



40 Years Achievement of JICA Volunteers



40 YEARS OF JICA VOLUNTEERS IN SRI LANKA

JICA conducts two volunteer programs in Sri Lanka: The Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers (JOCV) Program, and the Senior Volunteers (SV) Program. Both programs dispatch Japanese nationals who wish to share their knowledge, skills, and expertise for the benefit of people in developing countries.

The JOCV Program commenced in Sri Lanka following the exchange of notes between the Government of Japan and Sri Lanka on 15th May 1980. Subsequently, the SV Program commenced dispatching volunteers to the country in April 2002. Since 1981 over 1,100 JICA volunteers have been dispatched to work in Sri Lanka, and these volunteers have served in more than 100 different fields of service. Volunteers conduct their activities in the local languages (Sinhala or Tamil), depending on the region they work in. Although a large majority of JICA volunteers primarily worked in Sinhala speaking areas, with the dawn of peace in the country, JICA commenced assigning its volunteers to the Northern and Eastern Provinces as well. This commenced in 2012, and it was the first time in 25 years that JICA volunteers were sent to former war-torn regions.

Whilst JOCV are dispatched to offer their service with a strong commitment by utilizing their knowledge and skills for the job category of their choice, SV are dispatched to offer their specialized skills to support projects that require their specific expertise. The purposes of both volunteer programs are threefold.

- To contribute towards socio-economic development, and reconstruction activities at grass-root level in developing countries.
- To promote friendship and deepen mutual understanding between Japan and developing countries.
- To give back the volunteer experience to society, mainly in Japan.

The year 2021 marks 40 years of volunteer activities in Sri Lanka, and the impact it has had amongst various communities, especially at grassroot level, has been significant. The small, but important contribution JICA volunteers have made towards the country's development is greatly valued by the people and organizations that have benefited from their services.

The focus of JICA volunteer program in Sri Lanka has changed from time to time in keeping with social and economic changes that have taken place in the country. During the early stages of the program there were many volunteers engaged in fields such as agriculture, animal husbandry, inland fisheries, telecommunication and such. Similarly, during the 1990s there seemed to be volunteer dispatch opportunities in fields such as community development and several areas of vocational training. Although JICA Volunteers' role was mainly value addition and technology transfer - "helping local people do what they do better", with the Sri Lankan Government employing an increasing number of qualified and specialized human resources at grassroot level, the need to the dispatch JICA volunteers in some of these areas decreased. Year 2000 afterwards a third of JICA volunteers have been engaged in the education sector.



Mr. Motoharu Muta, the First Batch of JOCV in 1981. He was engaged in vegetable growing at NYSC Batangala Training Centre.



Ms. Hiroe Ioka, the First Batch of JOCV in 1981. She worked at Uda Peradeniya Training Centre.

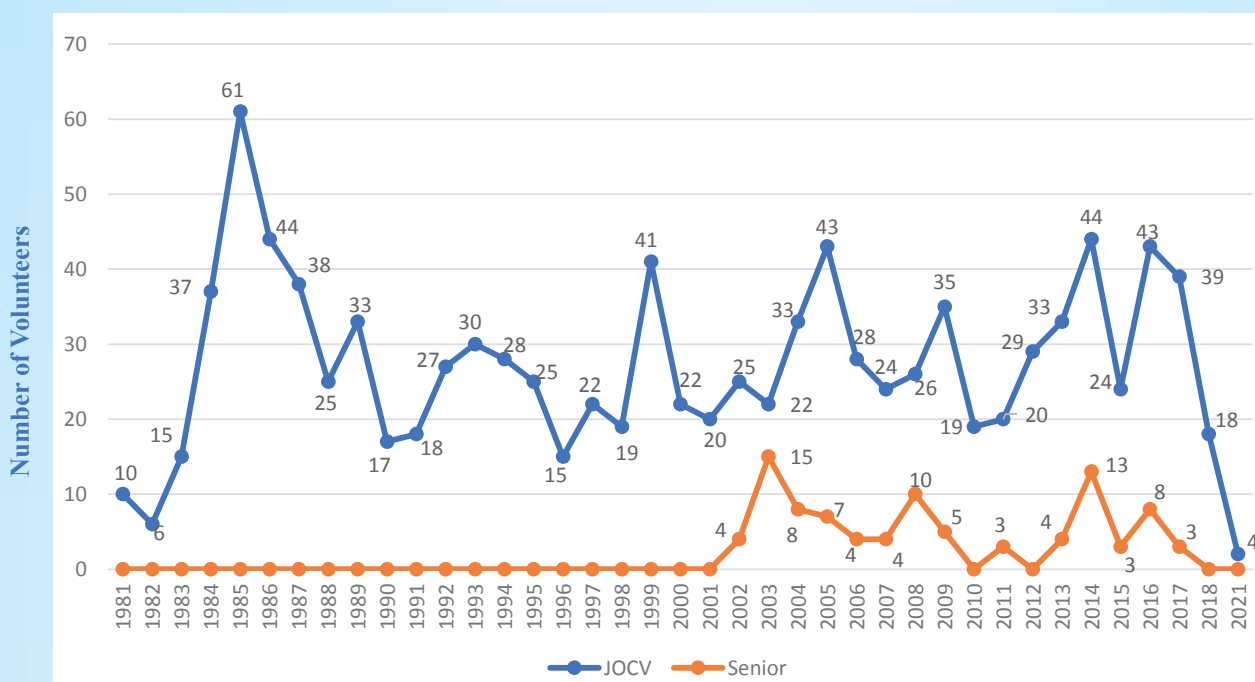
Here are some statistics that provide a clearer picture concerning the number of volunteers dispatched, their fields of expertise, and geographical locations of service.

Volunteers Dispatched to Sri Lanka Since 1981 (Cumulative Total)

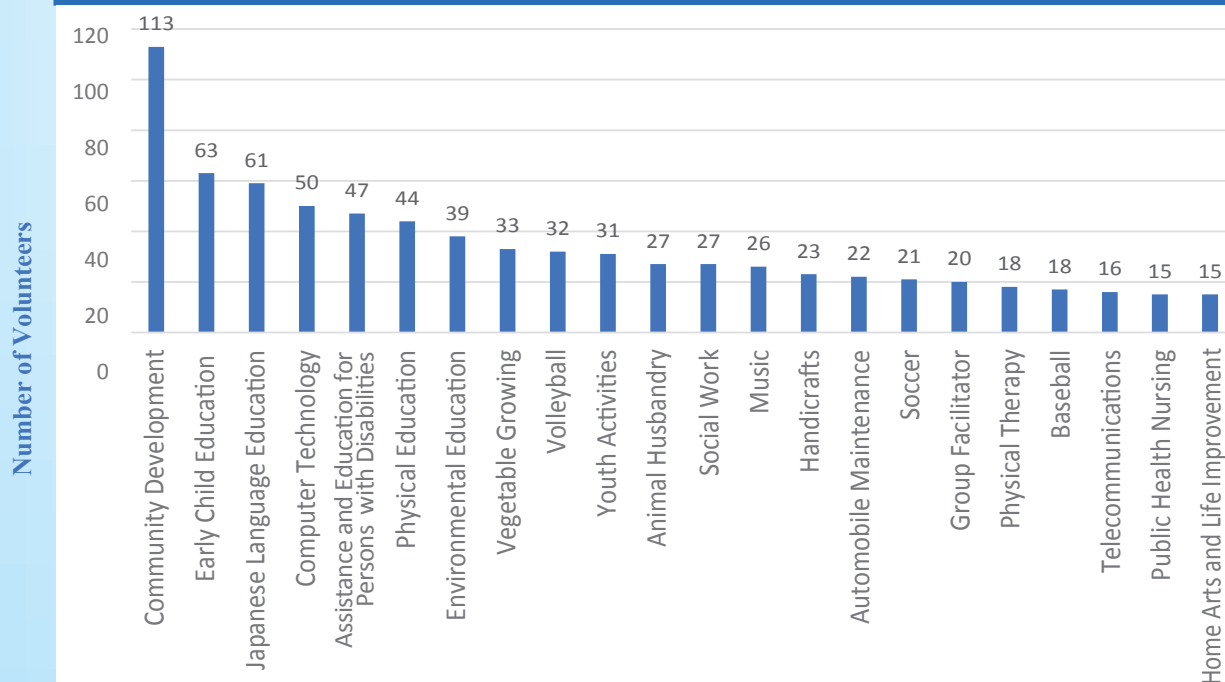
JOCV: 1,062 (Male: 456 Female: 606)

SV: 91 (Male: 66 Female: 25)

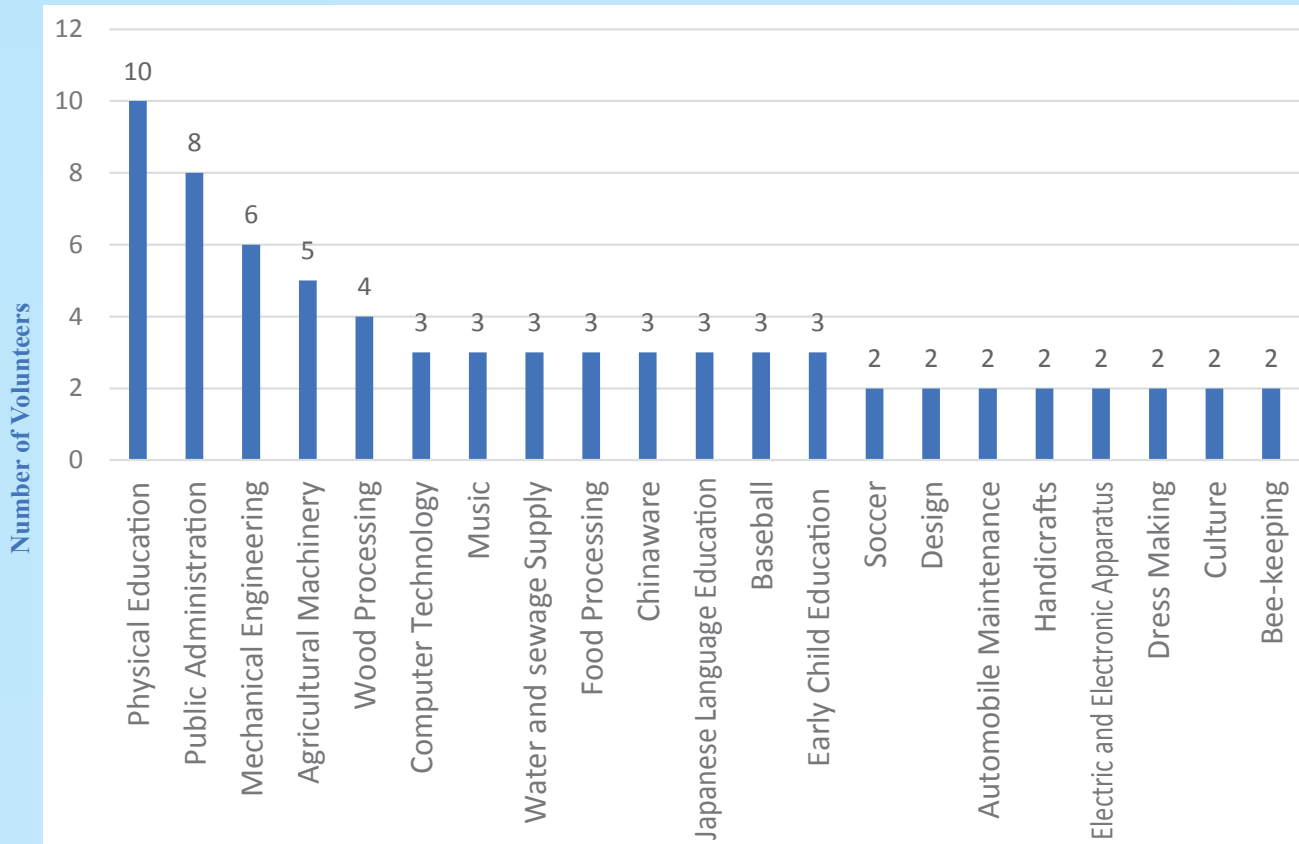
Number of JOCV and SV by Fiscal year (JOCV: Since 1981 - SV: Since 2002)



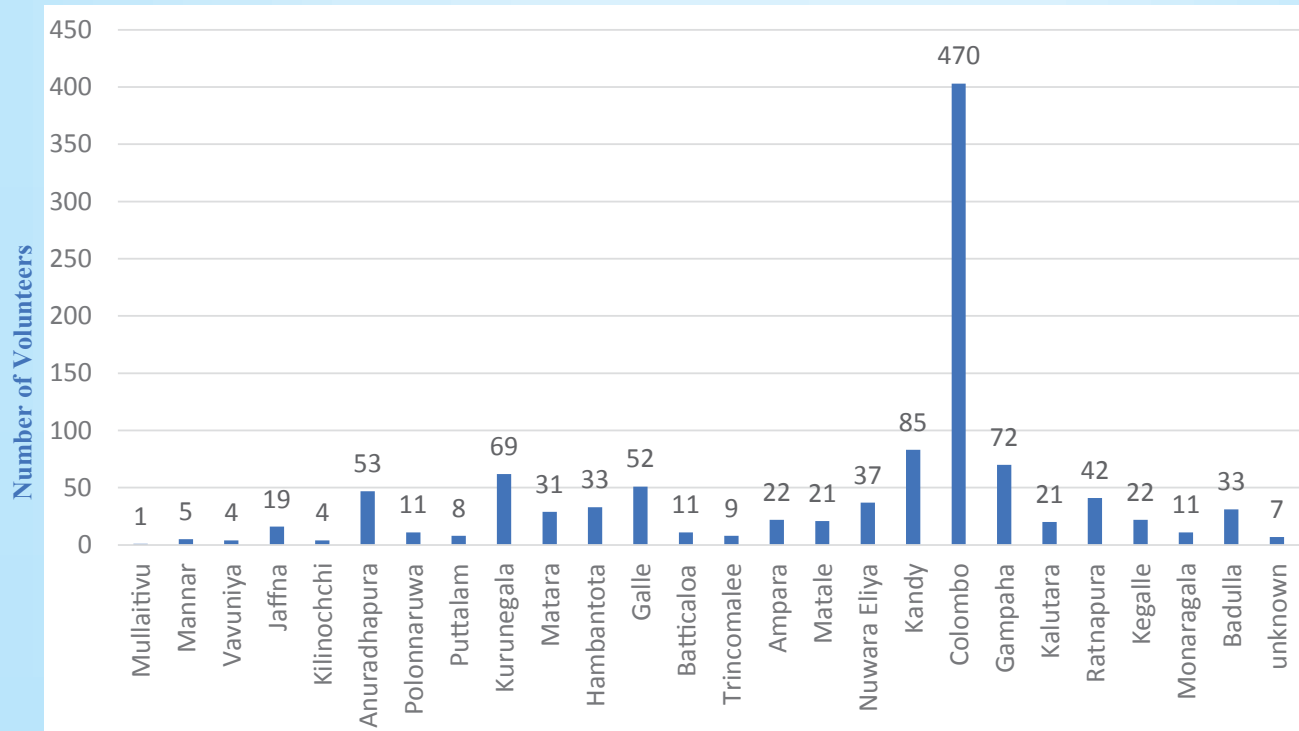
Top 20 Areas of Specialization (Cumulative Total) JOCV (1981-2021)



Top 20 Areas of Specialization (Cumulative Total) SV (2002~2021)



JICA Volunteers – Locations of Service (District Wise Distribution)



MAJOR AREAS OF VOLUNTEER CONTRIBUTIONS

Agriculture, Animal Husbandry, and Inland Fishery Related Activities

During the 1980s and up to the late 1990s, there was a strong demand for JOCV members in fields such as agriculture, animal husbandry, inland fisheries, food processing etc. There are several factors that brought this about. One is the change in the Government's agriculture policy that encouraged commercial type farming in place of consumption oriented contemporary farming with the aim of bringing about a marketable agricultural surplus. As a result, the emphasis was more on improved agricultural techniques that were considered helpful in increasing the incomes of the rural poor. However, with the use of improved agricultural inputs, the profitability of small scale farming experienced a decline, resulting in eco-friendly, low cost production techniques being preferred by small scale farmers. Therefore, the role of JICA Volunteers in this instance was to bridge this gap by introducing appropriate technologies.

The target groups JICA Volunteers worked with could be categorized into two broad groups. One

group consists of mostly youth who follow various training programs in skill development centers, while the other group consists of people who are a part of society that do not have any intention of becoming professionals but would want to benefit from technology acquired through the services of JICA volunteers. The National Youth Services Council (NYSC) is an example of the former, while the Coconut Triangle Corporation Union is an example of the latter.

Other institutions that benefited from the volunteers' services included the Farm Mechanization Training Centre in Anuradhapura where volunteers transferred skills in the field of repair and maintenance of agricultural machinery (e.g. farm tractors, combine harvesters, paddy transplanners etc.), and the Beekeeping Centre of the Ministry of Agriculture situated in Bindunuwewa, where volunteers trained officials and farmers on beekeeping techniques.



Mr. Masao Murata (center) engaged in vegetable growing. Assigned to Sarvodaya (NGO) in 1987, he worked with rural communities in the Kurunegala District



Mr. Hiroshi Taniguchi who worked for the Department of Agriculture - Beekeeping Unit in Bindunuwewa transferred knowledge on modern beekeeping techniques to the staff and trainees (e.g. farmers, agriculture extension officers etc.), of the Beekeeping Unit. The most significant and valued activity Mr. Taniguchi engaged was queen bee rearing.

Inland Fishery

JOCV who contributed towards this sector worked for the National Aquaculture Development Authority Fish Breeding Centres in Dambulla, Nuwara Eliya and Ridigama. These volunteers transferred skills to officials and farmers on fish breeding techniques and aquaculture management.



Mr. Yoshitake Sone providing technical advice at the Dambulla Aquaculture Development Center.



Activities Relevant to Human Resource Development (HRD)

So far the highest number of JICA Volunteers dispatched to Sri Lanka have been in human resource development (HRD) related fields such as pre-school education, teacher training (in science, mathematics, home science, western music, Japanese language, primary education, and physical education), and predominantly important fields of skill development such as automobile engineering, design, welding, ceramics/pottery, computer science, food processing etc.

Support Towards Teacher Training

Another HRD related area in which JICA volunteers have made significant contributions is teacher training. Such training was mostly conducted in National Colleges of Education coming under the Ministry of Education. Some of the subject areas covered by JICA Volunteers with respect to training conducted in national colleges of education are: science, mathematics, IT, home science, primary education, physical education and western music.

Upon request from the Ministry of Education and provincial education bodies, JICA assigned volunteers at zonal education office level, where volunteers worked in partnership with teachers in local schools. The role of these volunteers is to transfer technical skills to teachers whilst teaching students, and adding value to existing study programs.



Ms. Tomoyo Takeichi transferring skills whilst working with a mathematics teacher in a school in Ampara



Primary school teacher Ms. Minami Abe teaching at a school in Kilinochchi



Science teacher, Mr. Yoshiaki Asami conducting an experiment with students in a rural school in Bandarawela



Students enjoying a mathematics class with Ms. Naoko Hashimoto who worked in Wellawaya

Early Childhood Development (ECD)

Another area that could be considered as having benefited immensely from grassroots level activity conducted by JICA volunteers is the ECD sector in Sri Lanka. This sector has shown many deficiencies including the level of enrolment (of 3-5year olds) standing at 70% in 2020. Consequently, the poor quality of child care methods adopted in most pre-schools have become a critical issue.

However, due to the change in lifestyles and attitudes towards education at present, there is a growing demand towards pre-school education not only in urban areas but also in the rural sector. It is to this environment or background that JICA volunteers were dispatched to serve in various parts of the country, covering rural, urban, and plantation sectors. JICA volunteers serving in the plantation sector worked under the Plantation Human Development Trust.

The role JOCV played in the establishment of the Sakura Model Preschool and its affiliated teacher training school in Kurunegala is one of the highlights of the volunteer program in Sri Lanka.



“Going through the tunnel” Children at play in a preschool in Polonnaruwa where Ms. Tomoko Sata worked



Ms. Risa Yamaguchi helping local preschool teachers in Matala to enhance their skills



Ms. Ryoko Omura with Preschoolers
Field of Early Childhood Education attached to Open University of Sri Lanka, Colombo.

Japanese Language Education

Teaching and training related to Japanese language education was one of the first assignments taken up under the volunteer Program in Sri Lanka. Some of the Japanese language courses that were supported by JICA Volunteers include the Japanese Language Course conducted under the auspices of the Embassy of Japan (in cooperation with the Japanese Language Education Association and popularly referred to as the “Sasakawa Hall Japanese Language Training Course”), the Japanese language teaching programs at the University of Sabaragamuwa, NYSC, and some language training programs conducted by a few government schools.

In later years several JICA Volunteers were assigned under the Ministry of Education to enhance the quality of teaching at school level by enabling local teachers to improve their language and teaching skills.

This activity complemented several short term Japanese language courses that were conducted by a Senior Volunteer at the National Institute of Education. Such courses were aimed at improving the knowledge and skills of local school teachers preparing students for GCE Ordinary Level and Advanced Level Examinations.



Ms. Chie Tanaka – Japanese language teacher who worked for the University of Sabaragamuwa at a group discussion with students



Ms. Saeko Yamamoto performing a traditional Japanese dance at a Japanese Cultural Festival organized by the University of Sabaragamuwa



Japanese Language teacher, Ms. Satomi Matsuyama teaching Japanese to the students at Visakha Vidyalaya in Colombo 4.

Western Music

JICA, through its Volunteer Program has supported the western music education sector in Sri Lanka since 1999. Moreover, the Japanese Government has paid special attention to this field of education by providing musical equipment to the Ministry of Education, under its Cultural Grant Aid Program. The equipment was provided for the purpose of teaching western music in Government schools. Thereafter, based on an initiative made by JICA, the Ministry of Education established a special training unit called the Western Music Resource Centre



Western music students being trained by Mr. Toshiaki Kamada at a school in Colombo

which was established within the premises of the National Institute of Education (NIE), Maharagama.

Various western music teacher training programs towards which the JICA Volunteer Program has been providing inputs have been instrumental in increasing the quality of training in urban schools, as well as with respect to training of the National Youth Orchestra. Another institution to which JICA Volunteers were assigned was the “Music Project”. This organization is a local NGO that provided training in western music to school children, with a special focus on rural schools.



Music teacher, Ms. Haruyo Kubo teaching music to Teacher Trainees at Maharagama National College of Education

JICA Volunteers’ Support Towards HRD Under the NYSC



The facilities of NYSC’s Maharagama Centre were constructed in 1985 under the Grant Assistance for “Grass-Roots Human Security Projects” of the Japanese Embassy in Sri Lanka, at a cost of approximately Yen 1 billion. This was followed by the supply of equipment worth of Yen 1.8 billion in 1986, also under Japanese Grant assistance.

The special feature of the assistance provided by JICA Volunteers to NYSC was its integration as a technical assistance component supporting the grant assisted facility and equipment supply program which was aimed at facilitating capacity building and maximum utilization of the resources provided under the said grant assistance program. This is a clear example of an integrated ODA assisted program in Sri Lanka. Some of the areas in which JICA volunteers have provided assistance at the NYSC include rice farming, animal husbandry, vegetable growing, beauty culture, welding, automobile engineering, western music, computer science, sports etc. The assistance provided by JICA volunteers through NYSC has immensely contributed towards developing skills of Sri Lankan youth, and has also enhanced employment possibilities especially for young school leavers. While these are some of the direct benefits resulting from JICA volunteers’ inputs at NYSC, it could be said that through this program JICA volunteers’ contribution towards developing cross-cultural links between Japan and Sri Lanka has been fairly significant.



Ms. Hiroko Sekine, who was assigned to NYSC Batangala Center in 1987. She worked in the field of animal husbandry.



Volleyball game in progress at the indoor stadium of the Maharagama Center

JICA Volunteers' Technical Inputs at Higher Educational Institutions in Sri Lanka

Apart from the University of Sabaragamuwa which has obtained the services of JICA Volunteers in the field of Japanese language education for more than two decades, JICA has also provided the assistance of SV to the University of Moratuwa, the University of Visual and Performing Arts, and the University of Vocational Technology (UNIVOTEC).

Since the commencement of the Senior Volunteer Program in Sri Lanka in April 2002, JICA has been able to support the Bachelor of Design Study Program at the University of Moratuwa. So far, more than ten SV in disciplines such as ceramics, jewellery, fashion, and furniture design have served under this study program. These volunteers possessed an abundance of experience and were able to add much value to these study programs in terms of introducing practical and modern skills that were helpful to both lecturers and students.

At the UNIVOTEC, SV who are experts in electric and electronic apparatus have guided lecturers and students on robot design, sensors and other technical fields. They not only provided guidance and technical advice to UNIVOTEC's full time mechatronics students, but also to those from the industry who undergo training at UNIVOTEC. The University of Visual and Performing Arts also benefited through the services of senior volunteers in the fields of ceramics and photography.

Senior Volunteers are known to possess a wealth of experience and practical knowledge, which is invaluable to the organizations and people they seek to help. Aim of the volunteer program is to ensure that the knowledge and skills acquired from these SV would be put into effective use in a manner that would ultimately improve the overall quality and productivity in relevant industrial sectors in Sri Lanka.

Vocational Training

JICA Volunteers have transferred technology in several fields including information technology, automobile/motorcycle/farm machinery repair and maintenance, pottery, furniture, airconditioning and refrigeration, cookery, pattern making and such. These volunteers have supported vocational training programs in universities, technical colleges and other training institutions at national, district, and rural level.

JICA Volunteers who support the vocational training sector focus on practical training, and not only simply transfer technology, but also add a lot of value by introducing activities aimed at building worker confidence, discipline, and proper work attitudes.



Mr. Junichi Kawasaki Training students at the Construction Equipment Training Center on repair and maintenance of construction machinery



Women in Velanai-Jaffna being taught the process of making fish biscuits by Ms. Miyako Yamamori, Specialized in food processing

Community Development

Through its volunteers engaged in the field of community development, the JICA Volunteer Program seeks to empower people who have few or no resources and influence in society to cooperatively organize themselves in order to achieve common objectives that would bring about specific benefits to them. In doing so, some of the objectives towards which volunteers have worked include improved living standards, increased opportunities for income generation, and increased employment opportunities for the underprivileged and marginalized. There has been a high level of community participation in most of the JICA volunteer assisted programs.

A program aimed at improving living standards of people living in low-income

settlements was carried out by JICA volunteers in collaboration with the former Ministry of Housing and Plantation Infrastructure (MHPI). This program was carried out by a special unit called the “JOCV Unit” which functioned under the MHPI, but had its origins as far back as 1986, when it was initially set up under the National Housing Development Authority. Since its inception, more than sixty JICA volunteers have served under this service unit which worked in collaboration with urban local authorities (ULAs) that hosted JICA volunteers at field level.



Ms. Kayo Imamura discussing issues with members of an underserved community in Colombo.



Ms. Chisato Koseki (far right) with participants of a cake and beauty-culture exhibition organized by the Negombo Municipal Council for the purpose of creating income generation opportunities for women.



Ms. Tomomi Kimura (who worked for the Dehiwala Mount Lavinia Municipal Council in the field of Community Development), working amongst underserved communities in 2003.



Ms. Sae Ishihara, specialized in community development, building bridges between the community in Mahaiyawa and stakeholders of the JICA funded Kandy City Wastewater Management Project

The plantation sector in Sri Lanka is another area in which JICA Volunteers have played a facilitation role in the field of community development. In this respect, JICA Volunteers worked in collaboration with the Plantation Human Development Trust which is an organization that supports social welfare activities in the sector. JICA Volunteers’

partnership with PHDT commenced in 1999 when it sent its first volunteer in the field of pre-school education in support of activities at child development centers (CDCs) in the Ratnapura region. Since then, JICA has sent other volunteers to the plantation sector for the purpose of developing its Estate Worker Housing Cooperative Societies (EWHCS) and CDCs.



Creation awareness on drug abuse through street dramas. One of the activities facilitated by a JOCV working in the estate sector.



Ms. Yoko Arayama working amongst the estate community in the Nuwara Eliya District

JICA Volunteers’ Immediate Response to the Tsunami



Following the tsunami disaster on 26th of December 2004, JICA dispatched a group of 19 Volunteers who carried out activities in support of those displaced by the tsunami disaster in the Southern Province. The main aim of their activities was to ease the psychological pressures of persons affected by the Tsunami. The target group included both children and adults of all age groups. The location where activities were carried out was in Matara and adjacent areas, while the activity sites were mainly refugee camps and accommodation sites where displaced persons were residing.

The activities were initially carried out for a period of approximately four weeks in March and April 2005.



The good-hearted volunteers



Clearing debris



Provision of basics

Following the support provided by JICA Volunteers to tsunami affected communities immediately after the 2004 tsunami, JICA Volunteers continued to work towards social and economic empowerment of such communities living in various newly established community settlements on a medium and long term basis. At that time, JICA Volunteers' partner in this facilitation process was the Reconstruction and Development Agency (RADA), which was an agency that came under the Ministry of Nation Building and Estate Infrastructure Development.

The objectives of the JICA Volunteer program includes the establishment and strengthening

of community based organizations, restoration and development of livelihoods, improvement of living conditions, enhancement of social harmony within targeted communities or with their neighboring communities, and strengthening of the community's social protection system.

In the process of achieving these objectives, the program aimed at enhancing the capacity of officials in stakeholder organizations and community leaders who influenced the long term sustainability of projects implemented under this program.

Subsequent to community development activities conducted in support of tsunami affected communities and the completion of RADA's facilitation role in helping such communities return to normalcy, the JICA Volunteer Program, in a similar manner, wanted to provide assistance to small scale producers in other parts of the country. For this purpose JICA collaborated with the Samurdhi Authority of Sri Lanka in conducting a program that focused on income generation at community level.



Ms. Kanako Matsuo working with a group of women engaged in producing items made of waste fabric in Beruwala



"Unity is strength" Mr. Keisuke Komichi working amongst tsunami affected communities in Habaraduwa



Ms. Fumika Kikuchi in the field of Design, inspecting the quality of tablemat made of waste cloth produced by an entrepreneur in Udunuwara



Crochet knitting skills being taught by Ms. Asuka Kumekawa in Weligama



Mr. Toshiharu Sato (far right), proudly displaying Thambili (king coconut) jelly introduced by him to a retail outlet in Weligama

Social Welfare

One of the fields in which JICA volunteers have contributed immensely is in the field of social welfare. Since the inception of the program in Sri Lanka, JICA has dispatched over 160 volunteers in support of various social welfare programs that have benefitted persons with disability and elderly in various parts of the country. These volunteers have worked in partnership with government institutions as well as non governmental organizations.

JICA engaged several categories of volunteers in support of the social welfare sector. They include social workers, special education teachers, community development facilitators, youth activity facilitators, physiotherapists, occupational therapists, early childhood education development specialists, vocational training instructors, elderly care specialists and such. In some instances JICA volunteers working in different fields have collaborated with each other or worked in a manner that complements each other's activities. Whatever the activities may be, the aim of the work carried out by JICA volunteers for the benefit of persons with disability is inclusion and empowerment leading to full participation and equal opportunities.



Mr. Naoki Nishitani providing training on automobile air-conditioning to persons with disability at the Vocational Training Center in Seeduwa



Ms. Miyuki Uemura teaching children with disability to weave rugs in Harispattuwa

Social Workers (Providing Assistance to Persons with Disabilities)

JICA Volunteer social workers have worked in institutions caring for persons with disability, including children with disabilities. These volunteers have added value to already existing programs by introducing new activities aimed at motivating and enriching the lives of persons with disability. These activities include the introduction of creative games and recreational activities aimed at cognitive and physical development, production of craft items or other products for income generation purposes, promotion of personal hygiene, and assisting in the development of daily habits aimed at instilling a sense of independence.



Social worker Ms. Shiho Anzai working with special needs children in Baticaloa



JICA volunteers participating in a walk to create public awareness

Special Education

The role of volunteer special education teachers has involved the transfer of knowledge and skills to those working in support of children with disabilities. In doing so, such volunteers work closely with special education teachers and students' parents.

Techniques of dealing with different types of disabilities, knowledge on teaching methods, and development of appropriate teaching tools are some of the key areas in which knowledge has been transferred to local teachers. With regard to this, JICA volunteers contributed immensely to the development of the Child Guidance Centre (CGC) in Navinna, which was established under the Department of Social Services, with the aim of providing holistic assistance to children with special needs.

The Center which caters to children who are under 18 years, has a special focus on early identification of disabilities of children between 1-5 years. The CGC in Navinna, where several JICA volunteers have worked, offers services such as early identification of disabilities, preparation of individual development plans, providing guidance to parents, providing physiotherapy, speech therapy, occupational therapy, hearing testing etc., and training preschool/primary teachers on caring for children with special needs.



Preparation of educational material for special needs children.
Ms. Namiko Takizawa training school teachers in Tambuttegama.



Ms. Miho Morihara conducting a workshop for pre-school teachers at the CGC Navinna

Physiotherapy and Occupational-therapy

JICA has dispatched many volunteers in the field of physiotherapy and occupational therapy in support of persons with disability, in Sri Lanka. These volunteers, who are assigned to support the CBR program of the Department of Social Services at grassroots level work in collaboration with field officers engaged in the field of social services (who are the volunteers' counterparts), and local CBR volunteers.



Physiotherapist Ms. Aiko Kodaira providing advice to a patient in Anuradhapura



Physiotherapist Mr. Koichiro Tobinaga during a field visit

Community Based Rehabilitation (CBR) Activities in Rajanganaya

One of the highlights of JICA Volunteers' support towards the social welfare sector is a pilot project in Rajanganaya which was implemented in partnership with the CBR Program of the Department of Social Services. This CBR program was conducted in a manner where the combined efforts of persons with disability, their families/communities, and service providers in the health, education, poverty alleviation, and social welfare sectors were harnessed for the purpose of empowering targeted communities, and ensuring their inclusion in the mainstream of society. The role of the volunteers in this program was one of facilitation, in which volunteers specialized in various disciplines such as special education, physiotherapy, social work, youth

activities, and community development have worked together in order to bring benefits to persons with disability. Some of the volunteers' activities included the establishment of community based organizations (representatives of persons with disability and their families), for the purpose of conducting various self-help and income generating programs, inclusion of children with disability, in the school system, introducing teaching methods and training persons engaged in the social welfare sector on best practice concepts. The main objective of the JICA Volunteer Program's assistance towards the Government's CBR program in Rajanganaya was the establishment of a model which could be replicated in other parts of the country.



CBR Self-Help Group in Rajanganaya engaged in income generation activities



Members of Disabled Persons' Organization in Rajanganaya and their families, with JICA Volunteers



Local youth celebrating International Day of persons with disability in collaboration with JICA Volunteers



JICA Volunteers in action. JICA volunteer team in Rajanganaya engaged in CBR activities

Caring for the Elderly

In the light of the increase in Sri Lanka's aging population it is becoming more and more important to ensure that its future senior citizens stay healthy. With this in mind, the Volunteer Program has, for over a decade, dispatched volunteers in support of the elderly in order to ensure that they live healthy lives, whilst remaining productive and enjoying a high quality of life. The Volunteer Program's activities in support of senior citizens of this country have been conducted mainly in collaboration with the National Secretariat for Elders (NSFE). Most of the activities

conducted by JICA Volunteers in this field are conducted through senior citizens' committees (at divisional and grama niladhari level) or at elders' homes and daycare centers. Whilst the aim of conducting such activities is to improve and sustain the physical and mental health of the elderly, a secondary objective of non-communicable disease prevention and transfer of knowledge to caregivers (e.g. those in charge of elder's homes, family members of elders and other stakeholders), is also achieved through these activities.



Ms. Naho Harashima checking a senior citizen's blood pressure at an elders' home



Physical exercises being taught to a group of elders



Environmental Education

In recent times, JICA's focus on environmental issues has become more intense as the entire world faces tremendous challenges in this area, especially those brought about by climate change. With this backdrop, JICA's assistance to the Government of Sri Lanka in the area of disaster management, climate change mitigation, and environmental protection could be considered significant.

In the context of environmental protection, JICA sees solid waste management as one of its most important components, and over the last few decades JICA has made several interventions in support of Government initiatives in this sector. For example, the National Solid Waste Management Support Center (NSWMSC) was established based on recommendations made by a JICA funded Development Study on Solid Waste Management, in 2003. This was followed by a four year Technical Cooperation Project in 2007, which was implemented with the aim of improving solid waste management in local authorities. The project entailed the dispatch of JICA experts, provision of equipment, and training of local counterparts. Crucial to solving some of the problems faced was the need to strengthen solid waste management systems in local authorities. To support this end, JICA, under its development cooperation schemes implemented several programs related to improving waste landfill sites, waste recycling and composting, monitoring water quality of major water bodies, and data collection on solid waste management.

JICA has supported some of these initiatives through its volunteer Program by dispatching volunteers who conduct activities in solid waste management and environmental education at field level. These volunteers are usually assigned to institutions such as local authorities (through the NSWMSC), and the Central Environmental Authority (CEA).

Some of the key activities conducted by JICA volunteers on environmental education include creating community awareness on source separation, and conducting environmental education programs at school, household, and institutional level, whilst adding value to various other related programs.



Ms. Yasuko Tsuzuki using creative methods to communicate the importance of environmental protection to school children in Wennappuwa



Presentation on waste management made by Mr. Shinya Inoue at a school in Colombo



Beach cleaning organized by JICA Volunteers in Mount Lavinia

Takakura Method of Composting

In the process of helping the National Solid Waste Management Support Center (NSWMS) to address various solid waste management issues, JICA introduced the Takakura method of composting to Sri Lanka by inviting its inventor Mr. Koji Takakura, to conduct a seminar on the subject in March 2014. Thereafter, JICA Volunteers conducted various activities in partnership with the NSWMS, Waste Management Authority of the Western Province, and seven local authorities to popularize the use of the

Takakura method of composting amongst households. These activities were carried out under a project named “Takakura Composting Network” (TCN). The relevant activities included conducting seminars at local authorities, organizing workshops for households selected for the pilot program (ten from each local authority), distribution of Takakura compost starter kits to households, and monitoring progress at household level.



Workshop for households



Mr. Koji Takakura with JICA Volunteers and some of the officials who attended the Takakura Seminar



Mr. Takakura explaining the method of composting

Sports

Sports is an area in which JICA volunteers have been able to help those training under them not only to improve their sporting skills but also to strengthen their level of discipline, teamwork, individual/collective responsibility, coordination, and the ability to correctly respond to success and failure (which are strengths of the Japanese in general). JICA volunteers have contributed much towards the improvement of sports such as baseball, judo, karate, volleyball, football, netball, swimming, basketball, badminton, athletics, gymnastics and tennis.

Some volunteers were responsible for bringing about tremendous changes in the skill level of players they coached. For example, several past national football players had their initial training under a JICA volunteer who conducted training in Badulla. One JICA volunteer tennis coach enabled the girls' team of a rural school in Karandeniya to achieve second place in an all island schools' tennis tournament, while its boys' team ended up participating in the final rounds of the same tournament.

This was significant since tennis in Sri Lanka is mostly confined to the urban elite; and JICA volunteers have been instrumental in improving the quality of the game in several places outside of Colombo, thereby offering opportunities to players from such regions to compete at national level.

At the request of the Physical Education and Sports Branch of the Ministry of Education, JICA dispatched several JICA volunteers who coached students outside school hours in order to teach them specific sports skills. Athletics, football, volleyball, and gymnastics are some of the sports covered by these volunteers.

Whilst conducting these activities, some of them also provided valuable inputs to improve physical education classes and morning exercise programs held in schools.



Girls' rugby in Kandy. Training session in progress under the watchful eye of Coach Mr. Yuri Ito.



School children in Deniyaya being trained by Volleyball coach Mr. Kei Sato



Football coach Mr. Keisuke Sakaguchi conducting football practices in Matara



Physical education instructor Mr. Shinsuke Yokote teaching basketball techniques to school children in Jaffna

Baseball

Baseball is another game which owes its current standing to the technical inputs made by several JICA Volunteer coaches dispatched to Sri Lanka. After JICA Volunteers started training the National Team, it was able to beat several Asian teams, and in 2009 reached the Semi Finals of the Asian Baseball Cup, beating more experienced teams such as Thailand and Malaysia. The activities of the JICA Volunteers assigned to the country, so far, have resulted in the enhancement of baseball skills amongst an increasing number of youth who have taken a liking to the sport. These volunteers have helped teams representing Sri Lanka to obtain better results in the international arena. Baseball players in Sri Lanka have also benefited much from the baseball ground that was built under the Grant Assistance for Cultural Grassroot Projects of Japan, together with donations received from the Baseball Support Group for Sri Lanka in Japan. JICA volunteers played a very important facilitation and coordination role with respect to this project.



Baseball coach Mr. Kazune Kodama teaching baseball techniques to a player at the Japan - Sri Lanka Friendship Baseball Ground

Sri Lanka baseball has a long history with JICA Volunteers where a total of 21 volunteers have been dispatched since 2002.

The support provided by JICA's senior and junior baseball volunteers as coaches and mentors helped Sri Lanka win the West Asia Cup in 2019, which is one of the greatest achievements of JICA's volunteer program in Sri Lanka.

Together with local coaches and support staff, JICA volunteers continue to conduct baseball coaching activities at school, university, club, and national levels to enhance the performance of local players and bring them up to international standards.



A Japanese team and Sri Lankan team during a game played at the inauguration of the baseball grounds at the Japan - Sri Lanka Friendship Baseball Ground



Opening Ceremony of Baseball Knockout Championship 2021



40 Years
Achievement
of JICA Volunteers

