

Learning each other for a better tomorrow



Celebration of
1000 JOCVs
in Bangladesh 2009

Celebrating the occasion of the 1000 JOCVs in Bangladesh is really a pleasant experience for me. This also a reminder of the high magnitude of intimacy between Bangladesh and Japan.

JOCVs are one of the most promising engines of the JICA's assistance programme as well as priceless bridge of friendship between Bangladesh and Japan. They are motivated & dedicated young people who wish to cooperate in the economical and social development of developing countries. The volunteers work hand-in-hand with the people of recipient countries and transform their knowledge directly to the local community.

At present JOCV volunteers are working in 76 countries in Asia, Africa, Middle East, North-Latin America, Europe and Oceania.

First JOCV assigned in Bangladesh in 1973. Since then, more than 1000 volunteers have worked in Bangladesh. At present 48 JOCV volunteers and 1 Senior Volunteer are working in the country. JOCV programs are coordinated to suit the needs of Bangladesh and are under the guidance of JICA country co-operation framework strategy.

In Bangladesh JOCVs have been engaged in different sectors including agriculture, fisheries, manufacturing, mechanical maintenance and operation, civil engineering and architecture, sports, education and culture, nutrition, health and family welfare of different govt. agencies.

At present they work in rural and community development, primary education, health & family welfare youth & sports, ICT, environmental education, machine tools and tourism.

JOCV's in Bangladesh helps to meet the needs for practical technology transfer and Human Resource Development by directly interacting with people.



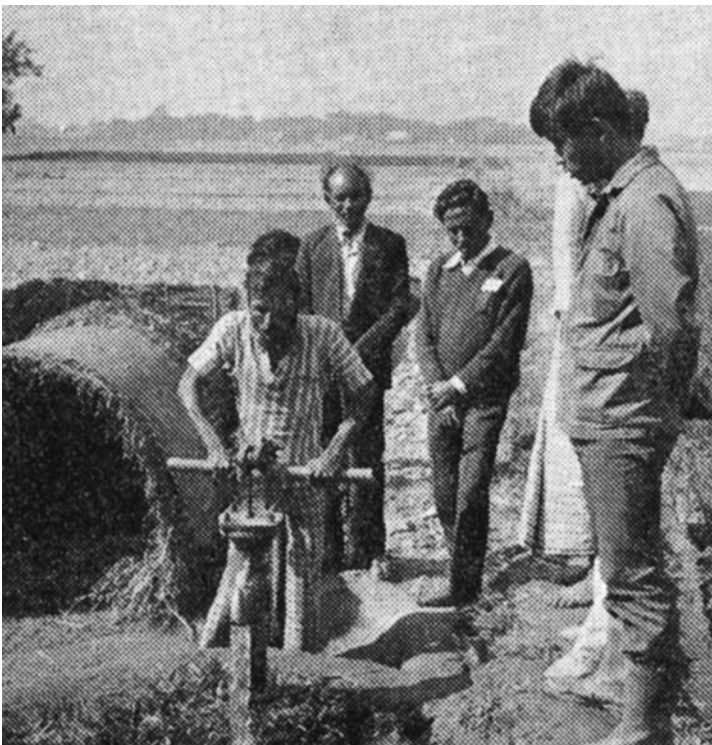
On this occasion I also like to extend my sincere gratitude to the concerned officials of the Bangladesh government for providing the enabling atmosphere to make the JOCV programme a success here. Besides the people of Bangladesh also deserve a heartfelt thanks for the warm hospitability and love they have been offering since the beginning.

I wish all out success of the Celebration of 1000 JOCVs in Bangladesh.

TODA Takao
Country Representative
JICA, Bangladesh

Jocv History in Bangladesh

The year of 2009 has marked 36th anniversary of Japan overseas cooperation volunteers (jocv) for Bangladesh. Since 1973, above 1000 Japanese have been dispatched to Bangladesh as the jocv and that has led to a great success of cooperation with Bangladeshi people.



JOCV were dispatched to Bangladesh first in 1973, following the conclusion of the bilateral agreement between Bangladesh and Japan in the same year. Since then, as many as 1000 volunteers have worked hand in hand with Bangladeshi people who have dedicated themselves to the nation building of Bangladesh. Presently 49 volunteers are working in 15 areas throughout Bangladesh.

36 years have passed since the initial 3 JOCV members (Rice farm, Vegetable growing and Farm machinery) were dispatched to Agriculture Extension Training Institution (AETI) in 1973 in

Bangladesh. It was the basic idea of the Prime Minister at that time to develop the country in Agriculture sector. The Prime Minister Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman told that proper training was necessary for improvement of Agriculture. So Bangladesh requested Japan to provide assistance in this sector through sending young volunteers.

In 1974, farmers suffered from flood of a maximum scale. Price of rice rose 2.5 times higher than usual and there was a shortage of food estimated at nearly 3,000,000 tons. The problem was so acute that the farmers had to ate the paddy seeds resulting in the destruction

Number of JOCV volunteers dispatched to Bangladesh

DISPATCH	YEARS	NUMBER OF JOCV
1	1973	8
2	1974	9
3	1975	1
4	1976	22
5	1977	14
6	1978	20
7	1979	18
8	1980	12
9	1981	37
10	1982	21
11	1983	25
12	1984	14
13	1985	36
14	1986	33
15	1987	29
16	1988	21
17	1989	42
18	1990	42
19	1991	27
20	1992	60
21	1993	27
22	1994	38
23	1995	32
24	1996	30
25	1997	31
25	1998	25
27	1999	26
28	2000	25
29	2001	36
30	2002	24
31	2003	22
32	2004	35
33	2005	36
34	2006	38
35	2007	34
36	2008	32
37	2009	32
TOTAL		1015

of paddy seeds completely.

In the beginning of February, 1975, the JOCV members who belonged to Gaibandha AETI distributed seedling. One of each seedling was able to produce hundreds of rice. This success had good influence for other regions. Since then 67 JOCV members have acted at AETI (11 JOCV were Gaibandha) until 1985 and they were highly appreciated among local farmers.

In the Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development, more than 250 JOCV members have been acting since 1976 up to now. One successful example is the Karupalli project. It started from 1988, aiming at increasing income of village women by producing and selling cloths and handicrafts at Karupalli shop in the BRDB headquarters in Dhaka.

In the Ministry of health & Family Welfare, the first JOCV member was dispatched as a nurse to the Dhaka Child Hospital in 1986. In total 32 members were dispatched to this hospital by 2003. The fame of the hospital was not so good earlier but it has been changed by the JOCV member's effort. Also, 18 JOCV members have been acting in the Civil Surgeon Offices in different districts since 1999 for the polio/EPI extermination till now. Many JOCVs have been engaged in fighting the curse of Filariasis.

JOCVs members have been playing vital role for the development of the ICT sector in Bangladesh through providing training to thousands of Bangladeshi people .

In the Ministry of Education, JOCV volunteer came to inform practical teaching methods. The then to till now, 22 JOCV members have raised the big result for practical science and mathematics at class in the Teachers Training College and Primary Training Institution.

In the Ministry of Youth and Sports, the first JOCV (JUDO) came in 1982. Since then 51 JOCV members have acted in this field up to now.

In 2002 JOCV member guided the BKSP tennis, basketball players to participate in the Asian Games. And other 32 JOCV members have acted with the Department of Youth Development for its training to the youth in the Ministry.

In the Ministry of Labour & Employment, the first JOCV member was dispatched to Teachers Training College (TTC) of Chittagong in 1980. Since then 108 JOCV members have acted with TTC in different districts. With their skill of Bengali, the JOCV members, together with counterparts, have completed technical text books in Bengali. The books are fully used in TCC. Also, JOCV members have been acting with NGO's under the NGO Affairs Bureau.

JOCV activities are aimed at not only transferring technology, but also building friendship through mutual communication at the grass-roots level-their impacts were immense for past 36 years.

Tale of a Forerunner

Takeo Oshima started his contribution to the development of the rural sector of Bangladesh as a Practical Instructor on Rice Cultivation, the staple food of the country with the view to eradicate poverty as well as with the motivation of ensuring food for all. He is one of the first three JOCVs came to Bangladesh in 1973 with the torch of new knowledge, innovative ideas and modern technologies to enlighten the agriculture sector.



Recalling the old days he said, it was 1973 August, that I set foot on Bangladesh as one of three JOCVs (Rice farming, Vegetable and Agricultural Machine) and we were the first batch dispatched to Bangladesh”.

He also noted that probably because of the good influence of the first counterpart, he had spent total eighteen years in Bangladesh, as JOCV, Senior JOCV, expert and so on. “I have still kept good relation with my first counterpart” he said.

He also felt that besides helping Bangladeshi people in developing their skills here, the JOCVs could learn many things from the people of Bangladesh in the long run.

He suggested the present day JOCVs to work together with counterpart closely to accomplish success in their mission.

Since then he knotted his deeds with the development of Bangladesh mainly the rural sector through continuous visits and successful activities. His contribution is not limited to the development of the agriculture sector only but his works in the education and health care sector are also praiseworthy.

During this long time he has worked with Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Industries, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Ministry of LGRD & Cooperatives and Ministry of Livestock & Fisheries. Within this period he has also served in JICA Bangladesh office and JICA head quarter in Tokyo.

At the age of 61 he is still working for the development of Bangladesh with the same enthusiasm and dedication as he started 36 years ago. He has dedicated half of his life for the wellbeing of Bangladesh with his knowledge, experience and hard work. He is expected to donate more of his precious knowledge and valuable time for the development of this potential agricultural country in the years to come.



Ms Yuko Tsuchida, Pabna. 1990-1992

A True Friend

A few in Bangladesh know that some important varieties of popular fruits and vegetables were introduced in the country by a JOCV. Back in early eighties, JOCV Kenji Yokoi did the great job during his assignment from 1978 to 82 in Patenga, Chittagong. Being an agriculturist, Yokoi brought seeds from Japan of various varieties of fruits and vegetables including big sized watermelon, Chinese cabbage, and radish from Japan and produced those in the soil of Bangladesh successfully.

But being an agriculturist, his contributions to the field of healthcare are also remarkable. In 1983, as a project coordinator, Yokoi worked at Cardiovascular Diseases control programme at Shaheed Shaurawardhi Hospital in the city. It was the first project in the country to control this lifestyle disease.

During his three-year project, Yokoi was working to create awareness among the local people about the danger of the heart diseases.

In 1986, at the end stage of the project, he got married and interestingly due to his deep love for this country he had decided to hold his wedding ceremony in Bangladesh. Then, Yokoi left the country and worked at various capacities of the JICA's medical project in Yeaman, Afganistan, Turkey and Jamaica.

In November 2006, he returned in Bangladesh and started working in safe motherhood project of JICA and Ministry of Health and Family Welfare. At present Six JOCV members are also engaged in this project in Narsingdi.

For Kenji Yokoi, Bangladesh is the second home. Though he is a Japanese, he works here relentlessly to save mothers' lives during childbirth.

Safe Motherhood Promotion Project is being implemented in

Narshingdhi since July 2006. Six upazillas are under the project that aims to promote safe motherhood in the country where 80 per cent pregnant deliver at home in the hand of unskilled birth attendants.

About 60,000 births take place in Narshingdhi every year, of which 9,000 pregnancies develop life threatening complications. Only 15 per cent deliveries are conducted at health facilities and skilled attendance at birth is 18 per cent, he added.

Against the backdrop, last three years, Yokoi was promoting the campaign to ensure that pregnancies should be taken care of very carefully as it may occur many troubles including death. "Though government recommended people to go the health



facilities while giving birth, people do not aware about the facts," Yokoi said.

Through their approach the safe delivery service system is strengthened, he said.

"When we started the project very few people knew about safe pregnancies, now the number is rising day by day," he said. Our approaches are to develop community support system, and improvement of the facility including quality of services. There are nine model unions of the 71 unions, which are encouraging, people.

Yokoi is very happy to serve the people of the country. He likes Bengali dresses and unlike many foreigners he loves Bengali cuisine, especially enjoys chicken biriyani and vegetable curry.

From Japan with love

Perhaps Chieko Yasuda herself could not imagine that her first visit would change the course of her life. After completing her degree in management, Yasuda started working at a departmental store in Japan. She had the desire to work overseas as a volunteer and to achieve her goal she applied to the Japan Government in 1988.

After she was selected as a volunteer she received training in Japan and came to the country in 1989 as a JOCV, which was her

first overseas assignment.

She volunteered to help rural craft-women generating their incomes.

"I was working in the head office of the BRDB and helped rural co-operative women to their income generating activities," Yasuda recalled.

After accomplishing her first assignment, she went back to Japan



and again returned in 1992 as a JOCV co-ordinator. In mid 1996, Yasuda again left Bangladesh to earn her masters degree in Resource Development from Michigan State University, USA.

Completing her degree, she came back to Bangladesh in 2000 and got involved with the first phase of the Participatory Rural Development Project. The first phase of the project completed in 2004 and then she left Bangladesh to return again to serve the second phase of project.

The country is very much familiar to her and she used to wear local attire, practice local customs and fond of local foods. She likes Bengali dresses and unlike many foreigners she loves Bengali cuisine, but does not like spices in food.

"The country changed before my eyes," she said when asked what changes you notice in the country. She loves Bangladesh so much that she used to call it her homeland. "I loved people here so much that I got married here," she said, adding, Bangladeshis are very friendly.

In 1993 she got married with a Bangladeshi name Prasenjit Chakma who is the deputy director of the Chittagong Hill Tracts Development Facility of the United Nations Development Programme.

Due to her long stay here, she achieved the rare experience of studying the psychology of the people and social chemistry here.

"Despite having tremendous potentials, some people have the tendency not to abide by the law. May be this resulted from the lack of awareness," she said hoping that it would be changed in near future.

"There are many rules and regulations for the betterment of people as well as for the society, but those are widely violated by many people" she observed

"People in general have not the practice of taking collective efforts to accomplish a target. Political condition needs to be improved for the sustainable development" she added. But the most alarming thing which Yasuda has observed was the brain-drain.

"I have seen that brilliant students' are leaving the country as they feel that proper environment is yet to be developed here to ensure their real potentials" she said.



But I am sure that all of them would love to back home if the sound atmosphere would be ensured.

Lauding Bangladeshi people, she said, I have been many places but in my observation Bangladeshis are the most meritorious. As a project coordinator of the Participatory Rural Development Project -2 of the JICA and Bangladesh Rural Development Board (BRDB), Yasuda is helping village people so that they can receive the various government services smoothly and properly. This project is being implemented in 15 unions in three upazillas of the country.

Through this project, a link has been developed to help village people to get their services from upazillas. The project will be ended by May 2010. "It might expand in different parts of the country," Yasuda said.



Mika Iwasaki

SMPP, Narshingdi

“During our nursing course, we were taught to provide best possible services for the human being. From then on I was planning to dedicate myself for human welfare in a poor country where people in general are deprived of health services,” says Attached with the Safe Motherhood Her main ‘Actually we have trained to serve the underprivileged so I feel that my work here is an ideal match to my philosophy of my life’ she added. Her daily routine includes visiting the rural households of the upzila to conduct medical check-up for the pregnant women and teach them about different aspects of pregnancy.



Kenji Tsuji

BRDB, Meherpur

We are working as bridge between people and the government. We formed village committees and meet in a meeting every month to exchange views. Village people have less access to the government’s service delivery mechanisms. They don’t get proper information. We work on this particular area. They created opportunity for the village people to sit together with government people at the same place. I believe people’s concerted effort can yield many benefits. For instances, a poor farmer alone can not buy a tractor, but when a group of farmers try, they easily can manage with the help of the government.



Kei Shiga

PRDP, Tangail

Bangladesh is a very beautiful country and I love the people of the country very much. They may be poor bit their hearts are rich. I am seriously thinking to do something for them. I want to see that they become self-reliant and not dependent on others. I am envisaging a wheel chair through which they themselves can attend their schools. Though I am working for the development for this country I want to inform the local people about Japanese culture and heritage.

Ayako Hirashima*PTI, Mymensing*

I'm a primary school teacher. In Japan, all the children have the opportunity to go to school and study. However, when I thought that in many countries there are children who are deprived of having the primary education, I prepared myself to be an overseas volunteer. I always had the desire to help those children through teaching them.

I thought Bangladesh is the poorest country in the world. After coming here I have found that Bangladesh people are very friendly and kind. They care for their family very much and do not hesitate to extend cooperation even to a stranger. Their hearts are so rich.

**Yuko Miyamoto***URC, Cox's Bazar*

Before coming to Bangladesh I had certain images about Bangladesh. I came to know that it was over populated, flood prone and a very poor country. After coming here I found that the country is not as underdeveloped as I thought.

In Japan there are limited students in a class and the number is maximum 40 but here the number of students in a class is more, which is also a problem in delivering quality education.

I like the stunning beauty of this area. My mother and younger brother has also visited Bangladesh and they have also enjoyed the country very much.

**Yoshino Suke Arakaki***Handball Federation, Dhaka*

Handball is very popular in Bangladesh. The JOCV members have been playing a pivotal role in enhancing the skills of Bangladeshi people since long. Presently JOCV Yoshinosuke Arakaki is working for the Bangladesh Handball Federation. He is providing coaching to both male and female handball players of the country so to prepare themselves for the ensuing South Asian Games. Hailed from Okinawa in Japan, young and energetic Arakaki arrived in Bangladesh last year for a two year long assignment. He is 26 years old. Besides training the players in Dhaka, he also providing training in different handball training camps across the country.





Published in October, 2009

Chief Editor:
Takao Toda
Chief Representative

Editor:
Paritosh Barua
Senior Program Manager

Uday Tower, 7th Floor
57 & 57A, Gulshan Avenue (South)
Circle-1
Dhaka-1212
Bangladesh

Tel: 9891897, 9891899, 9891972, 8826541, 9893732
E-mail: jicabd@jica.go.jp

Fax: 9891689, 9891753
Website: www.jica.go.jp/bangladesh

Inclusive and Dynamic Development
Japan International corporation Agency