

“ONGAESHI” - GOOD DEEDS RETURN

JAPANESE PEOPLE SHOWED SOLIDARITY FOR PEOPLE IN FLOODED AREAS

In mid of May, Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH), Serbia were struck by heavy rain. Three-months-worth of rain hit the Balkan region causing the historical floods. Devastation was in extent that the state of emergency was proclaimed. More than 56 dead, 70 thousand displaced. The damage caused by floods estimated on more than billion euros for each country.

Those in BiH and Serbia, who were not struck by floods directly, were struck by images of it on social and public media. Everyone stood up to give support of any kind to those who were affected. The atmosphere of solidarity in BiH and Serbia reminded of the time Japan was struck by the Great earthquake in eastern Japan, followed by devastating Tsunami and nuclear disaster in Fukushima in March 2011. In weeks following the Great earthquake, Serbia was the top donor in Europe and sixth in the World. People of BiH also gathered financial aid that exceeds its own economical power.



Fans of FC Nagoya Grampus collecting the aid for Dragan Stojkovic Piksi's homeland

Although the Government of Japan sent emergency aid immediately to both countries, Japanese people in general did not know the extent of the devastation caused by floods. It seemed as the floods in Balkans were going to pass unnoticed in Japan. With effort of the Japanese people who live in BiH and Serbia, as well as BiH and Serbian people who live in Japan, the news started to spread by social media (Twitter, Facebook, etc.).

“Ongaeshi” is a Japanese word, which means to return the kindness. “Now it’s the time for Ongaeshi” tweeted a Japanese twitter user. Soon the tweets and statuses with “Ongaeshi” as a keyword flooded the social media.

Japanese major media started reporting on the support that people from BiH and Serbia have shown during the hard time after the Great earthquake, and Japanese people, cafes, private companies, football clubs, that are showing unselfish solidarity to those affected by floods.

Japanese people have had the image of countries in Balkans predominately connected to ethnic conflicts from 90’s. The spontaneous “Ongaeshi” campaign on social and public media has changed the picture, putting the adjectives such are “friendly”, “unselfish”, “supportive” right in front of the names of the countries BiH and Serbia.

JICA AND DISASTER MANAGEMENT

The prevalence and damage of disasters such are floods, earth quakes, forest fires has increased in the past 30 years or so, as those disasters occur across the globe almost daily. People in developing countries are particularly vulnerable due to urbanization, which accelerates the concentration of people in cities and delays the provision of social infrastructure.

Whereas the previous mainstreams of disaster assistance were centered more on structural measures such as construction of dams and levees, there is also a need for compound measures that emphasize non-structural assistance such as installation of disaster warning systems, creation of hazard maps, and evacuation drills to improve the emergency response of people and society to disasters

As for flood control, JICA has vast experience in supporting the implementation of balanced flood control measures. Projects include formulating plans to develop facilities and strengthening community organizations for flood prevention, and setting up flood-warning systems. ([link](#))

CONTENTS

- MAIN TOPIC P1
- SERBIA P2
- BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA P2
- ALBANIA P3
- MACEDONIA P3
- KOSOVO P3
- MONTENEGRO P3
- OTHER TOPICS P4



For more information, please contact:
bk_oso_rep@jica.go.jp

or visit:

www.jica.go.jp/balkan/office/



www.youtube.com/user/JICABalkan



SERBIA AND BiH



EMERGENCY AID TO BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA, AND SERBIA

On May 23, the emergency aid (aprox.USD100,000 per each country) that was donated by JICA for flooded areas in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) and Serbia was delivered to capital cities of both countries, Sarajevo and Belgrade.

Soon after the floods, the reconstruction of both countries started immediately. But for many, the life in displacement or life without electricity, drinking water continued for weeks.



Emergency aid delivered to Sarajevo and distributed to Doboj, Maglic and other flood affected area in BiH

On the handover ceremony, the representatives of both countries expressed gratitude for the emergency aid, stressing out that the delivered goods will be useful not only in emergency situation but also in period of reconstruction.

JICA has donated tents, sleeping pads, water tanks, cord reels, generators, as an emergency situation. Right after the floods, the emergency aid goods were delivered to the regions in need.

With hope that both BiH and Serbia will be able to stand on its feet firmly again, as soon as possible, JICA is planning to deepen the cooperation with these countries focusing on mid-term and long-term improvements on flood control knowledge.



Emergency aid handed over to the Ministry of internal Affairs of Serbia



BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

SIGNING CEREMONY FOR A NEW IT EDUCATION PROJECT

On June 26, BiH Ministry of Civil Affairs and JICA, organized for the respective education authorities in Bosnia and Herzegovina the signing of a cooperation agreement on the "Project for Improving IT Education at Mixed Secondary Schools with Gymnasia Course". In the following two years, this Project to be budgeted at about 200 million yens (approx. 1,442,000 EUR) will encompass 59 mixed secondary schools with gymnasia course throughout Bosnia and Herzegovina. Signatories from both sides firmly believe that by equipping the target schools with necessary IT devices and textbooks, raising skills of the IT teachers and establishing information exchange network among stakeholders this Project will promote standardization and raise the overall quality of IT education. The Project will commence in September 2014 and will last for two years.

This Project is a new phase of the technical support that JICA has been providing to local gymnasia since 2008, during which time 54 gymnasia had already received the same type of assistance.



Signing ceremony

SARAJEVO WORLD PEACE CONCERT

On July 5, a Japanese conductor Mr. Toshio Yanagisawa held the "World Peace Concert" in the Sarajevo National Theatre, with the Balkan Chamber Music Orchestra. The orchestra was backed by members of the Sarajevo Philharmonic Orchestra, which received JICA's Cultural Grant Aid a year ago. The repertoire of the concert consisted of Mozart's Piano Concerto No. 13 and Beethoven's Symphony No. 9. The Sarajevo National Theatre was fully packed with audience, which warmly welcomed, Mr. Yanagisawa, pianist Mr. Takeshi Kakehashi. "Ode to Joy" featured choir mixed of 100 Japanese and Bosnian singers amazed the audience. This concert was a part of the "World Peace Concert" project. Mr. Yanagisawa and the Balkan Chamber Music Orchestra played in Tokyo, Nagano, Ishikawa and Aichi this May and June.



ALBANIA

GROUND BREAKING CEREMONY FOR SEWERAGE SYSTEM IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

On July 9, the ground breaking ceremony for the construction of Greater Tirana Sewerage System was held at the construction site under the flaming Sun exceeding 30 degree with more than 100 participants including the Minister and Deputy Minister for Transport and Infrastructure, Director General for General Directory of Water Supply and Sewerage (DPUK) from the Government of Albania, Japanese company of Kubota and Italian company, the contractor of project, the TEC International, the consultant, the Embassy of Italy, media, etc. The Loan Agreement was signed in June 2008, and looking back long procedures of prequalification, design, bidding, evaluation and contract in close cooperation with DPUK, the ceremony was marked a milestone for the construction of infrastructure of great importance. The construction is scheduled to be completed in December



Ground breaking ceremony



MACEDONIA

SUCCESSFUL COMPLETION OF PROJECT FOR EARLY WARNING OF FOREST FIRES



The Final Steering Committee

Commenced in May 2011, the "Project on Development of Integrated system for Prevention and Early Warning of Forest Fires" completed in May 2014 and achieved project purpose and outputs as initially planned. Forest fires are the most serious natural disaster in Macedonia. The successful capacity development of counterpart organization the Crisis Management Centre is attributable to the great efforts made by Japanese long-term experts. Their activities, included procurement of equipment, dispatch of short-term experts, development of integrated GIS system for prevention and early warning for forest fire, which is called as "MKFFIS", various trainings in both Macedonia and Japan, etc. The final steering committee was held on April 9 and MKFFIS has been in public since April 16. It is expected that outcomes of the Project will not only reduce the occurrence of forest fire in Macedonia but also

be spread out to the surrounding countries with common issue of forest fire. Web-site of MKFFIS-PUBLIC: [link](#)



KOSOVO

ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION WORKSHOP HELD IN PRIZREN

On April 30, a workshop was held in Prizren, on environmental education in schools. About 30 teachers from schools in the Prizren area attended along with about 15 students from 3 schools that are cooperating in the "Project for Enhancement of the Capacity for Waste Management toward Sound Material-cycle Society", a pilot project. The objective of the workshop was for teachers handling environmental education in each of the schools to get practical knowledge in how to provide their students with guidance. Check the full article on workshop: [link](#)



MONTENEGRO

FOLLOW-UP SEMINAR ON INFORMATION SECURITY FOR E-GOVERNMENT

On June 10 and 11, the Ministry for Information Society and Telecommunications of Montenegro, with support of JICA, held its first follow-up seminar. This seminar was a part of the follow-up cooperation for "Information Security for E-Government Promotion" training course held in JICA Okinawa Center, with goal to enhance the learning effects of trainee. The seminar has been conducted by experts from Fujitsu Company, who presented the latest Japanese technologies to representatives from relevant state authorities.



OTHER TOPICS

SENIOR VOLUNTEER NEWLY ARRIVED

The new Senior Volunteer (SV), Mr. Toshiki Maeda arrived in Serbia on July 1. Now the total number of SVs in Serbia is 4. JICA has been dispatching SVs in Japanese culture related activities and product management.

It is the first time for JICA to dispatch SV to Serbia in the field of the support for people with special needs. The partner organization is Nasa Kuca ("Our House" in English), NGO supporting the social employment of people with special needs. New SV is expected to transfer own experience of Marketing and Product Management to the partner.



Mr. Maeda (sitting in the middle) with his hosts at Nasa Kuca

HANABI - SUMMER AND FIRE FLOWER

In Balkans, people are used to enjoy the fireworks as a part of celebration: New Years Eve, victory of favorite football team, victory of political party on elections or on the end of big concert by pop superstar. In Japan, fireworks known as *hanabi* (花火, fire flower) are enjoyed simply to celebrate the summer.

Originally used to ward off evil spirits, *hanabi* became an integral part of Japanese summer. From tropical island of Okinawa to Lake Toyako in Hokkaido, hundreds of *hanabi* shows are held across the country, mainly during the July and August, with some of them drawing hundreds of thousands of spectators.

From the small fireworks, one can buy in stores and enjoy with family and friends in backyard to the world record holding Yonshakudama firework shells which are 1.2 meter in diameter and weight several hundred kilograms, *hanabi* varies in forms and shapes. The usual firework shell are known as stamine (single-color, multi-color, round, palm shape, etc.), but some shells are formed to burst into familiar shapes such as hearts, butterflies, smiley faces, sunglasses, cartoon characters, etc.

People wearing *yukata* (traditional light summer kimono) or *jinnbei* (man only), are gathering to enjoy powerful explosions, that one can feel on chest and colorful display of fire flowers shining on pitch-black sky, while drinking and eating picnic-like. The competition for good viewing spots can be quite strong, and people often show up and reserve the best spots hours in advance, especially in cities where tall buildings limit the number of spots with unobstructed views of the fireworks. Many shows offer paid seating, but tickets are usually not available on the day and are often difficult to get from outside of Japan or without Japanese language skills.

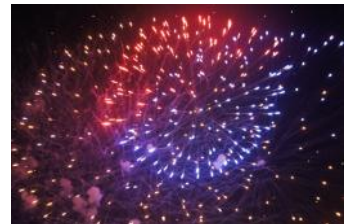
Hanabi shows often end with a grand finale consisting of hundreds of shells launched simultaneously, leaving smiles on thousands and thousands of guests, and with the feeling that it is summer.

TRAINING NEWS

May 13 - 25
Country-focused training program "The Project for Enhancement of the Capacity for Waste Management toward Sound Material-cycle Society"
8 participants

May 28 - July 10
Small and Medium Enterprise Development Policies (C)
3 1

June 15 - July 1
Mentoring Service for Small and Medium Enterprises in Western Balkans
5 4
5



Multi-color stamine firework



Palm-tree stamine firework



Falling leaves firework

Announcement

Aug - Survey on SATREPS Science and Technology Cooperation on Global Issues

Oct 12 - Concert of Kosovo Philharmonic Orchestra, with JICA donated instruments

The elusive summer. After the floods, we have hoped that we welcomed the summer. "First we have rain, than we have Sun., And all of that in 5 minutes. I have never experienced such summer", five old men were talking in front of the local store.

The floods had past, and the works on reconstruction are pacing up. I will look for the topics for the next issue, with "Solidarity" as a keyword.

Message from editor