

2018年度 神戸大学男女共同参画推進室 ユネスコチェアサマープログラム 感想・報告書
2018 Kobe University Gender Equality Office UNESCO Chair Summer Program Reflection Report

学部・研究科 Faculty/School	学科・コース Course
GSICS	Regional Cooperation Policy Studies

(1) 見たこと/What you saw; (2) 考えたこと/What you thought; (3) 感じたこと/What you felt

As our departure to Indonesia approached, I was increasingly concerned about whether I would fit in with the younger students participating in the UNESCO Chair program. I wondered if students at Universitas Gadjah Mada, our host university, would be disappointed when they saw that I was much older than undergraduate students in their late teens and early twenties. I thought about my “buddies” from UGM, even before I met them, and felt sorry for the students assigned to help me, thinking how much more rewarding it would be for these students to be matched with someone closer in age. However, despite of these concerns, I was determined to keep an open mind and looked forward to learning as much as possible about gender and vulnerability in the context of disaster risk reduction. As I reflect on my experience in Indonesia, I am relieved to say that my worries were unnecessary thanks to everyone’s kindness and understanding. I am also pleased to say that the experiences and insights that the program offered exceeded my expectations.

When we arrived to Jogjakarta, UGM students were patiently waiting to welcome and take us to our homestay. I was relieved to discover that “homestay” in Indonesia seems to literally mean “staying at a home” which does not mean the same as “staying with a family in their home” as I had assumed before our departure. It meant that I could focus on the program without having to worry about how I spent my free time, but perhaps for younger students’ it meant a lost opportunity to learn more about Indonesian culture. Our initial homestay did not have running water, but students were resourceful and coordinated with other students staying at a nearby homestay to bathe at their place. If participants in the program were disappointed by any of these details, they certainly did not show it and accepted the situation gracefully without any comment. The reason that I mention this is to highlight that students were cooperative, open to new experiences, and eager to embrace cultural differences and their unfamiliar environment. I feel that students’ diverse backgrounds and positive attitude contributed greatly to the overall success of the program.

The most rewarding part of the program was learning about the full range of disaster risk reduction and how much heavily it relies on the effective coordination between multiple stakeholders and actors at every level and sector in order to successfully prepare for and mitigate disasters in response and recovery efforts. In my opinion, the program was structured to provide relevant information and various perspectives in a meaningful way which helped us to grasp the complexity of this enormous task. The lectures were intense but provided necessary and useful background information. The lecture and activity facilitated by Mercy Malaysia was especially helpful to get us thinking about the importance of coordination between actors at the local and international level to minimize the overlapping of limited resources and insure that necessary relief is provided to those in distress. Student presentations about the resilience of Taiwanese women were impressive. Field trips gave us the opportunity to interact with people in the local community and learn from their expertise and experiences. The group project and role play activities help us to reflect and put things into perspective. Each day was built upon what we learned the day before. As a result, we were able to gain a comprehensive introduction to disaster risk reduction through the lens of gender and vulnerability.

If I had to make a suggestion to improve next year’s program, my suggestion would be to allow more time

for the field trip to the permanent housing facility so that all students have the chance to interview the community leader, his wife and the people living in the community. I feel that because we were limited to conduct only one interview, we missed a much-needed opportunity to gather information which would have helped us to better understand the perspective of survivors at the individual level. I also think that it would be a good idea to interview the community leader and his wife separately to be able to fully concentrate on each individual's experiences. Perhaps allowing more time to interview people, would have given us even more insights to the complexity of vulnerability and gender.

---To Professor Alexander and Professor Okada---

Thank you very much for all your understanding and support throughout the UNESCO Chair Summer Program. It was a truly an amazing and unforgettable journey that would not have been possible without your dedication, vision, and leadership. Telima Kashi!

With warmest regards,
Shari Yamamoto