

**Report on the Dispatch to Namibia:
Organizational structuring of Scientific Research (S)**

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From October 18 to November 3, 2024, I visited mainly the University of Namibia, JICA Namibia Office, Embassy of Japan in Namibia, Oshana Village, Endobe Village, Onandjokwe Medical Museum, and National Archives and Library of Namibia to hold research discussions, collect materials, and conduct field research related to this project. As the stay in Namibia was a short-term this time, I especially focused on building an organizational structure to promote the project “Ecological future making of childrearing in contact zones between hunter-gatherers and agro-pastoralists in Africa,” which was left unfinished during my most recent stay in southern Africa (August 1 to September 3, 2024).

Upon arrival in Namibia, I visited our counterparts at the University of Namibia in Windhoek, the capital of Namibia, to meet with our collaborators, Dr. Romie Nghitevelekwa and Dr. Martha Akawa, to discuss the contact zones of Namibia's hunter-gatherer and agro-pastoralist communities, and to collect data on this (Photo 1). Drs. Nghitevelekwa and Akawa have recently been conducting research on the use of indigenous ecological knowledge in response to climate change in north-central Namibia. In relation to this research project, we are considering collaborating on the (re)creation and utilization of such indigenous knowledge in the contact zones of hunter-gatherers and agro-pastoralists in the region.

I then visited the JICA office in Namibia and gave an overview of this project and its past activities to Mr. Akihiko Hoshino, Director of the Namibia Office, and other staffs. We then discussed the possibility of cooperation in future activities and reaffirmed that these activities are highly compatible with the action research on revitalization of indigenous knowledge and vocational training that we are exploring in this project. We had an enjoyable and meaningful time discussing with abundant examples how the utilization of indigenous knowledge and social organizations is essential not only to motivate local residents to participate in development projects, but also to lead such projects to success.

I also had lunch and discussions with Ambassador Hisao Nishimaki and his fellows at the Embassy of Japan in Namibia. Ambassador Nishimaki, who has extensive international experience and interaction with high-level government officials, provided valuable insights into the current state

of political and business affairs in Namibia. We also exchanged very interesting views on the historical characteristics of Namibia and the social situation of ethnic minorities, while sharing the experience of the presenter's research.



Photo 1 At the beautiful campus of the University of Namibia, from left, ASAFAS graduate student Shino Yamamoto, Akira Takada, Senior Lecturer of the University of Namibia, Martha Akawa, Lecturer of the University of Namibia, Romie Nghitevelekwa, and ASAFAS graduate student Hu Liu.

After that, I moved to north-central Namibia and made a short visit to Oshana and Endove villages in the Okongo district, where many !Xun and ǀAkhoe, known as hunter-gatherers in the region, reside. In Oshana village, I interviewed the residents about their current livelihood activities. In particular, they reported that government development projects have not been functioning well in recent years, and that there are problems such as the inability to procure tractors to plow the fields at the beginning of the rainy season. The findings will be used for future action research. In Endobe village, I visited a kindergarten for young children (Photo 2). I also visited the headman, Mr. Walde Mdatipo, and exchanged views on the history and current problems of the village. He explained with great interest how the missionary group visited this still unexplored area in the middle of the 20th century and

developed the village because of its abundance of water (endobe literally means “water pan”). After that, I visited the combined school in the village and had a chance to talk with the students and teachers. In the combined school, children of both San hunter-gatherers and Owambo agro-pastoralists attend classes together, which is noteworthy from the perspective of the contact zones in this project.



Photo 2 Toilet attached to the kindergarten. A survey on the sanitation situation in the village is one of the most important issues for the future.

After that, I moved to Oniipa, where the headquarters of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Namibia (ELCIN) is located. The Onandjokwe Hospital, which was established and operated by the ELCIN and later became independent, is located in Oniipa. The hospital sets the Onandjokwe Medical Museum, which introduces the historical contributions of the hospital and stores materials on its activities. Here, I worked with Mr. Kleopas Nghikefelwa, who has also helped me during my previous visit, and with whom I had a very interesting interview and collection of materials about the activities of his father, the late Sakaria Nghikefelwa, who was involved in literacy education in San as a linguist at ELCIN. The results will be published as our co-authored paper.



Photo 3 Mr. Kleopas Nghikfelwa in front of his office at the Onandjokwe Medical Museum. He is versatile, full of ideas, and a key person in this project.

In Onipa, Rev. Wilhelm Hainane, who works at Onandjokwe Hospital, explained the close relationship between the church and hospital activities. As the host family, Rev. Hainane has received Ms. Mayu Watanabe, ASAFAS graduate student, who is conducting research on ELCIN's activities. I'm confident that we will learn much more about the unique history of ELCIN's activities through future exchanges with him and his family.

Due to the limitation of the short report, I cannot fully describe the visit details, but I continued to have research meetings and to collect materials in urban areas in north-central Namibia and in Windhoek with the people involved in this project. Through the above, I believe that I was able to make a significant contribution to organizational structuring for the promotion of this research project. I would like to express my gratitude to the organizations and people who made this possible.