



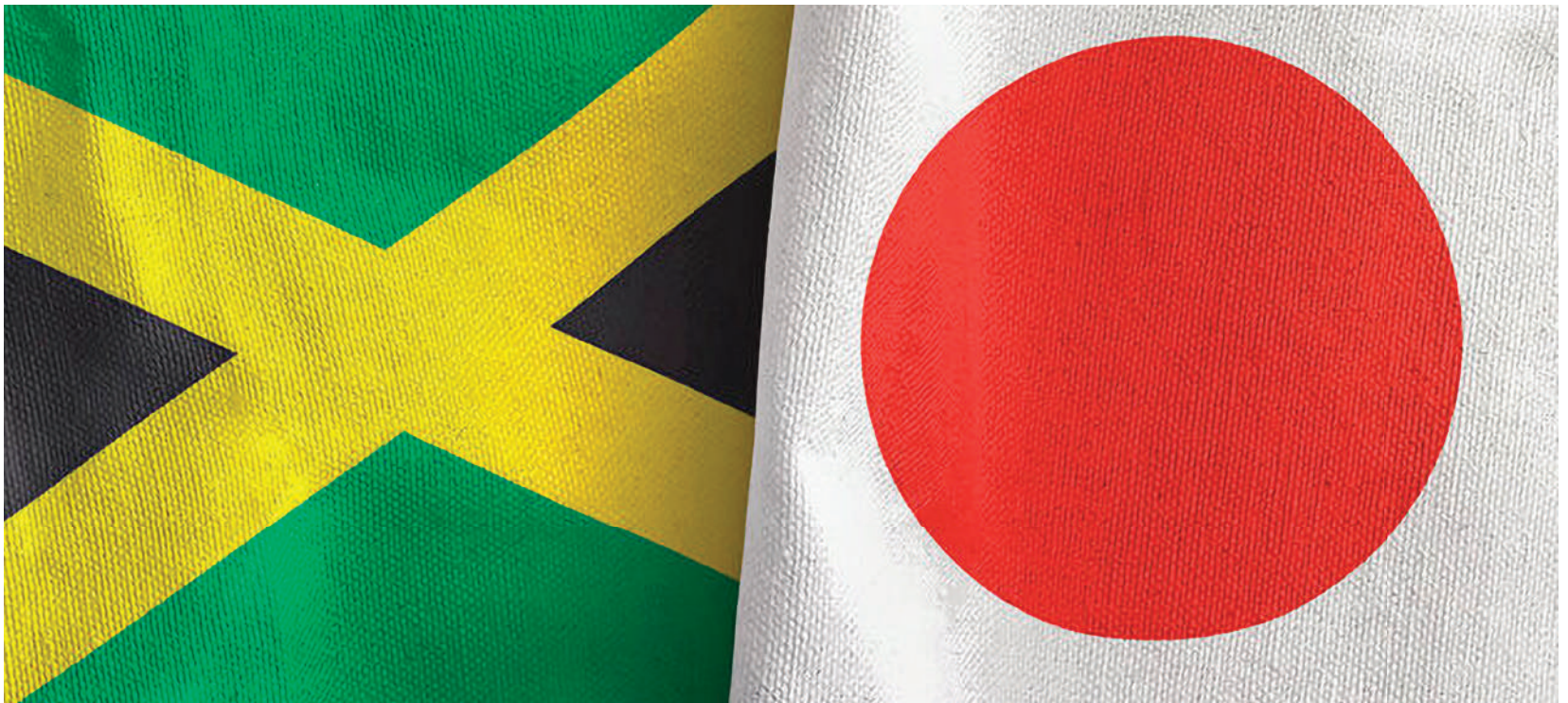
JICA ALUMNI ASSOCIATION IN JAMAICA NEWSLETTER

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*Building Partnerships,
Strengthening Connections*

ANNUAL REPORT FY2021



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President's Message



Throughout the journey of life, we each have memorable experiences in our personal and professional journeys that have helped to shape who we are. Our lives are full of activities related to our careers, personal development and family and it sometimes get complicated and before we realize, we lose touch with those who fall outside our immediate circle.

I have been privileged to serve as president for FY2021. It was an activity packed year. And I truly appreciated the team of committed members who continue to give service to keep this association going, all in an effort to achieve its mandate.

The major activities implemented were:

- ◆ Tree planting exercise in two schools in Kingston & St Andrew;
- ◆ The virtual Culture Extravaganza, showcasing the cultures of Jamaica and Japan.
- ◆ The Technology Transfer Seminar which facilitated the sharing of knowledge gleaned from training accessed over the year.
- ◆ A joint community project executed by JAAJ and JETAA, a new initiative that will hopefully become a calendar event for both Associations.
- ◆ Hosting of a Self Advocacy Forum, a partnership initiative between the JAAJ, the Jamaican Association on Intellectual Disabilities and Digicel Foundation.

My dream is that more alumni members will be deliberate in their efforts to contribute to the work of the JAAJ. I encourage you therefore to select the best option from the three possible opportunities to give back and stay connected:

- ◆ Get involved and participate in scheduled activities
- ◆ Assist in programme planning by serving on committees or
- ◆ Consider financial contributions towards planned development projects.

These opportunities are designed to strengthen partnerships that will enable the execution of more purposeful outreach activities. Please contact the president or other members of the team to share your interests.

I extend special thanks to the team at the Embassy of Japan, for their unwavering support; thanks to the JICA Jamaica Secretariat under the distinguished leadership of Mr. Takeshi Takano (Resident Representative) for the quality guidance and support in the execution of calendar activities.

To the FY2021 executive team, thank you. You each brought your formidable talents and unreservedly used them for the benefit of the JAAJ. A special thank you to members of the alumni, who offered support in programme planning for specific events despite not being elected members.

Giving back simply feels good!

Marilyn McKoy

JICA Alumni Association *in* Jamaica (JAAJ)

The JICA Alumni Association in Jamaica, JAAJ, is one of over one hundred Associations worldwide and is comprised of former participants of JICA's Knowledge Co-Creation Training Program in Japan.

The JAAJ was established in March 1998, with the support of the Embassy of Japan in Jamaica and the office of JICA Jamaica. Each year a number of events are executed engaging the membership. Despite the challenges related to the COVID-19 pandemic experienced in 2021 and the restrictions imposed by the Government of Jamaica, a number of activities were executed.



Mr. Takeshi Takano, Resident Representative of JICA Jamaica (seated) along with members of the JAAJ Executive team at the Technology Transfer Seminar held at the Courtleigh Hotel and Suites, Kingston 5 on February 25, 2022

Annual General Meeting Reports

FY2020/2021

The 23rd AGM of the JAAJ was held at the Terra Nova All Suite Hotel on July 24, 2021. Special guests included Mr. Takeshi Takano - Resident Representative, JICA Jamaica; Ms. Larisa McBean - Vice President Japan Exchange and Teaching Programme Alumni Association of Jamaica (JETAA).

The special activities executed over the year were the National Tree Planting Day, Virtual Culture Extravaganza, Technology Transfer Seminar, Training Support to the National Solid Waste Authority, development of a Waste Management Brochure and a Virtual Town Hall Conversation on Human Rights Protection and Persons with Intellectual Disability.

THE NEW EXECUTIVE BOARD FOR FY2020/2021

PRESIDENT	Marilyn McKoy
VICE PRESIDENT - Central Chapter	Pricilla Chambers
VICE PRESIDENT - Kingston	Rachael Reid
SECRETARY	Jean Pennington
PRO	Jacqueline Bennett
TREASURER	Dahlia Dwyer-Hodelin
BOARD MEMBER 1	Tendi Henry
BOARD MEMBER 2	Garfield Murray

FY2021/2022

The 24th AGM was held at the Hotel Four Seasons on Saturday March 26, 2022. Special guests were Mr. Toru Togawa, Acting Resident Representative of JICA Jamaica. The meeting was streamed live on the Zoom platform for member participation.

Six (6) special projects completed over the year were the National Tree Planting, Coastal Clean-up Day, Virtual Culture Extravaganza, Technology Transfer Seminar, joint project with JETAA and Intellectual Disability Forum in partnership with the Jamaican Association on Intellectual Disabilities and the Digicel Foundation.

THE NEW EXECUTIVE BOARD FOR FY2021/2022

PRESIDENT	Marilyn McKoy
VICE PRESIDENT - Central Chapter	Pricilla Chambers
VICE PRESIDENT - Kingston	Rachael Reid
VICE PRESIDENT - Western Chapter	Dilton Pike
TREASURER	Dahlia Dwyer-Hodelin
SECRETARY	Kerry Ann Palmer
ASSISTANT SECRETARY	Damanique McPherson
PUBLIC RELATIONS OFFICER	Jean Pennington
ASSITANT PRO	Ian Channer
BOARD MEMBER 1	Garfield Murray
BOARD MEMBER 2	Jacqueline Bennett

Courtesy Call

RESIDENT REPRESENTATIVE OF JICA JAMAICA - MR. TAKESHI TAKANO

The courtesy call with the Resident Representative was facilitated virtually amidst the rising COVID-19 cases across the country. The virtual conversation was facilitated on the Zoom platform with six (6) JAAJ members and three members of the JICA Jamaica team.

President Marilyn McKoy presented the calendar of events to be executed over the year. Possible solutions to increase the number of active members were discussed including a special campaign, redesigning the membership offerings and updating the existing membership database.

The other areas highlighted included increased partnership with the Embassy of Japan and greater collaboration with JETAA. The Joint project with JAAJ and JETAA was introduced in FY2021 and was considered a good community outreach event with the potential to becoming an annual event.

EXTRAORDINARY GENERAL MEETING

An Extraordinary General Meeting of the JAAJ was called to order by Mr. Andrew Samuels at 4:40pm. The primary aim of the meeting, as explained by Mr. Samuels, was to discuss and vote on the resolution to amend the Articles of Association in order to facilitate the hosting of JAAJ meetings using a virtual or hybrid approach. The notice of the meeting and special resolution to amend the Articles of Association were sent to members through the postal service.

All the members in attendance voted and the resolution was passed. The meeting was terminated at 5:00pm.

Special Projects

The following six (6) projects were undertaken during FY2021:

- ◆ National Tree Planting
- ◆ International Coastal Clean-up Day
- ◆ Culture Extravaganza
- ◆ Technology Transfer Seminar
- ◆ Intellectual Disability Forum
- ◆ JAAJ/JETAA Joint Project

Environment Project

National *Tree* Planting



*Tree Planting at the **Randolph Lopez School** with student, Principal and JAAJ members*

National Tree Planting Day was celebrated in October 2021. The tree planting exercise was carried out by the JAAJ members over a period of one week. A number of tree seedlings were donated by the Forestry Department for the project in adherence to the Government guidelines.

The schools that benefited were:

- ◆ Randolph Lopez School of Hope in Elletson Flats
- ◆ Paradise Basic School in Rae Town.

The events were held on October 7th & 10th. JAAJ members Garfield Murray, Rachael Reid, Marilyn McKoy, principals, students, guardians and community members.



Tree planting at the Paradise Basic School with student, principal, parent and community members





International *Coastal Clean-Up* Day



The JAAJ has over the years participated in International Coastal Clean-up Day as one of its Calendar events. The main objective is to raise awareness about marine pollution and contribute to the reduction of garbage and plastic in the ocean. The day is usually observed on the third Saturday in September, however, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the local organizer, the Jamaica Environmental Trust was not able to accommodate all the groups on that day. Subsequently, an invitation was extended with different dates to groups not exceeding 15 persons and strict adherence to the COVID-19 protocols.



On Saturday, October 30, 2021, members of the JAAJ were engaged in clean-up of the beach at Port Royal Point, the specific site adjacent to the Jamaica Defense Force Coast Guard. Based on the proximity of the beach to the JDF Coast Guard base, the JAAJ capitalized on the opportunity to partner with members of the JDF Coast Guard in Port Royal, who assisted with the clean-up exercise.

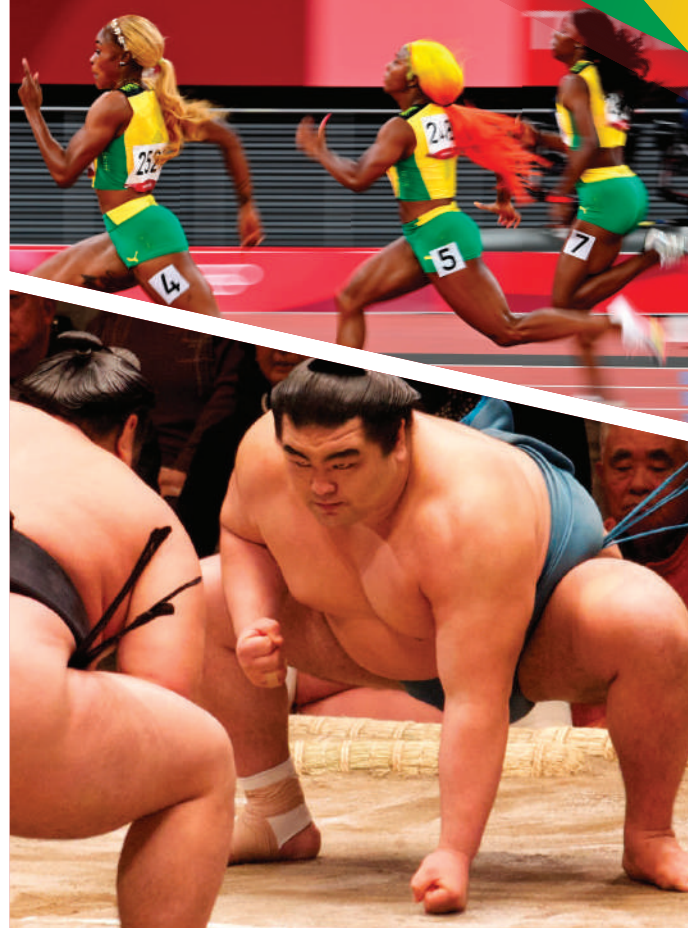
A total of fourteen (14) persons volunteered. The participants included six (6) JAAJ members and eight (8) members of the JDF Coast guard. The clean-up exercise lasted for approximately three hours and was indeed a productive activity which left the area in a state that was more aesthetically pleasing. The bottles were picked up by Recycling Partners of Jamaica while the garbage was picked up Metropolitan Parks and Markets (MPM).

Virtual Culture Extravaganza 2021

On December 10, 2021, JICA Alumni Association, Jamaica (JAAJ) held its 2nd Virtual Culture Extravaganza, under the theme – “Celebrating Unity, Embracing Diversity”. The event was moderated by Ms. Brithney Clarke, Journalist on Zoom and Facebook Live.

Special guests were His Excellency Masaya Fujiwara, Japan’s Ambassador to Jamaica; Mr. Takeshi Takano, JICA Jamaica’s Resident Representative; Mrs. Diedre Mills: Director-Bilateral Relations Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs & Foreign Trade and Ms. Sauna Maragh - President of the Japan Exchange and Teaching Programme Alumni Association of Jamaica (JETAA Jamaica). Former volunteers in Japan were able to participate in the event on Zoom.

The strong bi-lateral relationship between Jamaica and Japan has always highlighted areas in which the two (2) countries had similar strengths, as well as the unique balance in their differences. This 2021 theme was a clarion call, amidst the great tragedies of the COVID-19 pandemic, economic loss, drastic change and uncertainty, to celebrate the things that unify us as a people, a nation, and to embrace the elements that make each country different and unique.



The focus was on Sports, Music and Fashion - areas in which both Jamaica and Japan are known to excel on the global stage, specifically for their distinctively unique styles and cultural impact. The audience was given a virtual treat, as videos of both the traditional and contemporary sides of music and fashion, as well as the popular sports of each country were presented.

Sports presented opportunities for celebration in the 2020 Olympics (staged in 2021 due to the global COVID-19 pandemic) where both countries in their various disciplines, and Japan as the host, made their people proud. The drums were highlighted as a “Channel of Communication” for both countries. The different types and traditional uses of the drums, which accentuate each country’s cultural diversity were featured.

Fashion for both countries, was the canvas on which the people’s expressions of identity, individuality, passion, national pride and cultural traditions were on display. It was a unique mix of ‘edutainment’ as the creativity of the Jamaican and Japanese people was weaved using Fashion in Sports, as well as Music. Other features included were:



- ◆ A pictorial presentation of Culture Festivals over the years.
- ◆ Human Interest story of the Jamaican Hurdler, Hansle Parchment in Japan,
- ◆ Organizations that have contributed to sharing the cultures of both countries including the Japan Foundation, NPO Link up JAJA and the Westmoreland/Tottori Prefecture.

Technology *Transfer* Seminar



The Technology Transfer Seminar was held on Wednesday, February 25, 2022 at the Courtleigh All Suites Hotel, 85 Knutsford Boulevard, Kingston 5. Twenty one (21) participants were in attendance. Special guests were Ms. Noriko Oshima, First Secretary and Director of Economic Cooperation, Embassy of Japan; Mr. Takeshi Takano, Resident Representative, JICA Jamaica; Ms. Lasheree Senior, Foreign Service Officer, Japan Desk representing the Director, Bilateral Relations Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade; Mr. Donovan Leon, Chief Workplace Planning Officer, Scholarships & Assistance Unit, Ministry of Finance and the Public Service.

The event was moderated by Mr. Lenroy James, Immediate Past President of the JAAJ. Welcome was extended by Mrs. Marilyn McKoy, President. She expressed thanks to the Embassy of Japan, JICA Jamaica secretariat for the continued support to the JAAJ and the Government of Jamaica and Japan for the continued

facilitation of opportunities aimed at strengthening the human resources in organizations across Jamaica.

Ms. Noriko Oshima, First Secretary and Director of Economic Cooperation at the Embassy of Japan, in her greetings spoke of the major strength of the Government of Japan is the transfer of knowledge and technology between countries and the continued efforts of the Japan International Cooperation Agency since 1977 to offer training to the people of Jamaica. She also made reference to the adjustments during the pandemic to make the training accessible in the online medium.

Mr. Takeshi Takano, Resident Representative, JICA Jamaica, referenced the global reach of the Knowledge Co-Creation Programme which has been around since the mid-1970s and the number of Jamaicans who have accessed training in Japan. He expressed that for the next fiscal year, JICA will continue to provide access to training to Jamaican participants in areas

including Environmental Management, Governance, Agriculture and Private Sector Development, Nature Resources, Water Conservation and Health. The online medium of training, he indicated will continue until travel to Japan for direct training resumes. He lauded the efforts of the alumni association and commended the joint project between JAAJ and Japan Exchange Teachers Alumni association and encouraged the continued collaboration.

Ms. Senior, commended the JAAJ for the advancement of the objectives of the Association including the enduring bond of friendship since the development of the bilateral relations between Jamaica and Japan in 1964. She spoke of the investment of the Japanese Government in Jamaica's development efforts and expressed gratitude to especially the Ambassador and Resident Representative for the role played in deepening the cooperation of both countries. She congratulated the participants of the Knowledge Co-Creation Programme and encouraged them to



implement programmes using the knowledge gained from the training received.

Mr. Donovan Leon, in his remarks, highlighted the long history of capacity building programmes accessible to Jamaicans in varying fields. He spoke of the role of the Scholarships and Assistance Unit in synchronizing training opportunities across the public sector and the engagement of organizations to better understand the needs.

He expressed satisfaction regarding the level of development from the JICA Alumni body, the need to create a talent network to increase awareness among other Jamaicans thereby generating greater public interest and promoting the work of the Association and its work. He alluded to the work of JICA in strengthening the capacity of Jamaicans through training. He congratulated all the Jamaicans who participated in the training programmes over the 2021 financial year.



PRESENTATIONS & DISCUSSION

Two participants in their presentations gave an overview of each training programme accessed virtually during the FY2021. They outlined benefits to their organizations and specific activities being undertaken. The participants were:

1. **Ms Damanique McPherson**, Customer Relations Officer, NSWMA.
FOCUS AREA: Management towards a recycled oriented society and how to effectively manage solid waste.
2. **Mrs. Karen Nelson**, Acting Senior Public Health Nurse, Clarendon Health Department
FOCUS AREA: Strengthening of community health system for infectious diseases control: Improving Tuberculosis Programmes at the Parish level.
3. **Ms. Tracy-Ann A Hyman**, Coach/Entrepreneur/ Author who completed a Masters Degree in Environmental Management in Japan presented on her personal experience documenting the Japan experience under the theme, *“A balancing Act: The fusion of two cultures.”* She encouraged the members to read her recently published book *“How Do You Use Those Darn Chop Sticks?”* as well as participate in the scheduled book writing webinar. A recommendation was made to explore documenting the varied experiences of alumni in a collaborative manner.

A number of questions were posed to the presenters, resulting in a very engaging discourse. The presenters were commended and encouraged to stay committed to changes or addressing the challenges.

President Marilyn McKoy in closing expressed appreciation to Mr. Takeshi Takano, Resident Representative of JICA Jamaica, for the strong support given to the JAAJ over his tenure. She wished him well in his future assignments following his departure from Jamaica.

Vote of thanks was extended to the guests and other participants by Vice President Pricilla Chambers.

JAAJ & JETAA



Joint Community Outreach Project

On Saturday February 19, 2022, members of the Alumni Associations of the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) and the JET Alumni Association of Jamaica (JETAA) collaborated to provide support to the Paradise Street Basic School in East Kingston to address three needs of the school. A toilet was installed in the teachers' restroom and students' bathrooms refurbished, two white boards were installed, and the classrooms repainted. Two technicians from the National Water Commission were also available to lend support to the initiative.

Principal, Ms. Terika Grant, along with teachers, parents and students were also on site to welcome and assist in the work activities.



The Paradise Street Basic School was built in 1948 and is located in Rae Town, East Kingston with twenty-one students, two teachers and other members of staff. The school was previously the beneficiary of a JICA Alumni tree planting exercise held in October 2021.



The school is also the first beneficiary of the collaborative community outreach project between the two Alumni Associations which both share a mutual interest in promoting the Japanese spirit of cooperation and goodwill. It is hoped that this initiative will become an annual activity.

The JICA Alumni Association in Jamaica was established in 1998 aimed at strengthening the bond of friendship between Jamaica and Japan while promoting the cultures of both countries. The JET Alumni Association of Jamaica (JETAA) was established in 2000 with the objective of promoting a deeper and broader understanding of the JET Programme and of Japanese culture.





Intellectual Disability Forum

In Partnership with JAID & the Digicel Foundation

The Intellectual Disability Forum was implemented by the JAAJ in partnership with the Jamaican Association with the Jamaican Association on Intellectual Disabilities (JAID) and Digicel Foundation. The event was executed during Intellectual Disability Month and was aimed at empowering persons with intellectual disability to express themselves and speak on issues that impact them. This project had the following components:

THE FORUM

The Forum was held on March 25, 2022 at the Hotel Four Seasons. Twenty persons were in attendance including self-advocates, representatives from agencies serving persons with intellectual disabilities, educators, parents and representatives from the health sector, Justice and transportation. Mr. Toru Togawa, Acting Resident Representative of JICA Jamaica and Mrs. Lowrie-Chin, Chairman of Digicel, brought greetings. Mrs. Melissa McKenzie, teacher from the Woodlawn School of Special Education and beneficiary of the JICA Knowledge Co-Creation Training Programme in 2021 spoke of the benefits of the training focusing on Persons with Intellectual Disabilities in Community Activities. She also shared the action implemented in her school after the training.

The event was moderated by Ms. Brithney Clarke, Journalist, and included a panel discussion. The focus was on issues impacting their lives as they navigated the justice, health and transport sectors. A video presentation entitled "Allow Me" showcased the views and aspirations of young adults in relation to issues on employment, intimate relationship and sports. The event was streamed and accessible on JAID's YouTube channel.

BROCHURE DEVELOPMENT

Two (2) brochures were developed to build awareness of service providers in health, justice and transport sectors.

The forum offered young adults an opportunity to express how they felt about issues usually represented by others on their behalf. It provided them with an opportunity to strengthen their self-advocacy skills and build their self-confidence while expressing their thoughts and feelings on a matter of interest to them.

JICA Participants of Knowledge Co-Creation Programmes FY2021

Despite the COVID-19 Pandemic, training opportunities provided to Jamaicans as part of the Official Development Assistance of the Government of Japan, based on the bilateral agreement between Japan and Jamaica continued in 2021 with training offered virtually.

Twelve (12) Jamaicans accessed training in areas such as disaster risk management, energy, solid waste management and disability studies and infectious disease control. Online courses commenced in November 2020 through to March 2021. Organizations that benefited from the training include:

1. Caribbean Maritime University
2. Ministry of Science, Energy & Technology
3. Jamaica Public Service
4. National Solid Waste Management Authority (NSWMA)
5. National Environment & Planning Agency (NEPA)
6. Jamaica Association on Intellectual Disabilities (JAID)
7. Ministry of Health & Wellness
8. Ministry of Tourism
9. Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development

OPERATION GEN-Z CONNECT!

Membership *Engagement*

Investing in our children, youth and young adults is just one of JICA Alumni Association's strategies for sustainable development.

In an effort to strengthen the membership offerings, attract new and reignite the interests of past members, plans have commenced for the launch of Operation: GEN Z Connect!

This programme is aimed at providing opportunities for the children of Alumni members (ages 8 - 20 years) to:

- ◆ Connect with their Japanese peers through joint outreach partnership programmes.
- ◆ Participate in Anime and other Japanese themed classes.
- ◆ Experience the Japanese culture by learning the language and other art forms.

Many of our members are parents. Operation GEN Z Connect! is a great way for them to share their interest and love of Japan's rich culture with their children, whilst passing on a legacy to the next generation.

