



**Hideyo Noguchi Africa Prize  
Prix Hideyo Noguchi pour l'Afrique  
NEWS LETTER**

*No.6 November 2011*

**Visit to Japan by Prof. Miriam K. Were, the Laureate of the first Hideyo Noguchi Africa Prize (Medical Services Category) in 2008**

(October 1st to 8th, 2011)

Prof. Miriam K. Were, the Laureate of the first Hideyo Noguchi Africa Prize (Medical Services Category) in 2008 visited Japan to participate in STS Forum (Science and Technology in Society Forum) and encourage the victims of the great east Japan earthquake in Fukushima.

STS Forum was held in Kyoto from October 2nd to 4th. She had a lecture titled "CONTROL OF INFECTIOUS DISEASES & OTHER COMMUNICABLE DISEASES THROUGH THE COMMUNITY HEALTH STRATEGY". During the presentation, she emphasized

the community health approach appropriate for Africa's development needs: In most sub-Saharan African countries, the majority of the people lives in communities far away from health facilities and many people suffer from infectious diseases. Bringing health to the community improves access for all to health care. Through the community health strategy, the people can be integrated into the formal health system. This provides plenty of opportunities to control infectious and other communicable diseases in sub-Saharan Africa.

Then, she visited Fukushima prefecture on October 5th and 6th. During her visit, she visited places related to Dr. Hideyo Noguchi and areas hit by the great east Japan earthquake. Her great career as a doctor and her warm personality (well-known as "Mama Miriam" or "Big mama") encouraged victims and volunteers in Fukushima.

Before her departure for Kenya, she visited Tokyo on October 7th and 8th. She exchanged views with people related to The Hideyo Noguchi Africa Prize. The list of the persons she met is as below:-

(In alphabetical order)

■ **Dr. Kiyoshi KUROKAWA**

Professor of the National Graduate Institute for Policy Studies  
Chairperson of Hideyo Noguchi Africa Prize committee

■ **Dr. Makoto MUGITANI**

Assistant Minister, Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare

■ **Mr. Yasuhiro SONODA**

Parliamentary Secretary of Cabinet Office, Government of Japan

■ **Dr. Keizo TAKEMI**

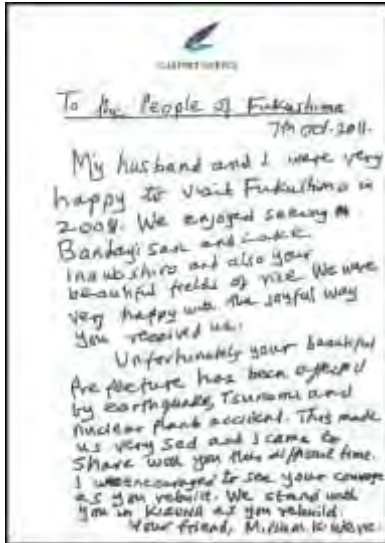
Professor, Research Institute of Science and Technology, Tokai University



**Prof. Miriam K. Were**

The Laureate of the first Hideyo  
Noguchi Africa Prize (Medical  
Services Category)

**To victims of the great east Japan earthquake in Fukushima**  
**Here is a Message from Prof. K. Miriam Were**



To the People of Fukushima

7th Oct, 2011.

My husband and I were very happy to visit Fukushima in 2008. We enjoyed seeing Bandai san and Lake Inawashiro and also your beautiful fields of rice. We were very happy with the joyful way you received us.

Unfortunately your beautiful prefecture has been affected by earthquake, tsunami and nuclear plant accident. This made us very sad and I came to share with you this difficult time. I was encouraged to see your courage as you rebuild. We stand with you in KIZUNA as you rebuild.

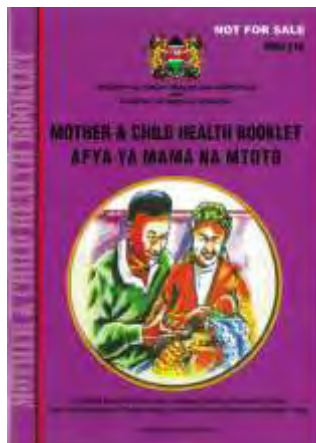
Your friend, Miriam K. Were

**Picture gallery**

**STS Forum in Kyoto**

Kenya's Mother & Child Health Handbook (MCH Handbook)

Prof. Were is spreading MCH Handbook, as an important pillar of community health strategy in Kenya. It refers to Japanese MCH Handbook system.



**Prof. Miriam K. Were in Fukushima Prefecture**



Prof. Were together with Mr. Yasuo YAGO, the Director of Hideyo Noguchi Memorial Hall



Prof. Were together with Dr. Hidekiyo TACHIYA, the Mayor of Soma City



Prof. Were together with Dr. Yoshinobu KUMA, the Director of Public Soma General Hospital



Prof. Were gave a lecture on African culture to children of Nakamura Daiichi Elementary School.

■ **Prof. Miriam K. Were in Tokyo**



Prof. Were handing over the KIZUNA T shirt to Mr. Yasuhiro SONODA, Parliamentary Secretary of Cabinet Office, Government of Japan



Prof. Were together with Dr. Makoto MUGITANI, Assistant Minister, Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare



Prof. Were together with Dr. Kiyoshi KUROKAWA, Professor of the National Graduate Institute for Policy Studies



Prof. Were together with Dr. Keizo TAKEMI Professor, Tokai University

**Interview with Prof. Miriam K. Were**

1 Could you tell us why you came to Japan this time ?

There are two reasons I came to Japan. One reason is to participate at STS (Science and Technology in Society) Forum that was held from October 2nd to 4th in Kyoto, chaired by Mr. Koji Omi, ex-Minister of Finance. I was invited by the Forum to give a lecture on infectious diseases.

Another one was to visit Fukushima. I have been having an idea to visit Fukushima again since the Great East Japan Earthquake in last March. I was very sad and sorry. I decided to go to Fukushima, because I thought the invitation by STS forum was a good opportunity. When my husband I and colleagues visited Fukushima in 2008 after the Prize ceremony, we were very happy with the joyful way people received us. I feel Fukushima is my home. I placed a bouquet of flowers in the sea in the memory of those who lost their lives and those who have not yet been found.

I also visited temporary houses where displaced families live and I was very happy they were laughing with me.

## 2 Have you had any changes after receiving the Hideyo Noguchi Africa Prize?

Though Dr. Noguchi worked not only in Africa, but also in the U.S., Latin America and Europe, etc..., I was very happy that Japanese Government honored Africa and created the Noguchi Hideyo "Africa" Prize. It is encouraging not only for some African people who could be candidates for this Prize but also for all Africans.

TICAD (Tokyo International Conference on African Development) with all African leaders gathering enriches and encourages Africa. In the world, some people say "Hopeless Africa". However, the phrase "Towards a Vibrant Africa" was written in the brochure of TICAD IV in 2008. This phrase is very encouraging for Africans.

Moreover, the strong point for the Noguchi Hideyo Africa Prize is its prize money ("One hundred million yen"). This Prize money helped us to support training of public health workers who deploy their activities in communities, to provide a vocational training and medical services, to improve the access to general health care.

Before, AIDS orphans, having lost confidence, were scared because they didn't understand what to do. Some of them suffered from sexual abuse or prostituted themselves. But, they could regain their confidence through training to become kindergarten teachers. The Noguchi Hideyo Africa Prize made it possible to assist some of them. I am very happy about that. I would like to continue and develop such a movement at the community level.

## 3 You are interested in mother and child health handbook (MCH HANDBOOK)

I have been interested in MCH Services all my professional life because the group of mother and child is the one most at risk in Africa. So I was very interested in the Mother and Child Health Handbook which Japan has used and whose use Japan is supporting in a number of developing countries. After giving a lecture about African health care situation at Nagasaki University in 2009, I had an opportunity to get in depth briefing about the MCH Handbook from Dr. Yasuhide Nakamura of Osaka University. I was looking for somebody who could tell me about MCH Handbook and Dr. Nakamura was also looking for somebody who was interested in the MCH Handbook in Africa. I thought that MCH Handbook was very important for the development of continuum of care between the mother and child health. MCH Handbook has already been introduced in Asia. I was encouraged and I thought "Why not in Kenya?"

Representatives from Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Burundi and Malawi gathered and held a workshop on MCH Handbook in March 2010 in Nairobi.

People asked us, on the occasion of the 7th international conference on MCH Handbook in Bangladesh 2010, to host the 8th international conference in Kenya in 2012. And I accepted. This will be the first trial for Africa. Though Africa is the most behind achieving the targets 4 and 5 of MDGs, this will be a chance to push forward the momentum in Africa towards achieving MDG 4 & 5. On that occasion, I hope we will organize an event related to the Noguchi Hideyo Africa Prize to celebrate the 4th anniversary of the Prize.

END

DONNATION TO HIDEYO NOGUCHI AFRICA PRIZE (AS OF SEPTEMBER 2011)

491,625,972YEN [INDIVIDUAL:1887, CORPORATION OR FOUNDATION:320 (TOTAL 2,207) ]

**Thank you very much for your support.**

**Hideyo Noguchi Africa Prize Unit, Cabinet Office**

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