

JICA Iran Office Newsletter



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SPECIAL POINTS
OF INTEREST

CR visit to
Haraz Center

CR visit to
Rehabilitation
Center

Muslims in
Japan

Message from
JICA's

Long-term
Trainee

Haraz Center, contributing to rice production for 2 decades

On April 16th, 2023, Chief Representative of JICA Iran Office visited Haraz Extension and Technology Development Center (Haraz Center) located in Amol. JICA started its cooperation on agriculture field in this area in 1984, including implementation of technical cooperation projects such as "The Project of the Haraz Agricultural Human Resources Development Center"(1999-2004). Through these projects, Haraz Center was founded to carry out the training for developing the technology for rice cultivation. Trainees also participated in the training courses held in Japan to learn the Japanese agricultural technology.

It has been almost 20 years since then, but the equipment supplied in the projects and these trainees still remain in Haraz Center. The Center consists of mechanization lab, soil lab etc., and the equipment provided by JICA in the labs are well maintained. With these resources, the Center has been offering quality training for many farmers, engineers and technicians not only from Iran but also from neighbor countries.

The former trainees have been performing important roles as trainers in the training courses.

The long-term outcome of cooperation between JICA and Iran in Haraz Center is impressive, contributing to rice production in Iran for 2 decades even after the projects' completion.



A Place More than a Rehabilitation Center

Chief Representative (CR) of JICA Iran Office visited a rehabilitation center in Karaj, which was established in December 2022 by "Mint Association for Supporting Persons with Disabilities in Iran", an NGO in Japan.

This NGO had a very successful cooperation with JICA in a barrier-free support project in Karaj (2018-2022). They promoted barrier-free of pedestrian streets in the center of Karaj, and trained experts/supporters for people with disabilities (PWDs) through workshops. In the second phase of the project with JICA, which will start in 2023, they aim to help the PWDs to go out and visit the rehabilitation center independently.

On May 27th 2023 when CR visited, more than 10 PWDs and their families were gathering. Some were practicing self-rehabilitation and others learning about bed sore care supervised by a Japanese NGO staff member who was a qualified

physical therapist. In this center, everyone tries to make a peaceful environment. "This is a place more than a rehabilitation center. A place to make friends, to socialize, to talk about common challenges," CR commented. JICA hopes that more PWDs will have opportunity for an even brighter future by spending a good time at the center.



Muslim Society in Japan



On May 15th, 2023, a lecture on “Muslim Society in Japan” was delivered by a staff member of JICA Iran Office at Faculty of World Studies of Tehran University. About 20 students and staff from Japan Studies Department and outside the university participated in the seminar.

Since 1980s, the Muslim population in Japan has been increasing and, according to the studies, it is estimated that over 200,000 Muslims are living in Japan recently. In the lecture, in

addition to background of Japanese religions, history of Muslims in Japan, and activities of Mosques in Japan, problems the Muslim society are facing were discussed.

For example, at Japanese schools, school lunch may include some ingredients that Muslims avoid to eat such as pork. In this case the parents need to negotiate with the schools to allow their children to bring their own lunch box. School uniforms also can be a problem especially for teenage girls because girl’s uniform is usually skirt at Japanese schools, which Muslim parents hesitate to allow their daughters to wear. The idea of gender equality could be a possible solution to this problem. In some schools, all the students can choose skirts or pants, regardless of gender, to promote gender equality.

During the Q&A session, participants raised many interesting questions showing their strong interests in the theme. We hope participants have got some insight about another aspect of the Japanese society and that it will contribute to their academic achievements.

From Mr. Zakeri, A Long-Term Trainee in Japan

In late March 2023, I arrived in Tokyo, Japan, during the enchanting season when the Cherry-Sakura blossoms paint the entire city in a delicate pink hue. My name is Ghodrattollah Zakeri, a PhD student of Meiji University in Japan, dispatched as a trainee of JICA’s Long Term Training Program. Currently, I find myself specifically at the Graduate School of Humanities, as it aligns perfectly with my research interests in the intersection of Culture and Development.

The primary motivation behind selecting this research objective is the extensive examination I have conducted on the utilization of culture as an essential catalyst for development, drawing inspiration from Japan’s expertise and experiences in this crucial field. Comparatively, I have observed that despite both Iran and Japan implementing reform



programs simultaneously, Iran has not witnessed the same level of success in its pursuit of growth and development as its Asian counterpart. Through my research, I have discovered that Iranian sources fail to recognize and acknowledge the critical 'cultural' dimension that plays a pivotal role in this disparity.

Living in Japan and pursuing my research at Meiji University has been a truly fantastic experience. My PhD supervisor has been incredibly supportive, and I have access to abundant research materials at the library.

Upon the completion of my proposed PhD study, I aspire to utilize the knowledge and research skills I have gained in Japan, to benefit students in Iran and contribute to the advancement of my academic institution.