



JICAIRAN

**SPECIAL POINTS  
OF INTEREST**

Nowruz  
Message

The visit of  
Japanese  
Delegation to  
Iran

Interview with  
Dr. Ishikara, the  
Representative  
of UNHCR Iran

JICA's Lectures  
at University of  
Tehran

## A Happy Persian New Year of 1403 !



As we step into the dawn of the new year, it is important that we cherish all the past lessons learned and accomplishments and embark on a journey filled with hopes.

This year is the 50th anniversary of JICA Iran Office. Looking back on the past,

our outstanding achievements we managed to realize in collaboration with Iranian counterpart organizations fill us with a sense of pride and hope. Together, we have triumphed over challenges, showcasing our dedication and determination. I believe each obstacle we faced was a steppingstone to a brighter future.

This year, we will celebrate half a century of collaboration and deepen our commitment to making a positive difference in the world, giving people hope for a better future.

TANAKA Osamu  
Chief Representative

## JICA HQ Delegation Visits Iran

A delegation from JICA Headquarters in Tokyo visited Iran from January 21 to 24, 2024. Led by Mr. TOYAMA Kei, Director General of the Middle East and Europe Department, the mission highlighted the longstanding relationship between the two countries. Throughout the visit, the mission had a series of meetings and site visits, delving into JICA's ongoing collaboration with the Government of Iran and discussing potential areas for further cooperation.

One of the notable sites the mission visited was Arash Women Hospital in Tehran where they learned the latest status of the medical



• Visiting the progress of construction and installation of medical equipment in Arash Women Hospital

equipment delivered to the hospital under JICA's Grant Aid Project. In the meeting with the hospital, the management team of the hospital conveyed its profound contentment of the provided and installed equipment and added that "our healthcare professionals find satisfaction in utilizing such state-of-the-art medical technology equipment to save the people". Both sides also emphasized that every effort will be made all related parties to complete the construction and prepare the site for the

installation of the remaining equipment so that the Iranian people can take benefit of more qualified and faster medical services as soon as possible.

At the conclusion, Mr. Toyama expressed expectation that the discussion during the meetings and site visits will lead to further ensuring the effective implementation of projects. He further expressed hope for future collaboration to foster public support and steady development of Iran.

## Interview with Dr. Yumiko Ishikawa (Takashima) The Representative of UNHCR in Iran

UNHCR Iran mission and the possible future cooperation with JICA

### Short Biography and Self-Introduction

Hello, my name is Yumiko. I was born in Tokyo, Japan. As part of my Ph.D. research, I became interested in working with refugees and joined



UNHCR.

Before coming to Iran in 2023, I have worked with and for refugees in a variety of functions around the world - from Sudan, Kenya, Uganda to Thailand, Myanmar and Syria, as well as in Geneva at the UNHCR headquarters and in Tokyo steering private sector contributions to the refugee cause. Most recently, I was the Deputy Representative in Kabul, Afghanistan.

### What is your impression of the environment in which you are working in Iran?

I first came to Tehran in 2009 when I was the Field Coordinator at UNHCR's Tehran office. Now, with a renewed interest in this country and its generosity and hospitality towards refugees, I have been leading UNHCR's operations in Iran since last August.

Every day I see how Iran, despite economic difficulties, has been hosting refugees, mostly Afghans, for more than four decades. This is a true testament to the country's tradition and culture towards forcibly displaced persons and its inclusive policies.

My interactions with partners have been collaborative; we also closely collaborate with the government's lead agency, the National Organization for Migration, which is primarily responsible for responding to the refugee situation in the country. We also value our partnership with other local and national authorities, such as the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Health and Medical Education.

UNHCR aims to help maintain the protection space and assistance that refugees have found in Iran, while sharing this responsibility with the Iranian government and society.



- Afghan and Iranian students sitting side by side at a school in Tehran-Iran.  
@UNHCR Hossein Eidizadeh

***What are the goals of UNHCR Iran? What are your current activities?***

2024 marks the 40th year of UNHCR's presence in Iran.

Our main goal as the UN refugee agency remains to contribute to the government's efforts to support and build a better future for those forced to flee. In Iran, our main activities focus on enhancing refugees' access to education, health care and livelihood opportunities.

While my organization's name includes "refugees," it is also important to note that our impact goes far beyond that and always includes the host community, ultimately fostering social cohesion.

For example, over the past three years, we have invested more than \$22 million in education projects, including building schools, providing literacy training, educational kits and tablets, and higher education scholarships. Similarly, nearly \$62 million has been dedicated to health initiatives, with nearly half of this amount going to medical supplies such as ambulances and mobile labs/health posts, ventilators, dialysis machines, CT scanners, radiology equipment, TB medicines, rapid test kits for communicable diseases and other laboratory equipment.

This is particularly important because 99% of refugees in Iran live in urban areas, side by side with Iranians. Thus, all interventions must benefit both communities.

***Please tell us what you have been able to do in cooperation with the JICA office in Iran, the benefits of the cooperation, and what activities you would like to carry out in cooperation with JICA in the future.***

Self-reliance opportunities and livelihood activities are crucial for refugees to provide for themselves and their families. This is certainly a potential area of cooperation with JICA in Iran that can have a positive impact on both refugees and their host communities. JICA's expertise in creating jobs and sustainable rural livelihoods complements UNHCR's work in empowering refugee entrepreneurs, employers, and workers.

In addition, in the current context of global warming, it is essential to join forces to address issues related to climate change.

We look forward to building on our strong relationship with JICA through strategic cooperation that links development and humanitarian action for refugees and hosts alike.

# JICA's Lectures at University of Tehran



• Lectures of JICA Iran Office and the members of Faculty of World studies, University of Tehran

As part of their monthly sessions on Japan Studies, Faculty of World studies, University of Tehran invited Mr. TANAKA Osamu, Chief Representative of JICA Iran Office and Mr. KAWAMORITA Satoshi, Staff Member of JICA Iran Office to give lectures respectively in December 2023 and January 2024.

Referring to the 70th anniversary of Japan's ODA in 2024, Mr. Tanaka spoke about "History of Official Development Assistance (ODA) Granted to Japan". In his lecture, he described Japan's socio-economic situation after the Second World War and the ODA Japan received for its reconstruction between 1946 to 1966. He then referred to major projects and discussed the casual clarification for the successful ODA to Japan. In conclusion, Mr. Tanaka explained how the ODA Japan received has influenced Japan's ODA policy with emphasis on the self-reliant and continued efforts of the people even after cooperation projects terminate.

Mr. Kawamorita's lecture was on "River Management in Japan". Linking the Japanese

history of development to the river development, he highlighted not only the long experience of Japan in river management but also "river management framework", "flood control", "water use", and "environment management of rivers". He explained the different river classes in Japan and discussed how river administrators develop flood control plans for rivers and manage water use in terms of water rights and water management resources. Finally in terms of environment management, Mr. Kawamorita gave some examples of actions river administrators take to improve the nature-friendly river environment and landscape.

During the Q & A part of both sessions, participants raised a lot of questions and expressed their enthusiasm. The participants have learnt about Japan's experiences in both fields, which helped them to deepen their knowledge about Japan.

Newsletter Archive

