ICT for Aging Society: Proposing Japan-the United States Collaboration for Silver Innovation

**Welcome address:**


**Speaker:**

Dr. Toshio Obi, *Professor Graduate School of Asia-Pacific Studies, Waseda University, Tokyo*

Naoko Iwasaki, *Associate Professor, Institute of E-Government. Waseda University*

**Discussant:**

Majd Alwan, *Director, Center for Aging Services Technologies, LeadingAge*

**Speech summary**

**Yuki Imamura**

There are many issues that could be discussed between Japan-US relations, such as technology, culture and economy. The topic today specifically looks at the applications of ICT in Japan as Japan is currently facing the challenge of a rapid expansion of its aging population. As for the U.S., whether the “Japan Model” could be deployed would be a key question. This event offers a great opportunity for face-to-face discussions. Our participants are distinguished, coming from diverse backgrounds and organizations.

**Toshio Obi**

Today’s topic is the aging society in Japan and its implications for the U.S. Examining the rapid aging situations in the world, Japan is the No. 1 country that has the biggest aging ratio of the population. It is defined as “Super Aging Society” and at present, one fourth of its population is aged people and will become one third in the future. The aging issue affects both economy and social development by impeding the growth andpressing the social security system. There might be similar problems in the future of USA, which are now taking place in Korea and China. Some important facts of the aging society in Japan include: aging people spend a half of national healthcare cost, 80% would like to die at home and keep half of personal financial assets. To tackle the situation, the Global Silver ICT Network is developed. My office at Waseda University has been collaborating with OECD, APEC, UN, WHO, China, UNESCO, EU, etc. to work on the aging problems. One of the successful instances would be the joint OECD-APEC -Waseda activity. Based on a series of research and activities, problems of the aging issue contain the lacking in standards, revaluation of healthcare service, need of smart connectivity and security system and collaboration between government and enterprises. There are also concerns of Silver e-Democracy, Transparency and Public Accountability, which covers public
service issue, social networking issue, big data and global standards. The Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communication (MIC) has a significant project with my leadership that comes up with the Silver ICT visions and proposals to solve the aging problem. In general, the aging society is a crosscutting problem and it happens in a number of different areas. Therefore, it also creates a huge market for numerous enterprises. To summarize, the Japanese government has initiated to introduce new policies to promote silver ICT project. There are new research fields and more needs to be done.

Naoko Iwasaki

The Otsuki City (Mt Fuji City) could be considered as an important case study of the silver ICT project. It aims to promote inclusive communities on silver society in local area by utilizing ICT applications for the e-agriculture, e-health, and e-tourism. While there is 80 percent of aging people in Japan want to work but only 20 percent has a job, e-agriculture helps to improve the employment condition. E-health assists to manage and support aging people, and e-tourism brings the convergence between the young and old people. The project by far has been implemented successfully.

Majd Alwan

CAST is a program in LeadingAge that opens beyond aging services providers and brings technology companies as well as academic researchers who are looking into the aging issue and aims to promoting the awareness of ICT and dealing with the aging problem. There are four focused areas, referring to research, policy, standards and education, which CAST is actively working on to promote appropriate technologies. CAST has recently identified future-ready models for integrated/coordinated healthcare, community-based support services, and real estate based as well as key enabling technologies. In addition, CAST has conducted a comprehensive study of the aging services technology (AST) for the US Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), in partnership with NORC at the University of Chicago; HHS submitted the report to Congress. Based on the research, adoption barriers identified included lack of awareness, variability of evidence of value, and the absence of business models. Moreover, there is strong evidence of efficacy, but evidence of cost-effectiveness is weaker. On the other hand, CAST is developing tools to assist providers of aging services understand, plan for, select and implement the right technology solutions that fit their business lines, goals and needs to help them realize the value of technology. Regarding to Dr. Obi's presentation, I agree on the point that there is need for interoperability, especially on Interoperability Standards and Certification. Also, there should be critical re-evaluation of the traditional healthcare services such as cost-effectiveness and large-scale demonstrations. We should use research findings to drive adoption and change policies and practice, meanwhile; encourage grounded user-centered technology developments. Lastly, I would like to encourage the collaboration between Japanese enterprises and the U.S. companies.

Key Questions
1. How are the ICT models produced and financed? What’s the role of government? The public and business work together.
2. What about the entrepreneurship in the silver ICT market? Yes, the entrepreneurs are willing to step into the market, especially the robot one.

3. In the case of Otsuki City, how does e-agriculture help increase the silver employment? The e-agriculture creates jobs while the aging people can help monitor the fields since they cannot work full time.