NEW VISION

Nine years has passed since “Inclusive and Dynamic Development” was promoted as JICA’s vision. Today, when the world faces new challenges, it seems to be necessary to rethink the vision, mission and actions. In July 2017, JICA introduced the new vision “Leading the world with trust”, which implies that JICA, together with its partners will keep forging bonds of trust across the world, with the aspiration for a free, peaceful and prosperous world where people can hope for better future and fulfillment of their diverse potentials.

JICA’s mission focuses on human security and quality growth, without leaving anyone behind. Even in the furthest places in the world, JICA strives to provide economically, socially and environmentally sustainable development. JICA aims at accomplishing this mission through a series of action; commitment with pride and passion to achieving its mission and vision, diving into the field (“gemba”) and work together with the people, strategy with broad and long-term perspectives, co-creation which brings together diverse wisdom and resources and innovation to bring about unprecedented impacts.

Symbol of JICA logo design

Themes of the new design of JICA’s logo are “people” and “Earth=World”. The new logo also includes the arc which begins and ends at JICA’s logo. The arc symbolizes “recycling society”, “sustainable development and growth” and it also means that “through Japanese international cooperation, the international contribution is also a contribution to the Japanese society”.

The red circle above “i” symbolizes both “Earth=World” and “Japan”. The gradation within the motif indicates JICA’s scheme of “Technical Cooperation”, “ODA loans” and “Grant Aid”, while at the same time, it implies that JICA is implementing its policy of overall and strategic development and growth.

To conclude, the new design of JICA’s logo symbolizes the speed and dynamics of new JICA.
JICA’s Vice President Visits Serbia

From 5th-8th July the Vice President of JICA, Kenichi Tomiyoshi, visited Serbia.

During his stay in Serbia, Mr. Tomiyoshi met with the Executive Director of RAS (Serbia Development Agency), Ms. Tamara Jurenic, with whom he discussed about the current situation of private sector development in Serbia and future cooperation with JICA.

Mr. Tomiyoshi also visited the Bor Mining and Metallurgy Research Institute, the counterpart organization of the SATREPS project "Research on the Integration System of Spatial Environment Analyses and Advanced Metal Recovery to Ensure Sustainable Resource Development", and exchanged opinions with stakeholders.

In addition, Mr. Tomiyoshi visited Reception Center of Asylum-Seekers in Krnjaca. On this occasion, he was able to observe the current situation of refugee support in Serbia and stressed the importance of valuable support by host countries.

MACEDONIA

Supporting the participating countries to finalize National Action Plans (Third Country Training Program – Development Integrated System for Prevention and Early Warning of Forest Fires)

JICA implemented the Project on Development of Integrated System for Prevention and Early Warning of Forest Fires, in collaboration with Crisis Management Center (CMC) of Macedonia for three years from 2011 to 2014. CMC and JICA considered that the outcomes of the previous project shouldn’t be limited only to Macedonia, but disseminated into the surrounding countries. Since forest fire does not have borders and it is a common issue in the Balkan region, JICA implemented a training program on Integrated System for Prevention and Early Warning for Forest Fires inviting five countries (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Montenegro, and Serbia) in JFY 2016. In the Technical Seminars, action plans of each country were presented and suggestions were provided by the lecturers.

Though Technical Seminars in Skopje were finalized in JFY2016, CMC, host of the training program, visited all five participating countries, which were realizing their action plans, and had discussions with related authorities about the provision of technical support between April and July 2017. Among the participating countries, a few countries plan to submit proposals for Japan’s technical cooperation to build capacity of prevention and early warning of forest fires.
Commencement of works in Ugljevik TPP in Bosnia and Herzegovina

ODA Loan, which was offered to the Government of Bosnia & Herzegovina (BiH) in 2009 for Flue-gas desulphurization project (FGD), has reached very important phase. Namely, on 15 May 2017 the Site-opening Ceremony was organized in Ugljevik Thermal Power Plant where the Contractor, a Japanese consortium MHPS, and the Executing Agency Ugljevik TPP jointly prepared ceremony to celebrate commencement of works.

This project is very important since it will prevent very high-pollution with SO2 and contribute to good health of the residents. EU environmental standards will be achieved as a result of FGD facility work in 3-year time when the completion of construction is expected. Japanese know-how and new technology will be transferred to the people of BiH and therefore this project will become a symbol of friendship and cooperation between our two countries.

High-ranked guests gave speeches, such as the Minister of Energy in the Government of Republika Srpska and H.E. Ambassador of Japan in BiH.

Ground digging ceremony and *taru sake*, barrel breaking ceremony, were held as well, and folklore ensemble from the town Ugljevik performed traditional folk-dance to celebrate commencement of works.

Participating in the training program in Japan (Technical Cooperation Project – Confidence Building through Physical Education)

In July 2017, the “Physical Education in Basic Education” training program in Japan was held in Tsukuba University and JICA Tsukuba for three weeks, and three staffs from the Project for Confidence Building through Physical Education participated in the training program.

The training program received participants from eight countries such as Bhutan, Myanmar, Fiji, Malawi, etc. as well as Bosnia and Herzegovina. The purpose of the course was “to realize the current status of Physical Education in the resident country and to draw up the suggestion for solving challenges”.

The program included lectures for understanding framework of Physical Education in Japanese schools, study visits to primary and junior-high schools, demonstration lessons of Judo, swimming, and dancing, courtesy call to Japan Sports Agency, etc.

As Bosnia and Herzegovina has been reforming education system to integrate different curricula by three ethnic groups into common curriculum, forming the curriculum of Physical Education will start in September 2017, and the Project will support these activities. The three participants from the Project were impressed by lessons of physical education in Japanese schools which focus on, not only increasing physical performance, but also self-reliance, cooperation with friends, and enjoying sports. We wish this experience will contribute to the new common core curriculum of Physical Education in Bosnia and Herzegovina.
"Smallholder Families Financial Inclusion Project in Albania" launches in Autumn 2017

Upon implementation of Project Formulation Survey in March 2017, the Project document on the “Small Holder Families Financial Inclusion Project in Albania” was signed between JICA and the Ministry of Economic Development, Tourism, Trade and Entrepreneurship of Albania. Since Albania became EU candidate state in 2014, a certain level of economic development has been shown along with the implemented structural reforms to achieve the EU standard. Nevertheless, Albania remains one of the poorest countries in Europe with big urban-rural wealth gap. Most of the farmers in Albania are smallholder families consisting of family members, and enhancing their livelihood foundation and financial situation is crucial for economic development of the country. Therefore, this project will aim at contributing to livelihood improvement of smallholder families through provision of support to Albanian Financial Institution, particularly in development of its financial and nonfinancial services, expansion of its operational areas, as well as in support to increase the number of members who will benefit from these services. The project implementation is expected to launch in autumn 2017.

“Waste Minimization and 3R Promotion Project” has completed

After three years of its implementation, the project, which was launched in June 2014, was completed in May 2017. Through this project, JICA has been providing support towards capacity building for the government in the field of waste management, waste minimization, and 3R (Reduce, Reuse, Recycle) promotion in Albania. As part of the project, “3R guideline” was prepared by the project team, which was officially approved by the government of Albania.

The final Joint Coordination Committee (JCC) was held on the 25th of April during which a workshop was held on the introduction of the “3R guideline”, and the contents of the final report of the project was shared with the participants. Besides, it was concluded in the terminal evaluation of the project that the project purpose will be likely achieved, the fact that employees from 50 municipalities of Albania attended the “3R guideline seminar” indicates the success of this project. JICA sincerely hopes for the sustainable utilization of the “3R guideline”, in order to further strengthen the waste management system in Albania.
Judo for Peace, regional Judo tournament held in Peja/Pec

On 29 April 2017, in Peja/Pec, the town known with the Monastery of the Patriarchate of Peja/Pec, the UNESCO World Heritage, the regional Judo tournament called “Judo for Peace” was organized. This regional Judo tournament has been organized once a year with the aim of deepening friendship within the country and the region through Judo; and this was the 16th tournament this year. The tournament is being organized by Ippon Dojo in Peja/Pec with the Kosovo Judo Federation, to which Majlinda Kelmen-dj, the 2016 Rio de Janeiro Gold medalist (Women’s 52kg class) belongs. For this year’s tournament, there was about 250 Judo-ka from Kosovo, Albania, Macedonia, Montenegro, Bosnia, UK, Romania and Japan.

JICA provided the Kosovo Judo Federation with the medals and trophies that was provided to participants of the tournament; as well as 12 officially recognized uniforms that could be used by selected Judo players of Kosovo in future world competitions.

For more details please visit the following page

https://www.jica.go.jp/balkan/english/office/topics/170429.html

Opening ceremony of the new food processing laboratory held in Gjakova/Dakovica

On 18 May 2017, the opening ceremony of the newly established food processing laboratory was held in Gjon Nikolle Kazazi school in Gjakova/Dakovica municipality, which is located in the western part of Kosovo.

The establishment of the laboratory was assisted by JICA through the follow up cooperation project based on the training “Local Industry Development in Agricultural Regions” conducted in 2015. This project was initiated by the ex-training participant, a school teacher of Gjon Nikolle Kazazi school. JICA provided 12 different food processing equipment to function the laboratory for the school as one of components in her follow up cooperation project.

The school, through the use of the laboratory, will be supporting not only school students in the agricultural faculty of the school but also others from private sectors and farmers who want to develop new and unique products using locally harvested fruits and vegetables.
JICA Balkan Office covers Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia.

Assistance to Balkan countries began in 1990, when JICA accepted first training participants from Albania to Japan, and last year JICA Balkan Office marked the 10th anniversary since its opening in Belgrade.

At this moment, Balkan countries are tackling social and economic development as they are approaching the accession to the EU. In this regard, JICA Balkan Office is assisting each country in their endeavors by focusing on environmental conservation, development of private sector and consolidation of peace.

Furthermore, as Balkan countries aim at joining the EU, they are making efforts to adapt to the environmental standards of the European Union and JICA is providing assistance by utilizing Japanese experience and advanced environmental technologies in overcoming various environmental pollution.

As Balkan countries are facing high unemployment rate, JICA's efforts are also focused on activation of domestic economy and promotion of employment. Through technical cooperation, JICA has introduced mentoring system for small and medium enterprises and promoted foreign direct investments.

Although at the end of the 20th century this region has experienced severe conflicts, today's picture has drastically changed. In Belgrade Philological High School, I met students who learn Japanese and dream about working in anime industry in Japan. I also got involved in a conversation with a taxi driver who told me “You are Japanese, right? I am a huge fan of Japanese actors Toshiro Mifune and Ken Takakura.” I was surprised by the fact that many people practice Judo, Karate and Kendo.

Reason for this may be found in the fact that Balkan countries and Japan have maintained good relations for a long time, and in all six countries there are people who admire Japan for its fast recovery after the World War 2, modern technology and highly developed economy. Moreover, immediately after the conflicts in the Balkans ceased, Japan extended its helping hand in the reconstruction endeavors of Balkan countries. It seems that people from the Balkans do not forget it. On the other hand, we also should not forget that after the Great Tohoku Earthquake, many offers to help were coming from Balkan countries, indeed.

I sincerely hope that we will further develop and strengthen high quality cooperation, based on trust, and make it valuable for all sides.

Mr. Kobayashi, new Chief Representative of JICA Balkan Office, visits Kendo lesson, instructed by JICA Senior Volunteer.