

The Education, Children, and union Situation in North East Asia

Mongolia was amongst the 7 most vulnerable countries which will be affected by the Global economic and financial crises. When the budget revenue has dropped due to fall in price of gold and copper by the recommendations of IMF, public services funding was cut. Budget allocations for education sector was cut by 10 percent. Fortunately, the union demanded the government in 2008 to fulfill 20% budget revenue quota for education sector and much higher allocations were made in the education sector. The Government of Mongolia tried to cut teachers salary by 20 percent but again the union stopped that amendment to the budget of 2009.

In Japan the Central Government is trying to reduce its involvement in education and the proportion of compulsory education costs borne by the Central Government has decreased from 1/2 to 1/3. As a result, many regional governments struggling financially have hired casual and temporary teachers. Also, even though there are national laws and regulations on class size, regional governments allocate teachers unilaterally in reality and there are now educational differences between regions depending on their financial situation.

The Democratic Party of Japan promised free senior high school education in its manifest, and there is a hope that this will be the first step forward to solving the issue of disparity. JTU will continue its work to next seek an increase of public spending on higher education.

In spite of economic crises, education funding of Korea is increased by 0.2% to 4.5% of GDP. Recently to simplify the tax system, Korean Government tried to abolish education tax which has contributed for improving quality public education and education environment. As a result of KFTA's active voice against education tax abolition, the Government decided to postpone the Education tax abolition Bill. KFTA keeps urging to ensure more stability in education funding.

NTA promotes free education from primary to upper-secondary level. However Taiwanese government is not determined for the policy, so NTA will continuously demand by all necessary means to promote free education.

In recent times, children's poverty has become a social issue in Japan. Due to the downturn in the economy, parents' income has dropped and educational costs now take up a larger proportion of the household budget. It is estimated that one in seven children are suffering from poverty. In Japan and in Korea, education costs are high and some children are not able to go on to further education or need to quit school due to financial reasons. As a part of social safety network, school tuition is discharged for students from the lowest income family at primary, secondary and higher education levels. In Mongolia the government is covering costs of school breakfast and lunch, meals for dormitory students. School supplies, textbooks are provided free for children from poor households. Poor schooling facilities including heating, electricity and water supply is the problem not only in rural areas also in suburbs of the capital city. In addition, in Japan there are statistics showing that children who go to well known competitive schools are from higher income families. This indicates that equal opportunity in education is not guaranteed.

The changes of Taiwanese population structure, which are decreasing birth rate and increasing new migration, have affected the quality of education. The massive decrease in birth rate leads to decrease in number of students in one school and possibility of teacher laid-off. NTA has won administration's approval of decreasing the average number of students per class. Furthermore, the increase in new migration burdens teachers' work for the difficulties in communication. NTA is now actively demanding the Government to provide more learning materials to new migration to solve the above-mentioned problem.

Master teacher system which KFTA has urged the government to implement for 20 years is finally accomplished. This system aims to promote quality education and teachers' professional development. It is now being piloted and soon it will be legalized. KFTA and the government is working on practical plans of sabbatical leave for primary and secondary school teachers who are involved in professional development programs. In Mongolia Action plan on teachers in-service training and professional development was adopted.

Bullying, non-attendance and suicide are prolonged issues in Japan. Recently, with the spread of the internet and mobile phones, personal attacks using the internet have increased, making it difficult to detect problems and identify those involved.

The environment surrounding children is flooded with information and there are cases where it links to delinquency or crime. Therefore, media literacy education is an urgent task and JTU together with the think-tank, Institute for Education and Culture, have put forward concrete recommendations. We will be demanding the implementation of these measures by the Japanese government and Ministry of Education(MEXT- Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology)

1. Taiwanese government has committed under GATS framework to open educational service market at tertiary and higher education level, which has led to vigorous competition among universities. In addition Taiwanese government continues to accelerate the marketization of education.

Despite of economic crises KFTA's membership is increasing thanks to the actions dedicated to attract young teachers and it is recognized in the Korean society one of the most influential organization in education sector.