

# The Impact of the EDU-Port Projects on the Internationalization and Quality Improvement of Education in Japan – Through Analysis of Reports on Past Projects and Interviews with Stakeholders

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# Purpose and Background

## Why Reconsider “Domestic Return” in the EDU-Port Japan Initiative?



- EDU-Port Japan has aimed to promote both international outreach and domestic educational improvement.
- However, “domestic return” has often been discussed only as a fragmented or secondary outcome.



This study reframes domestic return as a cyclical learning and transformation process generated through international collaboration.

# Research Scope and Methodology

## Approach to Understanding Domestic Return as a Process

- Data source:
  - **112 project reports** from EDU-Port Japan
- Methods:
  - Qualitative content analysis
  - AI-based co-occurrence network and cluster analysis
  - Long-term, empirical case study at the University of Fukui
- Key feature:
  - This study views domestic return not as an outcome but as a cyclical process in which teachers' and practitioners' reflection, practice, and organizational learning interact, and analyzes it through an iterative combination of content analysis, co-occurrence network analysis, clustering analysis, and case studies.

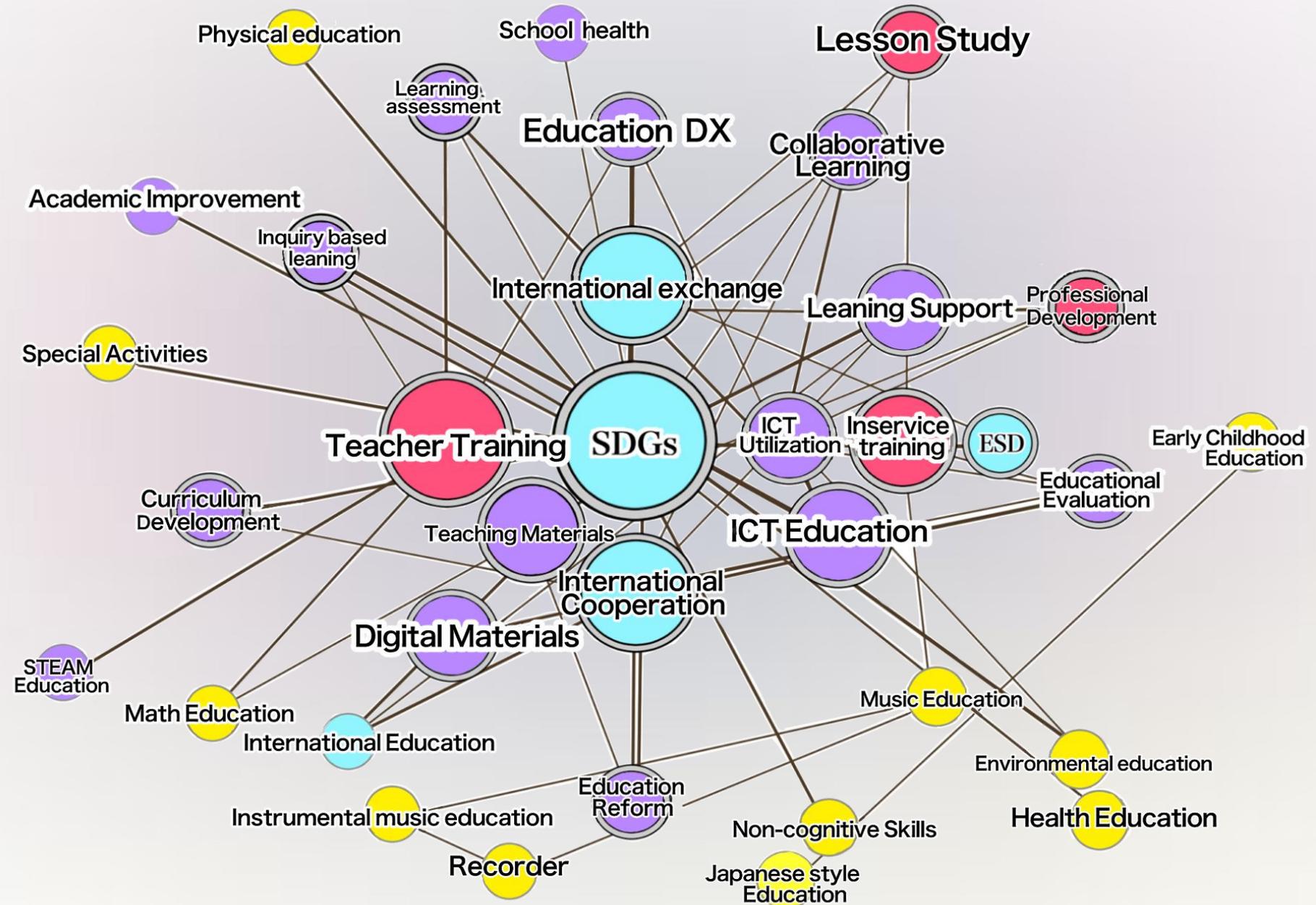
Main organisation	No. of reports
School	3
University/Graduate school	31
Private company	57
NGO/NPO	18
Educational organisation (Academic society, education board etc.)	3

# Redefining “Japanese-Style Education”

## Beyond a Fixed Model or Method

- Japanese-style education should not be understood as a fixed system, pedagogy, or single model, but rather as a generative practice that emerges through international collaboration.

- It functions as an educational practice model that promotes practitioners’ reflective learning through international collaboration and feeds it back into classrooms, schools, and local communities.



# Structural Framework of Domestic Return

Four Interacting Meaning Domains Identified through Co-occurrence Network analysis and Clustering analysis

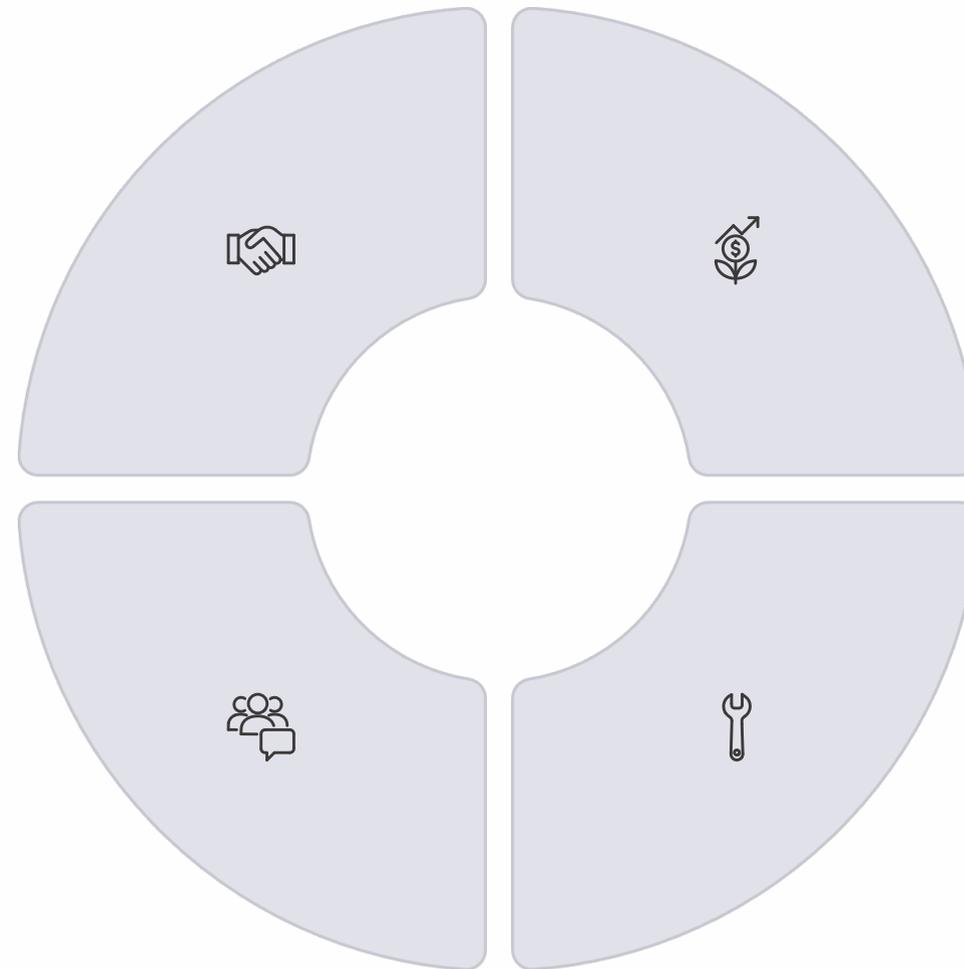
These domains are interconnected and mutually reinforcing.  
Domestic return emerges through their dynamic interaction.

International understanding  
and cooperation  
(Ideational domain)

Professional learning of educators  
(Learning domain)

Subject-based education and  
community engagement  
(Expansion domain)

ICT and teaching  
material development  
(Practical domain)



# Structure of Domestic Return

A Case Analysis of the Process through Which Domestic Feedback Is Generated: Insights from Interviews with Eight Organizations

## High School A

- Enhancing the Quality of Vocational (Manufacturing) Education through International Collaboration and Its Contribution to Student Career Development [FY2023]  
→ Advancement of Inquiry-Based Learning and Career Education through Lesson Study Videos, Research Conferences, and Student Interactions
- **Main themes:** International understanding and cooperation; subject- and domain-specific practices / dissemination to local communities

## International NGO B

- International Understanding Education for Youth Based on Refugee Support Practices [FY2020–2021]  
→ Learning to Engage with Refugee Issues as Personal Concerns through Opportunities for Dialogue, Participation, and the Promotion of Youth Understanding
- **Main theme:** International understanding and cooperation

# Case of the University of Fukui

## An Analytical Case Illustrating the General Framework

- **Target:** The University of Fukui (since 2016)
- **Aim:** This study analyzes how domestic return has been concretized over time based on longitudinal data, and examines its underlying structure through both theoretical and empirical perspectives.
- **Partner countries:** Malawi and Uganda
- **Analytical focus:** Three layers (Teachers, students and schools)
- **Data Source:** Multiple data sources, including student interviews (n=2), pre- and post-questionnaires and interviews with teachers who traveled to Uganda, reports by participating teachers in this project (n=5), as well as lesson records and conference discussion records.

2018–2019 : **Multilateral Expansion and International RT Expansion**

- Pilot Project Adoption
- Dispatch to Malawi, Egypt, etc. / On-site RT Implementation
- Held International RT for Approximately 470 Participants (Fukui)

2022–2024 : **Institutionalization and regional expansion**

- Linked with grassroots technical cooperation
- Establishment of a three-tier PLC involving schools, universities, and government
  - Presentation in Africa and international conferences

2016–2017 : **Participation and Foundation-Building Phase**

- Initiated international collaboration through EDU-Port participation
- Invited to Fukui RT as JICA training follow-up
- Introduction of “Fukui-style Lesson Study”

2020–2021 : **Online Lesson Study Coordination (COVID Era)**

- Online Teaching Research Model Development
- Cross-Border PLC Network Formation

2024–2025 : **New Developments and Deepening Domestic Reintegration**

- Collaborative Classroom Research in Malawi and Uganda
- Sharing a Culture of Reflection through training in Japan
- Establishing Inter-University Collaboration Foundations

□ The core of domestic feedback lies in the **transformation of teachers’ professional expertise**, and a structure was identified through which this transformation extends to students and schools.

# From Teacher Transformation to Systemic Change

## A Knowledge Circulation Model

### 1<sup>st</sup> Layer

International lesson study and cross-cultural encounters

→ Reflective transformation of teachers

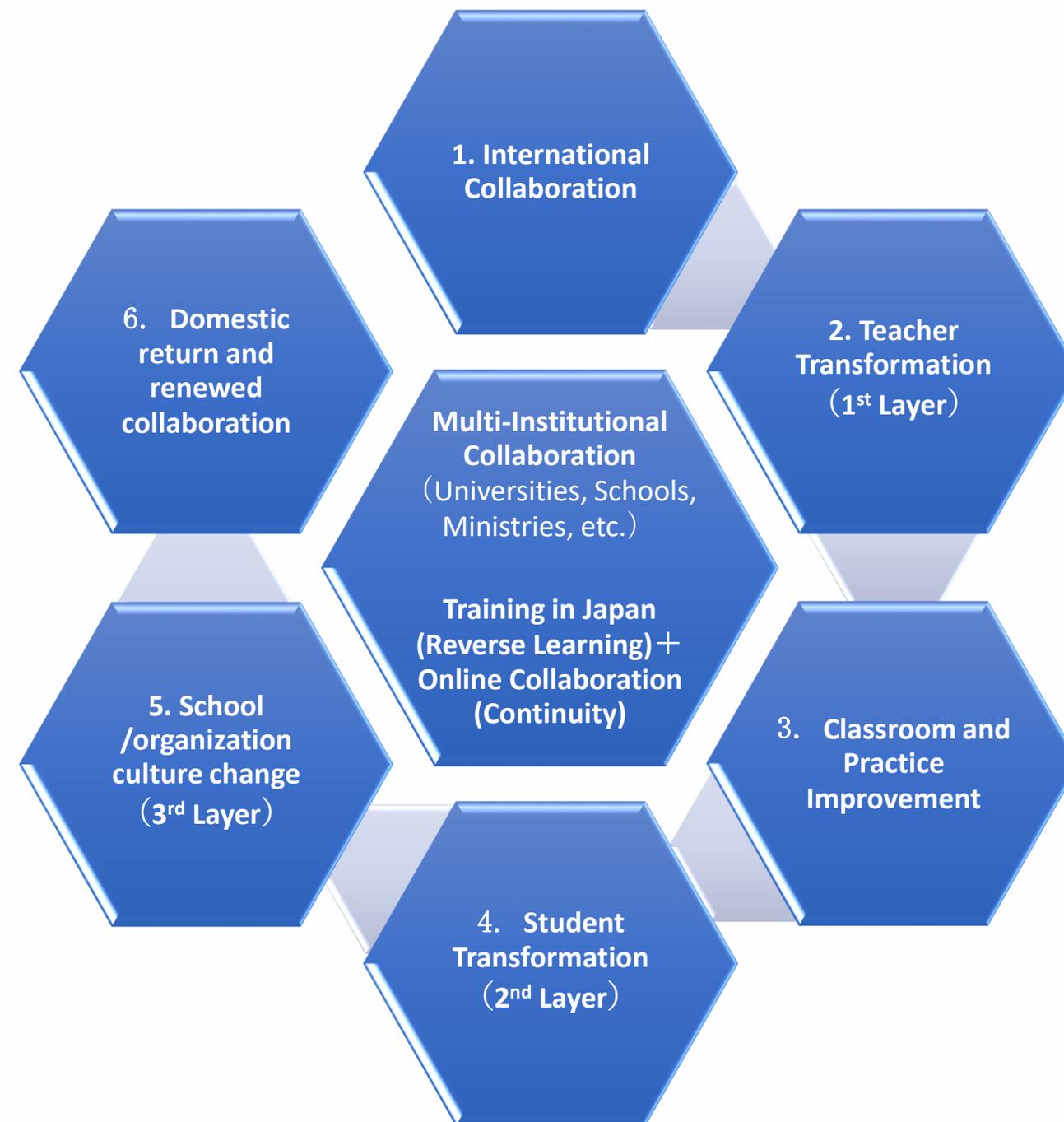
Teacher transformation leads to:

### 2<sup>nd</sup> Layer

Changes in students' cognition, attitudes, and agency

### 3<sup>rd</sup> Layer

Development of school/organization collaborative cultures



# Rethinking Evaluation: Indicators of Domestic Return

Balancing Quantitative and Qualitative Perspectives

## Quantitative indicators:

- Number of trainings, participants, collaborative lessons
- Useful for capturing scale and continuity



## Qualitative indicators:

- Transformation of teachers' beliefs and practices
- Changes in students' learning quality
- Activation of professional learning communities
- Expansion into communities and networks



By viewing **domestic return as a process-oriented and generative outcome**, these indicators capture cycles of learning and transformation initiated by international collaboration.

# Implications for the Next Phase of EDU-Port Japan

## Toward a Sustainable Knowledge Circulation System

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Reframe EDU-Port Japan as an infrastructure enabling continuous cycles of international collaboration and domestic return

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Strengthen its role as a collaborative platform connecting universities, schools, local governments, NGOs, and companies

03

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Reposition domestic return not as a secondary outcome, but as a **core mechanism** sustaining international educational cooperation

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Thank you!