

Preface

Fiscal year 2009 is the third year of five-year RIHN Full-Research (FR) for our project “Vulnerability and Resilience of Social-Ecological Systems.” Our project is a member of Ecosophy program under the five RIHN research programs. Other programs include Circulation, Diversity, Ecohistory and Resources.

During the FY2009, young project researchers stayed for long-term in Zambia and collected data with great efforts. During this fiscal year, we experienced 2nd rainy season and the harvest season for the 3rd rainy season 2009/2010 is approaching. The field experiment for the impacts of various fallow systems on agricultural yield and soil nutrients is underway at the field site in Petauke District, Eastern Province. In the Sinazongwe District, Southern Province, annual rainfall for the 2007/2008 cropping season was twice the normal level and it has been revealed that household reduced food consumption after the heavy rain. It was observed that farmers were trying to overcome this situation through various coping strategies including shifting cropping patterns from maize to potato and beans, or engaging in various cash earning activities. The analysis at the local level for decision making process of food distribution by government organization is under way. The land use and forest cover information using satellite data and aerial photographs as together with intensive ground survey analysis is also underway.

In April, eight project members attended IHDP Open Meeting 2009 and presented at two organized sessions and a poster session. In August, we organized the 2nd Lusaka Workshop and invited Dr. Elizabeth Colson who is Emeritus Professor of U.C. Berkeley and the Tonga study expert. Participants included researchers from universities and government agencies, staff from NGO and international aid agencies. The concept of “resilience” has been well received by participants of the workshop. In October, we were excited to hear news that Prof. Elinor Ostrom became a recipient of Nobel Prize in Economic Sciences. Prof. Ostrom was a lecturer of the 12th Resilience Seminar in 2006.

Our project has just finished the third year of full-research. We appreciate our project members for their efforts and contributions to the steady progress of our project. We also appreciate the Project Evaluation Committee (PEC) members, director, program directors, administrative staff and the colleagues of RIHN for their kind support and for facilitating this integrated research program.

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