

· TRENDS ·



Japan

JICA Sends a Message about Disaster Risk Reduction on World Tsunami Awareness Day



During the UN General Assembly in December of 2015, Japan led 142 countries in proposing a resolution to designate November 5th the World Tsunami Awareness Day, and the proposal was approved. On November 5, 2017, various events took place around the world to raise awareness of and reinforce measures for tsunami disaster risk reduction. On that occasion, JICA hosted the World Tsunami Museum Conference while also providing support for projects organized by the Japanese government, international agencies, and other countries for the event.

The conference was held in Ishigaki, Okinawa, on November 5th. Seventy people from eight countries, including the staff of tsunami museums, government officials involved in disaster risk reduction, and academics gath-

Conference participants

ered to discuss how to hand down to the next generation experiences of natural disasters including tsunami and what role tsunami museums can play in this process. The results of the conference were reported at the High School Students Islands Summit on World Tsunami Awareness Day 2017, which was held in Ginowan, Okinawa, on November 7th.

JICA also hosted seminars related to the World Tsunami Awareness Day in Peru, El Salvador, and other places. In the Maldives and Solomon Islands, JICA staff and their counterparts participated in evacuation drills that were part of a tsunami disaster education project implemented through the Japan-UNDP Partnership Fund. These activities were covered by the media and they provided an opportunity for people to learn about JICA's disaster risk reduction efforts and Japan's tsunami disaster prevention measures.



Morocco / France

JICA President visits Morocco and France, speaks at the 10th World Policy Conference



On November 3, 2017, JICA President Shinichi Kitaoka visited Marrakesh, Morocco, where he spoke at the 10th World Policy Conference (WPC), an international forum for world leaders and experts to discuss constructive solutions to major regional and global problems. The event was sponsored by the Institut français des relations internationales (IFRI).

At a plenary session on investing in Africa, Mr. Kitaoka praised the strong sense of ownership that African countries had demonstrated at the sixth Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD VI), which was held in Kenya in 2016. At the same time, he pointed out that one challenge facing Africa was securing adequate food supply to stabilize prices and wages in the region. He talked about successful initiatives in Senegal, where

JICA President Shinichi Kitaoka (center) speaks at the WPC

JICA established the Coalition for African Rice Development (CARD) to improve rice production, as well as the importance of developing human capital, emphasizing in this respect the crucial role of universal health coverage (UHC) and JICA's efforts to improve food and nutrition in Africa. Mr. Kitaoka also stressed the importance of promoting private investment and described JICA's pilot project that utilizes innovative ideas of small businesses in Africa to accelerate regional development. He expressed hope that African students who had studied in Japan under JICA-funded programs would use their experiences to lead regional industrialization.

On November 5, Mr. Kitaoka visited France, where he attended a panel discussion at the IFRI on Japan's approach to developing countries. He talked about the history, philosophy, and current direction of JICA's development cooperation.



Cuba

Increasing Cuba's Rice Production with Improved Agricultural Machinery



JICA signed a grant agreement with the Cuban government in November of 2017 to provide grant aid of up to 1.215 billion yen for a project to help the country improve rice seed production techniques with the use of agricultural machinery.

Although rice is a major staple food in Cuba, the country's self-sufficiency in the crop is low, and it needs to increase domestic rice production. However, only a small number of farmers have sufficient machinery, which makes plowing and farm consolidation inefficient and rice growth uneven. Due to the shortage of "transplanters" for planting seedlings on paddy fields, direct seeding is the mainstream method, which results in many weeds.

The project will provide the machinery need-

ed for producing rice seeds in the eight targeted provinces and one special municipality in Cuba. The goal is to increase transplant crop production on paddy fields by 20% and secure a stable homegrown supply of rice in Cuba.

JICA has provided technical cooperation for rice production in Cuba on a continuous basis since 2003. For example, in a certified rice seed production project, which was implemented in five provinces in the central area for four years starting in 2012, JICA supported the extension and diffusion of technology for producing good-quality rice seeds. In the ongoing project to extend technology for grain production, JICA is providing support for improvement of cultivation techniques. Through this project, more comprehensive support will be provided to increase Cuba's rice production and therefore its self-sufficiency.

Signing ceremony