

### 1. Research title / research area / name

Virus, democracy and sustainable society: the experience of community-based HIV/AIDS programs among the Gurage, southern Ethiopia / Ethiopia / Makoto Nishi

### 2. Research purpose

The purpose of this research is to conduct field research on community-based HIV/AIDS initiatives promoted by different stakeholders in the Gurage zone, southern Ethiopia, and to discuss possible ways through which the stakeholders may construct democratic and sustainable relationships between those who live with and without the virus.

Through my research I will examine local initiatives for HIV prevention and for supporting the lives of people living with HIV by focusing on local debates over the efficacy of such initiatives. Theoretical problems in capturing the ideas of democracy and sustainability in the context of community-based HIV/AIDS initiatives will also be examined.

### 3. Major findings

I conducted field research in Gurage during September 2007 and February 2008. I learned that traditional leaders of the Gurage are actively engaged in HIV prevention activities by promoting pre- and post marital testing. On the other hand, women living with the virus are forming their own association to 'renegotiate' the current situation. At this moment local debates over the risk of infection and necessary support for AIDS patients are going on between men and women, married and unmarried, *positiboch* and *negatiboch*. These two words are the local terms to refer those who are HIV positive and HIV negative.

### 4. Publication plans

Kyoto Working Papers on Area Studies (G-COE Series)



Photo 1: A Gurage village landscape



Photo 2: “Parents should talk about HIV/AIDS with their children” (a campaign board installed by the government)