JICA INTRODUCTION

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

After the due date for accomplishment of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) passed in December 2015, a new initiative called the “Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)” was launched with implementation period of 15 years, until 2030.

With the MDGs, established following the UN Millennium Declaration in 2000, 8 goals and 21 targets were set for reducing poverty in developing countries. While it definitely achieved some positive results, such as reducing the number of people in extreme poverty by half, some people were left behind from the benefit of development, especially women and people living in conflict zones.

While taking over some of the MDGs, SDGs added new goals, which are to affect the whole world and deepen the cooperation between the developed and developing countries. SDGs prioritize engagement in something that allows protection of natural resources necessary for both social development and economic growth.

As a member of G7, Japan is committed to advance the implementation of SDGs both domestically and internationally in a people-centered and planet-sensitive manner. Therefore, Japanese government launched the SDGs Promotion Headquarters in May 2016.

Some of the examples how Japan is involved internationally in implementation of SDGs are listed below.

SDGs: Malaysia

While Malaysia successfully shifted from an agricultural country to industrial one with continuing economic growth, it has been facing severe urban environmental problems, such as traffic congestion and air pollution, since the carbon dioxide (CO2) emissions are problematic. In order to tackle this problem and provide a long-term solution, both governments and the citizens have to work on it together. In Malaysia the awareness of CO2 emissions are rising and since 2011 the plan, including citizen-level element for revision of energy consumption and the lifestyles towards the future “low carbon society”, has been implemented. The project is being conducted by the research team of the University of Technology, Malaysia and research team from Japan. The project includes about 200 individual programs such as tree-planting activities, promoting composting, posting electronic bulletin board systems near bus stops for sharing information and promoting the use of public transportation. So far this program has been widely implemented by elementary schools in Malaysian Iskandar Development Region, which became a model district. It has also expanded to middle schools and local communities, while some neighboring countries are also showing interest in it.

The plan is that Malaysian research team continues implementing the project, on their own, in the future, while Japanese team shares as much as possible the technics of data analysis and so on.

SDGs: Kenya

As climate in northern Kenya is tough for agriculture due to little rain, nomadic grazing, where livestock is fed grass in yearly cycle of rainy and dry season, is the best lifestyle for this environment. However, this lifestyle has been changing due to frequent droughts, where people, by losing livestock, lose important assets and food.

As a response to global climate change in dry lands, Japanese company Nippon Koei has worked on improving the local resistance level against draughts to lessen damage. Three main focuses of the project were securing water source and effective use of green lands, promotion of livestock trade and securing income source other than grazing. Moreover, local customs and diverse lifestyles of people, living in this part of Kenya, needed to be considered while trying to improve their living space. Therefore, programs which meet the particular needs of each tribe’s lifestyle were developed and implemented.

For more information on SDGs, please visit the following URL
From 5th-7th October the President of Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), Shinichi Kitaoka, visited Belgrade and Tirana, for the first time since JICA opened Balkan Office in 2006.

During his visit to Serbia, Kitaoka met with the President of Serbia, Tomislav Nikolic and with the Prime Minister, Aleksandar Vucic, with whom he discussed about the current situation in Balkan region and ongoing and future projects of JICA in Serbia.

JICA delegation visited Thermal Power Plant in Obrenovac, where the first ODA loan project for the FGD Facility Construction on Power Plant Nikola Tesla is underway.

On the second day of his visit to Belgrade, Kitaoka focused on meetings and site visits related to the current migrant and refugee crisis in Europe. Kitaoka used the opportunity to visit Center for Reception of Asylum-Seekers in Krnjaca. On the same day, the delegation organized joint meetings with the representatives of the international organization as well as academic institutions.

On 7th October in Albania, Kitaoka met with the Prime Minister, Edi Rama, and the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ditmir Bushati, with whom he exchanged views on the overall situation in the Balkans and ongoing JICA projects in this country.

The delegation visited the area of Kashar administrative unit, where the ODA loan project for the “Greater Tirana Sewerage System Improvement” is underway, and the Pediatric Hospital “Mother Theresa University Hospital Center of Tirana”, where two Grant Aid projects of Japan’s ODA have contributed to the improvement of medical equipment.
Students of Akita University Toured MMI Bor

Balkan countries, including Serbia, which are aiming at joining the EU and are required to meet EU environmental standards for the accession. JICA considers “environmental protection” as one of priority sectors of support in the area, and implements projects enabling them to meet the EU environmental standards.

Bor City, located 250 km east from Belgrade, is the area with rich mining resources, but the mine drainage water is causing environmental pollution. In order to improve the situation, JICA is implementing “the Project for Research on the Integration System of Spatial Environment Analysis and Advanced Metal Recovery to Ensure Sustainable Resources Development” with the objectives of developing evaluation and analytical methods to grasp the pollution situation, and the technical method of detoxification and recycling resources from contaminants in the mine drainage water.

This project is jointly carried out in collaboration with Akita university, Mining and Metallurgy Institute Bor(MMI-Bor) and Belgrade University-Technical Faculty Bor(TF-Bor), and JICA provides MMI-Bor of machinery and equipment necessary for the research.

In August 2016, Japanese students from Akita University visited Bor to participate in a field trip to the mine, organized by MMI-Bor, and they conducted a survey to analyze the water contamination together with TF-Bor students.

Japan + V4 Workshop

On 11 October, 2016 “Japan + V4 Workshop” was held in the Chamber of Commerce of Serbia in Belgrade. The purpose of this seminar was exchanging knowledge and experience between Serbia and Visegrad Group countries (Poland, Hungary, Czech and Slovakia) with regard to the process of establishing energy management system (EMS) in accordance with the EU Directives. Representatives of the Embassy of Japan, Mr. Yamato, and JICA HQ, Mr. Hayashi, greeted the guests and expressed their wish the seminar to be successful which would help further effective implementation of EMS in Serbia.

The host was the Ministry of Mining and Energy of Serbia (MOME), as main counterpart of JICA in Technical Cooperation Project - Assistance of Enhancement of Energy Management System in Energy Consumption Sectors in the Republic of Serbia. Four presenters from V4 countries explained about particularities of the EMS in their countries as well the problems they have faced along the way. Some of 35 attendees from MOME working groups asked questions and the discussion was fruitful.

This seminar resulted in making good connections between MOME and colleagues from V4 countries and this cooperation will continue in the future.
In October 2009, a loan agreement of the Project for Flue Gas Desulphurization (FGD) Construction for Ugljevik Thermal Power Plant (TPP) in Bosnia and Herzegovina was signed. 11 July 2016, marked an important step for Mine and TPP Ugljevik by signing a contract with the contractor.

This project aims that BH would reach the emission standard for sulfur content in flue gases from the TPP, whose coal is known as one of the highest sulfur content in Europe. It is expected that this project will substantially improve the environmental conditions in Ugljevik, and bring significant health benefits to the inhabitants in the town, as well as the region as a whole.
In early 2000s, the Government of Japan provided grant aid for the Project for Construction of Basic Schools in Bosnia and Herzegovina which constructed 11 primary schools in the country. Since more than 10 years have passed from the construction, some deterioration and damages of the buildings (such as separation of exterior wall tiles, water leaking, and deterioration of roofing materials) at the primary schools were observed. Therefore, JICA decided to implement the Follow-up Project on the Project for Construction of Basic Schools targeting 9 primary schools which required significant repairs.

In February 2016, an agreement document called Scope of Work was sealed in Sarajevo by representatives of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Japan. JICA hosted the bidding for rehabilitation work, and the awarded contractor started rehabilitation work in late June 2016 when summer holiday season of the schools began. JICA dispatches a Japanese consultant to monitor the work. In the holiday period, major works (such as roof, drainage, etc.) had been mainly done. From September, as new school year started, the work has been implemented with paying attention not for bothering classes. The rehabilitation is expected to be completed in late October 2016.

In August and September 2016, Mr. Miyoshi, JICA project expert, together with BiH Ex-Participants Alumni Association, hosted the Atomic Bomb exhibitions in BiH. It was held in Srebrenica, Bratunac and Rogatica for about 5 days each, and posters and DVD of Hiroshima/Nagasaki atomic bomb provided by the City of Hiroshima were presented. Origami workshop and signature campaign for abolishing nuclear weapons were also taken place as a part of the exhibition.

On 5th September 2016, about 15 Japanese students from Chuo University in Tokyo and 20 BiH students from Srebrenica primary and secondary schools participated in the opening day of the exhibition in Srebrenica. After watching the DVD, Japanese students taught BiH students how to fold paper cranes in the origami workshop.

Paper cranes are considered as a symbol for peace in Japan, and thousands of colored paper cranes are received at Peace Memorial Park in Hiroshima from all over the world. The cranes folded in the origami workshop will be also sent to Hiroshima with signature for abolishing nuclear weapons.

The year 2016 is the 20th anniversary of diplomatic relations between BiH and Japan. The Atomic bomb exhibition provided an opportunity for young people from both countries to think about the value of peace jointly in this important year.
**MACEDONIA**

**Hand-over of Emergency Assistance to the Areas Hit by the Floods**

On 7th of September, the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), in close cooperation with the Crisis Management Center (CMC), handed over the emergency assistance for three municipalities, Arachinovo, Gazi Baba and Tetovo, that were hit by the floods caused by torrential rain on 6th of August 2016.

According to the reports from local authorities and media, 22 people died and approximately 25,000 people were affected by the floods. Also, many houses were covered by mud and debris brought by flood and it was extremely difficult situation for municipalities, with limited number of staff, to clean affected areas without adequate equipment.

The Government of Japan decided to provide emergency assistance through JICA from humanitarian point of view, as well as in the light of the friendly relationship between Macedonia and Japan. The emergency assistance which is worth around 111,000 Euro, including pumps, generators, mechanical tools, is expected to be utilized for quick recovery of the flood-affected area.

**MONTENEGRO**

**Follow-up Cooperation for the Project for Improvement of Medical Equipment for Main Hospitals**

In Montenegro, due to the old facilities and overused equipment, the quality of medical services was declining. Therefore, in 2006, JICA donated X-ray machines and other medical equipment to three tertiary medical facilities, including the clinical center. As a result, the number of patients, surgeries and check-ups increased, which reflected the improvement of the quality of medical services.

Although the donated equipment served very well, some parts of it could not be repaired and they were out of function. In order to deal with this situation, the Ministry of Health of Montenegro submitted a request for follow-up cooperation for donation of medical equipment, such as endoscopes, and spare parts, as well as dispatch of experts.
Field Visit to the Philippines by Stakeholders of Financial Inclusion

The stakeholders of financial inclusion sector of Albania visited the Philippines in July and conducted field surveys at various institutions such as microfinance providers, agricultural cooperatives, banks, regulators and so on and have studied the history of microfinance sector development, current situation of financial inclusion education, variation of financial products for women and youth, branchless banking system, relevant legal framework, supervising mechanism of the government etc. Workshop was held to review their field visit as well as to produce their action plans for promoting financial inclusion in Albania.

Another group of the Albanian stakeholders plans to visit Kenya in October to learn developed mobile banking system and financial services through ICT.

KOSOVO

The Project for Capacity Development of Radio Television of Kosovo (RTK)

After almost one year since the kick-off of the project; in RTK, two working groups consisted with Albanian and Serbian staff members have worked on RTK’s capacity development for maintenance of TV broadcasting equipment and program production.

Currently, the program production group is preparing for a new show called “UMAMI (tentative)” in which Albanian and Serbian communities jointly present local cuisines; and the first show is about Kamenicë/Kamenica located in the eastern Kosovo. The RTK members with the Japanese experts are visiting the area on daily basis and shooting the scenes of the area’s long lasting mushroom plantation and local cuisine using local farm products.

RTK staff members learned the way how public broadcaster shall conduct program production while visiting the Japan Broadcasting Corporation (NHK) in Tokyo, in April 2016. Based on their experience and ideas, members are enthusiastically discussing with the Japanese experts on program creation while shooting the show. The first accomplishment will be soon presented in front of Kosovo viewers and those who watch RTK abroad.
Within the framework of bilateral technical cooperation agreed upon between the government of Japan and the governments of Albania, Montenegro, and Serbia, JICA is currently appointing a Regional Tourism Advisor to Balkan region.

As part of its activity and for the purpose of enhancing the tourism promotion of Balkan region to the Japanese market, JICA’s Regional Advisor for Tourism has successfully concluded the organization of the study trip to Japan from 16 – 25 September 2016, coincided with the participation in the Tourism EXPO Japan 2016, inviting directors and staff members of National Tourism Organization of each country.

Through their visit to the key touristic sites in Japan, namely Kyoto and Hiroshima, they have been better acquainted with efficient Japanese site management method, warm Japanese hospitality, strategic cooperation of tourism industry with other industries, and effective promotion techniques.

During their time in Tokyo, they have built relationship with key tourism related organizations, as well as potential tour agencies, media and others, through which they will have been provided an improved marketing opportunities in near future.

In particular, their participation in Tourism EXPO Japan which was held from 22 to 25 September was remarkably successful. Being enjoyed by more than 180,000 visitors, this year was the first time participation for Albania and Montenegro, and the first regional cooperation initiative for Serbia. This has not only allowed them to see their improved potential opportunities in Japanese tourism market, but also let them feel more practically equipped in dealing with the Japanese market.

Through the cooperation of Turkish airlines, the media tour will be organized on November 2016 inviting various Japanese medias so as to achieve better exposure of tourism potentials of those countries in Japan.