

# African Poverty

Hibi Eruno

## ● Introduction

I want to become a global person in my future.

We often associate the global person with the person who is able to share warmly with natives wherever he goes, but I am resistant to only Africa.

I cannot become a true global person with such a mind.

I must change in my awareness.

When I thought deeply, I found that I did not know Africa very much.

Then I caught an opportunity that I was able to study at University of Cambridge, which was one of the most outstanding universities in the world.

We often tend to think that Africa is the poorest continent.

Many people, countries and institutions have supported Africa for a long time, but Africa is still poor.

I wanted to know why African poverty does not disappear and researched.



<African Family>

## ● Literature Review

Because of various causes, there are many poor countries in Africa.

One of the cases is that much relief supplied from all over the world is not received by the poor who need them.

According to data by the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications, all over the world in 2008, the total of ODA amounted to 136.8 billion dollars (about 12000 billion yen) and Japan also sent it about 700 billion yen.

41% of them were toward “sub-Saharan Africa.”

“Sending” aid is different from “receiving” it.

In the case of Japan, it is said that only about 20% of the total aid is received by the poor who actually need support.

In other words, only 2400 billion yen, out of 12000 billion yen, are received by those who really need support.

9600 billion yen, the rest of it, are taken by customs staffs, policemen and politicians.

A prime minister once estimated that about 85% of various capitals which are for the poor' s salvation had been embezzled by corruptible officials.

“In Africa there are many poor people, who are given much aid, but why do they remain poor?”  
A Malian said the following about the reason.

“Well that is because African politicians are troubled if the poor disappear.

They need developed countries' support to get money.

They tell that they make roads and receive support (budget).

But a lot of it are taken by them.

If they are not given much money but relief are supplied, they sell relief somewhere and earn money.

That is how many African politicians earn money.

They are troubled if the support does not come to be sent by foreign countries.

It is because they come not to earn money.

So they always need the poor.

They say that there are such many poor people in this country and appeal to the world for support.”

A steady number of the poor are always necessary to receive aid from foreign countries.

This Malian said that African politicians were not interested in whether their countries are poor, but only think that they become rich.

All African politics are not such terrible.

There are also persons like Nelson Mandela in South Africa.



<Nelson Mandela>

## ● Method

Firstly I referred to an African person' s story because I thought that the way was the best.  
Then I interviewed Dr Rosalind Raddatz, who was a Postdoctoral research fellow, Department of Politics and International Studies (POLIS), University of Cambridge, and a Research Associate, Lucy Cavendish College.

I talked with her for about 40 minutes by Skype on 26th July.



<Dr Rosalind Raddatz>

- **Discussion**

I asked her six questions.

1. Why does not African poverty disappear though many people, countries and institutions support Africa?
2. Do not developed countries teach African politicians?
3. What should the African poor do to become rich?
4. There are many other countries to receive aid and they are not poorer than Africa, why?
5. Do the African poor know the situation?
6. According to my friend who read a book about Fairtrade, Fairtrade does not help many African farmers because their rulers take most of the aid, is it true?



<Fairtrade>

She answered like this.

1. Because African politicians steal aid.

Economy and politics are tied strongly.

2. Yes, they do.

But still, African politicians do acts of dishonesty.

3. They should place importance on education.

For example, Botswana familiarized citizens with elementary education.

And now it is a free and democratic country, both politics and public peace are stable, and GDP per citizen, which is 7500 dollars, is higher than South Africa.

4. Up till 30 years ago, they and Africa were the same economic situation.

The countries that were active about support were China and France.

But especially South Asia such as Bangladesh grew rapidly.

In addition, South Korea also did though North Korea did not.

They are all democratic countries.

In other words, the growth of countries needs democracy.

Communistic China might go bankrupt.

Economy and politics are tied strongly.

In addition, GDP came to grow in Turkey.

5. No, most of them do not.

They do not know if African politicians gave themselves the aid as it really was.

6. No, it is not.

It is known as a very good movement for the poor.

Especially we can say that Kenya was almost able to grow thanks to Fairtrade.

## ● Conclusion

A Malian' s story tells one of the reasons that Africa is poor.

If politicians, who lead nations, think that they are troubled if African countries become rich, the countries cannot escape from poverty.

But his story was over 15 years ago.

I think that many African troubled about support are pointed out and improved now.

“What should the African poor do to become rich and happy?”

I asked Dr Rosalind Raddatz this question.

She replied, “rich and happy are not the same.

We, economists, think so at least.”

I was very impressed with this word.

And when I also thought deeply, that was certainly true.

I learned about not only Africa, but also the important thing for life from her.

In addition, it was a new idea for me that politicians place importance on education to make their countries rich and prosperous.

Anyway, I hope that those who really need support receive much.

I am not able to excuse that self-interest of politicians torments their citizens.

They are suffering from hunger and dying.

It is nothing less than they steal their living rights.  
I thought that we, developed countries, still must help Africa.



<African crying child>