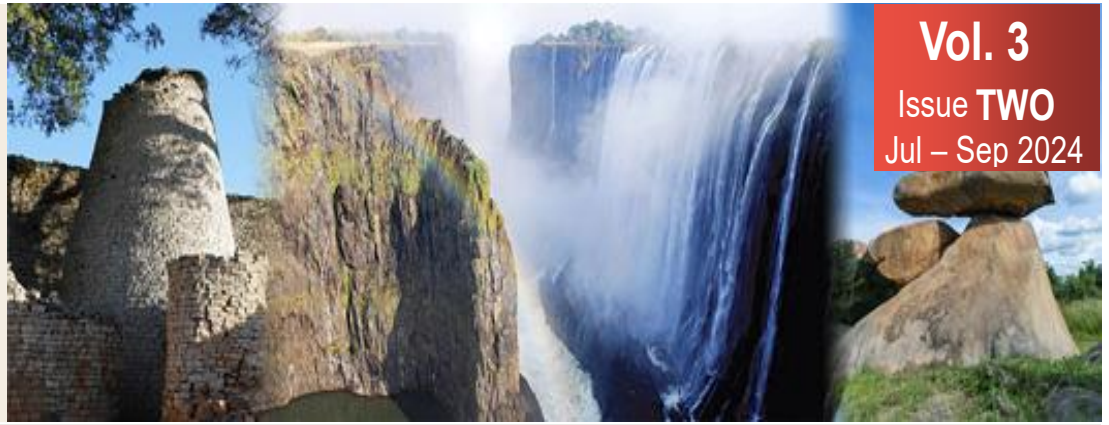




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An Insight into JICA Zimbabwe Activities

JICA Zimbabwe Newsletter



our highlights for this quarter >>>

✿ 35 Years of Friendship and Development: Celebrating JOCV's Contributions to Zimbabwe ✿

JICA Zimbabwe welcomed new volunteers...



In recognition and celebration of 35 years of the selfless efforts of Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers (JOCVs) towards sustainable development in Zimbabwe, JICA Zimbabwe was pleased to welcome 3 new volunteers to the JOCV team. JICA Zimbabwe is excited to see the positive transformation the 3 volunteers, Soccer Coach, Mr. Riki Hanada; Physical Education Instructor, Ms. Eri Kameyama; and Community Development Volunteer, Ms. Midori Matsunaga, will bring to the communities and organizations they will be working with over their 2 year assignment period.



Let's check out their introductions on page 3...



Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers
Since 1989

JICA ZIMBABWE

This year JICA Zimbabwe celebrates the 35th anniversary of the Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers (JOCV) programme in Zimbabwe. On July 14, in 1989, Zimbabwe received its first two JOCVs. One was a volunteer in "Architecture" dispatched to Ministry of National Housing and Social Amenities, and the other one was a volunteer in "Quality Management and Productivity Improvement" who worked at Zimbabwe Electricity Supply Authority (ZESA). It has been a marvellous 35 years of over 560 JOCVs contributing to sustainable development in Zimbabwe. As volunteers have come and gone, and as they have worked well together with local communities and organisations, they have all left a big footprint in different areas such as youth development, women empowerment, community development, sports development, Information and Communication Technology and tourism development.

📷 Photo: JOCV 35th anniversary logo based on the Japanese Mizuhiki concept of tying knots, which signifies that the 'knot' i.e., the relationship between Japan and Zimbabwe is becoming stronger and is long-lasting.

Catching up with the ZIM-SHEP Project!



Farmers conducting market survey in open market

The Project for Zimbabwe Smallholder Horticulture Empowerment and Promotion (ZIM-SHEP) Team conducted Market surveys in 6 targeted irrigation schemes in Matabeleland North (Hauke, Tshongokwe, Chentali) and Matabeleland South (Moza, Antelope, Masholomoshe) provinces in July and August 2024 respectively. The exercise was an eye-opener for farmers who were unaware of the availability of local and more profitable markets such as boarding schools, supermarkets, and traditional open markets.

The targeted beneficiaries collected information on horticultural produce such as quality, quantity, purchase frequency, terms, and mode of payments from the potential buyers. Participants also visited input suppliers offering a range of agricultural inputs such as seeds, chemicals, and fertilizers. Farmers visited input suppliers and enquired whether they offer free delivery, product discounts and after-sales technical support including setting up demonstration plots.

Prior to the practical market survey, farmers held mock exercises to effectively conduct the actual market survey. Participating farmers appreciated the exercise and made the following remarks:

‘The market research made me aware of my own biases towards marketing. I thought if my product is good, I can easily find buyers. But there are other aspects such as variety, quantity, and consistency in supply that are crucial too’.

‘For a profitable horticulture enterprise, I have realized there is a need to look for many buyers in order to spread the market risk’.

‘I have realized that an old person can also conduct market surveys utilizing the simple questionnaires that we were given’.

Following the sponsored exercise, farmers are expected to conduct a market survey funded by themselves, conduct feedback meetings with the irrigation scheme members and select target crops to grow together based on market findings. Afterwards, farmers will form commodity groups according to the target crop of interest and each group will prepare a crop calendar to be utilized throughout the production and marketing cycle. The next activity planned is follow-up visits for the market survey funded by themselves, feedback meetings, target crop selection and crop calendar making.

The The Joint Terminal Evaluation Mission was in Zimbabwe from 19 August to 7 September 2024 to conduct a monitoring and evaluation for the Project for Zimbabwe Smallholder Horticulture Empowerment and Promotion (ZIM-SHEP). The goal of the project is to improve the livelihood of the smallholder farmers in the target irrigation schemes (8 Provinces and 24 Districts). The project started in March 2019 with a five-year project period, and due to the interruption of project activities by the COVID-19 pandemic between 2020 and 2021, the project was extended by one more year to close out in March 2025.

The mission from Japan formulated the Joint Terminal Evaluation Mission, together with three officials of the Ministry of Lands, Agriculture, Fisheries, Water and Rural Development and they conducted Monitoring and Evaluation activities in two provinces where the project activities were implemented to assess the impact of the SHEP approach based extension activities. The in-depth interviews with farmers, extension officers, and their supervisors provided the Mission with a deep understanding of the farmers' experiences, challenges, and perceptions regarding the SHEP concept.

The project uses the SHEP approach to teach farmers how to conduct market surveys and strengthen farmers' capacity to practise market oriented horticultural businesses, which is consistent with the needs of the beneficiaries. The Joint Terminal Evaluation team also had discussions with other Development Partners who have embedded the SHEP concept in their project, such as World Food Programme (WFP). They have confirmed that the SHEP approach has significantly helped building resilience within the small-scale farmers and enhanced the sustainability of their activities.

After the monitoring and evaluation by the Joint Terminal Evaluation Mission, a Joint Coordinating Committee (JCC) meeting was held on 5 September 2024.



Participants at the JCC meeting

It was during the JCC meeting were the Joint Terminal Evaluation team reported on their findings regarding the implementation of the SHEP approach. The results from the Joint Terminal Evaluation team showed that the implementation of SHEP increased the horticultural income of most of the target farmers, which in turn improved their livelihoods. This not only increased the income of each farmer but also strengthened the cohesiveness of the farmer group and improved the maintenance of irrigation facilities through improved cash flow. The increased income has led to better management of irrigation facilities, which in turn has improved crop productivity.

The Evaluation team recommended that the project tenure be extended by 3 more months so that the project completes its activities and both sides agreed to the recommendations. A Record of Discussion was signed by both parties. The project will close out in June 2025.



Hello everyone. My name is Riki Hanada. I arrived in Zimbabwe in August. I was really looking forward to coming to Zimbabwe!! I work at Bindura University of Science Education as a football coach. I have played football for 16 years and taught kids for 7 years. My first goal is to enjoy life in Zimbabwe and stay healthy. And I hope to share my experience with as many people as possible.

JOCV Baseball Coaches Empowering Women in Baseball

JOCVs have been providing invaluable technical assistance to the Zimbabwe Baseball Association through holding training camps for the country's baseball men and women national teams. The women's national team was in August 2024 invited to the first ever women's international baseball series in Africa, held in South Africa. The ZBA has tapped into Japan's baseball technical talent resource and has for years requested for volunteers who have immensely contributed to the improvement of baseball in the country and have also taken the sport to schools and communities in high density suburbs. The volunteers do not only coach baseball but are also involved in teaching life skills to baseball enthusiasts, fighting against substance and drug abuse, manufacture of baseball equipment and preparation of playgrounds. A cumulative 29 volunteer baseball coaches have since been dispatched to Zimbabwe over the past 35 years, and have worked in Bulawayo, Harare, Mutare and Gweru.



Hello, everyone! Nice to meet you! My name is Eri Kameyama. I arrived in Zimbabwe in August. I worked as a Physical Education teacher at a high school for 11 years, and I played handball for 20 years. In Zimbabwe, I work in Harare at Belvedere Technical Teachers' College. I support students who are aspiring to become Physical Education teachers in the future. This is my first time living in a foreign country. From now on, I want to study more about the history, culture, and language of this country.



Hello everyone! Nice to meet you. My name is Midori Matsunaga, a JICA volunteer from Japan. My name "Midori" means Green in English. Please call me Midori. In Japan, I was working in the legal department of an ICT company. My technical field is Community Development, and I am attached to the Ministry of Women Affairs, Community, Small and Medium Enterprises Development. For close to two years, I will be engaging in activities to improve gender issues. In addition, I love sports, airplanes, and musicals! I have been swimming for almost 20 years, and I like running. I run about 2.5 km every morning since my arrival in Zimbabwe. I like watching and boarding airplanes because it allows me to experience something out of the ordinary. Moreover, I really love the musical "Lion King", especially "Timon" one of the characters in Lion King. In Zimbabwe, I want to balance maintaining an exercise routine with my work. I want to make the most of my experience and do my best.

JOCV baseball coaches' efforts bear fruit at NASH baseball tournament



Mr. Murata with national title winners, Mambo High School

Volunteer baseball coaches continue to make a lasting impression on Zimbabwe's secondary schools baseball scene, for example, their contribution to the National Association of Secondary School Heads (NASH) softball and baseball tournaments held in Mutare and Bulawayo. Gweru based baseball volunteer coach, Mr. Ayumu Murata led Midlands Province representatives, Mambo High School Under 16 girls softball team and boys baseball team to national softball and baseball titles respectively. Volunteer coach, Mr. Ryosuke Kasai who is working with schools in Bulawayo also saw his teams perform well in the NASH baseball championships.

Tourism JOCV brings Sake to Sanganai/Hlanganai

Mr. Shingo Tada in collaboration with his colleagues at the Mutare Polytechnic spearheaded the promotion of Sake, a Japanese alcoholic beverage made from fermented rice, at the Sanganai/Hlanganani held in Bulawayo from 12 to 14 September. Sanganai/Hlanganani is an annually held Tourism Trade Fair organized by the Zimbabwe Tourism Authority aimed at showcasing the widest variety of Africa's best tourism products and attracts international visitors and media from across the world. This year's expo focused on developing sustainable village tourism in Zimbabwe. For their efforts Mutare Poly emerged as first runner up in the Best Training Institution Stand at the exhibition.



Kendo at Mutare Poly



Mr. Tada and Mutare Poly Students Undertaking a Kendo Lesson

Tourism and Hospitality Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteer, Mr. Shingo Tada introduced Kendo as a part of Mutare Polytechnic's physical and mental wellbeing activities for its students. Kendo is a Japanese martial art of swordsmanship that originated from the Samurai Warriors. In the 18th century, practice armour and the *shinai*, a sword made of bamboo, were introduced to allow realistic fencing without risk of injury. Practicing Kendo helps in instilling discipline and self-confidence, improves physical fitness, mental focus and relieves stress.

Marketing Volunteer attends historic UN Tourism Regional Forum



Ms. Koda and her counterparts at the event

Marketing JOCV, Ms. Rina Koda attended the first-ever UN Tourism Regional Forum on Gastronomy Tourism for Africa in Victoria Falls in July 2024. Ms. Koda attended the event in her capacity as a Marketing Volunteer attached to the Zimbabwe Tourism Authority. The historic event was held with the aim of transforming and developing African tourism through food culture and brought together dignitaries and experts from around the world to share food culture and best practices in gastronomy tourism.

JICA for capacity development >>>



On September 3, 2024, JICA Zimbabwe bid farewell to the 2024 recipient of the JICA ABE Scholarship, Mr. Mondlie Alphonse Hadebe. He will be studying for a Master's in International Business, at Rikkyo University in Japan, from 2024 to 2027. JICA Zimbabwe extends best wishes to Mr. Hadebe as he pursues his studies in Japan, and wishes him success as he embarks on this remarkable journey and the experience of a lifetime.



Human resources development is at the heart of JICA's cooperation, and through an investment in people, JICA builds personnel who shoulder the responsibility of promoting sustainable development. September 17 to 20, 2024, saw 10 JICA National Staff from Zimbabwe, Namibia, Tanzania, Uganda, South Sudan, Kenya, and Democratic Republic of Congo converging in Tanzania for training in Urban Transport Planning and Public Transport Transit Oriented Development (TOD) in Africa, focusing on JICA's experience in Dar es Salaam. JICA Zimbabwe's Program Officer for Infrastructure, Ms. Andrea Zhou attended the training and highlighted that it was a life changing experience, with a lot learnt to implement in the Zimbabwean context.



JICA remains steadfast in ensuring food and nutrition improvement in Africa. Participants from Zimbabwe, Mr. Honest Mahlatini, Mr. Tasiana Nyadzayo, and Mr. Moses Gamundani, and participants from other SADC member states attended a regional training in South Africa, from 26 to 28 August, 2024, to address issues regarding foodsecurity and nutrition.

Contact Us >>>

Dear Reader,

Thank you for taking time to read JICA Zimbabwe Newsletter and thank you for your support during the year. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you want to find out more about our activities and / or if you have any queries / suggestions regarding our newsletter. We value your feedback and your support.

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JICA's One Stop Border Post project at Chirundu has been instrumental in building capacities for border management staff, which has led to increased trade facilitation. On July 9, the project's 7th Steering Committee took place at Bronte Hotel, in Harare. The meeting was attended by ZIMRA officials, including the Commissioner of Customs and Excise, Mr. Chadzingwa, Zambia Revenue Authority, including the Deputy Commissioner, Mr. Msimuko, and members from the Ministry of Industry from both countries. The meeting, which took place when the project is nearing its completion, was highly successful. There were extensive discussions on the progress made so far, enhancing the project's outcomes, and reflecting on post-project activities.