

JICA JAMAICA

NEWSLETTER

2023



Japan International Cooperation Agency



April 2023 - March 2024



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Resident Representative's Message

By Mitsuyoshi Kawasaki

As we stride into the post-corona era in FY2023, JICA Jamaica is picking up steam, reminiscent of our pre-pandemic momentum. We're now leveraging the online systems we mastered during the pandemic to maximize our cooperation results. In FY2023, we kicked off two significant third-country training programs. First, "Capacity Building on the Community Police-KOBAN System," aimed at contributing to local efforts in addressing Jamaica's security challenges. The second, "Enhancement of Sharing Experience/Knowledge and Partnership with the Caribbean Region on Tourism Crisis Management," seeks to bolster the resilience of the region's tourism industry.

In the former program, as part of the Japan-Jamaica-Brazil Trilateral Cooperation, 15 police officers from the Jamaica Constabulary Force underwent a comprehensive two-week training at the Military Police of the State of São Paulo in Brazil in March 2024. This initiative, rooted in the Japanese police box (KOBAN) system established in Brazil in 2005, is ambitious and aims to draw insights from the bilateral technical cooperation between Japan and Brazil. Looking ahead, including FY2024, this training will be localized in Jamaica, with Brazilian experts dispatched for further collaboration.

In the latter program, the Global Tourism Resilience and Crisis Management Center (GTRCMC), with input from Japanese experts, organized a two-day roundtable and workshop in February 2024. The goal was to share insights and experiences with participants from Caribbean region countries. We aspire that the subsequent training sessions will underscore the significance of proactive preparedness and a multi-sectoral approach, fostering collaborative endeavors for more effective tourism crisis management.

Furthermore, "The Project for Improvement of Emergency Communication System" (grant aid: 1.6 billion JMD) is set to conclude in April 2024. We anticipate that the facilities and equipment provided will be optimally utilized in Jamaica.

As we commemorate the 60th anniversary of diplomatic relations between Japan and Jamaica in 2024, we are poised to harness the wealth of experience and knowledge from JICA Volunteers and past participants of JICA's training programs. Their remarkable contributions have been instrumental in nurturing a robust relationship of trust between our two nations. We envision this continued collaboration will further fortify the JJ partnership. (see JICA Blog dated April 1, 2024: https://www.jica.go.jp/english/information/blog/1535092_24156.html).



Mitsuyoshi
Kawasaki

Looking Ahead in 2024

60TH Friendship
Celebration between
Japan and CARICOM



JAPAN
CARICOM
FRIENDSHIP YEAR 2024

JICA Day



OUR MISSION

JICA, in accordance with the Development Cooperation Charter, will work on human security* and quality growth.

OUR VISION

Leading the world with trust JICA, with its partners, will take the lead in forging bonds of trust across the world, aspiring for a free, peaceful and prosperous world where people can hope for a better future and explore their diverse potentials.



1

COMMITMENT

Commit ourselves with pride and passion to achieving our mission and vision.

2

GEMBA

Dive into the field (“gemba”) and work together with the people.

3

STRATEGY

Think and act strategically with broad and long-term perspectives.

4

CO-CREATION

Bring together diverse wisdom and resources.

5

INNOVATION

Innovate to bring about unprecedented impacts.

*A concept that focuses on each and every individual through protection of individuals from serious and wide-ranging threats to their survival, daily lives, and dignity and empowerment of people for sustainable self-reliance and community building, so that all people can reach their full potential.

WELCOME ABOARD

New Members of Our Dynamic Team



Makoto Kato

I've been appointed as the coordinator for volunteers being dispatched to Jamaica. Drawing from my own volunteering experience in Micronesia and Ethiopia 25 years ago, I've remained engaged in international cooperation projects both in Japan and abroad. My expertise lies in resource management, environmental conservation, and rural development, although I'm eager to explore new avenues. Jamaica's natural beauty lives up to my expectations, and I'm excited to spend my holidays immersed in its wonders. Additionally, I'm eager to draw inspiration from the vibrant and resilient Jamaican community, learning from their positivity and enriching my own life in the process.



Asha Anderson

I am the Programme Officer in the Projects Section. With a varied professional background in both Jamaica and Japan, I can draw from these to aid the work of JICA Jamaica. It has been and continues to be an interesting experience!



Yukari Hatayama-Tajima

Waagwaan! I never expected to be dispatched to this beautiful little Caribbean Island, so my expectations are always subverted in a positive way. After completing my term as a Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteer in infectious disease control in Guatemala, I used my expertise in community health and disaster preparedness to work as a coordinator on several projects in Myanmar and Indonesia. In my leisure time, I am a beginner, but I am enjoy making sweets. I am trying to make Japanese sweets with available ingredients in Jamaica. Hopefully, you'll have a chance to taste it!



Ai Kurimoto

Hi everyone! Wah gwaan? My name is Ai Kurimoto, and I'm the new Project Formulation Advisor at JICA Jamaica. My first name Ai confuses people these days but it's not artificial intelligence! Ai means love in Japanese and it's pronounced the same as "I". I was a Country Officer at JICA Headquarters, mainly focus on DRR, Disaster Risk Reduction in Indonesia before joining JICA Jamaica. I am excited and honoured to make contribution to the team and the country Jamaica. "The only way to do great work is to love what you do." I am looking forward to collaborating with each of you to create something remarkable!

Not Your Ordinary Volunteer

After weathering the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic, we're thrilled that JICA Jamaica was able to resume its Japanese Overseas Cooperation Volunteers (JOCVs) Program in 2022. Despite the setbacks, the volunteers' commitment to making a difference remains unwavering. Since the resumption in November 2022, we've dispatched seven (7) volunteers, each bringing their unique skills and passion to local communities strengthening the relationship between Japan and Jamaica.



1



2



5

- 1. Mikiko Takeda, Japanese lecturer, took a moment from her lecture to take a photo with her students
- 2. JICA's 2023 arriving volunteer, Ryuji Muraoka. His first day at his host organization
- 3. Ayumi Hayashi, Operational Therapist, with her colleagues and students
- 4. Keitaro Kyono, Disaster Risk Reduction Management Coordinator, at a workshop at the Women's Centre in Port Antonio
- 5. Natsumi Nagamura, Environmental Educator, teaching her students weaving while being interviewed by a Japanese tv station



3



4



ONGOING PROJECTS

Capacity Building on the Community Police Koban System

Oct. 2023 - March 2026

Project Purpose – To increase the capacity of police officers to manage public order and implement community policing through the adoption of best practices based on the Koban System in Japan and Community Based Policing (CBP) model used in Brazil.

- 1. JICA team with team members of the MNS and JCF
- 2. Delegates listening keenly
- 3. Participants listening to a lecture
- 4. Policymakers in a group shot

Loan Project: Energy Management and Efficiency Program

15million USD (Co-financed with IDB) | Nov 2017 - Dec 2025

Project Purpose – Retrofitting of government facilities, installation of urban transport management system, training of facilities managers and operators.

- 5. JICA team speaking with Dr Nigel Clarke
- 6 & 7. NWA representatives explaining to JICA team



TOURISM FUTURES

Resilience, Sustainability and Development Roundtable Workshop

February 7 – 8, 2024

In recognition of the need for resilience and crisis management in regional tourism, the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) and the Global Tourism Resilience and Crisis Management Centre (GTRCM) collaborated to organize a Round Table and Workshop themed **“Tourism Crisis Management, Tourism Futures: Resilience, Sustainability and Development.”**

The event brought together key tourism industry stakeholders, government agencies, and international organizations that champion the critical need for an integrated approach to resilience. Their discussions highlighted successful regional efforts and outlined a strategic framework to further enhance the resilience of the tourism sector.

1. Participants doing a group activity on Day 2
2. JICA logistics team caught on camera
3. Moderator Masato Takamatsu listening to participants on Day 2
4. Participants in deep discussion on Day 2
5. Panel discussion on Day 1
6. Panel discussion on Day 1
7. Prof. Lloyd Waller doing host duties
8. Participants having a panel discussion
9. Members of the planning team and guests eagerly await the start of Day 1
10. From left: Naoki Matsumura; Masato Takamatsu; Hon. Minister Edmund Bartlett; Mitsuyoshi Kawasaki and Prof. Lloyd Waller, CD.



1



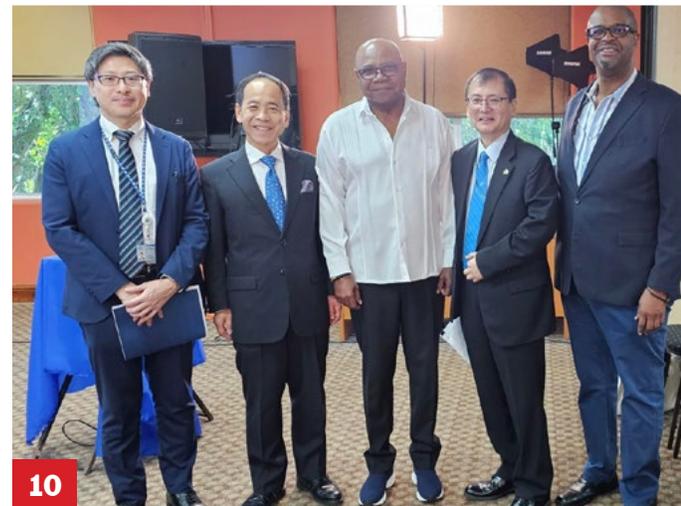
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BREAKING BOUNDARIES

Sustainable Development Goals Scholarship Programme

JICA Jamaica interviewed SDGs Programme participant, Ms. Chantal-Shemaiah Whitley, who is currently in Japan pursuing a Master’s in Special Education at Hiroshima University. Prior to commencing her studies in Japan, Ms. Whitley was a special education teacher in the parish of Manchester.

To strengthen a network among the target countries, JICA established a long-term training program: “**SDGs Global Leaders Program**” to develop human capital among young/middle bureaucrats, academicians and leading human resources in various fields to influence policy making processes and contribute to future socioeconomic development in their home countries

Q What has your experience been like so far? (E.g. Navigating school, daily life in Japan, weather, etc.)

A My experience in Japan has been interesting so far. Japan is no enigma to me as I had done my research on the country. However, the real-life experience has both met and exceeded my expectations. At first it was difficult to get around because my Japanese was not good. My academic supervisor assigned a student support (Japanese) to me, as it is the university culture here for foreign students, and as I maneuvered my way around campus with my student supports assistance, I was able to familiarize myself with school culture and subsequently the culture of Japan.

My support assisted me in all areas of academic life and even my personal life and now I can safely say I have a lifelong friend. I am now able to get around on my own, after taking Japanese classes and interacting with the locals in various events hosted by the university as well as JICA/HIC.

As I embark on this new journey as a student in a foreign land, I often times feel right at home as the people have shown me kindness when we interact. Living at the Hiroshima International Plaza as a part of the Global Relations Program has opened an avenue for me to participate in many cultural exchange activities to further familiarize myself with Japanese culture as well as to share my own. Though I had a rough first winter, I was able to stay warm and

anticipate the sakura. After the winter I had the opportunity to watch the sakura spring, bloom and fall off their branches. It was a wonderful experience.

Q What course topics have piqued your interest?

A The course topics that have interested me so far are:

- ▲ Inclusive Education
- ▲ International Cooperation
- ▲ Human Resource Development in Education
- ▲ Nonformal Education
- ▲ Local Curriculum Development
- ▲ Fundamental Theory and Practice in International Cooperation in Education
- ▲ Foundation in Education
- ▲ Planning for Educational Development
- ▲ Science and Culture of Daily Life in Japan

Q Are there any aspects of Japanese culture that surprised you?

A I was most surprised at the fact that pedestrians were given utmost priority on the streets. All the cars stopped to let me pass on both sides of the road and no one was trying to overtake another person to get by. Also, they do not toot their horns here. I have been here for 6 months, and I have never heard a car horn being tooted. Even in traffic everyone waits patiently, and everyone drives at a moderate speed.

Q Have you noticed any similarities between Jamaica and Japan?

A I have not noticed any as yet.



Bus Tour in Higashi Hiroshima. We made gold pencils at the first stop



Touch the World JICA cultural exchange event at Hiroshima International Plaza (HIP).



JICA Cultural Exchange School Visit

TRAILBLAZING MINDS

Knowledge Co-Creation Programme

We were happy to hear from KCCP participants of FY2023, Mr. Shervin White, Dr. Grace-Ann Junor and Mr. Todd Johnson. They participated in the Sustainable Solid Waste Management for Inland Areas, Food Value Chain for Community-Based Agri-Business and Renewable Energy courses respectively.

JICA's Knowledge Co-Creation Program (KCCP) is a development cooperation initiative with an emphasis on a mutual learning process that suits partner countries. The courses under the KCCP are usually conducted in Japan. Participants acquire useful knowledge and build on their existing expertise and further benefit their organizations.



Shervin White (left) - National Solid Waste Management Authority (NSWMA) – Sustainable Solid Waste Management in Island Areas

Q Name one topic in the course that you found interesting and why?

A “Recycling of Waste. I found this topic very interesting as first teaches us to accept our waste as our responsibility. It further teaches us that once we are resourceful then waste can be seen as resources. With recycling, the amount of waste generated is very minimal, hence having a cleaner environment”.

Q How has your training course impacted you professionally?

A This training course has widened my knowledge in the handling of solid waste, so I am more capable to guide my team and make better decisions in my professional life. This also equipped me with the skills and knowledge to plan and execute projects to better manage the solid waste generated in Jamaica.



Dr. Grace-Ann Junor (second left) - Scientific Research Council (SRC) – Promotion of Food Value Chain for Community-Based Agri-Business

Q Name one topic in the course that you found interesting and why?

A This training course encompasses several courses that span the interest from the consumer to the manufacturing and distribution chain. The first day of lectures resonated with me; the lectures delved into the importance of exploiting and converting tactical knowledge (innate resources) to explicit knowledge (science-based data). For instance, if you have a mineral bath/river in your community and observe that people usually visit for various reasons, you may garner some data (eg. why, who, when, etc.) from the visitors and formalize the resource into a sustainable business.

Q How has your training course impacted you professionally?

A This principle of looking within now affects my thought process on the job. It complements and enhances my problem-solving skills on the job, which I have disseminated on each opportunity forwarded to me. It creates an environment of peace and confidence for me that boost productivity.



Todd Johnson (left) - Ministry of Science, Energy, Telecommunications and Transport (MSETT) – Renewable Energy (D)

Q Name one topic in the course that you found interesting and why?

A Promote Energy Efficiency in Caribbean Countries

Q How has your training course impacted you professionally?

A The training course has positively impacted my current role as it has influenced me and my team to pursue the following:

- a. Learning from the courses has supported the review and update of ongoing policy update activities inclusive of the National Energy Policy and supporting policies
- a. Review governance structure of licensing regime and conceptualize compliance strategies to improve governance
- b. Formulate strategies to improve public awareness on Energy Efficiency and Conservation
- c. Create a supportive environment for renewable energy development, investment and deployment through policy revision and update

JICA ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

Building Partnerships, Strengthening Connections

JICA Alumni Association in Jamaica – Building Partnerships, Strengthening Connections

The JICA Alumni Association in Jamaica (JAAJ) was established in March 1998, with the support of the Embassy of Japan in Jamaica and the JICA Jamaica Office. It is one of over a hundred globally and comprises of former participants of JICA’s Knowledge Co-Creation Program in Japan. Several events and activities are executed annually to engage members and the wider community.

Activities executed between April 2023 & March 2024

International Costal Cleanup Day – Sept. 16, 2023 – The JAAJ Partnered with NEPA at the ICCD Shipwreck site on Palisadoes Road.

National Tree Planting Day – October 6, 2023 – Over ten varieties of fruit and shade trees were planted at the Manning’s Hill Primary School, with support from key stakeholders. **(See photo 1)**

Technology Transfer Seminars – November 2023 and February 2024. Two seminars, one virtual and one at the Medallion Hall Hotel were held, focusing on Marine Litter management and Agriculture and Fisheries and Renewable Energy respectively. **(See photo 2)**

Employment Expo – Dec 7, 2023 – The JAAJ, in partnership with the Jamaican Association on Intellectual Disabilities (JAID) and Digicel Foundation, hosted the expo for Persons with Intellectual Disabilities. **(See photos 3 and 4)**

Fundraising Event – Jan 26, 2024 – A production of Basil Dawkins’s play “Once Upon a Watch Night” was shown at the Little Theatre in collaboration with JETTA Joint Initiative funding. Proceeds went to assisting with repairs at the Manning’s Hill Primary School.

Culture Festival – Jan 27, 2024 – Cross cultural sharing with performances done by students, Japanese expats and other professionals highlighted the event.

FECCEBEJA - Jan 31 – Feb 4, 2024 – The 14th meeting of Central American and Caribbean Federation of Associations of Former Scholars of Japan (FECCEBEJA) was held in Panama and attended by delegates from ten countries. **(See photos 5 and 6)**





LIFE AFTER VOLUNTEERING IN JAMAICA

Meet former JICA volunteers, Yuko Aoki and Akio Kajitani. Mrs. Aoki, a veteran musicologist with a special love for the piano, although an expert with other musical instruments. She was thrilled about the opportunity to return to Edna Manley College of the Performing and Visual Arts to impart knowledge to graduands attending the college and youth at risk from peripheral communities.

Yuko Aoki



Mrs. Aoki instructing a student how to play the piano



JICA Headquarters | Persons: from left in the front row are Ms.Kontani; JICA President Tanaka; Ms.Nishida; and Ms.Aoki. In the back row from left are Mr. Otsuka, Chief Secretary of the Office of the President; Mr. Fujimoto; Mr. Ogawara; and Mr.Tachibana, Director General of JOCV.

Q Can you share a memorable experience from your time volunteering in Jamaica?

A I had many memorable experiences, I can't just give one, let me give you three:

- ▲ Offering music class with colleagues at the Bustamante Hospital for Children.
- ▲ The "Show and Tell Student Piano Concert" with over a dozen students from Gaynstead High School.
- ▲ And the benefit recital "The Chords That Unite Us" with my colleagues who are wonderful musicians from Jamaica and Cuba.

Q How did your role as a music teacher contribute to the community in Jamaica?

A I would be happy if I could have helped support the music culture of Jamaica in some small way.

Q What are some challenges that you faced during your assignment, and how did you overcome them?

A There were frequent schedule changes and students' absence, so I was unable to teach as I had planned. So, I tried to offer supplemental classes as much as possible.

Q What have you been doing since returning to Japan and how has your Jamaican experience helped?

A By chance, I had the opportunity to teach Japanese Language and culture, causing me to think deeply about Japan again. My experience in

Jamaica, gave me the opportunity to see Japan from the outside. This has been helping me.

Q In what ways do you believe your volunteer experience has influenced your perspective on global issues?

A It's a little difficult for me to deal with global problems but I consciously try to take an interest in people from different countries and backgrounds and try to build relationships with them if possible. It keeps me a bit busy, but it's fun!

Q Can you share any advice for future volunteers considering similar assignment in Jamaica or elsewhere?

A It would be great if you could accept Jamaican music culture and situation while conveying your values.

Mr. Kajitani was dispatched to the Ministry of Culture, Gender, Entertainment and Sport as a Civil Engineer. Prior to the advent of COVID-19, he was assigned to the Westmoreland Municipal Corporation where he worked assiduously to instigate the twinning of sister cities, Tottori Prefecture in Japan and Westmoreland in Jamaica. Both volunteers were eager to return to Jamaica to finish their remaining tenure of six months.

Akio Kajitani



Iwami High School students (Tottori) performed 'One Love' in the reception of the 60th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Japan and Jamaica (February 2024, Tokyo).

Q Can you share a memorable experience from your time volunteering in Jamaica?

A One of memorable experiences is creating an architectural model of the Sports Museum, which is to start construction in a few years, so that stakeholders can see what the Sports Museum will look like.

Q How did your role as a civil engineer contribute to the community in Jamaica?

A I promoted 8 infrastructure projects, such as the National Sports Museum and redevelopment of the National Stadium, with assisting production of construction drawings and field surveys.

Q What are some challenges that you faced during your assignment, and how did you overcome them?

A It was the first time for my partner organization to accept a JICA volunteer. So, my counterpart and I explored and found our way to collaborate. Besides, my partner organization requested another JICA volunteer, my replacement.

Q What have you been doing since returning to Japan and how has your Jamaican experience helped?

A I continue to work on the project aimed at fostering relationship between Tottori Prefecture in Japan and Westmoreland in Jamaica as an officer of Tottori Prefectural Government. My connections with people in Jamaica helped my work a lot.

Q In what ways do you believe your volunteer experience has influenced your perspective on global issues?

A I realized again that no global issue is irrelevant to me and that everyone, including me, has the potential to contribute to global sustainable development.

Q Can you share any advice for future volunteers considering similar assignment in Jamaica or elsewhere?

A It is precious to experience the dynamic development of society and economy through infrastructure projects. Enjoy it with your counterpart, partner organization and stakeholders.



Mr. Kajitani's first visit to his host organization, MCGES

JICA IN SUPPORT OF THE



SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



6 St. Lucia Avenue, Kingston 5, Jamaica | 5th Floor Courtleigh Corporate Centre
876-929-4069 | 876-960-0021 | 876-908-0847
jm_oso_rep@jica.go.jp | /jicajamaicaoffice
www.jica.go.jp/Jamaica/English/index.html