

JICA
海外協力隊



JICA
Volunteer Program
60th
Anniversary

The Power of JICA Volunteers
– Change the World, Change Japan –



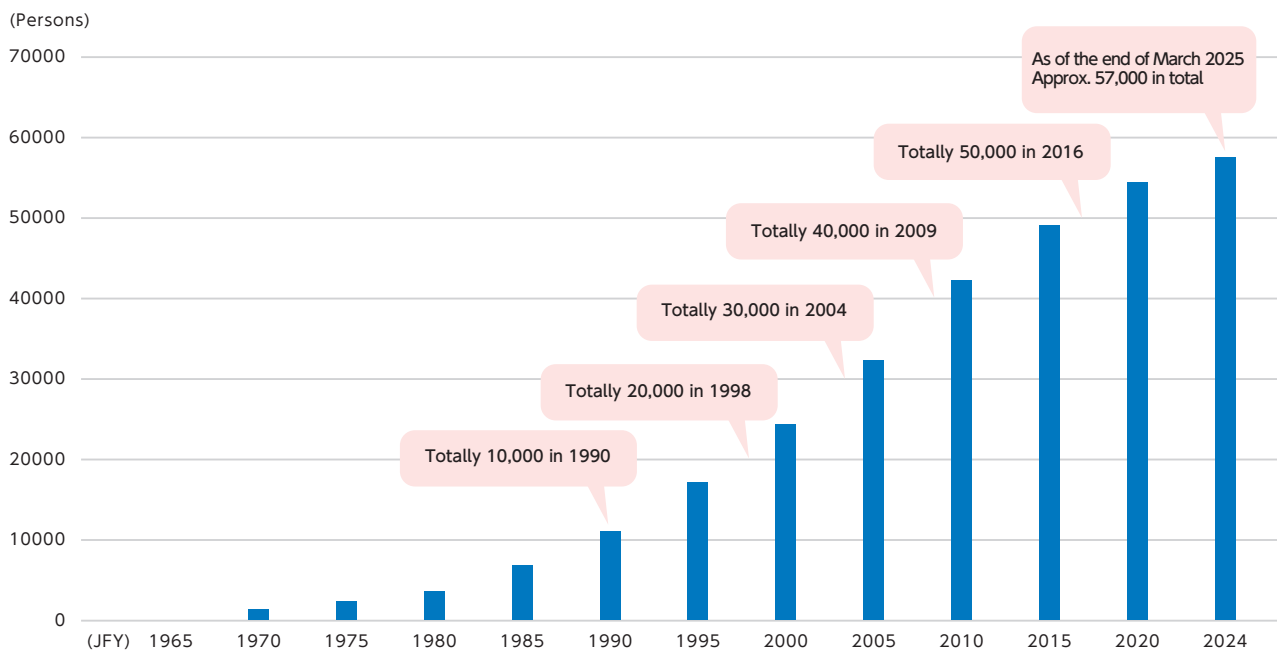
Overview of JICA Volunteer Program

The JICA Volunteer Program dispatches Japanese citizens who are eager to engage in international cooperation based on requests from developing countries. As summarized by the phrase “together with the local community”, JICA volunteers live and work at the grassroots level, speaking the same language as the local communities and carrying out activities with an emphasis on fostering self-reliance for sustainable change. Since its first dispatch of 29 Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers to 5 countries: Laos, Cambodia, Malaysia, the Philippines, and Kenya in JFY 1965, more than 57,000 volunteers have been dispatched to 99 countries and regions across a wide range of fields under the following three objectives:

- 1 To contribute to the economic and social development, as well as the reconstruction of developing countries
- 2 To deepen mutual understanding and coexistence in cross-cultural societies
- 3 To give back the volunteer experience to society



Total number of dispatched volunteers (Statistics)

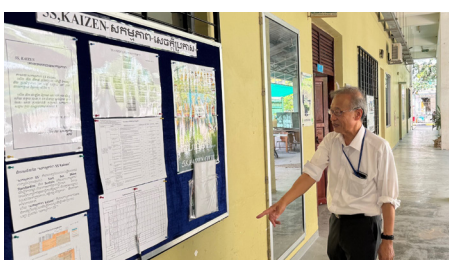


Case studies of ongoing volunteer activities



Kenya / Hospital Operations and Management (Jan. 2024 to Jan. 2026)

A volunteer dispatched to a major hospital in Machakos County has been contributing to enhance the staff's work efficiency based on observations of the workflow and operations across various departments within the hospital. One specific improvement involved addressing congestion at the reception area: the volunteer introduced the use of queue poles and helped establish a system where staff members guide patients, thereby reducing the confusion and disorganization among those waiting. In addition, the volunteer has been making broader proposals including improving the procedures for procuring necessary supplies through discussions with the hospital's management.



Cambodia / Quality Control/Productivity Improvement (May 2024 to May 2026)

A volunteer was dispatched to the Department of Civil Engineering at the National Polytechnic Institute of Cambodia. For quality control and productivity improvement, the volunteer provides guidance to both faculty and students on 5S activities ("Sort, Set in order, Shine, Standardize, Sustain") and Kaizen initiatives. The volunteer's efforts aim not only to establish these practices within the department but also to promote their adoption throughout the entire Institute. Additionally, there are plans to work on organizational development within the department and to improve manuals, including those related to safety.

60th Anniversary Events

JICA Volunteer Program marked its 60th anniversary in 2025, having dispatched its first group of 29 volunteers to five countries (Laos, Cambodia, Malaysia, the Philippines, and Kenya) in 1965. To commemorate this milestone, JICA plans to hold various events, including a commemorative ceremony, overseas events in the initial five countries and others, and domestic events including within the EXPO2025 OSAKA, KANSAI and TICAD9. In addition, JICA will carry out collaborative projects with supporting organizations and related public relations activities.



[Theme] The Power of JICA Volunteers -Change the World, Change Japan-

This theme aims to express in simpler terms the concept of giving back to Japanese society through JICA Volunteer Program. And, it represents how the volunteers, while addressing various global challenges, also bring about positive change and transformation within Japanese society.

[Commemorative Logo]



Title

"A Bridge Connecting Japan and Developing Countries"

The diverse activities of the Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers are symbolized as a colorful rainbow bridge, representing the cooperative relationship between Japan and developing countries.

The logo was designed by Fumiko Yamane.



Fumiko Yamane

In 2016, 2019, and 2020, she worked as a short-term volunteer in the design field in Argentina, Zambia, and the Marshall Islands, respectively.

[Relevant website]

60th anniversary commemoration movie

Short version ▶



Long version ▶



Webpage on JICA Volunteer Program



Chronology of JICA Volunteer Program

1960s	1965 ● Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers program launched: Establishment of the Secretariat of JOCV First dispatch of JOCVs (Laos)
	1966 ● The first JOCVs dispatched to Africa (Kenya)
	1968 ● Opening of the Hiroo Training Center ● The first JOCVs dispatched to Central American countries (El Salvador)
1970s	1972 ● The first JOCVs dispatched to the Oceania region (Samoa)
	1974 ● Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) established as a special corporation
	1978 ● The first JOCVs dispatched to South America (Paraguay)
	1979 ● Opening of the Komagane Training Center (Nagano Prefecture)
1980s	1985 ● 20th anniversary ceremony of JOCV ● Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers for Nikkei Communities program initiated.
1990s	1990 ● Reached 10,000 volunteers dispatched. ● Senior Volunteers program initiated. ● Senior Volunteers for Nikkei Communities program initiated.
	1992 ● The first JOCVs dispatched to Eastern Europe (Hungary)
1990s	1994 ● Opening of Nihonmatsu Training Center (Fukushima Prefecture)
	1995 ● 30th anniversary ceremony of JOCV
2000s	2000 ● Reaches 20,000 volunteers dispatched.
	2003 ● JICA established as an incorporated administrative agency
	2005 ● 40th anniversary ceremony of JOCV
	2007 ● Reaches 30,000 volunteers dispatched.
	2008 ● The overseas economic cooperation operations of the Japan Bank for International Cooperation (JBIC) and the grant aid programs implemented by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs were integrated into JICA.
2010s	2010 ● Reaches 40,000 volunteers dispatched.
	2015 ● 50th anniversary ceremony of JOCV
	2016 ● JOCV was honored with the Ramon Magsaysay Award.
	2017 ● Reaches 50,000 volunteers dispatched.
2020s	2020 ● All volunteers temporarily returned to Japan due to the global spread of COVID-19. ● In November, four volunteers were redeployed to Vietnam, marking the first return since the evacuation.
	2024 ● 1,568 volunteers are engaged in activities across various countries (as of the end of October)

Support for Returned Volunteers' Contributions to Society

GLOCAL Program

Developing globally and domestically active human resources

- For successful volunteer candidates who are willing to engage in solving domestic issues in Japan before dispatching, opportunities are provided to gain on-the-job training (OJT) in fields such as regional revitalization and multicultural coexistence.
- This program aims to foster human resources who has strong connections with local communities in Japan and can contribute to addressing regional challenges, thereby promoting the circulation of knowledge and experience back into Japanese society.

[Program period] 2.5 months

[Achievement] 276 people, 24 regions across 14 prefectures (as of March 2025)

JICA Social Entrepreneur Project BLUE

Supporting Social Contribution through Entrepreneurship

Utilizing the experience gained through JICA Volunteer Program, returned volunteers are supported in addressing social issues both in Japan and abroad through entrepreneurship.

Major activities

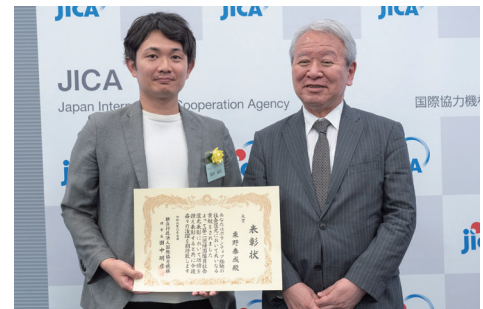
- Mentorship program
- Online seminars useful for starting a business
- In-person networking events
- Online community on LinkedIn



Commendation for Giving Back to Society

Recognizing returned volunteers who address social issues both in Japan and overseas

Since 2023, JICA has been gathering and recognizing cases of returned volunteers contributing to society, soliciting nominations both self-recommended and recommended by others. By showcasing these good practices, JICA aims to raise awareness and motivation for social contribution among returned volunteers and to provide visibility to their career paths and role models after their return.



JICA Volunteer Program Support Fund

Donations received from the public are used to support the development of the JICA Volunteer Program, including assistance for volunteers working in developing countries and returned volunteers addressing social challenges both in Japan and overseas.



**Japan International
Cooperation Agency**



Discover more about the Overseas
Cooperation Volunteers



▲ Official Instagram
@jica_kyoryokutai

Visit our website for further details.



▲ JICA Volunteer Program Website
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