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What is the Global Internship Program (G.ecbo Program)?



Overseas internships form the core part of this educational program with 'sandwich-style' education and research activities. In this program we aim to produce researchers who can deal with a variety of issues in various fields, and practitioners and highly skilled specialists who can take the lead in international issues.

Reopening the G.ecbo Internship Program as we live with COVID-19

Since last summer, whenever I traveled abroad on business, I was often asked, "Are you all right? Do you have some serious illness?" When I explained about the situation in Japan with the COVID-19 pandemic, people were very often sympathetic or puzzled by it and commented "Japan is having a tough time of it. Is that the seventh wave? Poor Japan." When I went overseas on business trips during the year-end and New Year holidays, even people I passed on the street looked at me strangely. When asked why I was wearing a mask, I replied something like, "Japan is now experiencing its eighth wave in the pandemic, and I don't want to pass COVID-19 on to anyone else."

In January, I visited the University of the Philippines Los Baños (UPLB) and Ifugao State University (ISU) for meetings to discuss the development of new host institutions for the G.ecbo Program. I asked various people I met there to accept students dispatched from Hiroshima University. As a result, both universities agreed to accept our students as volunteers. To fit in with how things were there, I made the bold decision to not wear a mask, and thanks to that, the topic of COVID-19 did not come up very often. The number of institutions accepting internship students has been decreasing because the G.ecbo Program's activities were suspended due to the pandemic, and we lost contact with some of the professors who served as liaisons with our host institutions, who retired or were transferred. In this context, it is very important for the future operation of this program that both universities are ready to receive the students. I hope that this will be a breakthrough in resuming the program activities like we did in the past, as we now have to co-exist with COVID-19.



MAHARJAN, Keshav Lall

Chairperson, G.ecbo Program Executive Committee

Professor, Graduate School of Humanities and Social Sciences, Hiroshima University

Director, International Economic Development Program

Professor, Joint International Master's Programme in Sustainable Development

Professor, Social Innovation Science, Graduate School of Innovation and Practice for Society

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(Cont'd from Page 1)

In order to increase the number of host institutions for the program, we must continue activities to link up with new institutions. We also need to develop contacts with non-university organizations, such as international organizations, I/ NGOs, third-sector companies, consulting firms, venture companies, volunteer groups, etc., to develop ways to respond to diverse needs in the field and to develop multidisciplinary solutions based on experience. We ask for cooperation from all quarters.

On a different note, at the beginning of February I had the opportunity to have dinner with the Indian Ambassador to Japan at a hotel in Hiroshima City. The ambassador wasn't wearing a mask but I was. As we were enjoying a pleasant chat before the dinner began, I asked the ambassador "Do you mind if I take off my mask?" The ambassador answered, "No, not at all. You see, I have had 5 vaccines and I have had COVID-19 twice so I think I have built up the strongest immunity." So we enjoyed the dinner in a friendly atmosphere. On the train back to Saijo, I was quietly thinking about the medical status of COVID-19 in Japan, the use of masks, the procedures for entering and leaving the country, and the future operation of the G.ecbo Program.

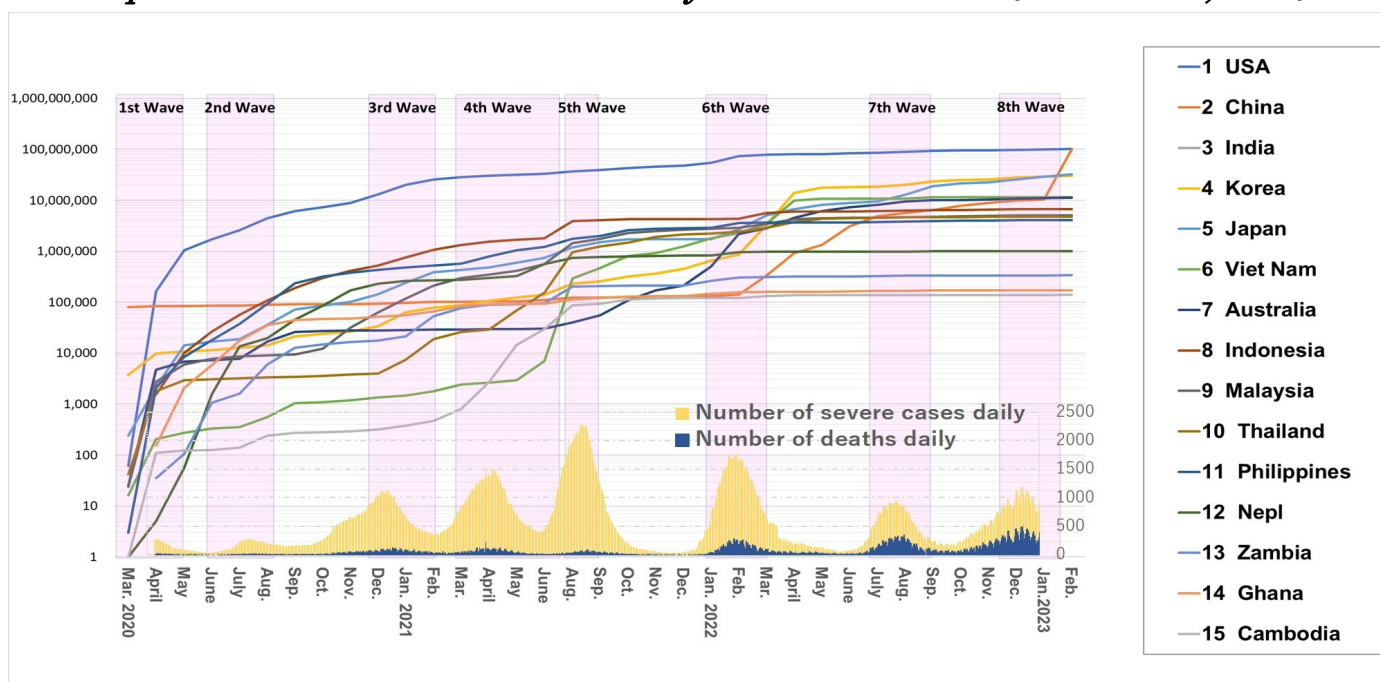
In AY2021, virtual internships were also considered as a trial. But we decided against it because it would not necessarily guarantee the achievement of the program's objectives and its educational effects, which are "to understand and learn about the needs of the field using problem-solving methods and to respond to them in a multidisciplinary way" as the main objective. Like most European countries at the time, we saw COVID-19 as a kind of endemic disease, and we strongly hoped for a time when it would be possible to co-exist with COVID-19.

In the first semester of AY2022, the online internship program was implemented, and in the second semester, the traditional face-to-face internship program with actual dispatch was started up again. With both internships, the students who participated were satisfied that they learned a lot. I myself was able to see the students' solid growth through their pre and post internship presentations. The students' internships were highly evaluated by the host institutions. We are also pleased that the internship program was appreciated in times such as these. The fact that we were able to fulfill last year's wish "to be able to conduct G.ecbo activities while coexisting with COVID-19" so quickly should be attributed to the students' willingness to learn and the understanding and cooperation of the host institutions and everyone else who was involved.

From the coming May, COVID-19 will be reclassified into the same Class 5 category as seasonal influenza in Japan, which will make things easier in many ways. Nevertheless, COVID-19 is constantly mutating and we should continue to be cautious. We are now entering a time in which society as a whole will adapt itself naturally and coexist with COVID-19, with the help of antibodies and, when necessary, medical science. In line with the management of this program, we would like to promote the G.ecbo internship program in AY2023 as co-existing with COVID. We look forward to your continued cooperation.

With COVID-19, With conscious mind.

Graph of confirmed cases of COVID-19 by relevant countries (As of March, 2023)



*Cumulative number of confirmed cases: Data for each day until August 2020 and for the first week after September 2020, extracted from the WHO Coronavirus (COVID-19) Dashboard.

*Number of severe cases and deaths in Japan: Extracted from Open Data of Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare

SODA Ami Interned at Kenyatta University (Kenya) in AY2010
Graduate School for International Development and Cooperation

◆Your recent situation and current work

I am currently working as a JICA Agriculture Specialist in Zambia. At IDEC, I majored in education and cultural studies, so working in the agriculture field is a daily learning experience and challenge for me. The area I am assigned to has a deep-rooted, unique culture and tribal character, and even Zambians say, "That is a difficult area to work in!" What is the most effective way to develop new agricultural extension development in such a place? This is a question I ask myself and often think about.



*Interacting with the village people
after graduation from IDEC.
Doing research in a village is fun!*

◆Looking back from your internship to the present, if you had to sum it up in one word, how would you describe it?

"Knowledge is power." Internship activities are more than just hands-on experience. Based on my internship activities experiences, I have continued to evolve myself through further experiences and learning. I feel that this sequence of events has continued to repeat itself since my internship.

◆In what situations or times was your experience at the G.ecbo Program useful to you?

My work now requires judgment, negotiation skills, and the ability to consider efficient and effective project approaches. In the G.ecbo Program, after their destination has been decided on, the student must contact the place they will be dispatched to explain the activity, and conduct negotiations on their own. I believe that the local coordination and negotiation skills I developed through the G.ecbo Program have been useful to me in doing my work where I am now.

◆From your G.ecbo experience, what do you feel has remained and taken root, and what do you feel you are developing further?

It was the first time for me to live in Africa, and everything was new and I experienced various things, such as activities in Kenya and homestay life with my counterpart's family. After graduating from IDEC, I moved to Zambia to live, and I believe that my G.ecbo experience provided the foundation for my life in Africa, building and developing my current life.

[Life and activities at Kenyatta University, Kenya, 2010]



Cooking Ugali, a traditional African food. During my internship, I learned to make Mandazi (Kenyan doughnuts) and other African dishes using a charcoal stove at my homestay.

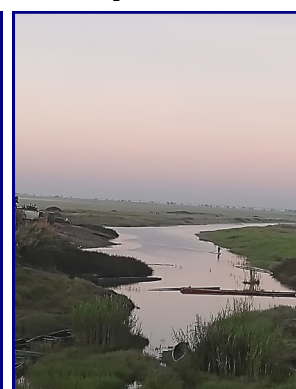


Participating in classes at Kenyatta University.

[Introduction to Zambia]



Zambia's T-bone steaks are said to be the best in Africa. I sometimes rewarded myself with a T-bone steak after a hard day's work.



The Zambezi River flows on to Angola. In the rainy season, this river overflows and the countryside becomes one big river.

— Advice for your juniors

Interactions with local people can be challenging and difficult to understand due to cultural and language differences. However, once you establish a rapport, it will change your life forever, and the experience will become something you will treasure for the rest of your life. That is true not only for you, but for everyone who meets you.

G.ecbo Alumni Active in Japan and Around the World

A general trading company

OHYA Shohei Interned at ALMEC Corporation (Vietnam) in AY2011
Graduate School for International Development and Cooperation

◆Your recent situation and current work

Since joining a general trading company in 2013, I have been working in the urban development and real estate department. Currently, I have been temporarily transferred to a joint venture with an American company, where I am engaged in data center development.

◆Looking back from your internship to the present, if you had to sum it up in one word, how would you describe it?

“Halfway there.” My experience as an intern at a development consulting firm in Vietnam through the G.ecbo Program piqued my interest in working overseas, and I chose to join a general trading company because I wanted to be involved in urban development, especially overseas. Although I have been involved in various domestic and international projects, I have not been able to do work leading to large-scale urban development as I had hoped at the time, so I would like to continue working toward that goal.



Lunch at the facility in Karuizawa where training was held by the company where I was temporarily transferred.

◆In what situations or times was your experience at the G.ecbo Program useful to you?

In my previous department, I was involved in transportation-related business development in Indonesia. Although we were not able to commercialize the project due in part to the COVID-19 pandemic, I was able to formulate my own hypothesis, interview local staff and potential partners, and conduct a feasibility study while receiving advice from JICA and development consultants (I also had contact with Almec, who helped me during my internship). In Indonesia, I met again with IDEC's alumna. This was just like the G.ecbo Program itself, and I worked with a sense of nostalgia for my G.ecbo days. I can't put it into words, but I feel that my experiences with G.ecbo, a practical educational program during my student days, were useful in the aforementioned work.

◆From your G.ecbo experience, what do you feel has remained and taken root, and what do you feel you are developing further?

An aspiration to go overseas. For better or for worse, living in Higashi-Hiroshima and commuting to university every day made it difficult to find an opportunity to dive into a global environment. (I'm sure it's probably different now. [laughs])

I think that G.ecbo was the catalyst that made me more interested in foreign countries. I have often hit a wall in business with foreign countries and communication with foreign staff since becoming a working adult, but I feel that the reason I have managed to do well so far is because of the foundation that was laid by the G.ecbo Program and other experiences I had when I was a student.

[During my 2011 internship at Hanoi, Vietnam.]



By being in an actual office, I was able to learn how interesting the work of development consultants is.

On my days off, I actively walked around the area and visited cities other than Hanoi to experience the culture and history of Vietnam.

[I met up with another IDEC alumna on a business trip to Indonesia.]



Together with Mai

Together with Erni

– Advice for your juniors

When I was a student, I remember feeling inspired as I listened to Steve Jobs' speech at Stanford University's commencement. You never know what will be useful in the future. I think it is a good idea to experience many things when you are a student by taking on various challenges and not be afraid of failure.

G.ecbo Alumni Active in Japan and Around the World

A general trading company

NOBEKAWA Yuki Interned at Kenyatta University (Kenya) in AY2011
Graduate School for International Development and Cooperation

◆Your recent situation and current work

After graduating from IDEC, I decided to work for Kanematsu Corporation. Although it was very different to my master's research, I handled sales for domestic and foreign semiconductors for the first four years after joining the company. After that, I worked at the Singapore branch for six months, followed by a year-long business trip to California, in the States. After returning to Japan, I have been engaged in business development utilizing advanced technology, collaborating with overseas IT venture businesses and leading investments in domestic IT venture businesses, and am currently on temporary transfer to a domestic investee.



Participating in a panel discussion in front of about 800 people at the Japan Foreign Trade Council's "Shosha Symposium 2019"!

◆Looking back from your internship to the present, if you had to sum it up in one word, how would you describe it?

"The path you believe in." I enrolled in IDEC because I was interested in education in developing countries. I entered IDEC with an honest desire to change the inequalities and disparities that exist between countries from the perspective of education.

The G.ecbo Program led me to decide on Kenya as the field for my master's research, and I conducted a field survey. My initial intention of reducing inequality through education changed to building the minimum of social infrastructure.

During my field survey, I saw a child running around barefoot in a poorly maintained schoolyard. I think there were some rocks and pieces of glass lying around, and the child caught his foot on something, causing it to bleed. In Japan, I would have thought that the child would have been immediately taken to the hospital, but there, the decision for the child to simply go home early shocked me. This is the moment when I realized that the minimum social infrastructure is necessary for children to have a safe school life.

This is the event that made me decide on joining a trading company, and this is the result of following my gut feeling at each location. The G.ecbo Program actually provided me with a new gut feeling to follow.

◆From your G.ecbo experience, what do you feel has remained and taken root, and what do you feel you are developing further?

"Next generation." Although I am now in the IT business, this gut feeling has remained rooted in me even after graduation. Because IT can easily cross borders, the social infrastructure that I felt at the time has changed from hardware to software, and my new gut feeling is to accomplish the correction of disparities through software. In addition, as I have experienced major events in my life, such as marriage and the birth of my child, I feel that the keyword of "developing countries" that I felt at the time of admission to IDEC, has evolved into "the next generation."

Now that I have been working for 10 years, I am keenly aware of how difficult it is to contribute to the correction of disparities, but I am striving every day to leave something as good as possible to the "next generation."

[During my 2011 internship at Nairobi, Kenya.]

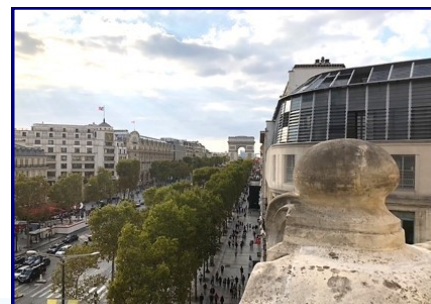


Finally visited an elementary school after it had been closed due to a teachers' union strike. Conducted a pilot study for my master's research.



In the city of Nairobi. I did a room-share and made many inspiring and motivating friends.

[View from the office of the overseas venture company.]



— Advice for your juniors

For me, my G.ecbo experience was my first time in Africa, and to be honest, every day I felt quite anxious there. But I was able to encounter a gut feeling that motivated me. Without these gut feelings we cannot inspire ourselves, so I sincerely hope that the G.ecbo Program will be an opportunity for you to encounter a new gut feeling.

SAKUMOTO Yasuhiro Interned at JICA Indonesia (Indonesia) in AY2014
Graduate School for International Development and Cooperation

◆Your recent situation and current work

As a national public servant in a general position, I am engaged in administrative work such as receiving and examining applications related to the work under my jurisdiction.

◆Looking back from your internship to the present, if you had to sum it up in one word, how would you describe it?

“Training.” After graduating from IDEC, I have continued to acquire skills and knowledge that I can apply to my work, such as language skills and regarding laws and regulations in my field of expertise.

◆In what situations or times was your experience at the G.ecbo Program useful to you?

I believe that overcoming difficulties overseas during my internship gave me an element of confidence during my job-hunting activities. I also think it gave me something to talk about during the job interviews. It is not common to have the experience of working with local staff in a foreign country, so I think the interviewers were interested in what I had to say. Actually, my first job search during my school days did not go well, and I received a job offer at my current place of employment after finishing my first job search and after my experience at G.ecbo. I think I was able to proceed more successfully with my second job search after my G.ecbo experience than I did with my first job search, because I was more confident.



Sightseeing in Indonesia in September, 2019.

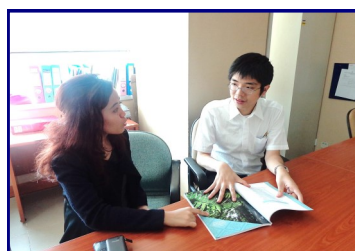
◆From your G.ecbo experience, what do you feel has remained and taken root, and what do you feel you are developing further?

During my internship, I went with the people from the place where I was dispatched to conduct interviews with local Indonesian residents and to do field research in forested areas. I was working in a completely different environment from Japan, in an unfamiliar land with an unfamiliar language. Since I started working, I often go to unfamiliar places and departments due to personnel transfers, but I do not have anxiety or fear in unfamiliar places and environments, and I am able to enjoy them in a positive manner. I think this is largely due to the experience I had at G.ecbo, where I managed to overcome challenges in an environment that I had never experienced before. I think I also acquired the mental strength to be able to put up with quite a lot.

[During my internship in 2014.]



The most memorable part of my activities was when I accompanied JICA experts on their field research during my participation in the project.



At Lombok Island, where I observed forest conservation.



Nangka, Indonesian for jackfruit.

– Advice for your juniors

My master's thesis was more of a macro field of research relating forest conservation to national economic data, and although the internship did not directly affect the content of my master's thesis, it was still a valuable experience to see firsthand the current situation and initiatives unique to the region at the micro level, which greatly broadened my perspective in conducting my research.

The experiences you have while you are a student are valuable. To avoid regrets, prepare and plan well in advance and act accordingly. If there is anything you would like to do prior to your internship, or if there is anything you would like help with, it is best to be assertive.



Internship-related master's theses and doctoral dissertations

(Period: from April 2019 to March 2023)

Twenty-eight participants in this program have completed their graduate studies
(23 have completed master's programs and 5 have completed doctoral programs).

Seventeen of them completed their master's theses and doctoral dissertations
based on the results of their internships



* Participants in the G.ecbo Internship Program for Doctoral Students

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| Completed on March, 2023 | GONZALVO CLARISSE MENDOZA Graduate School of Humanities and Social Sciences * | Farmer Decision-Making on the Concept of Coexistence: A Comparative Analysis Between Organic and Biotech Farmers in the Philippines |
| Completed on March, 2023 | PHYU PHYU ZAW Graduate School for International Development and Cooperation * | A study on Mindfulness : the Role of Awareness and Acceptance |
| Completed on March, 2022 | FUKAYA YASUKA Graduate School of Letters * | A Descriptive Study of the Kelabit Bario Dialect |
| Completed on March, 2021 | OKATA YOSHIE Graduate School for International Development and Cooperation | Japanese Linguistics—On the Extension of the Meaning of the Verb “naru”: Focusing on the Usage of koto ni naru— |
| Completed on March, 2021 | ESHUN FELIX KWAMINA EGYIR Graduate School for International Development and Cooperation | Daily Departure Time Learning Dynamics of Commuters Using Smart Application: Case Study in Accra |
| Completed on March, 2021 | TAKEMOTO YU Graduate School of Engineering | Study on Material Strength and Evaluation of FRP and Extruded Aluminum Materials |
| Completed on March, 2021 | SUMI JUMPEI Graduate School for International Development and Cooperation | Investigation of indoor and outdoor air pollution and respiratory health in unplanned urban houses in the hot and humid climate of Indonesia. |
| Completed on September, 2020 | SUN YU Graduate School for International Development and Cooperation | Intrinsic and Extrinsic Motivation to Classroom Learning: A Comparative Study between Migrant Children and Local Children in The Urban Public Middle School, Yantai, China |
| Completed on September, 2020 | USWATUN HASANAH Graduate School for International Development and Cooperation * | STEM Education for the Crucial Thinking Skills in Indonesian Science Education |
| Completed on September, 2020 | MOHAMMAD ROBIUL AWAL KHONDAKER Graduate School for International Development and Cooperation | Role of Sanitation Microfinance on the Improvement of Sanitation condition and Nutrition Condition of Under-five Children in Rural Bangladesh. |
| Completed on September, 2020 | HANIEF ARIEFMAN SANI Graduate School for International Development and Cooperation | Indoor Air Quality and Its Effects on Health among Urban Residents in Major Cities of Indonesia |
| Completed on September, 2020 | PENG BUNHEANG Graduate School for International Development and Cooperation | Intergenerational transmission of school education: impact of self- monitoring on household electricity consumption in Phnom Penh city |
| Completed on March, 2020 | MAHARJAN SHREE KUMAR Graduate School for International Development and Cooperation | Factors affecting climate change adaptation in agriculture in central and western Nepal |
| Completed on March, 2020 | UEMURA KENZO Graduate School for International Development and Cooperation | Factors Influencing Street Children's Intention to Participate in NGOs in West Bengal, India: Focusing on Street Children Living with Their Families near NJP Station Children Living with Their Families near NJP Station. |
| Completed on March, 2020 | TANIMOTO AOI Graduate School for International Development and Cooperation | Development of Radiant Floor Cooling System Using Phase Change Material under Hot and Humid Climates |
| Completed on March, 2020 | FUJII MASAOKI Graduate School for International Development and Cooperation | Analysis of the Influence of Residential Environment on Daily Life Behavior in Kampung Residential Area in Indonesia. |
| Completed on September, 2019 | RASOANJANAHARY TANTELY NIRINA Graduate School for International Development and Cooperation | Factors Affecting Students' Choice of University from the Perspective of Distance Learners, Case of the National Center of Distance Education in Madagascar |

One person was dispatched online in the summer and two overseas in the winter, resuming activities of the G.ecbo Program for the first time in two years since the global spread of the COVID-19 pandemic. The biggest challenge for G.ecbo's online internship program was whether it could maintain the main objective of the program, which is to "identify, learn, and respond to needs in the field in a multidisciplinary, problem-solving manner." G.ecbo's online internship program was realized with the cooperation of ALMEC Corporation, which has accepted many students since 2006, and it was very fruitful.

Mensah Ewurasi Boafowa

Graduate School of Humanities and Social Sciences,
International economic development program

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| Host | ALMEC Corporation (Philippines) |
| Period | September 14–October 13, 2022 |
| Location | Online |



– What were your expectations when you had just started participating in this Program?

During the time I was applying for the program, I realized the program was well organized and well structured. My expectations were to learn and develop myself professionally.

– About the internship course

During the internship, I had the opportunity through my internship Supervisor at ALMEC, Philippines to learn what a TOD (the Transit-Oriented Development) project is. TOD refers to integrated urban places designed to bring people, activities, buildings, and public space together, with easy walking and cycling connection between them and near-excellent transit service to the rest of the city. I also learnt about the TOD projects financed by JICA in several countries. I learnt also about TOD projects across the world not financed by JICA.

– The most impressive experience during the internship

I had the chance to broaden my global professional connections by networking with officials of ALMEC Corporation in Tokyo, Philippines and JICA officials in the Philippines office with strong expertise in transportation and urban planning. With the use of social media and apps like Skype and Zoom made it easy to actively pursue conversations get support from my internship Supervisor though I was in Japan and she was in the Philippines.

– Merits

With the issue of the COVID-19 pandemic, an online internship was the best for me. I had the chance to broaden my global professional connections by networking with officials of ALMEC Corporation in Tokyo, Philippines and JICA officials in the Philippines office with strong expertise in transportation and urban planning.

– Demerits

While I was able to accomplish tasks assigned to me because they were designed for an online experience, there are times I missed the in-person interaction, like the workplace culture of dealing with coworkers.

However, the use of social media and apps like Skype and Zoom made it easy to actively pursue conversations and get support from my internship Supervisor though I was in Japan and she was in the Philippines.



The online internship being implemented.

– Expectations on my internship for the future career

The online internship was a great opportunity for my professional development, relationship building, and skill sharpening as I had the opportunity to intern remotely in a reputable Japanese owned consultancy company called ALMEC Corporation's overseas department in the Philippines.

– Pre-internship preparations and tips

I had to ensure that I had installed all the applications like skype, zoom and Microsoft teams for an effective online internship. I also had to make sure my webcam was working well. I also made sure I could share presentation files during an online meeting was possible. Ask relevant questions before you start the internship.

– Advice for future intern

It is good to complete all the jobs assigned to you well because it can create job opportunities for you in the future.

Dasguputa Shamit

Graduate School of Humanities and Social Sciences,
International economic development program

| | |
|------------|---|
| Host | Cambodia Mekong University (Cambodia) |
| Period | January 21 – February 28, 2023 |
| Objectives | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◀ To find out the "Perception of university students on Women empowerment- Evidence from list experiment in Cambodia" ◀ To experience working in International setting, increase research skill and learn the challenges of conducting a research. |



Koh Rong Island, a secluded region. I participated in a weekend tour there and will never forget swimming in the ocean at night when the bioluminescent plankton were glowing.

–Journey from Hiroshima to Phnom Penh in Cambodia

On Saturday, January 21, my day started a little earlier than usual, at 4:30 in the morning. It was the start of my trip to Cambodia. I had to get the first train that morning to make it to Kansai airport in time for my flight. After a journey of about 16 hours, I finally landed at Phnom Penh International Airport. I was delighted to see Mr. Higuchi, head of the Department of Japanese Language and Business at CMU (Cambodia Mekong University), where I was going to study, who came to pick me up. He helped to make a smooth start to my life in Cambodia. I stayed at a hotel near the airport that day. The change in climate from 0 degrees Celsius in Japan to 35 degrees Celsius in Cambodia was a bit difficult, but I got used to it after a few days.

– To Cambodia Mekong University for training

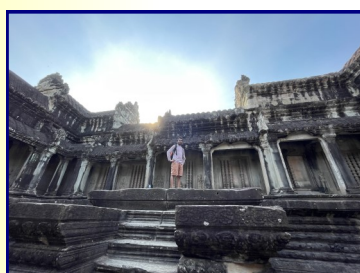
On Monday, January 23, I applied for a visa extension to stay in Cambodia for more than 30 days, and finally visited Cambodia's Mekong University, the place of my internship. There, I met for the first time with the Vice President, Mr. Kay Rithy. He gave me a tour of the university and we had another discussion about my training plan during my stay and how to proceed with my research as a whole. I was assigned a desk in the office of the department head Mr. Higuchi, to do my research activities. On Tuesday, January 31, I met with Mr. Ban Thero, the President of CMU, for a lengthy discussion on my research topic. Some modifications were made to accommodate Khmer culture and traditions, and the questionnaire was translated into Khmer as well to make it easier for the students to understand. This translation was done with the help of CMU students. We also discussed research methodologies and shared our views on the different cultures of Cambodia, Bangladesh (my home country), and Japan.

After receiving approval from the ethical review, preliminary data collection from CMU students began. So far I have received 137 responses. I hope to receive at least 300 responses this week for better survey analysis and impactful results.

–Sharing my experiences and having a discussion



Previously I worked in a bank in Bangladesh. I shared with the students my experiences as a central banker, my student life in Japan, and other personal experiences, and we had a discussion for about an hour. The students were very interested in learning more about studying abroad, and the session was packed with information about life and culture in Cambodia, Japan, and Bangladesh, as well as my experiences in government and private institutions. Just as I decided to study abroad at Hiroshima University, I hope that this discussion will motivate the students to pursue higher studies abroad and later hope to contribute to the development of Cambodia



–Life in Cambodia and sightseeing

Most of my research activities were done in Phnom Penh, but I visited various places on the weekends. I tried local dishes instead of food stalls or restaurants near tourist attractions and tasted the true flavor of Khmer cuisine. It was all really delicious. One weekend I went to Siem Reap to visit Angkor Wat, the largest religious monument in the world. I got somewhat excited at the precipitous cliff Poen Ta Kho in Phnom Kulen National Park. Participating in the G.ecbo Program gave me the opportunity to experience Cambodian life, culture, and its beautiful nature.

My wonderful experiences while doing my research at the majestic Banaue Rice Terraces and working as an RA at the G.ecbo Program

Gonzalvo, Clarisse Mendoza

Graduate School of Humanities and Social Sciences,
International economic development program

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| Host | Ifugao State University (Philippines) |
| Period | December 8, 2022 – January 20, 2023 |
| Location | Ifugao Province |



Banaue Rice Terraces. They are called the "Stairway to Heaven" and registered as a World Heritage site.

From December 2022 to January 2023, I did my internship at the Globally Important Agricultural Heritage System (GIAHS) Research Center of the Ifugao State University (IFSU). I focused on the Ifugao Rice Terraces, which is the only GIAHS in my country designated by UNFAO in 2011, and designated as a World Heritage Site by UNESCO in 1995. I did my data gathering at the Banaue Rice Terraces, specifically in Batad and Bangaan, which are two out of five GIAHS clusters in the Philippines. There, I studied the environmental conservation agriculture (ECA) adoption of the farmers, as well as the biodiversity conservation and heritage tourism in the area. It was a very exciting and insightful internship, and I am planning to publish a paper based on my data gathering.



With the Indigenous people of Ifugao Province

The people in Ifugao are so friendly and you can really enjoy what nature has to offer. Being able to talk to the locals and farmers gave me a renewed sense of motivation to do my research well. The government officials that I talked to are also curious to read the possible publications of my research, and they said that they want to incorporate it in their policy framing. During my stay, I was able to obtain a lot of books and resource materials, which are all useful for my research. Aside from that, I was able to interview experts and they were all very enthusiastic to talk about the rice terraces.

This internship experience made me realize how important it is to protect our natural resources, most especially the rice terraces, which are ancient creations of the Ifugao people. I also learned about the Tinawon heirloom variety, which is the center of their farming rituals. It amazes me how the rice terraces helped the Ifugao people to resist the colonization by the Spaniards hundreds of years ago. I hope that other provinces in the Philippines can also learn from the ways of the Ifugao people, most especially on how they sustain their natural resources.

Overall, I am very happy with my internship, and I hope that more students from Hiroshima University can experience going to the Ifugao rice terraces. I am grateful to the IFSU GIAHS Research Center, most especially to my supervisor, Director Jude Baggo, who guided me well during my stay. I am also very thankful to the G.ecbo Program for allowing me to embark on this global internship. I hope I can go back in the future to study the other GIAHS sites.



At a lookout

My Research Assistant (RA) experience:

I have been an RA at the G.ecbo Program since April 2020. For the past three years, I have been contributing to the program's initiatives to equip its interns with the right knowledge and skills before pursuing their internship abroad. I enjoy being an RA at G.ecbo because I can apply my skills as a researcher and I can also give advice to students to further improve their work. Overall, my experiences in this program allowed me to grow more and interact with other passionate students at Hiroshima University (HU). Thank you very much for the opportunity to work with you, G.ecbo Program! Best of luck to the future RAs and interns. May you also have wonderful experiences during your stay at HU.

Job-hunting experiences

TAKEMOTO Yu - Mazda Motor Corporation

Interned at Satyam Venture Engineering Services Private Limited (India) in AY2019 / Graduate School of Engineering (Transportation and Environmental Systems Program)

– Looking back from my internship to the present

I graduated from my master's program in the spring of 2021 and started working as an engineer at Mazda Motor Corporation. Currently, I am studying the application of CAE (Computer Aided Engineering) technology used in the development of vehicle models in the R&D department. In my work, I often deal with the properties of metallic materials, and am able to make use of the knowledge and experience I gained as a student. Incidentally, since I still live in Hiroshima, I often drive to okonomiyaki restaurants in the area close to Hiroshima University.

– Reasons and deciding factors for choosing the company/industry in which you work

Originally, I wanted to work for a manufacturer that handled materials, but I chose my current company and industry because I was influenced by the idea that an automobile manufacturer could create various ways to use materials, and because I wanted to contribute to the local industry and economy by being involved in Japan's key industry. I had been in contact with my current department through joint research since I was a student, so I had a good idea of the atmosphere of the workplace and what it would be like for me to work there.



The Charminar, Hyderabad, India

– Situations or times in which your experience with the G.ecbo Program was useful to you

For some reason, people at my workplace know that I went to India alone on the G.ecbo Program, and my colleagues sometimes look up to me for my toughness mentally and my active approach to life. At times like that, I feel that my experience with the G.ecbo Program is something to be proud of. The process of achieving your goal in a foreign country while deepening mutual understanding with those around you is similar in some ways to working with many people in a company to get work done.

– Advice for your juniors

I've just become a working adult myself and am not yet fully fledged, but I would like to offer two pieces of advice on how to prepare for job hunting.

1. What do you want to accomplish in your life and how will you use your work to achieve it? You need to have a clear idea about this.

It doesn't matter if you want to make a lot of money to live in a magnificent house or gain experience to go out on your own. As long as you don't deviate from that objective, you should be able to find the path for your future.

2. Humbly take to heart advice given to you by working adults

Those of you about to start job-hunting, you may be at the top level in the university community, but in the eyes of the world, you are still at Level 0, which means that you have not yet entered the workforce. First of all, listen to what working adults have to say. And ask lots of questions. There are many things that you only can do now. I hope you will chalk up lots of experiences and spread your wings to the world!



A trip to Fukuoka after starting work at Mazda

– About the life and culture in India

On weekdays, I was at the office of the company where I interned, from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. for training, meetings, and facility tours. At night in my hotel room, I did literature research and gathered information in preparation for the next day. On weekends, I was guided by local people to tourist attractions and shopping malls to experience the daily lives of the people of Hyderabad.

– Preparation before internship

I believe that the success of your internship depends how well you prepare for it before you leave Japan. Before leaving Japan, you will need to accomplish a number of tasks while also being busy with lectures and research. To be honest, the support you will receive from the university and the people around you will not be all that much.

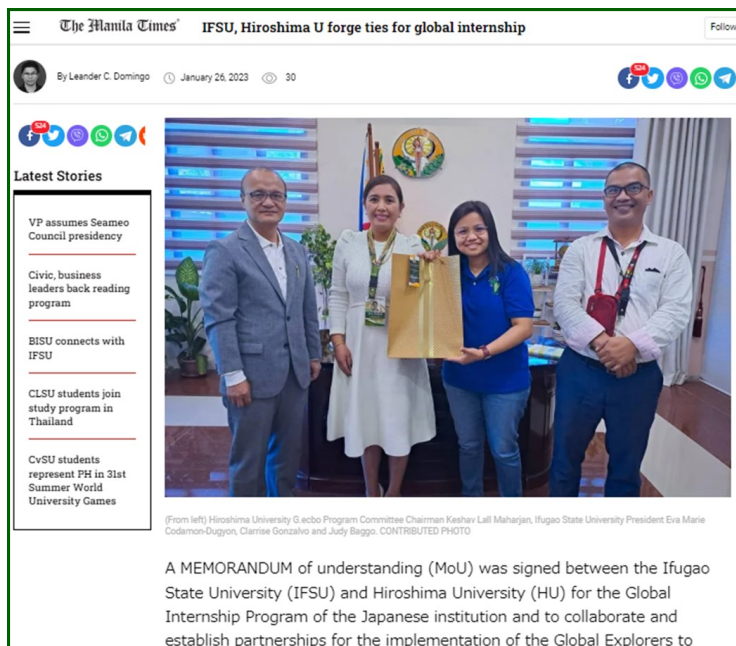
I believe that those who have the strength and leeway to overcome such a difficult period of time will be able to accomplish their tasks in a foreign country. However, internship is only one way to achieve the goals that lie ahead.

To all my juniors who are hoping to do internships, I would like you to have clear goals, independence, and a strong mindset as you take on the challenge of becoming an intern.

Expanding and finding new host institutions

To further enhance the G.ecbo Program, we are making efforts to develop host institutions in various fields.

The trip and consultations this January were reported in the Philippine newspaper The Manila Times, and on the websites and social media of the universities we visited.



Professor Maharajan visited the University of the Philippines, Los Baños, the Department of Development Studies, Ifugao State University, and the Center for Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems (GIAHS) to discuss the development of new internship opportunities. The Center will be added as a host institution in the next academic year.



G.ecbo will call for 2023 participation in April! Go to our website for the list of intern locations and further details.

Editorial

The first semester was online, and in the second semester we saw the resumption of the dispatch of interns for the first time since the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic. The satisfaction level of the participating students was high, and the program got off to a good start. One student said, "I liked the fact that I was able to make plans at the place of my internship, according to my interests and research. It's a lot of hard work, but it's a bonus time when everything you do is an experience." In the coming year, we would like to continue to provide opportunities for students who wish to do internships abroad.

(G.ecbo Program Office)



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