**Japan Society for International Development (JASID)** is an academic society that tries to bring together knowledge and experience about international development and cooperation from multiple disciplines, ranging from economics and management to politics, sociology, anthropology, agriculture, technology, medicine, and so forth.

**Korea Association of International Development and Cooperation (KAIDEC)** is an academic association of scholars from academic institutes in multidisciplinary subjects, government personnel working in development cooperation, private sector business personnel in charge of overseas investment, and field workers of NGOs.

**Development Cooperation Association** of Russia is association of researchers and practitioners of development cooperation in Russia and is currently in the process of official establishment. The association was initiated by the researchers who participated in the first North-East Asia Development Cooperation Forum in Seoul in 2014.

## *Provisional Programme*

<b>31 October 2015</b>	
9:30 – 10:00	Registration
10:00-10:30	<p><i>Opening Session</i></p> <p>Welcome remarks</p>
10:30 – 11:30	<p><i>Session 1. Introductory session - from MDG to SDG</i></p> <p>The Millennium Development Goals provided an important framework for development and significant progress has been made in a number of areas. However, progress has been uneven and some of the MDGs remain unfinished business. In relation to development cooperation, MDG8 is the only MDG goal which focuses on the means of implementation. Various weaknesses have been pointed out on its targets and indicators, as well as the scope of the Goal.</p> <p>The scope of Sustainable Development Goals under consideration goes far beyond MDGs, covering a wide range of economic and environmental objectives, along with continuing development priorities such as poverty eradication, health and education. It requires to mobilize more resources on one hand, and to engage wider range of stakeholders, to implement these ambitious goals. Furthermore, reflecting lessons learnt from MDG experiences, SDGs are expected to clarify means of implementation for each goal.</p> <p>In this connection, the session will reflect experiences of Millennium Development Goals and provide overview of proposed Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), reflecting the conclusion of UN Summit on post-2015 development agenda in September 2015. Particular attention will be given to the expected role of development cooperation in implementing the SDGs, highlighting how development cooperation supported the achievement of Millennium Development Goals, and how these experiences and lessons can be reflected in the development cooperation for implementation of SDGs.</p>
11:30 – 13:00	<p><i>Session 2. Sustainable Development Goals – roles of development cooperation of North-East Asian countries</i></p> <p>For North-East Asian countries, achievement of SDGs requires renewed engagements in two fronts. On one hand, they have responsibility to implement SDGs in own countries, in such areas as ensuring more sustainable production and consumption system, protection and restoring terrestrial ecosystems. On the other hand, they are expected to forge renewed partnership to assist other developing countries to implement SDGs. The development cooperation in the latter is particularly relevant question for the Forum.</p> <p>In this context, this session will focus on the latter, to discuss how SDGs can be integrated into development cooperation in the North-East Asia. While SDGs set out ambitious and transformational vision and emphasizes on inclusiveness, how they are translated into action will largely rest with development cooperation strategies, which may differ across countries. Therefore presentation on each country is expected to provide critical analysis on each</p>

	country's development assistance in the context of SDGs, and explore possible areas of collective action or cooperation among North-East Asian countries to jointly enhance effectiveness of their development cooperation in the context of SDGs. In addition, researchers from recipient countries are expected to provide their views.
13:00 – 14:00	Lunch
14:00 – 15:30	<p><i>Session 3. Development finance (include New Development Bank BRICS, AIIB, use of foreign exchange)</i></p> <p>Financing is considered as one of the key vehicles (means of implementation) in materializing SDGs. Countries in the subregion is particularly active in mobilizing financial resources for development. In this context, this session will critically analyse development finance of the North-East Asian countries, in light of contribution to sustainable development in developing countries. The session will also highlight prospects and problems in alignment, harmonization, joint financing, and peer review mechanism in cooperation among the North-East Asia countries on development finance. The session may also examine roles of frameworks and modalities, including but not limited to, New Development Banks by BRICS, Asia Infrastructure Investment Bank, use of foreign exchanges, etc. In addition, researchers from recipient countries are expected to provide their views.</p>
15:30 – 16:00	Coffee break
16:00 – 17:30	<p><i>Session 4. Means of Implementation, including knowledge sharing, collective actions towards SDGs</i></p> <p>Means of implementation for materializing SDGs go beyond financial means. The proposed SDGs outline means of implementation for each goal, in capacity building support, technical assistance, trade, etc. This session will analyse development cooperation activities such as knowledge sharing and capacity building initiatives undertaken by NEA countries in assisting countries towards sustainable development and achievement of SDGs. The session particularly encourages policy recommendations and innovative ideas for collective actions among NEA countries to assist developing countries in Asia and the Pacific. In addition, researchers from recipient countries are expected to provide their views.</p>
17:30 – 17:40	<i>Concluding remarks for the Plenary session</i>

**1 November 2015**

10:00 – 12:00	<p><i>Session 5. Collaboration and partnerships) (4 associations)</i></p> <p>This session will reflect discussion of the day 1 and review the potential areas of development cooperation among North-East Asian countries which deserve further research and analysis. Possibility of joint studies among participating researchers and development practitioners may be also explored and encouraged, in connection with proposal to issue special edition of Asia Pacific Development Journal.</p>
12:00 – 12:30	Conclusions and way forward