

PREFACE

From 1994 to 1997, the “Integrated Agro-ecological Research of the *Miombo* Woodlands in Tanzania” was conducted in Mbinga District, Ruvuma Region in Tanzania, in close collaboration between the researchers of Kyoto University and Sokoine University of Agriculture (SUA) under the research cooperation project of the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA). The researchers recognized the importance and necessity to have perspective gained from the field and understanding the realities of rural areas from multidimensional and interdisciplinary approaches. Based on the experiences and results of this research project, in May 1999, the SUA Center for Sustainable Rural Development (SCSRD) project was launched to build up a method of sustainable rural development (SUA Method), which was developed through practices in two model areas in Tanzania. Thereafter, since 2004, the Grants-in-Aid for Scientific Research by Japan Society for the Promotion of Science (JSPS) have enabled us to continue the research and practice on sustainable rural development in different areas in Tanzania.

On the other hand, in 2002, the Graduate School of Asian and African Area Studies, Kyoto University, launched the 21st Century COE (Center of Excellence) Program entitled “Aiming for the COE of Integrated Area Studies: Establishing Field Station in Asia and Africa, and Integrating Research Activities and On-site Education in Fieldwork.” As a part of promoting this program, Tanzania Field Station (TFS) was established together with other field stations in different countries. Under TFS’s main theme “Transformation and linkages of social, economic and natural environments under globalization”, the research and on-site education were carried out and fostered in various areas of Tanzania.

In December 2005, aiming at feeding back the previous experiences and exchanging the cases, the COE and JSPS joint workshop entitled “Concepts and Perceptions on African Way of Rural Development based on Area Studies” was held in Dar es Salaam. Both Tanzanian and Japanese researchers and practitioners participated and argued key issues, some of which have been compiled in this supplementary issue.

In Tanzania, since mid-1980’s, economic liberalization has influenced socially, economically, and ecologically, and by looking at the process of the people reacting the impact and modifying the indigeness, we shall reconsider African way of rural development. Kato’s article looks at the process of one area becoming a major rice production area by utilizing ecological environment without changing indigenous cropping system of paddy rice in the flood plain of Kilombero Valley, Morogoro Region. The following four articles focus on socio-ecological changes in the Matengo Highlands, of southern Tanzania, which is one of the major coffee production areas in Tanzania. Rural economy and livelihood in Mbinga used to have fully depended on coffee. However, due to the decline of economy under the influence of economic liberalization, coffee production was declined. People diversified economic activities so as to support coffee production. Mhando & Itani’s article examine the process of diversifica-

tion as coping strategies with economic liberalization. Kurosaki looks an importance of daily income for livelihood through changes of cultivation systems after economic liberalization. Araki looks at farmers' various trials such as environmental conservation and diversification of economic activities through group formation and collective action while having interaction with the development project. Nindi focuses on environmental issues between the people who utilize the environment and are affected, and emphasizes the importance of mutual understanding and co-existence.

First of all, we thank for the local communities. People's sincere commitment and enthusiasm in rural development have been always source of our research and practice. Trial and errors and dialogue with them have made us think deeply African ways of rural development. The collaboration and support from SUA, local governments of Mbinga, Morogoro, Iringa and Mbozi, and the cooperation from JICA would be deeply appreciated. Last but not least, without support and funding from COE program, this work would never be accomplished.

J. ITANI
M. ARAKI