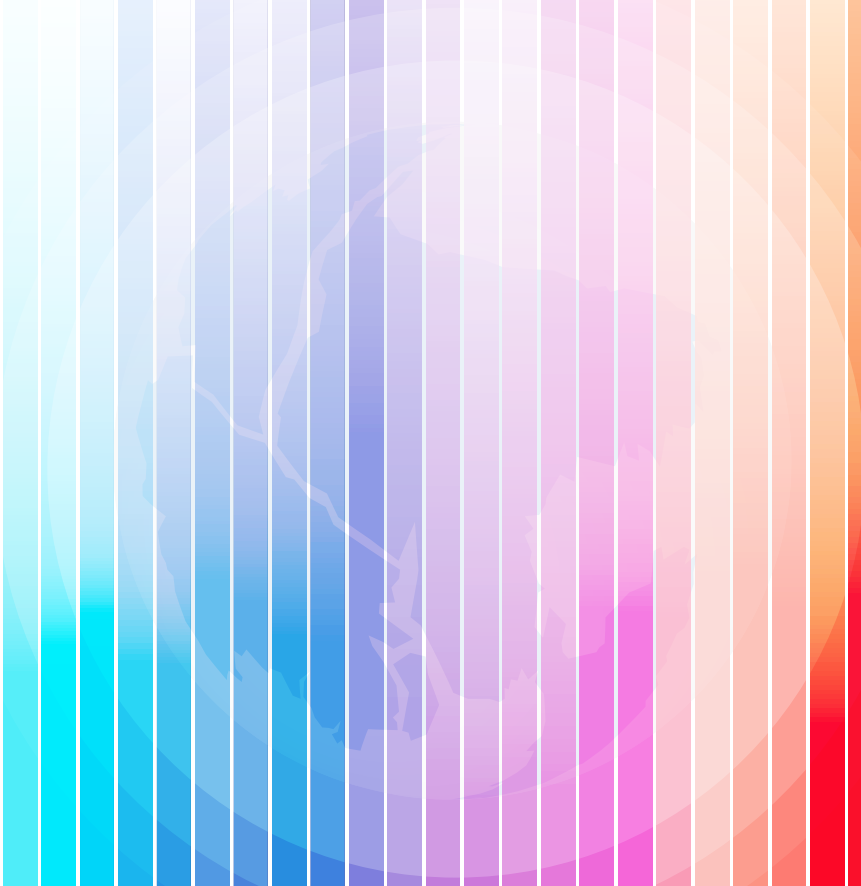




JICA VOLUNTEER IN BANGLADESH

জাইকা ভলান্টিয়ার





The value of looking back the history is not limited to our joy of nostalgia. In fact, through our attempt to celebrate 40 years of activities by JICA volunteers, we have learned that the history of JICA volunteers here in Bangladesh has crystallized into the incomparable friendship, mutual trust and respect between Bangladesh and Japan. These are priceless assets not only for consolidating our bilateral future relationship, but also for our common ambition to be realized in contributing to cope with any kinds of global issues.

Let us imagine a pair of compasses with which we have drawn half circle of their history and with which we will draw the other half circle of our future. We all know that our past is glorious not necessarily because of some volunteers' brilliant success stories, but rather because of so many volunteers' dream and sincere efforts often ending up with some lessons learned. Let us make full use of wisdom induced from the past for the sake of peace and prosperity of the coming generation.

I believe that the value of celebrating the history is there.

Chief Representative, JICA Bangladesh Office


Takao TODA

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JICA Volunteer's Contribution

Agriculture, rural development and local government sectors

A number of volunteers have been dispatched to cooperate in the fields of rice cropping, vegetable growing, fruits and mushroom culture, and agricultural machines to work on food problems in Bangladesh. Additionally, JICA technical cooperation project to enhance the system of local government involves JICA volunteers to promote rural area development by linking government services with local people's needs. JICA volunteers in this field also work on arsenic-laden groundwater issue in western Bangladesh through various approaches.

Technical training sector

A lot of volunteers have been working to develop human resources in manufacturing fields including machine tools, electric & electronic apparatus, refrigeration and automobile maintenance at training institutes all over Bangladesh. To support poor women, volunteers to teach handicrafts, textile printing, and basic PC skills have been working in Department of Youth Development, Bangladesh Rural Development Board, and Ministry of Women's Affairs. JICA volunteers also teach manufacturing and KAIZEN(improvement) in an effort to develop supporting industries.

Health sector (infection control, mid-wives, nurses etc)

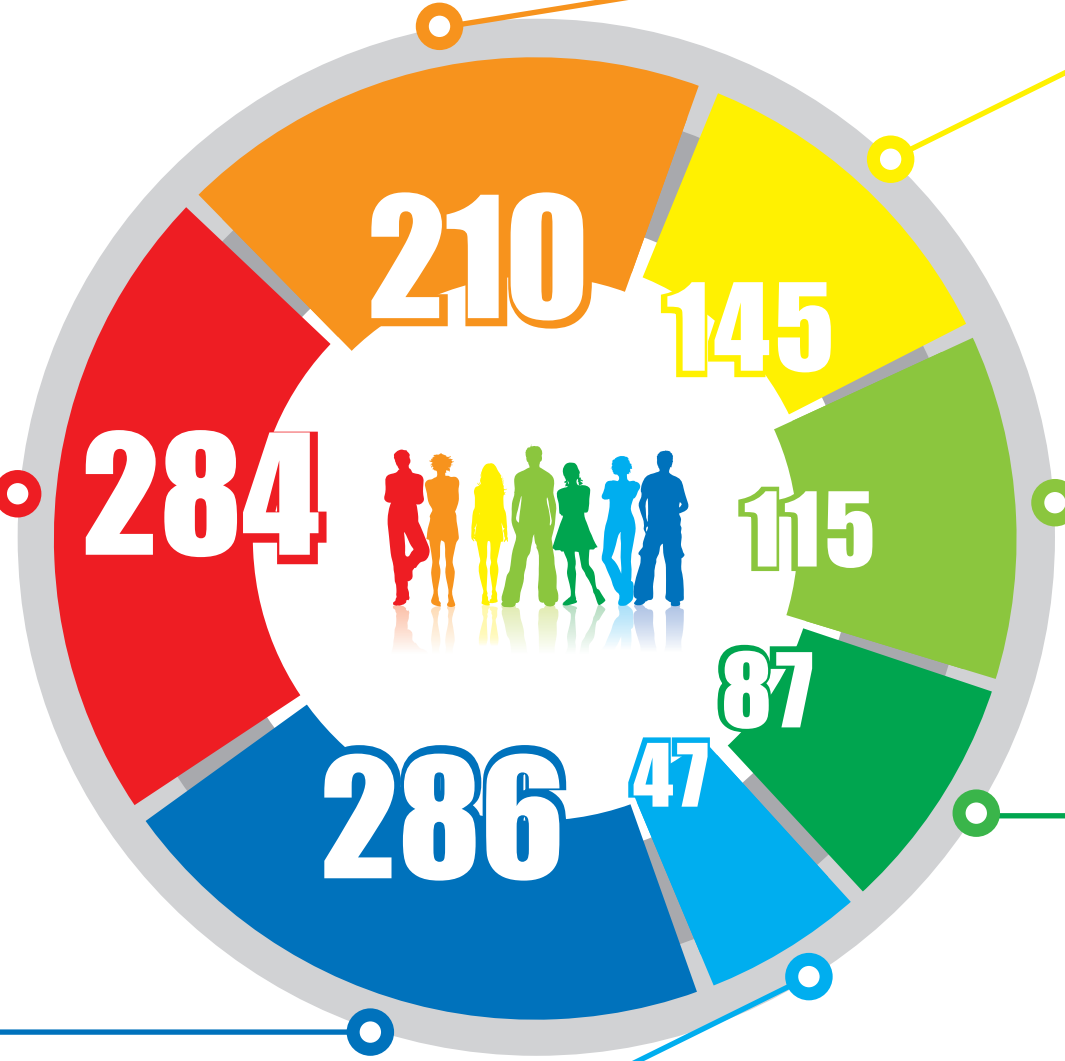
In this sector, JICA has been dispatching volunteers who work on infection control to support organizations for National Immunization Day(NID) or routine vaccination as well as filariasis prevention and morbidity control activities. Additionally, to strengthen maternal and child health system in Bangladesh, community development volunteers are conducting awareness activities toward the community and nurse volunteers are teaching 5S(sorting, set in order, systematic cleaning, standardizing and sustaining), KAIZEN, TQM(Total Quality Management) methods that are important for service improvement in different medical facilities.

Sports sector

Sports field volunteers have been contributing to human development through martial arts such as Karate and Judo. Many volunteers have also been dispatched to Bangladesh Krira Shikkha Protisthan(BKSP), physical education colleges, and some sports Federations to teach athletes and coaches various sports like tennis, soccer, basketball, swimming, handball, table tennis, badminton, boxing and gymnastics. They are trying hard to increase player numbers and giving advice on organizations of the tournaments.

Education sector (elementary school teachers and teachers of science and mathematics etc)

JICA has been sending volunteers to different government teachers training institutes collaborating closely with JICA's technical cooperation project named "Strengthening of Mathematics and Science Education at Elementary School" aiming at promoting 'children learning by thinking by themselves' instead of only memorizing the contents. Additionally, we are also sending volunteers to local NGOs which are working on education for qualitative development of education in Bangladesh. In the future, we have plans to address local-level problems in education sector by broadening the area of support with volunteer dispatch in secondary level as well.



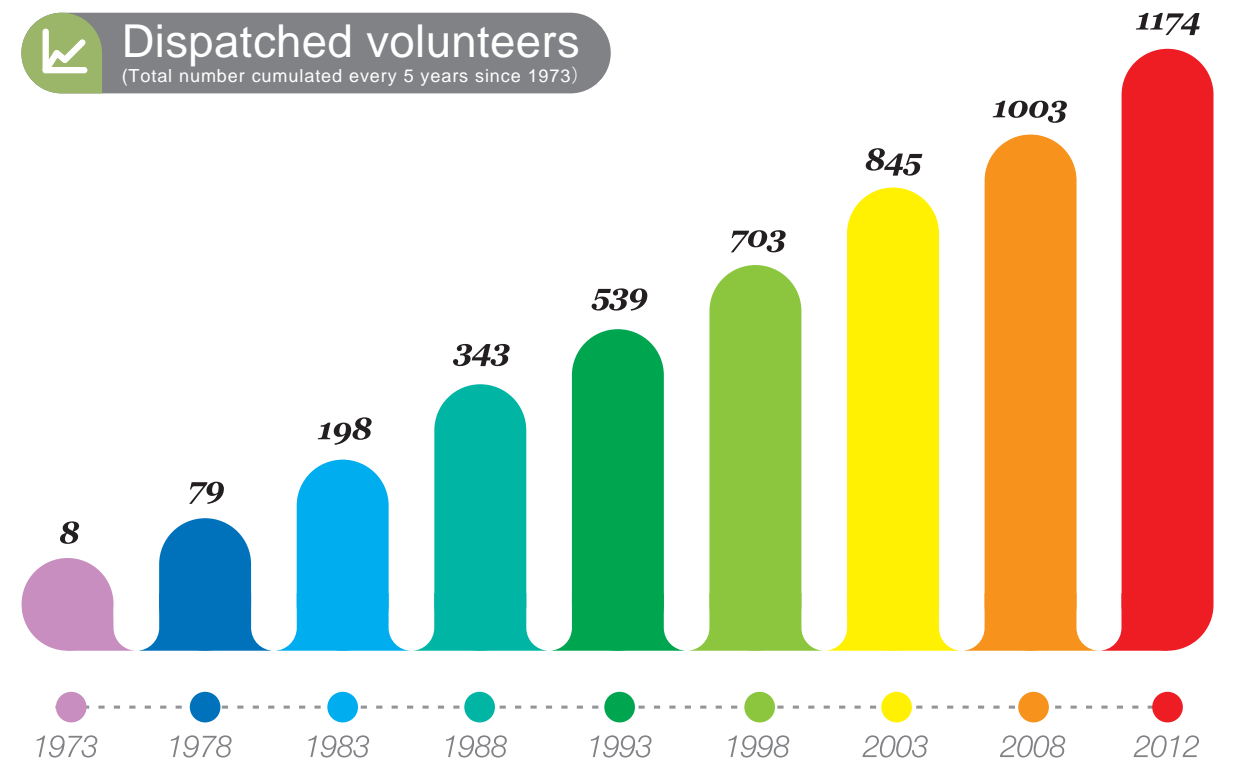
Others

To meet various requests from the government of Bangladesh, JICA has dispatched volunteers to work in broad areas such as broadcast, architecture, stock management, physical education, Japanese language, environmental education, cooking, tourism, business administration, youth activities, rural development(except agriculture & health) etc.

IT sector (Computer technology, PC instructor etc)

IT field volunteers are supporting the development of human resources who can be immediate force for an organization through conducting various courses in vocational and technical training colleges. They are also trying to introduce ITEE* to promote global standard IT professionals and develop private IT sector in Bangladesh. Some are supporting in implementing anti-virus, creating database, network management etc to ICT-related government offices. Senior volunteer is dispatched to the Ministry of ICT to advise the government on implementation of their public commitment to realize "Digital Bangladesh."

*Information Technology Engineers Examination



The History of JICA Volunteer

W World B Bangladesh V JICA Volunteer in Bangladesh

	1965	1970	1975	1980	1985
W	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ●1965 Start of the Vietnam War. The second Indo-Pakistani war. Establishment of Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers(JOCV) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ●1971 The third Indo-Pakistani war. Independence of Bangladesh ●1973 The Fourth Middle Eastern War. First oil crisis ●1974 Foundation of JICA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ●1975 The end of the Vietnam War ●1977 The hijack incident of a Japan Airline's plane ●1979 Second oil crisis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ●1980 Iran-Iraq War 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ●1986 Nuclear meltdown at Chernobyl ●1988 A cease-fire between Iran and Iraq ●1989 Collapse of the Berlin Wall. Japan became the top donor in the world
B		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ●1971 Beginning of Liberation War ●1972 Joining the Commonwealth ●1974 Severe floods killed tens of thousands of people and caused a major famine. joining the United Nations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ●1975 Assassination of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. Impose of martial law ●1977 Ziaur Rahman's presidency ●1979 Lift of martial law 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ●1981 Assassination of Ziaur Rahman ●1983 Hussain Muhammad Ershad's presidency 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ●1987 Declaration of state of emergency due to opposition demonstration and strikes ●1988 Catastrophic flood covering over 75% of the land
V		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ●1973 Dispatch of the first 3 volunteers to Bangladesh ●Around 1975 By giving white grain under volunteers' project to support farmers, rice cultivation became possible in the country 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ●1979 Introduction of hand-pump for irrigation and cultivation of watermelon, cucumber and Japanese radish became possible. Mushroom was introduced by volunteer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ●1980 Starting of volunteer dispatch for vocational training school ●1981 Dispatch of the first female volunteer. Start of volunteer dispatch of sports volunteers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ●1983 Publication of volunteers' journal ●1986 Dispatch of nurses to improve medical care ●1989 Dispatch of tuberculosis volunteers. Establishment of handicraft showroom "KARUPALLI."

	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010	2013
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ●1991 The Gulf War 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ●1995 The Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake ●1997 Adoption of the Kyoto Protocol ●1999 Proclamation of International Mother Language Day by UNESCO 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ●2000 Holding of the United Nations Summit, Establishment of Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) ●2001 9/11 terrorist attacks in the United States ●2003 Iraq war 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ●2012 The Great East Japan Earthquake
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ●1990 End of a military government due to Ershad's stepping down ●1991 Start of a parliamentary government. More than 100,000 people died by cyclonic tidal wave 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ●1998 Catastrophic flood covering over 75% of the land 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ●2006 Grameen Bank's Muhammad Yunus received Nobel Peace Prize ●2007 Declaration of state of emergency due to violence before election. Thousands killed by Cyclone Sidr 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ●2010 Bangladesh awarded for reducing child mortality rate by UN ●2012 A group of Muslim rioters attacking Buddhist community in Cox's Bazar. Japan mint's winning the order to produce 500 million 2-taka coins 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ●1992 The number of volunteers dispatched passed over 500 ●1995 Participation to safe motherhood program by dispatch of nurse and midwife volunteers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ●In the late 1990's Start of volunteer dispatch to Primary Teacher's Training Institute etc to educate science and mathematics teachers ●1996 Dispatch of the first Senior Volunteer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ●2000 Participation to polio control program and Expanded Program on Immunization (EPI). Increase in the number of volunteers on IT sector ●2004 Participation to Filariasis elimination program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ●2006 Start of environmental education volunteers to DS&NCC ●2008 Formation of puppet play group "Chiriakhana." ●2009 The number of volunteers dispatched passed over 1,000 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ●2012 Production of friendship song by Bangladeshi and Japanese to celebrate 40th anniversary of diplomatic relationship ●2013 Basketball players some of whom trained by successive volunteers won the South Asian championship 	



In 1980's
Promoted women's empowerment in a family and community by increasing women's income through instruction of agriculture, making handicrafts and clothes (ex.: doll, coaster, coconut-butter etc.) by JICA volunteer. Increased the number of academic volunteers in the field of cultural anthropology, social science and agro-economics



In 1990's
Some volunteers started to be dispatched to link up with Japan's grant aid project

Flood
Construction of weather radars and cyclone shelters by JICA and other organizations contributed to mitigation of the damage by cyclone

1 Introduced hand pump for irrigation 2 Watermelon introduced by JOCV 3 "Tasaki radish" introduced by JOCV 4 Mushroom cultivation 5 Automobile maintenance 6 Doll made by JOCV 7 Elephant coaster designed by JOCV 8 PC instructor

9 Safe motherhood activity 10 PTI volunteer to teach trainees 11 Karate players won South Asian Championship 12 Field work by EPI volunteer 13 Environmental education 14 "Chiriakhana" by some JOCVs 15 Ceremony of 1,000 volunteers dispatch 16 Basketball volunteer at BKSP

Stay together with the people of Bangladesh

Home economics

My lifetime bond with Jessore has started from nutrition improvement project



Profile



Meiko Magami(lino)
Work : Home economics
Batch : S57-3

Shinji Magami
Work : Animal husbandry
Batch : S58-3

Place : Jessore
Office : Bangladesh Rural Development Board(BRDB)

Past (Ms. Magami)



With two other JICA volunteers (vegetable growing & animal husbandry), I promoted soybean meal, taught how to cook, and conducted a campaign to provide vitamin & protein while visiting villages. I also offered job training on Nakshi Khata embroidery for women to generate income.

Past (Mr. Magami)

In addition to nutrition improvement mentioned above, live-stock office, hospital and I cultivated Napier grass and vaccinate to improve feeding procedure and prevent disease. We also hold a seminar on cattle husbandry for farmer, women and poor farmer unions once a week.



Present

Some people including us founded NGO "Japan Bangladesh Cultural Exchange Association(JBCEA)." Our main projects are to make sustainable system, provide school meal for elementary school children, help grow soybean to make processed food, and support female independence by offering job training.

My activities as a JICA volunteer

Before my dispatch in January 1983, there was a request from BRDB that "We would like raise the status of women in rural area through generation of cash income." So, a vegetable growing volunteer requested dispatch of a volunteer who has a wide knowledge in nutrition and can give training on cooking even in rural area of Bangladesh.

First, I conducted a research on the issue that villagers were facing jointly with 2 volunteers working in vegetable growing (my predecessor: Ms. Tomoko Sato & my successor: Ms. Tomoe Mashiko). Then, we decided what to do during our term. Later on, Mr. Shinji Magami (my present husband) has joined our project, and we started to work on nutrition improvement project.



Nutrition improvement project

This project contained two main activities; 1)to review traditional crops and promote new one, 2)to grow soybean which has good quality protein and have it included in people's diet. To implement the project, we could work with Dhaka University's laboratory for the study of

nutrition as well as Mennonite Central Committee (MCC), a NGO which has been working on soybean culture for a long time. Additionally, we tried to generate income of women in rural area by offering job training on Nakshi Khata embroidery.

Meet with a boy named "Simon"



In 1984, we happened to meet a 10 month old boy "Simon" and his mother. For a monetary reason, she had to work outside to build a road on a daily basis, and meanwhile her 6-year old daughter was taking care for Simon. Due to the lack of care, Simon has become sick. We advised her to bring him to the hospital, keep his body clean, and started to improve nutrition

by familiar food, soybean. In rural area of Bangladesh, poor nutrition, bad hygiene, and serious diseases were the issues that people were facing every day, and I strongly thought my 3-year term as a JICA volunteer would not be enough to solve them. These problems take time to be solved because they stem from poverty and poor knowledge on the matters. Especially, to improve nutrition takes decades and decades, so I have decided to contribute myself to solving the problem in Sharsha, Jessore as a lifetime project.

Marriage, and foundation of NGO

In February, 1986, my term has ended and I went back to Japan. Having got married with Mr. Shinji Magami in May, we gave lectures to introduce Bangladesh culture all over Japan. While introducing food habit of Bangladesh people for 10 years, we visited Jessore to interact and cooperate with local people on a regular basis. In 1996, some people including us established "Japan Bangladesh Cultural Exchange Association(JBCEA)" with my husband as a representative. For the past 15 years, we have been working on various activities. Surprisingly, we are still in touch with Simon. Due to improvement in nutrition, now he grew up to be 30 year old, and works as a long-distance trucker. We often tell his story to the local people in order to communicate the importance of nutrient balance, proper health-care and hygiene, and soybean.

Start of school meal project

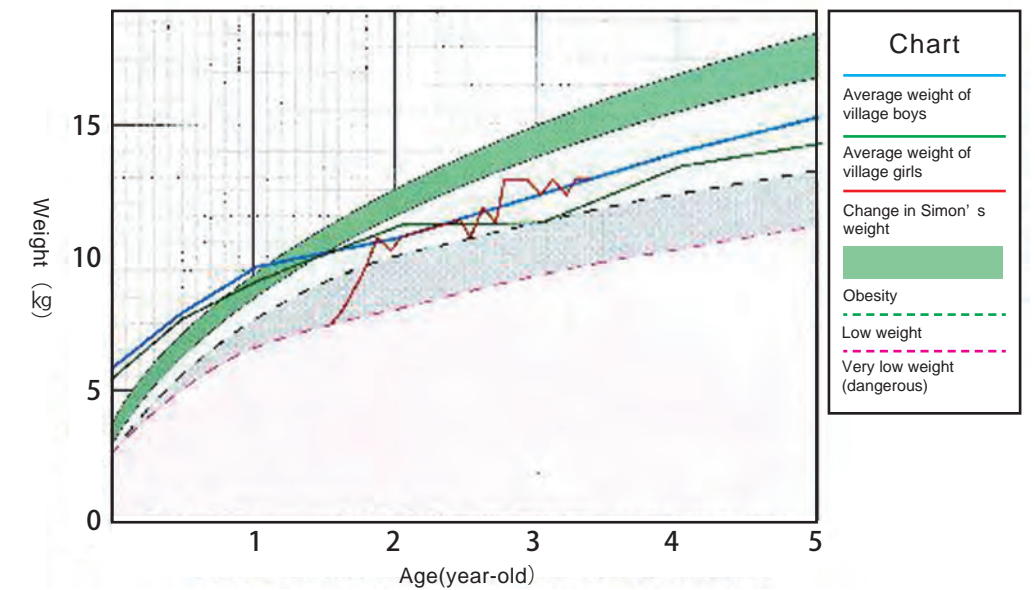
Providing elementary school children with school meal is one of our projects doing with local people. This has started a few years ago when we found out that 5 to 14-year old children had poor nutrition through evaluation of the activities in 2003. Then, we began to think the necessity of school meal with well-balanced food. Our project started from setting up a kitchen, training chefs, calling on government, schools, parents and local people for the need for school meal, and after several years, nutritious lunch has started to be offered to a school in Sharsha for the first time. Now 3 schools in total introduced this school meal system. We keep trying to expand introduction of this system into all schools in Bangladesh by having a series of meetings with related organizations both in Japan and Bangladesh.



Simon became 2 years old and healthy

Simon became 5 years old, and we kept in touch after JOCV

Growth record of Simon (Comparison)



Stay with Bangladesh for the entire lifetime

Bangladesh always inspires and motivates me with its wonderful people such as patient women and men working hard from early morning. My husband can't also say good-bye to this country because it has various aspects which sometimes bother or interest him. In

short, it's very deep. Every time we visit here, we feel and experience a lot. We would like to stay with people in Bangladesh over a lifetime.



The training center was established to provide a learning environment for villagers using JICA's budget allocated to support JOCV's activities on December 10, 1985. It took 2 years for completion and we released 100 balloons to celebrate its opening.

Textile printing

Setsuko Baba

Profile



Setsuko Baba
Work : Textile Printing
Batch : S63-3
Place : Dhaka
Office : Department of Women's Affairs (D.W.A.)



For the bright future of my friends in Cox's Bazar

Past

I was dispatched to DWA, an organization to provide women with better living and an educational opportunity. I worked as a dyeing instructor at technical institution which has various classes such as embroidery, sewing and leather processing.



Present

I serve as a representative of "A&A", a NGO to give Rakhain supports on education, culture and environmental protection. A&A stands for the initial letters of 'red' and 'green' in Rakhain language. We work with local people to meet various needs from them with the policy that we value interaction with people more than making some objects.



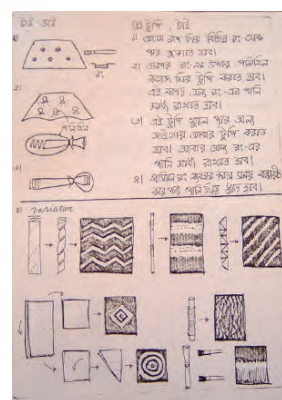
2013 Calendar by A&A



Proceeds from this calendar will be used to plant mangrove in southeastern Bangladesh. It is expected the calendar will be used as materials for learning Bengali.

My activities as a JICA volunteer

Dispatched in 1989, I started to work with a female counterpart to help women generate income by providing technical assistance as a dyeing instructor. My counterpart was in charge of teaching batik dyeing and tie-dyeing, so I decided to teach silkscreen printing and natural dyeing using plant in Bangladesh as originally requested by my office. There was no tutorial manual at that time, so I collected basic data for dyeing, drafted textbook and gave it to the office.



Meet with Rakhain people

During my term, I used to visit Bangladesh' s rural areas to see various woven fabrics and handicrafts. One day, my senior introduced me a handweaving studio of Rakhain in Cox' s Bazar. Rakhain believes in Buddhism, and their faces are similar to us. They maintain their unique lifestyle and culture such as cloths and food, and make very unique and rich handicrafts. From that time, I started to communicate and deepen friendship with them through homestay and participation in festival.



After a natural disaster

At the end of April in 1991, after 2-year term as a JICA volunteer, I went back to Japan. Right after that, I was informed that cyclone hit Cox' s Bazar, and devastated Rakhain' s villages. I could not do anything at that time, but later on, I contacted my friends in Cox' s Bazar to see if they were ok. After that, one of my Rakhain friends visited Japan, and I have been communicating with Rakhain people through him.

Walk with Rakhain people

A few years later, I started to work as an editor at "Crossroad" published by JICA and went abroad for coverage a few times a year. Then, I strongly thought "I want to show young people how foreign countries I' ve ever seen really are, and give support to those who are interested in volunteer work." After joining in Japan College of Foreign Languages as a teacher, I took about 30 students to villages in Cox' s Bazar where my Rakhain friends live, and had the students experienced the life in the village every year. In 2007, I decided to leave the college and established "A&A" with the students who had interests in Bangladesh. A&A offers a wide range of activities such as visiting Rakhain' s villages, donating wheelchairs, giving picture story books, providing necessary resources for well digging or helping out the victim of flood disaster. To me, Bangladesh is like a hometown with a lot of memories. Although there is still tough situation, vigorous and humorous people always encourage me.



Tree plantation with OISCA (2010)

Tetsuo Tsutsui

Fish culture

Profile



Tetsuo Tsutsui
Work : Fish culture
Batch : S61-2
Place : Comilla
Office : Bangladesh Academy for Rural Development(BARD)



Stay close to Bangladesh people for bringing about small changes

Past

I was dispatched to BARD in Comilla, the birthplace of agricultural development programme called "The Comilla Model." Through village union called Shomobai Shomiti, I tried to promote breeding Indian carp and gave union managers training on fish culture.



Present



I serve as a Secretary General at ShaplaNeer =Citizens' Committee in Japan for Overseas Support (ShaplaNeer), a Japanese NGO working for the poor in the South Asian countries. I introduce Bangladesh and Nepal through holding an event in Japan, offering development education, and selling fair-trade items. I also visit Bangladesh on business a few times a year.



"Exposition of Global Harmony" (2005)

My activities as a JICA volunteer

In the late 1970s before my dispatch, my seniors who were working in fish culture area tried hard to introduce and spread the technology of seeding production of Indian carp because Bangladesh' s Ruhi and Katla spawn only in the river. When I was dispatched as a JICA volunteers in 1986, the technology to seed the carp production seemed to be sufficiently widespread to the public, so I decided to work on growing juvenile carps, and increase the production of it. However, to start fish culture, people need to invest in facilities or get approval from co-managers of the hatchery. Even if they can start, they may experience some troubles such as carps being stolen or pesticide being poured in the pond.



Predatory fish in the fish hatchery used to disturb us since it eats juvenile carps. To solve the problem, we started a new project during the dry season. It was to dry out the hatchery to kill predatory fish, grow vegetable and rice at the fertile ground of the pond, and utilize removed water for irrigation. In Japan, there is traditional "Inada Yoshoku (fish culture in rice paddy)," but this is pond aquaculture. I changed my mindset and tried to promote this project. Within the limited 2-year term, however, I could try this only once or twice, so it was hard for me to check if the technology was properly transferred to Bangladesh people.

A turning point came when cyclone occurred

After my term, I joined fisheries division in a formula feed manufacturer, but after 3 years in 1992, I decided to take a leave of absence to visit Bangladesh to examine the damage situation of previous year' s cyclone with 103 thousand lives. During my 1.5 month stay, I met NGO workers who changed my life. At that time, people in Bangladesh were struggling through the day and almost no one could have hope for the future. Despite the situation, the NGO workers were working very hard with passion for the bright future of this country, which has impressed me a lot and I truly thought "I wish I could work with someone like them."

Stay close to Bangladesh as a NGO worker

After that, I had left the formula feed manufacturer and joined ShaplaNeer. I lead some projects such as mitigating risk from cyclone, assisting young women who work as maids, the disabled and minority groups in Bangladesh, and selling fair trade items. For me, Bangladesh is like "a teacher." Those who have passion for living here make me think what true wealth consists of and how I should live.



ShaplaNeer was awarded "Okinawa Peace Prize" at Okinawa Prefecture' s Peace Memorial Museum

Cultural anthropology

Profile



Mineo Takada
 Work : Cultural anthropology
 Batch : S63-1
 Place : Comilla
 Office : Bangladesh Academy for Rural Development(BARD)



To find out Bangladesh culture that fascinated me

Mineo Takada

Past



most of them belong to, urban slum they live and human relationships among the rural migrants.

*Economic sector which are not officially recorded

Present

I am a professor at the Faculty of Humanities and Human Sciences, The Department of Human Sciences, Hiroshima Shudo University. Since I have a lifetime membership to a research institute in Bangladesh, I visit Bangladesh to exchange information at least once a year. A research on the Bengali Muslim descent living in Thailand is still going on. I enjoy seeing a change in society for myself.



↑ Interviewees for my research ↓



My activities as a JICA volunteer

About 25 years ago, I was dispatched to research group at BARD to fulfill the original request to "transfer research technique while conducting research with local workers." Due to the change in a laboratory chief, however, I had to work without counterpart (a person to whom JICA volunteer transfers techniques). Then, I started to interact with Muslim people for my research, but their lifestyle and religious view was widely different from mine, which was simply interesting to me. To be honest, I was wondering why they can embrace Islam which bible Qur'an is written in classical Arabic, a foreign language for them. After that, I got to know various kinds of minority groups in Bangladesh, and found them interesting as well.



A turning point came when my teacher passed away

After a year of my dispatch, a turning point came. My teacher by whom I was supposed to be taught after going back to Japan has died during his research in Bangladesh. Although I paid respect for his research, as I learnt about Bangladesh more, a doubt about his study arose in my mind. Then, I started to think "I'd like to find out Bangladesh society from a different point of view that my teacher had."

New resolution

After going back to Japan, I had finished graduate school, served as a part-time lecturer at a few universities, and eventually became a professor at the current university. I visit Bangladesh for my research every year, and in 2001, I was here for a year. By learning Arabic to understand Muslim culture more, deeper interaction with Bangladeshi has been created. One day, they started to talk to me in "Muslim version of Bengali" which differs from Bengali for non-Muslim and foreigners, which happened over 10 years after I started to engage in Bangladesh. At the same time, I thought I need to confront them more seriously for further understanding.



Interview those who have Nepal background

Engage in Bangladesh for my entire life

In 2005, I received my PhD at Keio University in Muslim culture in Bangladesh, and next year, published my book "Changes in Muslim awareness of Bangladeshi and the society - Desh & Islam." After that, I continue my study while widening the scope of my research to cities and disaster. Bangladesh is like a second home to me, irreplaceable, and always in my mind. I'm sure I will engage in this country for my entire life.

My life destined to live in Bangladesh



Yuko Tanaka

Profile



Yuko Tanaka (Shiba)
 Work : Handicrafts
 Batch : H3-2
 Place : Dhaka
 Office : Bangladesh Rural Development Board(BRDB)

Past



products were made by the women who received technical training by other JICA volunteers.

Present

I enjoy my life in this rapidly-changing country Bangladesh with my husband who was also a JICA volunteer in the past. I sometimes help my husband's work as an interpreter or a guide.



ShaplaNeer's project to assist young women who work as maids

My activities as a JICA volunteer

When I was thinking of applying for JICA volunteer about 20 years ago, I wanted to master Spanish and work in Central and South America, but the acceptance letter from JICA said "You will be dispatched to Bangladesh." After my dispatch, I started to engage in store operation to sell handicrafts made by women in rural area and generate income of them. There were about 10 JICA volunteers in BRDB at that time, and all of us were struggling to seek stable sales channels while giving technical training. However, economical gap which makes differences in sense of color and design between cities and rural areas made it more difficult. Handicraft shop "KARUPALLI" was established to solve these issues. Several volunteers taught various techniques in rural areas, and I designed and developed products by mixing the techniques. I was also in charge of providing market information to production areas and giving training on display and service, and advice on store management.

A career in international cooperation

In the winter of 1993, I went back to Japan and joined the company from which I took a leave for JICA volunteer work. However, I decided to leave the company for working in the international cooperation field. So, I transferred to university to study international economics. I was also doing a part-time job as an assistant producer at NHK WORLD RADIO JAPAN's Bangla program until my graduation. Having being dispatched by International Red Cross to Myanmar to improve the quality of life of Rohingya refugees for a 3-year term, I joined Japanese Red Cross Society to assist the reconstruction of hospital in Afghanistan which was bombed after 9.11. After that, I got married with ex-JICA volunteer who was working in Bangladesh, my son was born, and we returned to Bangladesh for my husband's business.

Work for an NGO, and my husband's new job

During my stay in Bangladesh, ShaplaNeer=Citizens' Committee in Japan for Overseas Support gave me an opportunity to serve as a Country Director in Bangladesh Office. With partner NGOs, I led some projects such as assistance of street children and young women who work as maids, regional disaster prevention, and rural development. Although I left the organization due to child-bearing after 2.5 years, my husband started a business(import-export company between Bangladesh and Japan), so we still stay in Bangladesh.



Destined to live in Bangladesh

Looking back, I have been engaged in Bangladesh for most of my life after JICA volunteer work, but I did not have the strong passion for working here. When I realized, I'm related to this country. I think I may be destined to live here. I feel "perverse love" for Bangladesh, which means I feel annoyed with someone's saying something bad about this country while I don't think Bangladesh is the perfect country. Bangladesh may be my nearest relation.

Tracing 40 year's history of JICA volunteers

The dispatch of JICA Volunteer to Bangladesh started after 2 years of its independence in 1973. From there on, the volunteers have contributed in sectors like agriculture, rural development, education, health, technical training, sports and so on for the last 40 years in Bangladesh. National staffs who have been supporting them for a few decades talked about contributions that JICA volunteers made for development of Bangladesh.



Ms. Genevieve Mercer

has been working in JICA Volunteer section since 1976.

Ms. Genevieve Mercer



Mr. Zulfiker Ali

worked in (worked in) volunteer section from 1982 to 1992.

Mr. Zulfiker Ali



Mr. Sayedul Arefin

worked in (worked in) volunteer section from 1988 to 1991 and rejoined here from 2012.

Mr. Sayedul Arefin



Mr. Shar Md. Zahid Hossain (moderator)

has been working in the same section since 2010.

Mr. Shar Md. Zahid Hossain

Z Please share from your memory how the volunteers have been conducted their activities for the last 40 years in Bangladesh.

S In the beginning, the newly independent Bangladesh was facing huge problem from food deficit due to less productivity and lots of people were suffering from food shortage. As the main focus of the Government of Bangladesh (GoB) was on increasing food production, volunteers worked with the concern government agencies and local people for increasing food production.

A At that time the unit agricultural productivity in Bangladesh was very limited. Volunteers introduced to farmers modern techniques of cultivation such as mechanized cultivation, irrigation, vegetable growing technique, high yielding varieties of rice, vegetables and fruits. Their activities also contributed highly in the improvement of yield-rate of crops in Bangladesh.

G Some kinds of cabbages, radish or sweet water melon that are very much available in the market now a days were introduced in Bangladesh by the volunteers. Mushrooms were first introduced in Bangladesh by them as well.

Z I understand that due to a huge shortage of food items then, GoB requested a number of volunteers in agricultural sector, and more than 70 volunteers were dispatched for Rural Development. What kind of activities they performed?

S They contributed in skill development for employment and income generation by imparting technical training to young men and women. They have played an important role in involving women in income generating activities such as vegetable growing, dress making, and handicraft making and selling. Karupalli (*1) was established with the help of GoB and JICA as one of the main markets (sales center) for handicraft items from villages.

G Karupalli designs won first prize several times in the local fashion shows. The dolls or stuffed toys that are currently found in the shops, or buttons made of coconuts surface were also produced by JICA volunteer.



Z What was other activities of the volunteers?

S Japan is the first country which started dispatching volunteers to technical training center as instructor for mechanical, electrical, automobile, plumbing and pipe-fitting and so on. Many semi-skilled workers got job opportunities abroad after this training.

A Now volunteers are working in more than 10 fields for providing technical training. These days, there have been many volunteers in the IT field to support "Digital Bangladesh" as well.

Z Volunteers are also active in the health sector.

A JICA started dispatching nurses and medical technician volunteers in the hospitals in the 1980s. JICA also provided different medical equipment supports in the hospitals.

Through the activities of JICA Volunteer, Japanese ODA reaches to the doorstep.

G Instructions from the volunteers had a big impact in developing the ICU (Intensive Care Unit) and a lot of their counterparts (*2) then went to Japan for extensive training. It is the same in every sector that the volunteers first introduce a new system and later their counterparts go for training in Japan which can bring a cumulative impact in that sector.

Z In the health sector JICA started providing support for Polio (*3) or infectious disease control at the grass root level since later 90s. From 2004, we are also providing support in Filariasis Elimination Program (*4).

S In the 80s, support for TB control (tuberculosis) was also provided.

A I introduce one example that volunteer of clinical laboratory technician found serious contamination to medical syrup had brought on kidney disease to many children.

S In the late 90s, volunteer also pointed out mental problems of children who were sick but doctors could not find any physical problem. They introduced mental treatment for those children through recreational activities that was very successful.

Z How was the contribution in education sector? Currently their activities are one of the key factors for implementation of JICA's "Primary Education Project" (*5), right?

A Volunteers have already been providing training to the teachers on science and mathematics even before this project started. I would say that over the years their activities have led to the improvement of school enrollment and completion rates. Among the other JICA projects, volunteers are contributing a lot in "Solid Waste Management Project" in Dhaka.

S In the field of sports also, JICA is dispatching good number of volunteers. They are teaching about how hard work can lead to ultimate success and moral values through different sports.

G Sports can make a person proud of his/her own country if he/she can win in an international competition. The field of their activities are not only Judo or Karate but also swimming, tennis, soccer etc.

S Volunteer activities do not deal with infrastructure development. It deals with human or social development activities that contribute directly in the grass-root level development of Bangladesh. Now a days it can be said that they are very much involved in the central government policy level also and are contributing in improving life of the people of Bangladesh.

Z As JICA volunteers work very closely with the local people, it is contributing to their mentality change also. It can be said that 40 years of their cumulative works have impacted a greater success in different sectors. Their activities have also been very crucial for the development of a deep Japan – Bangladesh friendly relationship. Our national staffs are pleased and proud of our assignment in supporting them.

*1 Karupalli : The handicraft shop under Bangladesh Rural Development Board(BRDB) which was established with the financial and technical assistance of JICA in 1989.

*2 Counterpart : Appointed official to whom Volunteers transfer their techniques and skills

*3 Polio : A disease that is caused by oral virus infection mainly in the hands or feet

*4 Filariasis : A mosquito-borne disease, such as elephantiasis and it causes edema of the lymph

*5 Primary Education Program : This program aims at the improvement of teaching of science and mathematics in the primary schools. Target institutes are National Primary Education Academy (NAPE) and Primary Training Institutes. With the help of the Volunteers dispatched for Primary School Education, this program is concentrating on quality improvement of school atmosphere.

Ms. Genevieve Mercer

Mr. Zulfiker Ali

Mr. Sayedul Arefin

Mr. Shar Md. Zahid Hossain

One Day of JICA volunteer



Batch: H23-4
Work: Environmental Education
Office: Dhaka South City Corporation Zones

☉ 07:00
Wake up



☉ 08:00

Go to my ward office by walk
If I come across cleaners, have a chat with them.
Sometimes I have a Bengal-style breakfast with my counterpart (Conservancy Inspector).

☉ 08:00
Wake up



☉ 08:30

Have a Bengal-style breakfast with my home stay grandmother



Batch: H23-2
Work: Primary School Education
Office: Basic Development Partners (BDP)



☉ 10:00

Discuss my activity at office or go to the field.



☉ 09:00

Go to office. It's a Christian school, I pray with my colleagues.



☉ 09:30

Visit schools by motorcycle. I am often called by villagers.

☉ 09:45

Stop by my favorite tea stall to have a cup of tea and enjoy chatting.

☉ 11:00

Go to zone office by walk to grasp job situation or make a suggestion.



☉ 13:00

Have lunch at a near restaurant. Bengali curry became my favorite.



☉ 14:00

Go to Headquarters by walk or a local bus. Desk work, report to my boss etc...so many things to do.
When I get hungry, I enjoy sreet food such as samosa or Singara.



☉ 10:00

Go to BDP school. I work hard for my students.



☉ 13:30

On the way home, I stop by a tea stall to have a cup of tea.

☉ 14:00

Have lunch at home. Of course, I eat Bangla curry.



☉ 17:00

Go home by walk or a packed local bus. Sometimes I go to local market.



☉ 15:00

Study Bangla while talking with my colleagues and read books.



☉ 17:00

Have a break at a tea stall with my good friends or go to our favorite place.



☉ 18:00

Take a shower and prepare for dinner. I often knock on my neighbor's door to have dinner together.
At night, my neighbors sometimes visit me to have a chat.



☉ 23:00

Go to bed



☉ 18:00~19:00

Take a nap

☉ 19:30

Dinner (leftover from lunch)

☉ 20:00

Read books, check e-mails or review my day



☉ 24:00

Go to bed

JICA Volunteer's Activities by Major Sectors

Environmental Education

Miyuki Oku (Extended Tenure)
 Batch: H22-3
 Place: Dhaka
 Office: Dhaka North & South City Corporation

I am working with my counterpart to create a proper system on solid waste management (hard) and awareness building among the local people regarding waste management (soft) to promote a "community-based participatory waste management system". Specifically I am working for improvement of transportation of collected waste materials, holding environment awareness programs in schools and communities, arranging events with other organizations or universities, as well as doing some PR activities through different events. Bangladesh is a country where throwing garbage anywhere like roads and ditches has become a very natural act. In a city like Dhaka where it is said that more than 15 million people are living, it is very difficult to promote community-based participatory waste management system since it requires changing the mindset of the citizens at once and coordinating with many stakeholders. But on the other hand, it is very refreshing to see any small visible improvement on the existing situation. In the future also, I would like to work with my counterpart who will have a key role in Dhaka city's solid waste management while connecting people so that community and different stakeholders can cooperate together.



From my co-worker



Mr. Md. Mofizur Rahman Bhuyan
 Title: Conservancy Officer
 Office: Zone 2 of Dhaka North City Corporation

Ms. Oku has been working with us in the field level. She travels every day from her residence at old Dhaka to Pal-labi (Mirpur) and always smiling, eating same food like us. As a Bangladeshi, I am really thankful to her.

Rural Community Development

Keiko Tanaka (until January 2013)
 Batch: H22-3
 Place: Tangail
 Office: Bangladesh Rural Development Board (BRDB)

I have worked for the last two years with my counterpart, a Union Development Officer to promote Link Model based on JICA's project named PRDP-2(*1) in the rural areas of Bangladesh, local government services such as agricultural support and various subsidies are not reaching the village people properly. Currently in the Union, the Union Coordination Committee Meeting (UCCM) is being held every month. But in this meeting the participation rate of concerned persons from different ministries is very low, and sometimes the meetings are suspended in the middle as debates are jeopardized by emotional outbursts. To solve those kinds of problems, I have tried to call on the concerned persons along with my counterpart and found that comparing with the past, recently some concerned government officers have become more aware about village situation and also the village people have become aware of what kind of services they can get from the local government. I earnestly expect that, with the continuous promotion of Link Model, the peculiar response to every situation with words like "we do not have this or that" will be reduced in the local government level offices in Bangladesh.



From my co-worker



Mr. Kali Krisna Paul
 Title: Union Development Officer: UDO
 Office: Bangladesh Rural Development Board (BRDB)

I have learned and experienced a lot for the last 7 years working closely with JICA volunteers. Mine, along with the village people's motivation has increased and we feel really happy to work with the volunteers. Strict maintenance of time and seriousness in the work – the two things I have specially learned from them.

*1 Participatory Rural Development Project Phase 2 (PRDP-2): This technical cooperation project is to establish and promote the "Link Model" which aims at strengthening the coordination among the vertical and horizontal links for extending effective local governance service to the rural people. This project has been done for 5 years from April, 2005 and currently only the volunteers are working on it in the grass-roots level.
 *2 Teaching Package: It is a reference book for Mathematics and Science teachers and was prepared through JICA's technical cooperation project with National Academy for Primary Education (NAPE).

Primary School Education

Yuka Kotani
 Batch: H23-1
 Place: Gazipur
 Office: Gazipur Primary Teachers' Training Institute (PTI)

In PTI, I have been working on "quality improvement of classes" and "PR of TP(*1)" on science and mathematics. Specifically, I am lecturing on teaching methods referring to TP and providing advice on improvement of a class through monitoring of teaching practices. In classes on teaching methods where I refer to TP, I make the trainees think by themselves on what kind of questions they should ask the children, or what kind of learning tools should be used for easier explanations to them. I try to make them think from the perspective of the children. Moreover, currently I am putting more efforts on improvement of the classes in the PTI by conducting research along with the teachers for 15 minutes in the beginning and at the end of every class. I will try to continue this in the remaining few months also of my assignment period. I hope this will help the children who are the future of Bangladesh to think, find out and solve a problem by them. I will keep trying to create such classrooms along with my counterparts.



From my co-worker



Ms. Hasina Afrin
 Title: Instructor of Mathematics
 Office: Gazipur PTI

It has been really nice to work with Ms. Kotani in the classes through our day to day conversations. Her advices on how to make the classes easily understandable for the children have been really helpful. In the future also we want to continue working with her for the quality improvement of education in Bangladesh.

Tennis

Kazuya Ono
 Batch: H23-3
 Place: Savar
 Office: Bangladesh Krira Shikkha Protisthan (BKSP)

My working place BKSP is an institution which was established to develop national level sportsman of Bangladesh who will represent the country in the future Olympics or other international events. Currently I am coaching a team of 8 member top level players. Some of them were selected in the Junior National Team and may have chances to go for overseas expedition. I have been training hard with each of the players everyday as they are the players who will participate in overseas competitions and I want to ensure that they do not bring any embarrassing results for Bangladesh. Till now I have been very strict to the players who have not been serious in their training or game, but when those players try their hearts out in a match and win, I feel really proud. A lot can be learnt from sports. I hope that the Bangladeshi youth will learn fair play, sportsmanship or never give up attitude in difficult situations from sports and that will later contribute to the overall development of Bangladesh.



From my co-worker



Mr. Rokonuddin Ahmed (Rokon)
 Title: Tennis Head Coach
 Office: Bangladesh Krira Shikkha Protisthan (BKSP)

This year is the 14th year since JICA started dispatching volunteers to BKSP Tennis Team and I, along with the students have learnt a lot from them. I am really grateful to those volunteers who have tried to help the development of tennis in Bangladesh with their whole hearted efforts.

- *3 Safe Motherhood Promotion Project Phase 2 (SMPP-2) : A technical cooperation project aiming at providing support for the improvement of health services to mothers and the newborns. Phase 2 has been started from July, 2011.
- *4 KAIZEN : An employee participated approach to improve business process through sustainable activities.
- *5 Total Quality Management (TQM) : A total quality management approach for management and improvement of hospitals.

Nurse

From my co-worker



Dr. Salahuddin Ahmed
 Title : Superintendent
 Office : Jessore District Hospital

I feel that Ms. Takahashi's arrival from Japan has contributed a lot to the continuous smooth implementation of 5S activities in our hospital. The motivation of the hospital staffs has also improved. She has become like a family member to our hospital staffs and I feel very proud of her.



Rie Takahashi
 Batch: H23-4
 Place : Jessore
 Office : Jessore Civil Surgeon Office



Currently I am working in coordination with JICA's SMPP (Safe Motherhood Promotion Project) Phase 2(*3) project for the improvement of medical services in hospitals by conducting a Japanese-style quality control approach called "5S (Sort, Set, Shine, Standardize, Sustain), KAIZEN (*4), and Total Quality Management (*5)." Main objective of my work is not only to change the work atmosphere of the existing hospital staffs, but also to take care of the patients first. I am finding lots of opportunities to think about life from a "Quality of life" point of view as after coming to Bangladesh I can see that life and death has an unusually close existence here. Wherever a child is born or he/she is growing up, everyone has the right to pursue for "Quality of life". Environment has a big impact on human mind, but that environment is created by that same human being. I am not sure how much I can do in the remaining 1 year of my tenure, but I will try to work as hard as possible along with the existing staffs to provide the patients a better environment where they can experience "Quality of life".

- *6 Mosquito-borne diseases, such as elephantiasis that causes edema of the lymph.

Infection Control

Kana Sano
 Batch: H22-4
 Place : Lalmonirhat
 Office : Lalmonirhat Civil Surgeon Office



I have been working as an Infectious Disease Control volunteer for eliminating Filariasis(*6) in a Filariasis endemic district. More specifically I have been doing awareness building activities on filariasis, working for patient care, participating in Mass Drug Administration (MDA) campaign and soil transmitted helminthiasis campaign (STHC) in primary schools etc. Especially this year, I have tried to use mass media like TV or Radio for better awareness building activities along with the regular night-cinema show or miking for the promoting of MDA. As a result, I feel that the seriousness of this disease has been better understood by the local people this year. But still, the treatment of the filariasis patients will remain as a big problem in the future too. It has been very difficult for us to make the patients understand about the importance of continuation of their self-care till they see any improvement of their filariasis symptoms. In spite of all these, Bangladesh is now approaching elimination of filariasis where the dispatch of 4 batches of JOCVs has also contributed significantly. I hope our voluntary activities will remain as an important part in the elimination process of filariasis in Bangladesh in the future too.



From my co-worker



Dr. Md. Jahangir Alam Sarker
 Title : Civil Surgeon
 Office : Lalmonirhat Civil Surgeon Office

Ms. Sano has been supporting not only the activities of MDA or STHC, but is also participating in different other health programs. Me, along with our health workers – we feel that we are heading towards the right direction with the help of volunteers like Ms. Sano and I really appreciate her works.

- *7 Information Technology Engineers Examination : It started in Japan in 1969 and is a national examination for skill assessment in information technology sector. Now it is well-known and well-practiced in other 11 countries of Asia too.

Computer Technology

Shinsuke Yoneyama
 Batch: H22-2
 Place : Dhaka
 Office : Bangladesh Computer Council (BCC)



After my dispatch, I was stationed at a Barisal school where I advised the teachers on class contents and also worked on computer hardware maintenance. But after much thought on how I can contribute to Bangladesh as an ICT expert from Japan, I changed my work station to the current one to introduce ITEE (*7) here. Now in Bangladesh there is no skill assessment national examination for IT engineers. Since ITEE is mutually recognized as equivalent to that in each of different Asian countries, examinees that will pass this exam will be evaluated in those countries in the same level. This will increase the chances of getting jobs abroad for Bangladeshi IT engineers. On the other hand, ITEE is a national examination which will require less examination fee so that more people will be able to take it. Though my tenure here will be finished very soon, I will try to continue working for the awareness building of ITEE to ICT industries, universities or professional schools etc.. In addition, the project for introducing ITEE in Bangladesh has been started by JICA officially from December 2012, and the team will work very closely with the Japanese and Bangladeshi stakeholders for introduction of ITEE.



From my co-worker



Mr. Md. Rabiul Islam
 Title : Systems Analyst, PMO (Prime Minister Office)
 Office : Bangladesh Computer Council (BCC)

I am very grateful to Mr. Yoneyama for his work for the development of Bangladesh and I am really proud that I have this opportunity of working with him. JICA support will still be necessary in the future, but we ourselves also need to work hard along with them.

Quality Management

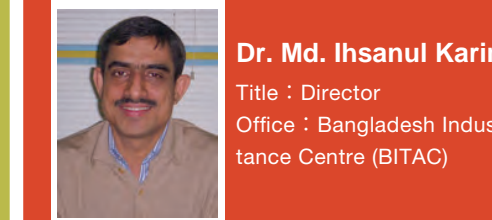
Yoshiaki Fujita (Senior Volunteer)
 Batch: H23-2
 Place : Dhaka
 Office : Bangladesh Industrial Technical Assistance Centre (BITAC)



Currently I am introducing and teaching "KAIZEN (Improvement) of production activities" at BITAC which is one of the institutes of Ministry of Industries. I have been teaching in BITAC's 5 different centers in Bangladesh about the idea of KAIZEN or showing them practically how to implement it so that in the future the engineers of BITAC will be able to transfer this knowledge to the private sector of Bangladesh. Starting with the basic 5S idea of KAIZEN, currently I am working on the overall efficiency KAIZEN of the manufacturing activities of BITAC. Along with it, I have started to advise on KAIZEN in the machinery or casting industries in the private sector with the help of BITAC engineers. I hope if the engineers and administrators of Bangladesh can master KAIZEN idea which will definitely improve the technical level of the manufacturing industries - will contribute a lot to make global level production in Bangladesh possible. It is expected to contribute to Japanese companies or even the whole world production industries as well. I am very hopeful that this improvement will increase job opportunities for Bangladeshis which will eventually help them to have a healthy and prosperous life.



From my co-worker



Dr. Md. Ihsanul Karim
 Title : Director
 Office : Bangladesh Industrial Technical Assistance Centre (BITAC)

The unique idea of KAIZEN from Japan can contribute a lot in different business sectors of Bangladesh with its productivity improvement idea. Mr. Fujita has been working very hard for the awareness building on KAIZEN activities and I hope this idea will also flourish in other industries including manufacturing.

Wishes for the Future

Since JICA volunteers take training in language etc before dispatch, they start to have the same life and use the same language as the local people from the day of arrival. During their 2-year tenure, they have been building on their "small successes" by steadily conducting their activities in spite of an unfamiliar environment and cultural difference and gaining trust from surrounding people.

Additionally, JICA volunteers try to think from Bangladeshi's point of view and closely work with them, so their opinions are valued and utilized for JICA's other projects, and even have made an influence on institutional reform of the government of Bangladesh.

JICA Bangladesh will do our best so that JICA Volunteer continue to contribute to development of Bangladesh and Japan and strengthening the relationship between the two nations.



The highlighted red and green colors of the rainbow describe friendship and tie between Bangladesh and Japan, and the "V" shape which those two lines are forming stands for "Volunteer". The rainbow shape is extending in the direction toward "40th," which expresses the time we have been through and the bright future we will build together.



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