

Project Name	<b>Exploration of Practical Wisdom and Resilience Overcoming Downside Risk - Collecting grassroots voices in Africa under COVID-19</b>
Research period	from December, 2021 through November, 2024

### Principal Researcher

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### Research Summary

This research project aims to classify and assess the real and perceived risks associated with both COVID-19 and government responses to the pandemic in seven African countries. It also elucidates the people's resilience in overcoming the risks by using their practical wisdom. Besides, we will make policy recommendations for containment policy against the pandemic by governments and aid agencies. The study areas are South Africa, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania, Zimbabwe, and Ethiopia. We establish an international collaborative research structure consisting of seven groups with research institutions in Japan and each target country (figure).

Under the global pandemic of COVID-19, Africa has its own concerns. First, there are difficulties in containing COVID-19 in an environment where health care systems and sanitation facilities are not in place. Second, strict policies by governments, such as border closures and curfews, have made it difficult for local people to earn a living, while violent policing by governments' officials has caused damage. Third, violent policing has created mistrust between the government and the people, hindering the spread of infectious disease control and vaccines. Fourth, other infectious diseases, such as Ebola and malaria, also exist in Africa, and the focus on COVID-19 control has increased the excess death toll from other diseases.

Given these situations, this research project considers the pandemic of the COVID-19 as a downside risk. In his report on human security, Amartya Sen referred to downside risk as to the risk that one risk triggers a snowball effect of other potential risks. In addition to the infection itself, the pandemic of COVID-19 triggers multiple risks to people, including strict policies, violent crackdowns, hunger, disruption of education, and the spread of other infectious diseases. Therefore, in addition to focusing on the individual risks, this research investigates the risks from the perspective of the people exposed.

As a research method, research collaborators will conduct field surveys. At the same time, online communication tools such as WhatsApp, which is widely used in Africa, will be

used to collect "private messages" of the daily living conditions and emotional changes of people in the target area. Through that, we will collect "grassroots voices" during the pandemic and dynamically capture the process of people overcoming risks by using their practical wisdom during the three-year study period.

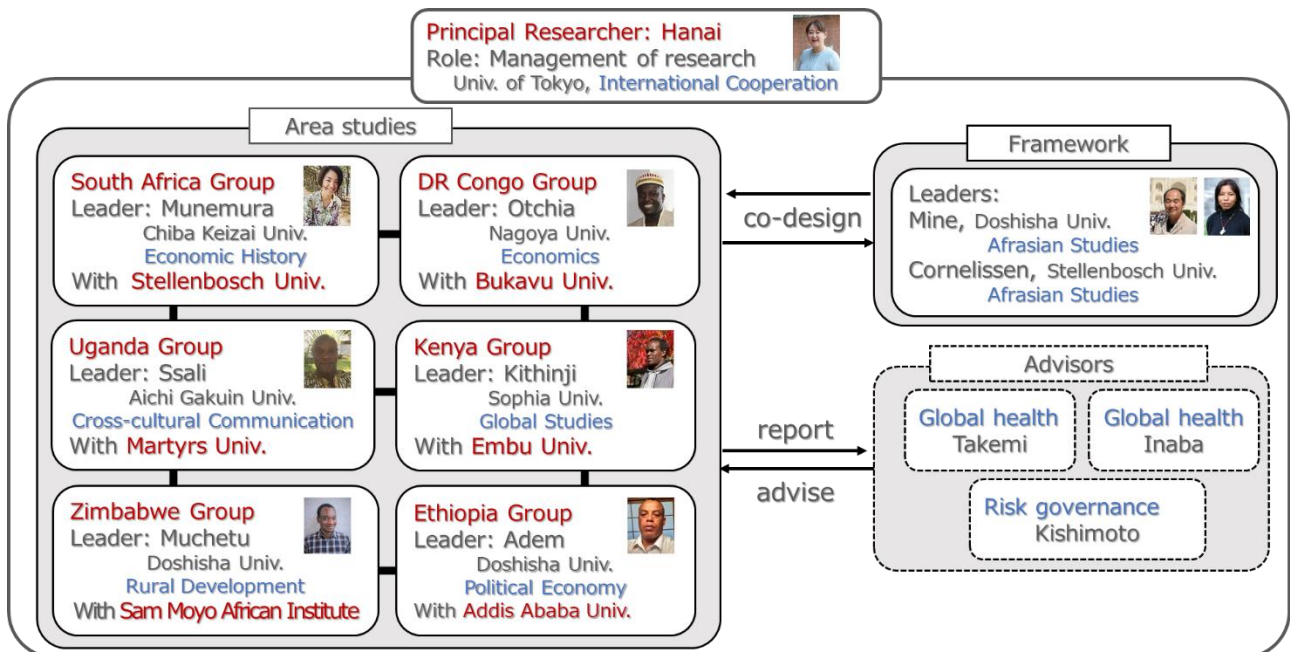


Figure: Research implementation structure