

### Message from the Japanese Ambassador in India

I would like to express my sincere felicitations on this occasion of the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers in the Kingdom of Bhutan.

Over the years, Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers (JOCV) in Bhutan have been cooperating with the people of Bhutan in various fields to promote development. Late Dasho Nishioka, who was sent to Bhutan for the first time as Colombo Plan Expert by Japan in 1964, was so loved by the people of Bhutan that his soul was enshrined after his death in the stupa at Paro. Dasho Nishioka's spirit of cooperation and the way he loved to work with the people of Bhutan has been inherited by every member of JOCV sent to Bhutan. They love Bhutan and are lively working together with the people of Bhutan.

The Kingdom of Bhutan has successfully transformed to democracy under the leadership of His Majesty the fourth King Jigme Singye Wangchuck, and after the general election and the adoption of the Constitution, His Majesty Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck was enthroned as the fifth King. The coronation ceremony was so joyful and colorful.

Japan will remain a strong developing partner of Bhutan. We would like to continue working closely with the people of Bhutan, in recognition in particular that the country is now in the important phase of the successful transition to the democracy. In so doing, I am confident that every member of JOCV will embody the spirit of Dasho Nishioka and achieve the commitment through working together with the people of Bhutan.

With best regards,



Hideki Domichi  
Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary  
of Japan to the Kingdom of Bhutan

### Message from the Secretary, Royal Civil Service Commission

The Royal Civil Service Commission would like to join JICA Bhutan Office in celebrating the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of successful JICA Volunteer program in Bhutan. The selfless and tireless contribution made by the Japanese Volunteers has indeed promoted the spirit of international volunteerism in Bhutan. Over the decades, JOCVs have shared their knowledge and skills through their warmth and friendship, creating a positive impact on the lives of many Bhutanese and communities through its various programmes and activities.

The People and Royal Government of Bhutan would therefore like to take this opportunity to convey our sincere appreciation and gratitude for the generous services and sacrifices rendered by smiling JOCV Volunteers from Japan in our Kingdom.

Long Live Japan-Bhutan Friendship and Cooperation.



Dasho Bap Kesang  
Secretary  
Royal Civil Service Commission



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Japan International Cooperation Agency



*20 years of JICA Volunteers  
in Bhutan*

## History of JICA Volunteer Program in Bhutan

JICA dispatches volunteers eager to make use of their skills and experiences acquired in Japan to developing countries to work together with local people. The two major schemes of volunteers dispatched to the Royal Government of Bhutan are Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers (JOCV, ages 20 to 39) and Senior Volunteers (ages 40 to 69).

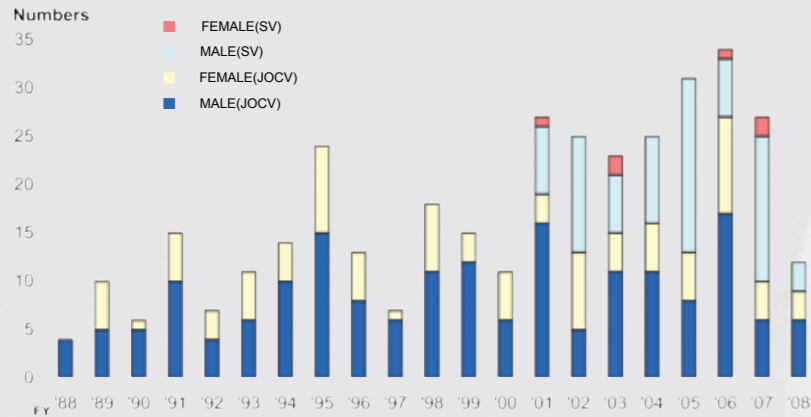


The Royal Government of Bhutan and the Government of Japan exchanged Notes in July 1987 concerning the dispatch of volunteers to Bhutan. In 1988, the first volunteer, a farm machinery engineer, was dispatched to Bondey, where Dasho Nishioka established a strong foothold for Japan ODA Assistance in Bhutan.

Twenty years later a total of 373 volunteers (291 JOCVs and 82 Senior Volunteers) have been dispatched to contribute to the exchange of friendship and the development of the Kingdom in various fields: Agriculture, Environment, Community Development, Education, Sports, Health, Architecture and Civil Engineering, Cultural Properties Protection, Independence of People with Disabilities, Vocational Training, and Engineering (Mechanical and IT).



JICA Volunteers in Bhutan



## JOCV in Bhutan

The Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers (JOCV) Program works in response to requests from the host countries as well as the young Japanese who wishes to cooperate in the economic and social development of developing countries. JOCVs generally spend two years in the host countries living and working with the local people while taking part in cooperative activities. The experience also benefits the volunteers themselves as they strive to overcome the various difficulties they face in their personal relations and work. The JOCV Program began in 1965. As of the end of September 2008, 82 countries had exchanged Notes with Japan concerning the dispatch of JOCVs, with 2,755 volunteers deployed in 77 countries, making a total of 32,097 volunteers dispatched since the program's inception. The number of female volunteers has increased in recent years; currently 62% of active JOCVs are women.

The JOCV program started with the Royal Government of Bhutan in 1988. Short-term JOCVs (less than 11 months) have also been dispatched. During the initial stages of the JOCV program in Bhutan, Agriculture and Infrastructure (Civil Engineering) were the main fields of assignments. From 1992 onwards, requests expanded to other technical fields including Telecommunications, System Engineering, Commerce and Finance. Dzongkhags of assignments have spread throughout the country, especially in the East. Today, the trend is towards Health and Education, where JOCV's were requested as Laboratory Technologists and Physical Education Instructors.

At present, there are 31 JOCV members serving in the Kingdom in Veterinary Medicine, System Engineers, Architects, X-Ray and Laboratory Technologists, Nurses, Environmental Engineers, Sports and Physical Education Instructors, Language and Music Instructors, IT Instructors, Vegetable Cultivation Researchers, and Civil and Electronic Engineers.

## Senior Volunteers in Bhutan

The Senior Volunteer program is aimed specifically at middle-aged people who have a strong interest in technical cooperation activities in developing countries and want to make use of their skills and experience. Under this program, volunteers with extensive skills and professional experience between the ages of 40 and 69 are recruited. Since 1991, Japan's ODA budget has been among the largest in the world; as interest in assisting developing countries has increased, the public has come to realize the importance of providing participatory cooperation with a visible profile.

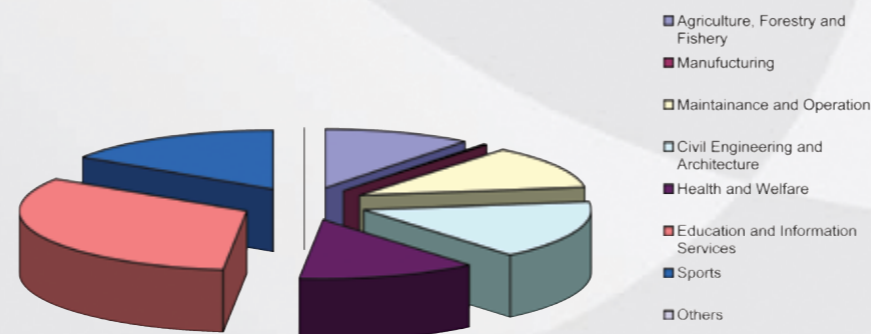
As a result, applicants for Senior Volunteers are dramatically increasing. This indicates how Japanese citizens are interested in overseas volunteer activities. JICA has thus been attempting to expand the Senior Volunteer program. 350 senior volunteers are active in 55 countries, a number that is likely to increase substantially in the future.

The Senior Volunteer program began in 2001 in Bhutan, with the current number of requests on the increase. Cooperation is provided in various fields: Cultural Preservation, Education, Planning and Administration, Public Works, Environment, IT Services, Machinery Maintenance and Operation, Agriculture, Forestry, Education, Vocational Training, and Health. Currently in Bhutan, 22 Senior Volunteers are serving and 60 volunteers have completed their service as of October 2008. The activities of Senior Volunteers are closely connected with the daily life of local communities in Bhutan.

JICA volunteer activities are not only aimed at the transfer of technology. Through heart to heart communication, they build friendship and intimacy at the grass roots level. All volunteers are recruited through nationwide recruitment campaigns in Japan.



## Volunteers Technical Fields (1998-2008)



## Message from the Director General, Secretariat of Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers, JICA

To commemorate the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers (JOCV) program in Bhutan, I would like to pay warm tribute to all of the people and local officials of the country who have helped make our program such a success.

Our JOCV and Senior Volunteers (SV) Program has followed three main principles: to help in Bhutan's social development, to strengthen mutual friendship and understanding between our nations and to give back to society the fruits of the volunteer experience.

We expect our volunteers to live among the people of the host country, enabling them to learn at first hand their needs and hopes and then working closely with them to realize their goals.

In the case of Bhutan, I believe our volunteers have built up very close ties with their local communities, successfully promoted development and deepened the understanding and friendship between Bhutan and Japan, despite our different cultures and value systems.

This would have not been possible without the help and cooperation of the government and peoples of Bhutan and I would again like to express by deepest gratitude to everyone who have cooperated with the volunteers.

Sincerely,



Takafumi Ito  
Director General  
Secretariat of Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers  
Japan International Cooperation Agency

