

Reports from JICA Tsukuba ex-participants <Part 1>

Since 2001, AAI has been conducting a number of training courses at JICA Tsukuba in Tsukuba, Ibaraki Prefecture in the field of vegetable and upland rice cultivation. Since the training courses on vegetable cultivation started in 1970 in the Uchihara International Agricultural Training Center, JICA, in Uchihara, Ibaraki Prefecture, the total cumulative number of participants has reached 900. As of October 2012, out of the 900, 149 participants have participated in our vegetable cultivation training and 61 have participated in our upland rice cultivation training. In the series “Close Friends from Far Countries” (AAINews No. 70-72), we reported on post-training activities of our African ex-participants in their own countries. Based on the communications and photos from ex-participants, we would like to continue to report on their activities from time to time.

Mr Emmanuel Odama (Uganda):

Emmanuel, who completed the Area-focused Training Course on Upland Rice Variety Selection Techniques for Africa in 2010, works as a researcher at the Abi Zonal Agricultural Research and Development Institute, a regional institute in the north western part of Uganda. The area covered by the institute includes 8 districts (15,903 km²) with 4.5 million people. According to the 2002 national census, 88.6% of the population is working in the agriculture (81% of women and 68% of men). Emmanuel's main duties are adaptive research on NERICA varieties and their multiplication, and promotion training on rice cultivation targeting farmers. He was also involved in cooperation with the projects by JICA Uganda, prior to his participation in the JICA Tsukuba training course. After returning to his home country, he has also been working on the Promotion of Rice Development (PRiDe) Project to the regions and has been conducting adaptive research on upland rice varieties and new lowland rice varieties in the north

western region.

Rice production and quality have improved significantly on the western bank of the Nile in Uganda's north west. Rice is beginning to be accepted as an important crop by the local farmers.

Mr Amjad Hussain Shah (Pakistan):

Amjad, who completed the Group Training Course on Vegetable Cultivation Technology II in 2006, has been working as the seed certification officer at the Federal Seed Certification and Registration Department of the Ministry of National Food Security and Research. Up to 2009 since he returned from the training at JICA Tsukuba, he was working on test cultivation of tomato, cauliflower, cabbage, carrot, cucumber, watermelon and pumpkin that were imported by the National Agricultural Research Center, to evaluate them for genetic resources and adaptability. After that, he became head of the Central Seed Testing Laboratory as the technical manager, and has been working on various seed quality tests (seed purity test, germination test, seed-borne disease test etc.).



Seed certification based on the ISTA standards



Seed Purity Testing

Facility visit



Joint meeting
with PRiDe Project

Drying for crop cut survey



Sampling

Measuring the grain weight

The Federal Seed Certification and Registration Department was established in 1976 based on the Seed Law. The main function is to conduct quality testing of crop seeds in Pakistan, and register varieties raised by government and private entities. The Central Seed Testing Laboratory is a member of the International Seed Testing Association (ISTA), testing seeds of crops grown in Pakistan. What Amjad is most interested in is to be able to issue the international seed certificate based on the International Rules for Seed Testing of ISTA, and he is in the process of obtaining the endorsement as an internationally accredited laboratory of the ISTA, aiming to realize this by December 2013.

(By Ono)