

# Africa NOW #122

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pp. 2-13      **Special Topic: Questioning “diversity” in Japan - Racial profiling, microaggression and medical care**

The importance of ‘diversity’ is often talked about in current Japanese society, but what are the barriers to a ‘diverse society’? Based on the issues that have come to light through the Africa Japan Forum (AJF)’s work with Africans in Japan and the activities of the African Kids Club, a special feature entitled ‘ Questioning “diversity” in Japan - Racial profiling, microaggression and medical care’ is presented for this issue of Africa NOW. This special feature highlighted issues in Japanese society whose reality is not well known and shared the experiences and thoughts of those involved. We hope that this will provide an opportunity to think together about what actions and changes are needed.

pp .3-8      **Round-table discussion: The racial profiling of people with African roots** by Nakao Abel, Kashiwakura Kissa Kalilou, Hayashi Junko, Tsuyama Naoko

Nakao Abel and Kashiwakura Kissa Kalilou have two roots - African and Japanese - and grew up in Japan. Since their early teens, they have frequently been questioned on duty by police officers based on racial prejudice, and have also felt the pain caused by the microaggressions they are subjected to on a daily basis in Japanese society. In this round-table discussion, we listened to their experiences and discussed the issues preventing the fulfillment of a ‘diverse society’ in Japan with Hayashi Junko, a member of the Tokyo Bar Association Committee on the Rights of Foreign Residents, and AJF’s Vice-Board Chair Tsuyama Naoko.

p.9      **Coined words using “Black” in a negative way** by Tsuyama Naoko

Tsuyama Naoko, AJF’s Vice-Board chair, raised the issue of using “Black” in the Japanese language in a negative sense, such as ‘Black school rules’ and ‘Black companies’. Noting that the use of the coined words ‘Black’ is seen as racist internationally, it states that other expressions and phrases need to be used..

pp .10-13      **Interview with Asaka Tomomi: Being a doctor overseas and in Japan**

Interview with Asaka Tomomi, who grew up in Kenya until she graduated from high school and became a doctor in Japan. As a surgeon, she has worked in the field of conflict in Iraq, in the northern districts of Uganda and in medical aid in Haiti after the great earthquake. Currently, as head of the International Medical Center at Japan Red Cross Narita Hospital, she is committed to providing medical support to foreigners visiting and living in Japan. In this interview, we heard her story about background to becoming a doctor, her experience of medical support activities overseas, and the challenges she faces in the field of healthcare for foreigners in Japan, in light of the right of all people to healthcare.

pp .14-15      **My life as a foreigner on provisional release, born and raised in Japan** by Kwarteng Eunice

This is the 15th installment in a series of “Essay Relay - African Kids Club”. Kwarteng Eunice, a Ghanaian born and raised in Japan, had her overstayed and had her residential status revoked when she was in primary school, making her family ‘provisional release’. As a result, she have been denied everything they need to lead a basic life, such as having to appear regularly at the office of Immigration Services Agency to apply for permission to extend their provisional release, having to obtain a ‘temporary travel permit’ to travel outside the prefecture, being unable to work, being unable to join the National Health Insurance system and having to pay all medical expenses themselves, not being eligible for free tuition fees at high schools, etc. She states that her dream is to be recognised as a member of society in the country where she was born and raised.

pp .16-19      **Public seminar by Dr. Babalwa Magoqwana in Tokyo: COVID-19 and connecting gender communities: Reflecting on feminist praxis during lockdown in South Africa**

Report on a lecture by Babalwa Magoqwana, head of the Centre for Woman and Gender Studies, Nelson Mandela University, South Africa, on “COVID-19 and Connecting Gender Communities: Reflecting on Feminist Praxis During Lockdown in South Africa”. Magoqwana raised the importance of maintaining community as a challenge for the humanities to address, as the pandemic has restricted movement and contact and denied people the premises for being people. As a practice to achieve this, she introduced an online seminar entitled ‘Author Fridays’ every Friday from March 2020. The seminar covered topics such as queer (sexual minorities), gender and health, women, liberation, populism, performing arts and the role of the humanities, and included an online gender film festival.

pp. 20-21 **From the ‘International health and COVID-19’ blog post by Inaba Masaki**  
Copy from the blog post on ‘International Health and COVID-19’ on the AJF’s website. Inaba Masaki, AJF’s Co-Chair and Program Director for Global Health, provides updates on COVID-19 and related global health issues

p. 20 **The UK’s “100-Day Mission”; Will it be a permanent multilateral initiative for pandemic readiness?**

The ‘100-day mission’ launched by the UK in 2021, led by the G7, aims to develop vaccines, treatments and diagnostics within 100 days of a pandemic. There is now a move underway to strengthen the ‘100-day mission’ as a permanent multilateral initiative for pandemic readiness. For the ‘100-Day Mission’ to become a global pandemic initiative, not just a G7 one, it needs to move from being confined to the R&D sector and pharmaceutical industry in the G7, particularly in the UK, US and Japan, to being open to all sectors, including civil society and others.

p. 21 **G7 Japan and G20 India; Will India gain more influence for global health transformation?**

The G7 and G20 in 2023 will be chaired by Japan and India respectively, and it remains to be seen how these two countries will influence international health policy respectively. In a contribution to the British medical journal “The Lancet” by Prime Minister Kishida Fumio, published in January 2023, the Government of Japan announced a policy that organises the international health agenda that has been addressed by the G7 and the UN. At present, however, no specific policies or initiatives have been identified. India, on the other hand, hosted a meeting of the G20 Health Working Group in its country in January 2023 and has clearly raised the issues that need to be attained. It could be argued that India is trying to connect its ‘strengths’ - its huge pharmaceutical manufacturing capacity and advanced digital capabilities - to a multilateral pandemic preparedness and health framework.

pp. 22 **Film Introduction: “The new Corona reflects the disparity in life” by Koizumi Takakiyo**  
AJF’s Global Health Project Coordinator, Koizumi Takakiyo, introduces the documentary film “The New Corona Reflects the Disparity in Life”. In the current Corona disaster, there is a growing global movement for temporary waiver of intellectual property rights on vaccines and medicines for COVID-19 in order to eliminate the global healthcare gap, and AJF is an active participant in this movement. As part of this campaign, the film “The New Corona Reflects the Disparity in Life” was produced, in which civil society members from around the world were interviewed in the midst of the Corona disaster, demanding fair access to healthcare.

p. 23 **Book Review: Endo Mitsugu, Sakamoto Takuto, eds. “Welcome to the African World” by Sakamoto Takuto**

Sakamoto Takuto’s book review of Endo Mitsugu, Sakamoto Takuto, eds. “*Welcome to the African World (Yokoso Afurika Sekai* in Japanese)”. The book responds to the wide range of questions and concerns of those who want to start learning about Africa, with chapters on topics such as the attractions of the African world, geography and nature, people and their lives, people’s world views, pre-independence history, post-independence history, state and politics, economy and development, people crossing borders, infectious diseases, education, social inclusion and exclusion, international relations, and relations with Japan. It is about understanding Africa’s ‘diversity’ and questioning our own perceptions and engagement with Africa.

Back cover **Afterword (‘Hitotsu no musubime to shite’ in Japanese) and a record of AJF’s activities**