



Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers

40 Years of Grassroots Cooperation



Introduction

The Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers (JOCV) program was founded in 1965. That it is now able to commemorate its fortieth anniversary owes in large part to the efforts of the volunteers themselves, local officials and residents in developing countries who worked with them, and people in Japan who gave the program their support. We would like to take this opportunity to express our heartfelt gratitude to all people who have cooperated with us.

The JOCV and other volunteer programs of the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) expect volunteers to live among the people of the country to which they are dispatched and to pursue their activities with local people, enabling them to ascertain development needs from the viewpoint of those living there. They work with the local people to contribute to the country's socioeconomic development, making effective use of their abilities and experiences. This has always been the JOCV ideal since the program's inception.

For many years JICA has been evaluating its volunteer programs, and this has resulted in a reconfirmation of the following goals: (1) to contribute to the socioeconomic development or reconstruction of developing countries and regions, (2) to strengthen friendship and mutual understanding between developing countries and regions and Japan, and (3) to give back to society the fruits of volunteer-activity experience.

This publication introduces case studies illustrating the first of the above goals as being the foundation of all three objectives.

When the activities undertaken by the volunteers are examined, it is clear that the most effective forms of cooperation have been those that were imbued with a strategic character from the outset and that effectively incorporated the viewpoint of human security. The goal of human security, which JICA introduced as one of its pillars of reform in 2004, is to ensure that assistance reaches the poor in developing

countries, strengthens their societies, draws out and allows people's latent abilities to blossom, and protects human life and dignity.

Working as a volunteer means, of course, that activities are undertaken on a voluntary and self-initiated basis. Ensuring that such activity is responsible and effective and pays due heed to the principle of human security, though, requires a planned approach. Conscious of this, JICA conducts its volunteer activities in accordance with its implementation strategy covering all development projects in respective countries. Furthermore, collaboration is being strengthened with other aspects of Japan's official development assistance (ODA) program as well as with other countries' aid organizations, international organizations, and NGOs.

This fortieth anniversary of the JOCV program is an ideal opportunity to look back on and examine projects undertaken in the past so that they can serve as reference points for more strategic and effective endeavors in the future. There is no single "correct" path to success in volunteer activities. Past experience shows, though, that steady results can be achieved by building up cooperative relations with local people through various activities. Misunderstandings have sometimes cropped up during this process, for we are all humans made of flesh and blood. But such experience has often helped to deepen understanding, founded on mutual recognition of differences between respective value systems and cultures. While individual volunteers are dispatched for two-year periods, their cumulative contributions can lead, in the long run, to success in cooperation activities.

It is our sincere hope that this publication will be a source of ideas for volunteers grappling with challenging tasks in the field and will also benefit the local people working with them. At the same time, we hope it will promote the understanding of all those who have shown their support for our endeavors.

Masaaki Otsuka

Director General
Secretariat of the Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers
Japan International Cooperation Agency

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Poverty Reduction

Bangladesh For People Who Till the Golden Earth

Volunteers have sought to blend into village life and speak the local language in Bangladesh, the land loved by Asia's first Nobel laureate, poet Rabindranath Tagore. This approach supports local residents' capabilities, and it has also fostered social participation by women. We offer an example from Bangladesh.

Encouraging the hopes of farmers battling water

The Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) dispatched its first volunteers to Bangladesh in August 1973. One year later, a large flood devastated the countryside. Farmers who lost everything were forced to consume jute leaves. Many were compelled to leave their villages and go to towns, where they could get relief packages from foreign countries. This meant becoming refugees.

Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers did not wish to see flood victims becoming refugees, and they advised farmers to stay in their villages, promising to give them help. They then began providing support in cooperation with local staff members. Volunteers distributed seedlings and helped farmers plant rice. The villagers were able to harvest this rice and secure food by their own efforts.

In addition to flood damage, another major issue was drought. For farmers who had to haul water for their farms using water jugs, the volunteers focused their efforts on hand pumps, which required no fuel to run. Volunteers in the job categories of rice culture, horticulture, vegetable growing, and agricultural machinery cooperated with local agricultural extension workers to increase the number of hand pumps in various areas, and successive volunteers have continued these efforts. Local farmers have started cultivating watermelons, cucumbers, radishes, and other crops as a result, and their hopes have improved along with the growth in their cash earnings.

Women become active in the 1980s

JICA dispatched female volunteers to Bangladesh, a country where almost 90% of the population is Islamic and where women were said to face difficulty

advancing in society, for the first time in 1981. Many of these volunteers, who worked out of a local office of the Bangladesh Rural Development Board (BRDB), were in the vegetable growing job category.

Because they were able to converse with the local women directly in Bengali, the volunteers were able to understand what local women wanted and what they were concerned about. Though these JOCVs were people from a variety of occupations, initially all of them worked with local women in an endeavor to revive and spread the cultivation of vegetables. In time this effort improved local nutrition, which broke down the stereotype among men that "vegetables are what poor people eat."

Popularizing the production and consumption of vegetables was also a success in that it got men involved in what had been a women's activity. Once it became clear that selling vegetables could result in a high income, men took over the bulk of the activity. Consequently, the volunteers needed to search for a new source of income for women. The idea they came up with was to help the women create and sell hand-made embroidery, a traditional handicraft with a long history in the region. An embroidery program targeting women's cooperatives was thus prepared, and it was launched in 1983 with funding from the BRDB.

Women who had never left their village rose to the task of delivering their products to the capital, even becoming capable of negotiating with the BRDB. Initially begun by 16 local women, this program grew over four years to involve 500 women by 1987. Responsibility for the program was then transferred to the local staff, and similar programs were started up in other districts. Then, in 1989, JOCV volunteers assisted in the creation of a sales outlet, the BRDB Handicraft Exhibition and Shop, in the capital of Dhaka. This sales system was further developed and expanded in the 1990s.

Creating an organization necessary to manage their earnings has given these women confidence and hope and fostered their independence. At the same time, efforts have been directed at raising the consciousness of men. Eliminating prejudice against women is, in fact, a requirement for their full participation in society.

We may say that the volunteers played the role of a catalyst in drawing out the latent strengths the local women possessed. Over a period of over 10 years, almost 50 JOCVs took part in these activities in the areas of handicrafts, dress making, and marketing research, with their sights set on promoting social participation by women. And even today the shop built with their help is still being used as a sales channel for the handicraft products of rural women.



Children use hand pumps to irrigate a rice field. (Photo by Hiroo Sasou)



A volunteer explains aspects of rice cultivation. (Photo by Hiroo Sasou)



A handicrafts volunteer explains embroidery techniques to village women. (Photo by Katsuhiko Fujii)

Philippines Establishing Sustainable Activities

To gain trust in the Philippines, one of the major battlefields during World War II, the JOCV first had to develop relations of good faith with local residents on a personal basis. Steady activities by animal husbandry and veterinary medicine volunteers eventually led to the bigger projects that are being implemented today.

First steps toward trust

In 1966 JICA sent its first 12 volunteers to the Philippines. The dispatch of JOCVs for work in the area of livestock raising began two years later. Because Japan had occupied the country in World War II, building personal trust with local residents was the first order of business.

During the 1970s many volunteers were posted to the Philippine government's Bureau of Animal Industry, and they sought to build cooperative relationships in the regions to which they were assigned. At first they focused on small-scale operations, such as farmers who were raising just several head of livestock in a pasture. Through the repetition of efforts directed at helping such farmers increase their earnings, they gradually established relations of trust within their communities.

Even today volunteers meet people in various areas who remember vividly and speak fondly of JOCVs they met many years ago. "I know Ken," one hears. "He's the guy who treated my goats." "Hiro and I worked together planting hay." This is evidence of the close relationships volunteers built with people in the Philippines and demonstrates how their cooperation activities still survive in local people's hearts.

Local organizations fostered by JOCV projects

Volunteers have been continually active since 1976 at the National Artificial Breeding Center (NABC), where they have pursued such activities as improving productivity and quality in semen freezing and expanding training for inseminators. They have also worked to consolidate a network linking the breeding center with the practitioners of artificial insemination in various regions.

Based on the results and information gained from these cooperation efforts, JOCV volunteers initiated the Strengthening of National Artificial Insemination Project in 1989. The goal was to provide high-quality calves of the cattle and water buffalo so valuable to poor farmers. Cooperating in the activi-



An animal husbandry volunteer looks after a water buffalo and calf.

ties of the NABC, animal husbandry and veterinary medicine volunteers worked closely with local colleagues, and together they were able to secure funding from local governments for the independent operation of artificial insemination activities. In this way a system came into being in the Philippines for strengthening artificial insemination operations and improving breeding techniques.

The JOCV volunteers in the field were working side by side with inseminators, administrative staff members, and others in the district offices of the Philippine Department of Agriculture, "the civil servants closest to the village." In 1987 some of these colleagues began to take part in study meetings the JOCVs were holding. At their suggestion, a joint organization called the JOCV-PASA (Philippine Animal Science Association) was brought into being. This organization was strengthened during the years when volunteers were still being dispatched to it, and in 1992 it was formally registered as a nongovernmental organization in the Philippines. At first JOCV members occupied the post of JOCV-PASA chair, but Philippine nationals have filled this position ever since the sixth chair, making it a truly independent NGO capable of operating on its own even without the participation of the JOCVs.

Today the organization has 170 members, is active throughout the Philippines, and holds a national meeting every year in May. These meetings offer members an opportunity to report on domestic artificial insemination conditions, introduce new techniques, and exchange information. The JOCV-PASA's newsletter has also become a valuable resource for individuals involved in livestock breeding in the Philippines.

In addition to these volunteers' activities, training for inseminators is offered in Japan. The techniques these trainees have taken back to the Philippines have made artificial insemination a widely accepted practice in rural areas.



An artificial insemination summit hosted by JOCV-PASA in 2005.

The Environment

Senegal From Afforestation to Rural Development

Against the backdrop of the 1985 pledge by the Group of Seven leaders to “strengthen our cooperation with African countries in fighting against desertification,” the Green Cooperation Projects were launched in Senegal in 1986. JOCVs delivered saplings and provided information to Senegal and did all they could to improve local living conditions.

A sense of crisis concerning desertification

JOCV activities in Senegal commenced in October 1980. During the 1980s, a sense of crisis concerning desertification reached new heights with the awareness that deserts, which account for 30% of the earth’s land area, are relentlessly expanding, with an area of green land equal to 15% of Japan’s total land area disappearing each year. Following the Bonn G7 declaration on strengthening the fight against desertification, the Japanese government advocated a “Greening Revolution” in Africa, and JICA dispatched a team of JOCVs to Senegal in December 1986. Volunteers in the categories of afforestation, fruit and vegetable growing, agricultural civil engineering, and automobile maintenance were posted to the Inspection Bureau of Water and Forestry. This was the start of the Green Cooperation Projects, under which Japan’s “green volunteers” were dispatched to Ethiopia, Niger, Tanzania, and other countries.

At the time, roughly 60,000 saplings per year were being grown in Senegal at a public nursery. With the cooperation of the volunteers, this number was expanded quickly, enabling Senegal to supply 200,000 to 250,000 saplings annually. In parallel with this effort, the project sought to elevate awareness of the need for afforestation. Volunteers in the categories of audiovisual education and rural community development organized seminars in various locations to inform people of specific technologies, and their presentations proved to be highly effective.

Project volunteers also made the rounds of villages. The local people, looking on them as virtual “jacks of all trades,” would ask for their advice about all sorts of matters. The Senegalese media let it be known that they were serious about blending in and working together with local residents, and as a result, word of their coming would reach villages before they did, making them all the more useful. The director of the Inspection Bureau of Water and Forestry praised the project with the words, “Japan’s aid has brought us specialists who seek to work directly with ordinary local people. This is unprecedented. It has had an educational effect on the rural population, and that has been very significant.”

Getting local residents involved in forestry

In the 1990s the project came to be targeted at selected villages, which became sites for a broader range of activities. In a bid to elevate local living standards, the focus was shifted from agricultural infrastructure improvements to increasing cash earnings and protecting the environment. The volunteers were mainly in the job categories of afforestation, fruit and vegetable growing, and sociology. As the cash earnings of



farming families gradually improved, it was possible to get farmers in broader areas involved in joint funds and cooperative investments.

One of the features of the project was the concept of agro-forestry, which brings farming together with forestry to improve the quality of life. Local residents working on both field crops and tree crops would plant trees around their fields to shelter them. Within this space, they would cultivate vegetables as well as grow trees for fruits and wood. Trees were also planted for soil conservation and to serve as windbreaks for strawberries and other crops. In addition, the volunteers gave attention to seedling production, and public supplies came to be supplemented with private ones. Farmers began operating their own nurseries and supplying young trees for locally managed forests.

After a 12-year effort, the Green Cooperation Projects were concluded in December 1998. Over the years, a total of 47 volunteers and two JICA experts took part in the Senegal part of the initiative.

Impact of the Green Cooperation Projects

The desertification prevention projects in Senegal had a number of results. For one thing, the techniques developed were disseminated throughout the country. For another, the Senegalese government’s promotion of afforestation was profoundly affected. This influence extended to the management and consolidation of public seedling supplies and the development of policies for private participation in afforestation. In the end, the planting and management of trees by local people became an integral element of Senegal’s rural development strategy.

In addition, the impact on the lives of the people was extensive. The sale of wood, fruits, and vegeta-

A volunteer explains grafting techniques on a mango tree. (Photo by Kanji Kunihiro)

bles increased income levels and invigorated community activities, and the introduction of new techniques, including microcredit (small-scale financing), generated jobs and lifted community spirit. The projects also served to empower women's groups, which were at the center of the activities.

The projects were operated to boost the overall efficiency of development cooperation. This was accomplished by sharing technologies with other aid agencies, including the UN Food and Agriculture Organization, the US Agency for International Development, and the Osaka International House Foundation. Efforts were also made to run the projects harmoniously with other parts of Japan's ODA program, such as the grant-funded Forestry Nursery Management Project and JICA's Integrated Community Forestry Development Project in Senegal. This coordination of efforts strengthened the ripple effects of the JOCV projects on the afforestation policies of Senegal's government.

Assistance for oyster cultivation

Another aspect of the JOCVs' environmental activities in Senegal was the cooperation provided by environmental "green volunteers" to preserve mangroves and assist in oyster cultivation.

In the course of the activities by eight JOCVs dispatched alternately from 1983 to 2004, the JOCVs cooperated on a regular basis with other volunteers working nearby in other project categories. The results of the cooperation in oyster cultivation were (1) stable shipments of raw oysters, (2) assurance of wild oyster seed supplies, (3) cultivation of seeds for oysters of a size suitable for marketing, and (4) preservation of the natural environment for oyster cultivation.

For many years local people had been drying and eating the wild oysters that cling to the submerged roots of mangrove trees. In 1984, with the help of an aquaculture volunteer, an oyster cooperative was established to attempt to harvest and sell oysters, and eventually also to cultivate them, thereby moving beyond the stage of oyster use just for home consumption. With the cooperation of the vegetable growing

volunteers in the vicinity, a channel for the shipment and sale of raw oysters was established. In the 1990s, using the proceeds from the sales outlets, the cooperative was able to purchase outboard motors.

The quantity of the harvest fell abruptly, however, owing to a decline in the number of mangrove trees and indiscriminate harvesting by transient fishers. The villagers at that point initiated oyster cultivation instead of relying only on simple harvesting. In order to introduce advanced cultivation techniques, the villagers needed to make capital investments and bring in expertise. This proved to be more than they could handle unaided.



Checks are made of small-scale oyster farms that use "hanging" cultivation techniques.

Conservation of the mangrove ecosystem

With assistance from the volunteers, representatives of the cooperative and the Inspection Bureau of Water and Forestry learned how to plant and grow the mangroves needed for oyster cultivation. Project members then organized seminars and created educational posters to guide local efforts at mangrove planting and management. Volunteers working in such areas as public health nursing, primary school education, youth activities, and rural community development helped out in this campaign, which offered tree-planting guidance and environmental education even to schoolchildren. Indeed, this environmental conservation campaign was one that got the whole community involved.

Through a process of trial and error, the volunteers learned that oysters could be effectively cultivated through small-scale operations relying only on locally available materials and equipment. By disseminating the techniques involved, local residents continued the cultivation operations even after the volunteer dispatch period ended, taking into their own hands small-scale oyster cultivation and shipments, the environmental conservation needed for this cultivation, and the management and operation of the oyster cooperative.



Participants in a seminar hosted by Senegal's Inspection Bureau of Water and Forestry.

Community Development

Sri Lanka A Bridge Between Slum Residents and the Government

The Sri Lankan government requested the dispatch of a JOCV team in 1986, on the eve of the International Year of Shelter for the Homeless. Today, JOCVs are still active in Sri Lankan slums, and their cumulative numbers have grown to 70. What approaches have they used to get residents involved in their activities?

Gaining trust and accumulating information

Many different categories of volunteers have been active in metropolitan Colombo's slums, including home arts, vegetable growing, rural community development, kindergarten education, public health nursing, and handicrafts. These volunteers began their involvement by going into the streets every day. They used the local language and sought to blend into the local communities, and they gradually earned the residents' trust.

The volunteers who were dispatched in later years built their activities on the mutual trust the initial JOCVs fostered with the residents. The first rural community development volunteers prepared lists of local residents, and these proved to be useful to those who followed them. The first public health nursing volunteers also compiled records, which were later used to create a system of healthcare volunteers among local residents. In handicraft classrooms, volunteers targeted their initial efforts at training local instructors so that they could run the classrooms by themselves. This handicraft guidance also sought to increase residents' income, and it later led to the opening of community shops. In kindergarten management, similarly, heavy emphasis was placed on joint activities from the start, and collaborative ties among the volunteers formed as a result.

From Colombo to regional cities

The volunteers made it a habit to share information and give each other a hand. This put them in a position to prepare finely tuned responses to issues they needed to tackle.

In 1997 JOCVs began cooperating with the Greater Colombo Flood Control and Environmental Improvement Project, which was supported by Japan's ODA loans extended through the Japan Bank



A volunteer visits urban residents who were relocated to reclaimed land. Homes were subsequently rebuilt in ways incorporating residents' opinions. (Photo by Koji Sato)

for International Cooperation. When urban residents who lived alongside rivers were moved to reclaimed land, they faced shortages of electricity, water service, and toilet facilities. Seeking to improve the living conditions of these relocated urban dwellers, volunteers provided guidance on the disposal of rubbish and the cultivation of home gardens, and they helped to establish a system of small-scale financing and organize group activities for children.

With these activities in and around Colombo underway, 1997 also saw the start of similar programs for low-income neighborhoods in six regional cities.

Linking communities to the government

Using grassroots approaches, the volunteers proved to be adept at getting bottom-up initiatives going. To combine these activities with top-down guidance, volunteers with extensive skills and experience were teamed up with counterparts on the Sri Lankan side starting in 1998 to work out of government ministries and agencies, thereby providing a mechanism for overseeing various projects. As a result, cooperative ties between the administrative level and activities in the field were strengthened. Volunteers posted to regional cities have also cooperated closely with local municipal officials, and these ties have worked to strengthen the ambitions and capabilities of both residents and officials.

During the three-year period starting from 2001, volunteers were involved in as many as 167 programs with 170,000 beneficiaries. The programs covered a wide range of areas, such as community development, environmental improvement, healthcare, education, and women's organization. Future strengthening of the cooperative setup was also given thought, and a long-term plan was drawn up.

The program in Sri Lanka today seeks to forge links between community residents and domestic resources, including knowledge, technology, capital, and human talent. The center of the action are rural community development volunteers, who, by playing an organizing role, promote participatory approaches by which residents formulate their own solutions. With their sights set on improving the everyday environment of poor urban residents, all the volunteers are pursuing approaches that can link residents with the local and central governments.



Rural community development volunteers tour a regional city, where programs were launched in 2000 to improve residents' lives.

Panama Working to Improve the Lives of Indigenous Peoples

The gap between rich and poor in Panama's urban and rural regions is stark. The plight of Panama's indigenous peoples, who have difficulty receiving the benefits of economic development, is particularly serious. Here we introduce some of the activities of volunteers who have risen to the challenge of improving lives in regions with low agricultural productivity.



A course on the use of a hydraulic ram pump for paddy rice cultivation at an agricultural school in Panama.

Cooperation with indigenous peoples

Ever since the first volunteers arrived in Panama in 1991, JOCVs have cooperated to improve the living conditions of the Kuna, Guaymi, and other indigenous peoples. Activities in the Ngobe-Bugle district were initiated in 1996. Some 30 volunteers have been involved, of whom 16 were in the category of rural community development. Other volunteers have been in such categories as program officers, food crops, rice culture, farmers' cooperatives, afforestation, vegetable growing, and handicrafts.

The volunteers have faced difficulties working together. Even those posted to the same district are apt to live far from each other and lack access to means of transport to move around. Each volunteer has therefore had to act independently, feeling the way forward. But all have been united in the common objective of helping the people in their region lead better lives. Let us look at the cases of two villages.

Coffee distribution in Soloy

The volunteers sent to the village of Soloy have engaged in a number of projects, such as getting women involved in running a restaurant and producing handicrafts. But what has won them the most praise was the local marketing of the coffee the villagers love to drink.

The people of Soloy are themselves involved in harvesting coffee beans, but the wholesalers they deal with beat down the price, and when coffee prices plummet worldwide, they may get little for their efforts. Not only that, the villagers were buying coffee for their own consumption from outside sources, since they lacked the means to process the local harvest. In this situation, the second rural community development volunteer posted to the village proposed the creation of a coffee distribution system. The producers formed groups to handle the respective tasks of processing, packaging, and sales, thereby transforming the harvest into a value-added product. This endeavor was so successful that as of 2004, purchases of coffee from sources outside the village had come to a stop.

Today the fourth volunteer to be dispatched is making the rounds of 10 producer groups. The current goal is to strengthen the local setup so that farmers can, on their own, set targets for coffee commercialization, formulate activity plans, and even handle negotiations with agents outside the village.

Rice cultivation in Panama's Buenos Aires

Through ongoing cooperation with rural community development volunteers, rice cultivation with organic fertilizer in paddies has taken root in the village of

Buenos Aires, whose residents had been relying on slash-and-burn agriculture. Initially rice cultivation was started up using funds provided by JICA, and it spread to 10 settlements. Then other tasks were taken on in an overall endeavor extending to vegetable farming, chicken raising, animal husbandry, nutrition improvement, and afforestation. Volunteers in the categories of rice culture and vegetable growing have also taken part in the endeavor, which is a comprehensive program to reduce poverty and improve villagers' lives.

Farming is not easy in the regions where Panama's indigenous peoples live. In the dry season the clay soil around Buenos Aires becomes almost too hard to harrow without resorting to tools like pick-axes. Agricultural development is, accordingly, a time-consuming task. With the cooperation of six volunteers, however, the lives of the villagers have



A nutrition improvement volunteer leads a seminar on methods to upgrade cooking stoves. A cooking class using the new stoves was also held.

improved step by step. Currently, the introduction of hydraulic ram pumps is being considered.

While working with residents at the site, the first JOCVs discovered that some of the local needs were far beyond the capacity of any single volunteer to address. An assortment of technologies and extensive knowledge were required. The project has therefore gone forward by soliciting cooperation from many people, including JOCVs in other occupational categories, Senior Volunteers (SVs, or JICA volunteers aged 40 to 69), JICA experts, and Panama's own specialists. Yields for farm products are rising gradually, and the quality of life in Buenos Aires is moving up.

Honduras and the Micronesian Region Endeavoring to Provide Basic Education

One of the Millennium Development Goals of the United Nations is to “achieve universal primary education,” that is, to ensure that all boys and girls complete a full course of primary schooling. In a bid to reach this goal, efforts are being directed at the teaching of arithmetic.

Honduras: JOCV Arithmetic Project

In a bid to avoid problems of children dropping out of elementary school, which hinder efforts to achieve universal primary education, volunteers have been involved in the teaching of arithmetic in Honduras since 1989, and the JOCV Arithmetic Project was initiated in 1991. A number of primary school education volunteers were dispatched to help improve arithmetic instruction.

The project had two objectives: (1) improving the arithmetic instruction abilities of teachers by providing them with necessary knowledge and teaching skills and (2) creating a system by which local teachers could endeavor on their own to upgrade their skills.

To reach these objectives, the JOCVs made use of short study courses and demonstration classes to train teachers' leaders. At the same time, they also sought to improve the quality of teaching aids by preparing texts for the study courses and drills for students. The total number of participants in all the study courses reached 11,072. It was found that as a result of the project, the pupils of the teachers who attended the courses gave the correct replies to questions at a rate about 10% higher each year than the pupils of teachers who did not.



Views are exchanged at a teacher training workshop attended by volunteers and local instructors from Palau, the Marshall Islands, and Micronesia.

While taking part in this JOCV Arithmetic Project, the volunteers participated in a parallel JICA technical cooperation project called the Improvement of Teaching Method in Mathematics. They served as instructors in teacher training programs at Honduran universities, using the teaching aids they had prepared. The JOCVs also gave instruction at schools of the teachers they were training, and they made use of the information they picked up in the field to improve their teaching materials and study methods.

The teaching skills of local teachers were upgraded in this fashion. At present, support programs for strengthening arithmetic education have expanded to cover eight Central American countries.

Micronesian region: Joint teaching of arithmetic

A training course on arithmetic teaching was conducted in Palau in 2004 with the participation of a JOCV technical advisor. With an experienced volunteer from Palau taking the lead, the course was planned and implemented by JOCVs working in primary school education, mathematics education, and science and mathematics education, along with local teachers. Primary school education volunteers and local teachers from the Marshall Islands and the Federated States of Micronesia also attended. The impetus for the training course came from the interest shown in the teaching methods that the JOCVs working in these countries devised.

During the training course, the participants discussed the current status of and approaches to arithmetic instruction, as well as tasks to be tackled. They came to appreciate more deeply the importance of teaching arithmetic starting from the lower grades, and they gained awareness of some of the local problems compared with the situation in other countries. These were reflected in action plans that were put together for arithmetic workshops in each country, as well as in the formulation of common goals for all three participating countries.

In addition to putting what they learned to use in the schools to which they had been posted, the volunteers from Micronesia met with the principals of their schools and local education authorities for discussions on how to improve arithmetic teaching skills. They also made plans for a training course in their country, and this project won approval from the Department of Education of the State of Yap, which secured state funding for it. Principals and teachers from a number of the federated states came to attend this training course. These states are island groups centered on main islands, and they have different languages, cultures, and education systems. Traditionally it has been rare for teachers to go to other states even just to observe classes there. In this light, the gathering of participants from around Micronesia was an epochal event.

The teachers who underwent this workshop-style training course were able to improve their skills in arithmetic teaching. At the end of the course, they received certificates jointly signed by the Micronesian education minister and the resident representative of the JICA Micronesia office. And because the course received much favorable comment in local newspapers, the teachers also got a visible boost in morale.



A primary school education volunteer leads a lecture for Honduran arithmetic teachers. (Photo by Hiroyuki Ikarashi)

Tanzania, Ghana, and Kenya Fruits of Science and Mathematics Education in Africa

Because the increase in the number of teachers is not keeping pace with growth in the rate of school attendance, volunteers in Tanzania, Ghana, and Kenya sometimes serve as teachers as well as assisting in improving the teaching skills of local instructors. Below are the JOCVs' educational activities in these three countries.

Tanzania: Sparking enthusiasm in teachers and students

Science and mathematics education volunteers began being dispatched to Tanzania in 1968. Thus far more than 160 volunteers in science and mathematics education as well as in mathematics education have worked in Tanzania.

The Tanzanian government, which has made increasing school attendance a top priority, has looked to the JOCVs to address the chronic shortage of teachers and to improve the quality of the teaching staff. The volunteers have devised and improved teaching aids and drills, which have helped to improve students' comprehension. These educational materials are used throughout the schools the volunteers have been assigned to and have also spread to other schools via training seminars and open classes.

In 1995 a questionnaire survey was conducted to learn what Tanzanian students think about the teachers from Japan. The students gave the teachers high marks for transcending the language barrier and demonstrating sincerity and enthusiasm in the classroom and also in the community. The zest of these JOCVs has sparked enthusiasm among local teachers and infused eagerness among the students as well.

Ghana: Passing on teaching experiences

Science and mathematics education volunteers have been sent to Ghana since 1977. Rather than having each volunteer work independently, a means of integrating and coordinating their activities has been devised, and this has become well established.

For over 15 years, volunteers in Ghana have been conducting a training program to improve their own teaching abilities. Immediately upon arrival, they are given opportunities to observe the classes of the JOCVs already there and to conduct rehearsal classes. Evaluation sheets and other such means are used to give them feedback. The summer school session is used as the venue for these training activities.

The summer training provides a great opportunity

Ghanaian students listen attentively to an explanation by a science and mathematics education volunteer. (Photo by Kenshiro Imamura)



for the experienced JOCVs to show the newcomers the classroom tools and techniques they have acquired in the course of their everyday work. Furthermore, volunteers posted to Ghana in other categories also conduct classes, drawing on their specialist knowledge and expertise. These courses span an array of practical subjects like organic farming (taught by vegetable growing volunteers) and Internet use (taught by computer technology volunteers). Such collaboration ensures that experience is passed on to the new arrivals. Skills and techniques that are of use in cooperation are accumulating as a result.

Kenya: Adopting a more strategic approach

Science and mathematics education volunteers have been dispatched to Kenya since 1974 and have helped to gradually alleviate a shortage of teachers.

In 1996 a system of targeting certain communities for concentrated activities to strengthen science and mathematics education was introduced, and 15 volunteers were dispatched to take part. The goal was



A volunteer conducts a physics experiment at a regional public school in Kenya. (Photo by Kazuhito Hattori)

to elevate the educational standards of science and mathematics throughout the community, not just in individual schools. In addition to holding classes daily, the JOCVs have been exchanging information with each other and strengthening collaborative ties.

In 1998 the volunteers set up a training organization for mathematics teachers. With the involvement of local math teachers, this organization is reaching out to local educational offices, school principals, and teachers at other schools. It has also created Kenyan-centered standardized tests and seminars in the hope of promoting greater self-sustainment among local teachers.

JICA's Strengthening of Mathematics and Science in Secondary Education Project was initiated in 1998 to draw on the experience of these JOCVs. It is aimed at elevating the quality of education not just in Kenya but also in Malawi, Zambia, and other neighboring countries.

Education

Giving Every Child a Chance to Receive an All-Around Education

The cultivation of human resources requires education that promotes physical, emotional, intellectual, and social development. Music, physical education, and art, though they are crucial to healthy human development, tend to get short shrift in schooling. A number of volunteers have sounded the alarm, and they are attempting to improve the situation.

Niger: Preschool education tailored to children's development

Preschool education has been strengthened in many countries since 1990, when the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) issued its World Declaration on Education for All. Nonetheless, there has not been a sufficient degree of understanding of the importance of education tailored to the child's stage of development. In Niger, where nearly 20 JOCVs have been posted in the category of kindergarten education since 1991, preschool children were being taught French, the official language, by rote learning.

The JOCVs pointed out the importance of three elements: (1) education suited to the child's stage of development, (2) the use of play and everyday life situations themselves as learning settings, and (3) guidance in such daily habits as hand washing and toilet use. They introduced such tools as games and picture-card storytelling, and these made an impression even on Education Ministry officials. Today the JOCVs have been designated to serve as educational instructors participating in the planning at the Inspection Bureau of Kindergarten and Nursery, and they are making the rounds of local kindergartens.

Early schooling encompassing prenatal care

JOCVs involved in early childhood education have been working in many countries, with nearly 500 volunteers being dispatched in this area since 1967. Their activities span not only kindergartens, nursery schools, and childcare centers but also educational facilities for orphans, abused children, and disabled children, as well as for teacher training.

Mainly during the 1980s, JOCVs worked in the categories of nursery care and kindergarten education in remote settlements in Malaysia. Vegetable growing and handicraft volunteers were also assigned to these regions, where they worked alongside other JOCVs to improve living standards and the educational environment. A kindergarten education volunteer sent to Nepal in the 1990s in a rural development project traveled to various sites to offer guidance to parents on hygiene, healthcare, housework, and child rearing; and she also developed educational materials.

In recent years it has become apparent that poverty reduction and universal primary education require measures that begin before the child is born. The volunteers have gained a first-hand appreciation of this at their work sites. For example, nursing volunteers at an orphans' hospital in Colombia have come into contact with children infected by HIV through mother-child transmission. Comprehensive care and parental education are obviously required.



A volunteer in Niger shows local kindergarten teachers how animal figures can be made from color paper. (Photo by Kazuhito Hattori)

Again, in Nepal, in conjunction with a United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) program for women and children, volunteers in rural community development and nutrition are working with weighing facilities, nursery schools, health posts, women's cooperatives, and other organizations. In these ways, comprehensive strategies for early healthcare education have been launched.

Zimbabwe: Music education helps children develop their potential

While music, art, and physical education are important means of promoting character development in the school curriculum, they have tended to be neglected in the classrooms of many developing countries.

In Zimbabwe, music education has a low position, and many schools had no music teachers or classes. Many students had never before taken a music class, and the first JOCVs sent to give instruction in music were a bit perplexed as to how to proceed. But ultimately the students became motivated to learn on their own and experienced the joy of singing and playing instruments with their peers.

Thus far more than 100 volunteers have been dispatched to elementary, middle, and high schools in Zimbabwe as music teachers. Their activities do not end in the classroom but have expanded to include offering guidance to choirs and holding concerts at the regional level. Because the schools where JOCVs



Leading a choir in a Zimbabwe school. (Photo by Masahiro Soma)



Hungarians of all ages have expressed interest in kendo. (Photo by Takeyoshi Tanuma)

were teaching consistently performed well in musical competitions throughout the country, many Zimbabweans became aware of the importance of music education. Through such experiences as concerts, the students have found out for themselves how moving it is to achieve success through hard practice. Some of the students have realized they have the talent to pursue a musical career, and thus the music classes have opened a new world for these youngsters.

Building on these successes, the volunteers sent to Zimbabwe as music teachers are now attempting to take their efforts to the next level by training local music instructors and by providing music education to disabled children.

Eastern Europe: Developing character through kendo

Sports education contributes to the development of people who are well rounded in terms of intellect, morals, and physical fitness and also cultivates sportsmanship and fosters discipline and a sense of dignity.

The dispatching of volunteers to Eastern Europe began in 1992 in Hungary. At that time, one volunteer was sent to work with the Hungarian Kendo

Federation. Since then, a total of 20 kendo volunteers have been dispatched to Poland since 1993, Bulgaria since 1994, and Romania since 1997. By playing a cooperative role in tournaments as well as in training in these countries, the volunteers have helped to promote kendo throughout Eastern Europe. In recent years, Hungarian kendo students have performed well in East European and international tournaments, and this has worked to raise the level of kendo in the region.

The kendo volunteers in Eastern Europe use the local languages in their work and provide information when people express interest in Japan. They have thus played a role in deepening mutual understanding between Japan and these countries. Through the kendo classes, students learn not only about the technical aspects of kendo but also about its ethics, history, and cultural background. And in a broader sense, the volunteers bring their students into contact with Japanese culture and current events. The mastery of manners and the physical and mental conditioning of these East European kendo students have made a favorable impression even on people from the Japanese kendo world.

Maldives and Malaysia: Years of Japanese Language Instruction Yield Successes



Japanese language education in the Maldives has created job opportunities. (Photo by Takeyoshi Tanuma)

Japanese language instructors have been sent overseas since 1965, the same year the JOCV program was launched. Starting with the dispatch of two instructors to Laos, over 1,300 JOCVs have now been dispatched throughout the world to provide Japanese language instruction.

Since 1987, 10 Japanese language instructors have been sent to the Republic of Maldives. The number of Japanese tourists visiting the islands has grown with each passing year. Many travel operators therefore consider Japanese language proficiency an essential skill. The 10 volunteers have been sent in succession to the Maldivian College of Higher Education, the only institution in the Maldives that offers Japanese language instruction.

At one time, nearly all the people working in tourism in the country who could speak Japanese were foreign nationals. In recent years, however, local residents have been replacing them, and many of them are students of the JOCVs. This long-standing cooperative endeavor has created new job opportunities for the students in resort hotels, shops, travel agencies, and other tourism-related businesses.

Japanese language instructors have been dis-

patched to Malaysia since 1984. The Malaysian government had a Look East policy of learning from Japan's industrial and economic success, and it sought to increase the number of Japanese speakers. It was then that Japanese language instruction was introduced at public boarding middle schools and high schools attended by outstanding students.

The volunteers started by creating curriculums, formulating lesson plans, and creating and administering standardized tests. Their efforts resulted in the completion of a textbook in 1989 and of supplemental teaching aids in 1990, and these tools are still in use. At around the same time, the Malaysian government embarked on a program to develop local Japanese language teachers. Malaysians began going to Japan for instruction in language teaching.

Between 1984 and 2001, about 100 volunteer Japanese language instructors worked at over 20 public schools in Malaysia. Their activities can be said to have laid the foundation for the country's efforts to promote Japanese language education. Malaysians who have completed their studies have been working as Japanese language instructors since 1995. The management of Japanese language instruction was gradually handed over to local teachers, and in 2001, the shift was completed as the dispatch of these volunteers came to an end.

Tackling Threats That Know No Borders

Infectious diseases like HIV/AIDS cannot be stopped at national borders. In countries and regions where there are not enough hospitals, medical workers, or medicines, JOCVs provide needed care in a broad range of fields.

Eradication of infectious diseases

At the end of the 1960s smallpox was on the verge of eradication. The health ministry of one of the last countries grappling with the disease—Ethiopia—asked the World Health Organization (WHO) to dispatch surveillants to that country, and eight JOCVs took up their posts in 1972 to fight the disease. Supported by six other volunteers responsible for the maintenance of equipment, the surveillants applied themselves to the task of combating smallpox in the country.

Working in small groups, the volunteers launched educational and awareness-raising campaigns to fight smallpox in regions with limited access to healthcare services. This approach was subsequently adopted in the fight against diseases like poliomyelitis (polio), malaria, and filariasis, and it also opened the door to Japanese citizens who wanted to help people in developing countries as volunteers but were without expertise or special skills. The activities of the volunteers in Ethiopia were part of a global effort to eradicate smallpox, and they contributed, in 1980, to the declaration by the WHO that smallpox had been eradicated.

Following smallpox, the WHO turned its attention to polio. Since polio can be eradicated if all children in a population are vaccinated at the same time, the WHO adopted a strategy of nationwide vaccination and kept a watch on the results. However, in 1999 volunteers sent to fight polio in Niger found this strategy difficult to implement because the population was often scattered over a broad area. The volunteers, in consultation with the Niger government, decided to appoint community health workers in each village and to provide appropriate training to them.

Based on a series of follow-up surveys, a program was launched to train teachers, who were trusted in their communities, thus enabling sustained and highly effective monitoring. The volunteers also provided basic knowledge about healthcare and promoted awareness of the importance of vaccinating newborn infants and seeking medical attention for children with numbness in their limbs, using hand-made posters and picture-card storytelling. Today the JOCV-trained teachers and workers are engaged in raising awareness of these issues in villages throughout the country.

Owing to Niger's severe healthcare conditions, there are many patients in the country who suffer from other diseases, such as malaria and meningitis. From the point of view that an expansion of efforts to combat infectious diseases in a comprehensive manner would also be an effective approach to fight-



ing specific illnesses like polio, the volunteers who are dispatched today address a broad range of infectious diseases.

Comprehensive approach to HIV/AIDS

In the area of community healthcare, the broad range of occupational backgrounds of the JOCVs proved to be of great value. In Bolivia in the 1990s, when cholera was a serious problem, public health and youth activity volunteers worked together to perform puppet plays promoting cholera prevention. In Kenya, since 1992 sociology volunteers have been engaged in awareness-raising activities about family planning and maternal and child health in hospitals and schools using a wide range of educational materials.

Based on such activities, in 2004 a new job category of HIV/AIDS control was created, and these volunteers have been dispatched to many countries, principally in Africa. They are mainly engaged in support activities, including visits to patients' homes; distributing medication for pneumonia, tuberculosis, and other diseases to which HIV/AIDS sufferers are susceptible; providing training and data management for regional health workers; and creating educational materials to promote awareness of the importance of prevention.

Reproductive health and HIV/AIDS counter-measures are closely connected with one another, and it is important to coordinate the two. JOCVs thus incorporate the views of local experts in their endeavors to address difficult problems in the field. At present efforts in this area take the form of strategic cooperation in various countries, whereby the work of volunteers who are qualified midwives, nurses, and dieticians (to oversee patients' nutritional condition) is integrated into that of volunteers for HIV/AIDS control, who are responsible for test data management, health education, and community activities.

A volunteer visits a village in Niger in an effort to eradicate polio. (Photo by Akio Iizuka)

Laos and Kenya Coordinated Approach to Medical Cooperation

A carefully planned approach is an important element in enhancing the effectiveness of volunteer activities, the crux being to accurately grasp local needs. The efforts of nursing volunteers are detailed below.

Laos: Enhancing nursing techniques through coordination among volunteers

JOCV nursing volunteers were first sent to Laos in 1968, but a change in Laotian government policy led to a suspension of dispatches to that country. They were resumed in 1992, and from that year through 2005 nearly 70 JOCVs have worked in Laos in the areas of nursing, midwifery, and public health nursing. Senior Volunteers (SVs) are also active in this field.

Many volunteers in the field observed that improvements at provincial hospitals would not have the desired effect unless the policies of the health ministry also changed. Consequently, a decision was made to send JICA experts to central government agencies; experienced SVs to national and other hospitals in the capital; and JOCVs to work at the grassroots level in provincial nursing and healthcare schools and at regional hospitals. They cooperated with one another in identifying aspects needing improvement, and volunteers were subsequently dispatched under a program to enhance the technical level of nursing.

Specifically, the JOCVs at schools worked to improve nursing education, while those at the nursing departments of provincial hospitals supervised students sent there for practical experience. They also



A nursing volunteer and colleagues at a public hospital in northern Laos. (Photo by Katsumi Yoshida)

helped improve the training of school graduates at the hospitals. SVs, meanwhile, were involved in nursing education at medical technical colleges and in the nursing departments of hospitals in the capital, liaising and working with the JOCVs.

Several national-level nursing seminars have been held with the cooperation of JICA experts, SVs, and JOCVs. These have resulted in heightened consciousness on the part of Laotian nursing personnel, particularly in the provinces.



Preparing for a demonstration to raise public health standards at a Kenyan primary school. (Photo by Kazuhito Hattori)

Kenya: Upgrading the quality of provincial hospitals

In a city some 450 kilometers from Kenya's capital of Nairobi is a hospital founded by an NGO where five public health and nursing volunteers have been working since 1996.

They first created a hospital management and administration system to enable the hospital staff to maintain equipment, manage records, and undertake bookkeeping on their own. The kind and sincere treatment of the patients by the volunteers was emulated by the staff, and this became very popular with the patients. This further enhanced staff motivation and led to improvements in the quality of their work.

Volunteers also built up cooperative relations with health workers in the local community and other partners, including NGOs. As a result, the number of people receiving vaccines and health checks increased, and people's awareness of their health was heightened. A revolving procurement system for essential medicines, moreover, improved the quality of medical treatment provided by visiting physicians. This system enabled workers at local health posts to manage the sale and restocking of medicines, thus ensuring that essential medical items were always on hand.

Healthcare volunteers have also formed groups to teach schoolchildren about HIV/AIDS prevention and offered health education in secondary schools in cooperation with science and mathematics education volunteers. In addition, they have broadly undertaken activities addressing people's daily concerns, such as hygiene education and nutrition improvement, to enhance health and medical services for local communities.

Architecture and Civil Engineering

Mongolia and Morocco Preserving Public Facilities

The dispatch of civil engineering and architecture volunteers began some 40 years ago, and they have even helped build a road in Africa stretching for over 300 kilometers linking a national capital to an outlying district. Examples of JOCV involvement in architecture activities in Mongolia and Morocco are detailed below.

Mongolia: Improving the educational environment through citizen participation

Provincial school facilities in Mongolia were in a very bad state of repair, and in some cases they were dangerous to use. To rectify this situation, a school repair initiative was begun in 2002 to be executed by Mongolians together with a number of architecture volunteers under the supervision of an experienced volunteer, and work commenced in various parts of the country.

In 2004 a school repair and renovation project was implemented some 300 kilometers west of the capital of Ulaanbaatar. Before the project began, a workshop was held at the suggestion of volunteers in the field to decide how the work should proceed with the participation of local residents. First the local people prepared a broad outline of an educational action plan containing measures to improve the educational environment. Decisions on which educational activities to improve and what to repair and renovate were made on the basis of this action plan.

The project was funded not only with assistance from Japan but also with contributions from the local government and school budgets, as well as donations from the local people. It was a true “do it yourself” undertaking, as the work itself was done mainly by local residents. The volunteers provided guidance on how best to complete the work with limited funds, such as through the use of recycled parts and materials.

Because residents were involved in all aspects of the project, they gained a very strong sense of ownership. The volunteers contributed in many different ways, such as by offering advice on maintenance, arranging meetings for residents, and liaising with various relevant parties.



Villagers in Mongolia held meetings and participated in workshops to formulate a school maintenance and management program.

Technical improvements through local initiative will encourage residents to maintain and improve the educational environment on their own. JOCV cooperation will continue to be offered to enable local citizens to achieve the sustainable maintenance of educational facilities.

Morocco: Maintenance and repair of traditional buildings

JOCV architecture volunteers have been active in Morocco since 1970 in such areas as the construction of parks, bridges, and other public facilities and the maintenance and repair of traditional buildings.



An outdoor theater designed by an architecture volunteer. (Photo by Kenichi Suzuki)

The small city of Ouarzazate in southern Morocco has an outdoor theater accommodating some 200 spectators. It is used for music and dance performances and other events in the varied cultural life of the community. The idea of building an outdoor theater initially came from an architecture volunteer.

Morocco still has many buildings in the traditional architectural style, among them being the earthen buildings within the walled *kasbahs* (old quarters). However, the majority of buildings in the Kasbah Taorirt in Ouarzazate were in a state of collapse requiring “recovery” and “resuscitation.” Recovery does not entail simply putting up new buildings; the key issue was how to achieve a spatial design based on the remains of the original structures and utilize original building methods.

An idea developed by a volunteer was to use part of the site for an outdoor theater, making as much use of the undulating terrain as possible. Local officials praised the plan, and work soon began. This is how an outdoor theater for the citizens of Ouarzazate was born.

Cultural Properties Protection

Honduras, Micronesia, and Bhutan Conservation of Historical Heritage

JOCV activities aimed at preserving cultural properties have aroused local people's interest in cultural artifacts and raised awareness that the relics they live near to are part of the common cultural heritage of humankind. JOCV projects in Honduras, Micronesia, and Bhutan are detailed below.



Restoring a Mayan relic in Honduras.

Honduras: Archaeological site turned into a park after excavation

Due to a shortage of funds and human resources, Honduras's archaeological heritage—including that of the Maya civilization—was in danger of disappearing. An archaeological project was thus initiated in the district of La Entrada in 1984, and a team of volunteers was established under the leadership of an experienced volunteer with an archaeological background. Among the team members were specialists in archaeology (including physical anthropology and ecological anthropology), geology, botany, landscape architecture, afforestation, systems engineering, and audiovisual education.

The project spanned some 10 years. El Puente—one of the many ancient relics in the region—was designated a national historical site by the Honduran president. Intensive excavation and restoration work was carried out during the latter half of the project, and the site was developed into the second archaeological park in the country.

Archaeological surveys in Honduras have usually been carried out by foreign researchers who wrote up the survey results in English after returning home. The JOCVs, meanwhile, adopted an approach that ensured that the results would remain in the country; through a collaborative effort between the volunteers and their Honduran counterparts, analysis of the excavation findings was carried out locally, and the results were published in Spanish, the country's official language. Know-how relating to survey techniques, such as site measurement and production of drawings, was transferred to Hondurans working in this field.

Bhutan: Protecting historical buildings

There are many traditional buildings in Bhutan, including fortresses called *dzong*. Architecture and building construction volunteers have been helping repair and rebuild these structures for over a decade.



The Punakha Dzong that JOCVs helped restore. To preserve traditional features, their restoration and rebuilding activities included producing a record of the project and giving guidance on building methods that leave the original structure intact. (Photo by Kazuyoshi Nomachi)

In addition to carrying out survey activities, the JOCVs also addressed the need to raise local awareness of the relics. Residents had not really thought of them as “cultural properties,” and the sites were often destroyed by land development, farming, or theft. Volunteers thus organized lectures and archaeological exhibitions to promote the concept of cultural property protection.

Gradually, people's interest in the cultural heritage of their ancestors grew stronger, and they began actively donating stone tools, pots, stone sculptures, and other artifacts they had found to the archaeological museum in La Entrada, set up with JOCV help. People now also consult with the archaeological project team before carrying out construction work in the vicinity of the historical remains to prevent the remains from becoming damaged. The perception has spread that the country's cultural heritage belongs to the people in common.

Micronesia: Recording and transmitting folkloric heritage

Since 1991 three archaeology volunteers have been sent to the Federated States of Micronesia. A museum set up by JOCVs in cooperation with local resi-



Conducting a survey of local residents in Micronesia.

dents served as the base for their cultural education activities.

They carried out surveys of fast-disappearing traditional cultures, recording them in both video and written form. They also helped spread knowledge of local legends and history among the younger generation by creating picture-card storytelling and booklets based on these legends.

Traditional culture in Micronesia has mainly been transmitted orally—only rarely were written records made. In this light, it can be said that the volunteers' work was significant in giving a strong impetus to the handing down of the region's culture to future generations.

Independence of People with Disabilities

Expanding Support for Rehabilitation

Rehabilitation seeks to restore the right to quality of life among people with disabilities, but establishing support takes many years. Seeds sown 25 years ago in Costa Rica have now spread throughout Latin America.

Costa Rica: Extending cooperation throughout Latin America

The first two physical therapy JOCVs to Costa Rica were dispatched in 1979. Since then, nearly 40 volunteers have been working in the fields of occupational therapy, bamboo craft, nursing of people with disabilities, and social work to promote the social welfare of disabled and elderly people in that country. Initially they worked in the cities, but after several years they began working mainly at provincial hospitals, expanding their activities to include nurs-



A volunteer speaks with a resident of a Costa Rican nursing home. (Photo by Tsunemitsu Kato)

ing schools, rehabilitation centers, and homes for elderly people.

In 2001 the results of an evaluation study conducted by a JOCV technical advisor showed clearly that 20 years of steady efforts by the volunteers had made the Costa Rican government aware of the importance of rehabilitation. Also, the chairman of a local association of nursing homes gave the JOCVs high marks for their kindness to elderly people and reported that local workers were following their example. The study also revealed a weakness in teamwork and coordination among various Costa Rican sectors and organizations.

The following year, in response to these findings, JOCVs helped prepare a seminar on teamwork as a rehabilitation strategy. The seminar drew over 90 participants, including rehabilitation doctors, physical therapists, occupational therapists, and social workers. Japanese participants included not only lecturers but also three former volunteers stationed in Costa Rica. Also among the participants were physical therapy and occupational therapy volunteers along with their counterparts from the Dominican Republic. This brief seminar made a strong impact, and it is now held annually.

The number of participating countries has grown each year, elevating rehabilitation standards in Costa Rica and many other Latin American countries.

El Salvador and Syria: Using wheelchair sports to enhance the standing of people with disabilities

A volunteer was assigned to a wheelchair sports association in El Salvador in 1996. Efforts to improve competitiveness and to establish awareness of the value of wheelchair athletics as lifetime sports have resulted in the development of players capable of competing in international tournaments. Sports for people with disabilities help them maintain their health, foster social ties, and improve their standing in society. The activities of physical education volunteers led to the formation of a female team, in turn increasing the population of competitors. The number of wheelchair sports for which JOCVs are offering guidance has increased, and volunteers have also begun coaching the visually impaired. The volunteers are currently working on improvements in training methods and nutrition.

JOCVs have been at the forefront of efforts to promote wheelchair sports in the Middle East as well. Five volunteers have been working in Jordan since 1987, and nine have been working in Syria since 1990. Physical education volunteers have been dispatched to the Sports Association for the Disabled in Syria for 10 years with the objective of expanding participation among the disabled and increasing public awareness of people with disabilities.

The volunteers initially focused their efforts on basketball, which is popular in Syria. Their efforts have paid off over time, as teams were formed in various parts of the country, and local coaches have de-



El Salvador athletes have competed at international wheelchair track events. (Photo by Yoshihisa Yamada)

veloped. The volunteers extended this success to other sports, including volleyball, hockey, physical education, and swimming. In 1995 six Syrian athletes and a JOCV member participated in a tournament in the United States for people with cognitive disabilities. This tournament was televised in Syria, and the appearance of the athletes and the volunteer sparked an increase in the number of competitors, coaches, Syrian volunteers, and spectators.

Vocational Training

Sharing Japan's Technical Expertise

The various skills honed by Japanese workers were a key factor behind the country's postwar growth, and those skills have been shared with many developing countries through vocational-training and technical-education programs. The following are case studies involving automobile maintenance and other volunteers.

Supporting vehicle maintenance efforts in various ways

Since 1966 over a thousand automobile maintenance volunteers have been dispatched around the world, and they have helped transfer maintenance and operation technologies to developing countries in various settings.

The first two such volunteers were dispatched to the Indian Ministry of Surface Transport. In Tanzania and Nepal they worked with employees of a public bus company, and in Malawi they provided support to the vehicle maintenance department of a city office. Their concerns were to ensure the safety of buses, which are the most popular forms of public transportation in many developing countries. The

volunteers worked with local mechanics to conduct repairs, a process through which they were able to pass on their skills and knowledge.

In 1970 volunteers were sent to a technical college in Malaysia, and since then they have primarily been dispatched to teach at vocational schools. Many are still active in different countries, where they have helped to enhance the employment opportuni-

ties of the students that have acquired auto maintenance skills. Conditions and maintenance skills vary widely from one country to another, though, and at many public facilities, shop tools and textbooks tend to be quite old. Volunteers and their colleagues have therefore had a challenging task teaching students the latest automotive technology. In recent years, efforts have been made to address pollution problems, such as the emission of noxious gases from poorly maintained vehicles and disposal of waste oils.

In addition to public transportation facilities and vocational schools, automobile maintenance volunteers have been sent to work at national parks and wildlife services in Tanzania, Zambia, and Kenya. In Kenya, whose national parks are particularly vast, close to 30 volunteers have been active in these parks and in the Kenya Wildlife Service, servicing vehicles for surveying and patrolling the parks and training local mechanics.

Dominican Republic: Improving quality control

Many volunteers are active in vocational training

centers. In countries with few job opportunities even for skilled applicants, some volunteers have worked tirelessly to help students find employment. Today, small-scale financing is available for students who wish to start their own businesses using the skills they have acquired, and activities have been undertaken to strengthen coordination with the industries in which the students will be working.

In the Dominican Republic, 18 volunteers have been involved in vocational training since 1986. These volunteers were initially involved in automobile maintenance and later provided guidance in basic industrial fields, helping to not only develop text materials but also establish vocational training methods with an emphasis on hands-on training. From 1997, moreover, 21 Senior Volunteers (SVs) in labor safety and health, electronic engineering, and quality control have been dispatched to provide cooperation that makes use of their expert skills.

Thanks to many years of such activity, the national institute for technical and professional training obtained ISO 9001:2000 certification for quality management. Promoting orderliness and neatness in the training room has heightened awareness of quality improvement.

In the areas of vocational training and technical education, there are plans to strategically coordinate the dispatch of JOCVs and SVs to the Dominican Republic and Zambia.

In step with evolving computer technology

The first group of computer technology volunteers was dispatched to Ethiopia in 1973. Since the late 1980s, these volunteers have been sent to many other countries around the world, and their total to date now exceeds 1,000. Most of the early volunteers were either dispatched to government ministries for system development or taught at the university level. From around the latter half of the 1990s volunteers also came to be assigned to vocational training schools. Today, due to the spread of personal computers, their activities vary widely from teaching secondary school students and providing vocational training for people with disabilities to building systems for central government offices.

Information technology is progressing remarkably in countries where the volunteers are at work, and many countries have developed software for their native languages. Due partly to a shortage of technicians, however, people in many countries are not able to take full advantage of these technological advances. As the digital divide widens, computer technology volunteers are increasingly being looked upon as pivotal figures in helping these countries close the gap.







An automobile maintenance volunteer works at a rehabilitation center in Kenya. A suspended course on auto mechanics was revived by the volunteer, expanding opportunities for the boys' social reintegration. (Photo by Katsumi Yoshida)

Mutual Understanding

Strengthening Friendship Ties

Just as JOCVs gain an understanding of people living in their assigned regions, local people's understanding of what life is like in Japan is deepened through the volunteers. Such grassroots exchange fosters friendship and mutual understanding between developing countries and Japan.

Colleagues and trainees who have become leaders in their respective fields

<p>Alfredo Cristiani Former president, El Salvador</p> <p>"When I was young, I learned volleyball and sportsmanship from JOCV volunteers. It's because of Mr. Omine* that I am where I am today." (Photo shows Cristiani, right, with the chairman of the wheelchair sports association) (*Yasuhiro Omine, volleyball volunteer dispatched to El Salvador in 1971)</p>		<p>Lucky Mhango Professor, Kamuzu College of Nursing, University of Malawi</p> <p>"When I was a nurse and midwife at a hospital in the provinces, I learned a lot from a volunteer named Midori Nishioka.* And with her recommendation, I was able to get training in Japan, and I'm now teaching in Malawi the things I learned there." (*Midori Nishioka, midwifery volunteer dispatched to Malawi in 1988)</p>	
	<p>Khashbaatar Tsagaanbaatar Judo athlete, Mongolia</p> <p>"Thanks to Mr. Hotta,* I was able to win a bronze medal (Mongolia's only medal) at the Athens Olympics. This medal is steeped in the sweat and effort of my teacher." (*Atsushi Hotta, judo volunteer dispatched to Mongolia in 2002)</p>		<p>Panganayi Mlambo Lecturer, Rio Tinto Agricultural College, Zimbabwe</p> <p>"I use the teaching methods of Mr. Nonaka,* who was my teacher, to guide me in preparing lectures that are easy for students to understand." (*Hiroyuki Nonaka, agricultural machinery volunteer dispatched to Zimbabwe in 1997)</p>

NPOs and NGOs established by former JOCVs

Many JOCVs continue their activities to broaden friendship and promote mutual understanding with people in developing countries even after the conclusion of their assignments. The following are just a few examples.

Development Education Action Group

In the 1980s the group produced *Our Global Friends*, a groundbreaking work in the field of development education. This series of teaching materials focuses on children from around the world and their lifestyles; it has been revised and is still in widespread use. (Representative: Kaori Usui, fine arts volunteer dispatched to El Salvador in 1975)

AJA Foundation

This foundation awards scholarships to elementary and secondary school students in Ghana. It is also working to promote literacy education for children who do not have the opportunity to attend school and to promote fair trade of traditional handicrafts. (Representative: Yuko Asahina, science and mathe-

atics education volunteer dispatched to Ghana in 1987 and representative of the Toyama International Education Study Group; Secretary-General: Makoto Jomura, science and mathematics education volunteer dispatched to Ghana in 1987)

Japan Bangladesh Cultural Exchange Association

This organization is engaged in human resources development in Japan and Bangladesh and supports the self-help efforts of people in Bangladesh to improve their lives. (Representative: Shinji Magami, animal husbandry volunteer dispatched to Bangladesh in 1984; Director of Head Office: Mieko Magami, home arts volunteer dispatched to Bangladesh in 1983)

Asia Pacific Sustainable Development

This organization was founded to support post-conflict recovery efforts in the Solomon Islands. It carries out projects to promote recycling-intensive organic farming in Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands and conducts environmental education in Japan. (Representative: Kenji Ito, audiovisual education volunteer dispatched to the Solomon Islands in 1993)

Japan Overseas Cooperative Association (JOCA)

Founded in 1983 under the leadership of volunteers returning to Japan, JOCA seeks to return to society the international cooperation experience that JOCVs accumulate in developing countries. It supports the activities of its members, which include local JOCV alumni associations and other organizations for returnees grouped according to host country or dispatch category.

JOCV-supported scholarship programs

Many volunteers and former volunteers have established scholarship programs for students in their host countries who would have been forced to leave school without financial assistance. One example is the Kenya Students' Educational Scholarship (KESTES), launched in 1983 by volunteers who had been assisting with school expenses on an individual basis. KESTES offers scholarships, engages in fund raising, and issues public relations bulletins. Over 400 Kenyan students have thus far received KESTES scholarships.

There are many other similar organizations established by former JOCVs that provide scholarships to students.

Giving Back to Society

Drawing on the JOCV Experience

JOCV volunteers have a saying: "It's after returning to Japan that you really start being a volunteer." True to this saying, JOCV volunteers feel it is important to share their field experiences with Japanese society and with the international community. Following are just a sampling of such efforts.

Making a difference in the classroom

Many teachers who become JOCVs send information and photos of children in their host countries to their students in Japan, along with artwork done by those children. By so doing, the volunteers are sowing seeds of international understanding in Japan. Teachers who have experienced the diversity of developing countries have a high impact in Japan after they come back, and the school boards of many cities regard such experience as a means of elevating the caliber of the teachers.

Over 1,600 volunteers have entered or reentered the education profession after returning to Japan.

A multifaceted approach to development education

Returnees play an active role in JICA's development education activities in order to foster understanding of international cooperation. Some returnees are involved in conducting national meetings on development education held annually by the Supporting Organization of JOCV. Many returnees are also working through the nonprofit Development Education Association



Our Global Friends textbooks developed by former volunteers.

and Resource Center (DEAR) to conduct research, develop educational materials, and create information-sharing networks and study forums for development education. One is Yoshihito Kinoshita, a computer engineering volunteer sent to Sri Lanka in 1988, who has established the Kanagawa Development Education Center to carry out development education on the local level.

Starting a farming career

Toru Onodera, an automotive maintenance volunteer dispatched to Kenya in 1994, currently operates an organic farm. After coming into contact with the wildlife and nature of Kenya, Onodera realized that agriculture was the foundation of life and decided to start



Working on an organic farm.

farming when he returned to Japan. He studied agriculture and is now also supporting people who want to become JOCV agriculture volunteers.

Launch pad for creative activities

Hiroshi Fuji, who served as a fine arts volunteer in Papua New Guinea from 1986, now takes everyday articles that have fallen into disuse or been discarded and turns them into avant-garde art objects. He is also known for his planning and production endeavors that transcend categories, including environmental education events in various parts of Japan. The starting point for his creative pursuits was his experience as a volunteer. "Things that appear commonplace at first glance," says Fuji, "can take on an unexpectedly wonderful quality."

Offering medical services where there are no doctors

After serving as an animal husbandry volunteer in the Philippines from 1979, Kenichiro Ogura decided to help people by becoming a doctor, and he enrolled in a national medical college. He was working at a hospital in Hyogo Prefecture when the Kobe earthquake struck in 1995; this experience brought him into contact with an NGO called the Association of Medical Doctors of Asia (AMDA). He works overseas as an

AMDA doctor and a member of a Japan Disaster Relief Team and is also serving as a physician on isolated islands south of Tokyo.

Addressing literacy in Japan by teaching night school

For the past 17 years, since the year after returning to Japan from Nepal (where he was dispatched in 1984 as a science and mathematics education volunteer), Jiro Kobi has been working at public night schools for secondary school students. His students range in age from their teens through their eighties, and countries of origin and academic backgrounds vary widely. In addition to the subjects covered by the curriculum, they are also studying the Japanese language. Kobi plans to compile and publish an account of this experience.

Ongoing cooperation for people with disabilities

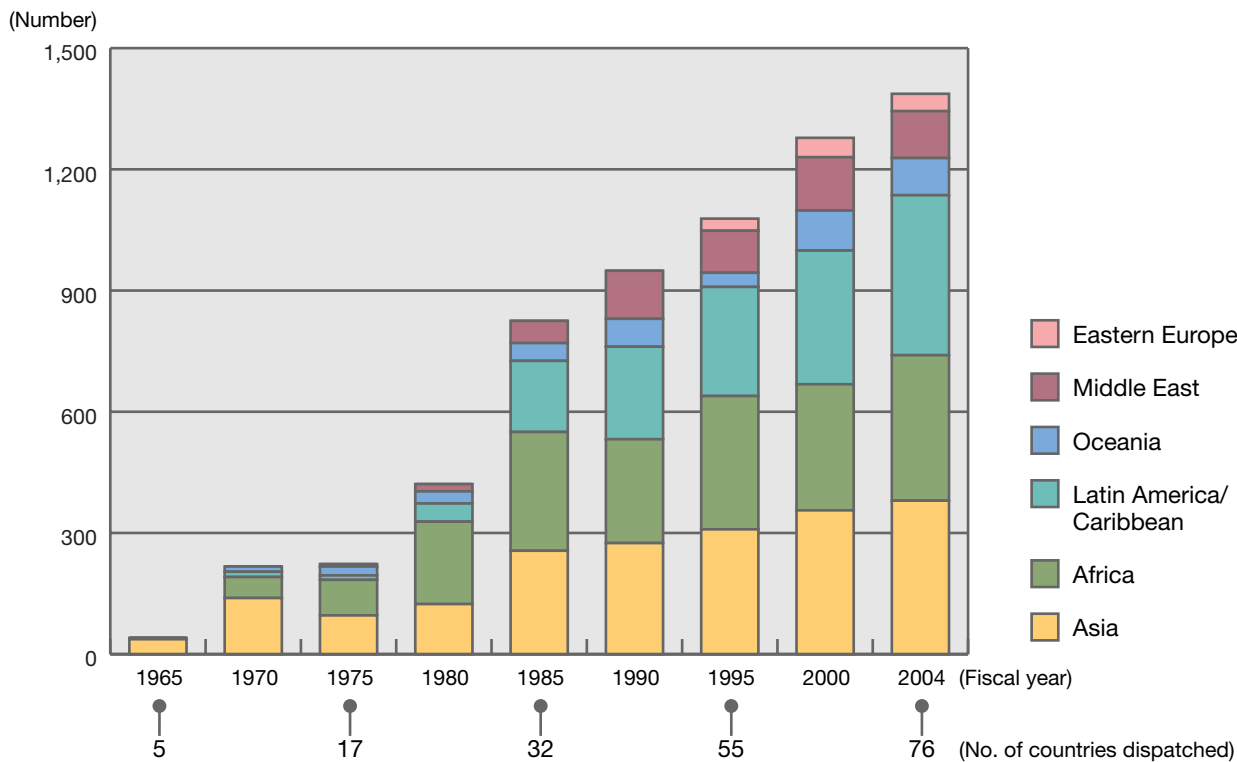
Aki Hirano, dispatched to Paraguay in 1993, had been involved in educating children with disabilities before she left for her overseas assignment. In Paraguay she encountered many children with disabilities who were living at home. This gave her a keen awareness of the need for a medical approach. She entered night school to study occupational therapy, and is now working in this profession at a hospital. She treats mental-health patients who range in age from adolescents to the elderly.

Working as an international cooperation professional

After returning to Japan, many volunteers continue their involvement in international cooperation by going to work for JICA or other international organizations, NGOs, and consulting firms. Harumi Sakaguchi, dispatched to Malaysia in 1972 as a Japanese language instructor, was one of the first returnees to become an international civil servant, joining the UN Development Programme (UNDP) in 1978. In addition to working at the head office of the UN Volunteer (UNV) program, he has also served in developing countries like Afghanistan.

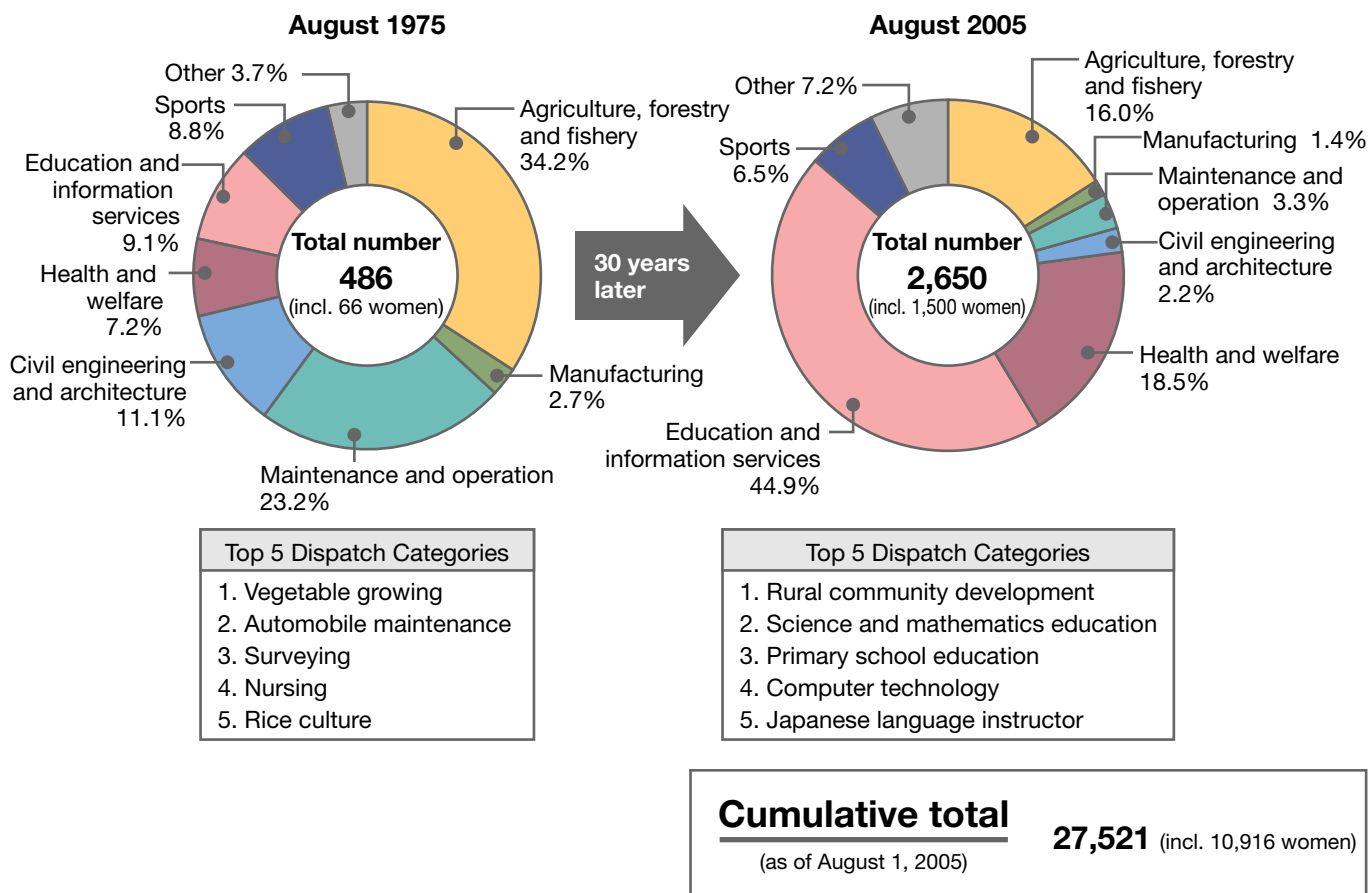
Reference

Number of JOCVs Dispatched by Year



Note: JOCVs include regular and short-term volunteers and coordinators.

Categories of Active JOCVs



JICA Volunteer Activities

Year	JICA Volunteer Activities	Major World Events / Events in Japan
1954		Japan joins the Colombo Plan (initiates technical cooperation)
1955		Asian-African Conference (Bandung Conference) held
1956		Japan joins the United Nations
1961		Peace Corps established in the US
1962	Overseas Technical Cooperation Agency (OTCA) established	
1964		Japan formally joins the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)
1965	Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers (JOCV) program launched (Apr. 20); first JOCVs dispatched to Laos (Dec. 24)	
1968	JOCV Secretariat transferred to Hiroo; Hiroo Training Center opened	
1969	JOCV dispatch agreement signed with 10th country	
1971	JOCV alumni posted to Yemen as first UNV	UN Volunteers (UNV) launched
1973	Acceptance of JOCV counterparts for training in Japan begins	
1974	Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) founded; JOCV dispatch agreement signed with 20th country	
1976	Supporting Organization of JOCV established	
1979	Komagane Training Center opened	
1980	JOCV dispatch agreement signed with 30th country	
1982	JICA participates in Ex-Volunteers International (EVI) conference for first time	
1983	Japan Overseas Cooperative Association established	
1985	JICA hosts EVI conference	
1986	JOCV dispatch agreement signed with 40th country	
1989	JOCV dispatch agreement signed with 50th country	Malta Summit (Cold War ends)
1990	JICA begins Senior Volunteers dispatch activities	UN Development Programme (UNDP) issues first Human Development Report; Japan completes repayment of World Bank loans
1992	JOCV dispatch agreement signed with 60th country	UN Conference on Environment and Development ("Earth Summit") held; ODA Charter is announced
1994	Nihonmatsu Training Center opened	
1995		Hanshin-Awaji (Kobe) Earthquake
1996	Japan Overseas Development Youth Volunteers and Senior Volunteers for Overseas Japanese Communities begin activities	Conference of International Volunteer Sending Organizations (IVSO) held in the US
1997	Japan participates in IVSO Conference for first time	
1998	JOCV dispatch agreement signed with 70th country	
2000		UN Millennium Summit held; Millennium Declaration adopted and Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) issued
2003	JICA is relaunched as an independent administrative institution; JOCV dispatch agreement signed with 80th country	Report of the Commission on Human Security issued; new ODA Charter adopted
2004		Tsunami damage caused by earthquake off the coast of Sumatra
2005	Meeting of International Volunteering Cooperation Organisations (name changed to IVCO from IVSO) held in Japan	