Expand Understanding of Development Issues
—Support for Development Education—

A Bridge Connecting the People of Developing Countries and the People of Japan

Development education is provided to make people aware of situations in the international community and societies, such as poverty, hunger, environmental destruction, etc., and thus deepen their understanding of various issues such as development, the environment, human rights, and peace, as well as their recognition of the importance of international cooperation and development assistance. Development education also aims to foster attitudes and abilities for participating in activities to solve pressing issues in the international community, including the relationship between the developed and the developing world.

Programs to Support Development Education

Development education is provided by different actors, including in-service teachers, NGOs, and civil organizations engaged in development education, and their activities are varied. Among these various development education actors, JICA, which doesn’t own continuing educational institutions such as schools, places its emphasis on a program to support development education from the sidelines.

Activities Carried out under Two Pillars

One of JICA’s pillars of the program to support development education is sharing knowledge on situations in developing countries and the relationship between the developing countries and Japan with the public so as to build a bridge between the people of developing countries and Japan.

JICA possesses knowledge accumulated through its long-term commitment to technical cooperation and volunteer programs in developing countries, as well as research aiming for the systematization and analysis of information and experience. Sharing knowledge means promoting understanding among Japanese citizens on the situations in developing countries and their relationships with Japan by sharing JICA’s knowledge with Japanese citizens.

Another important pillar is the provision of opportunities to help citizens realize what they can do voluntarily. Centering on its activities within the framework of integrated study that was introduced to the school curriculum in fiscal 2002, JICA is creating opportunities for citizens to consider what they can do voluntarily, while strengthening coordination with school education.

Sharing Knowledge

1. Delivering International Cooperation Lectures

JICA staff, experts, former volunteers, and training participants from abroad are dispatched to schools and other places as lecturers to promote understanding of the situations in developing countries and the relationship between developing countries and Japan. In fiscal 2003, 2,178 lectures were offered at schools throughout Japan, and were attended by approximately 248,000 people.

2. Teaching Materials for Development Education

1) Monthly magazine Kokusai Kyoryoku

A monthly magazine, Kokusai Kyoryoku (International Cooperation), which contains information on developing countries and international cooperation, is distributed to junior high and high schools, as well as libraries throughout the country. In fiscal 2003, JICA contributed articles to Sankei Color Hyakka (wall newspaper targeting school children) for the first time, and information on developing countries was posted five times on the bulletin boards of 16,000 elementary and junior high schools in Japan.

2) Pamphlet entitled Gakko ni Ikita

A pamphlet entitled Gakko ni Ikita (I Want to Go to School), which gives an overview of issues on education in developing countries targeting students from elementary to junior high schools, has also been well received.
3) Webpage Bokura Chikyu Chosatai

JICA’s homepage has a page called Bokura Chikyu Chosatai (We are the Earth Explorers) that explains global issues* such as water issues, desertification, population growth, and environment issues in an easy-to-understand manner using animation.

4) Material for development education: JICA Photo Language Kit

In cooperation with teachers and NGOs, JICA has prepared photo materials that vividly explain the climates and ways of life in developing countries. They are used in classrooms to deepen understanding of situations and issues in developing countries by giving students opportunities to think and exchange opinions. They can be borrowed free of charge from JICA Plazas around the country.

Provision of Opportunities to Consider

1. Essay Contest for Junior High, High School, and University Students

JICA runs essay contests for junior high, high school, and university students. These contests aim to provide them with an opportunity to deepen their understanding of the situations in developing countries and the necessity of international cooperation, and to consider what Japan should do in the international community and how each individual should act.

In fiscal 2003, 27,220 essays were entered in the contest. Junior high and high school students who won awards and placed high were invited on a study tour to ASEAN countries as a supplementary prize.

2. Global Citizenship Program for Students

This program provides junior high, high school, and university students who are interested in international cooperation with an opportunity to consider the perspective of Japan's relations with the world and the type of international cooperation that is needed. Views are exchanged with training participants from abroad, and lectures and workshops are offered by experts and former volunteers. Fiscal 2003 resulted in 27 programs with the participation of 1,239 students.

3. Development Education Study Tour for Teachers

In this program, teachers from elementary to high schools

---

Chapter 2 Program Implementation

World Mix Global Cooking

An international exchange event utilizing food called World Mix Global Meal was held jointly by Tsukuba International Center and Kasumi Group, a local enterprise, on August 24, 2003.

The event was held during the summer holidays with the aim of promoting international exchange through food. Ten elementary school students and their parents paired up with training participants from overseas to cook meals from different countries and thus become familiar with the cultures of those countries in terms of language, climate, and history while learning about choosing ingredients and recipes.

The training participants and children developed good relationships individually through various activities: for example, a pair-matching game to introduce the participants to each other, a meeting for menu planning, homestays, shopping for ingredients, summer parties, and sports activities. Both the children and the training participants cooked meals seriously.

The hall was a mixture of everything, filled with the smells of various spices and uncommon fruits. All the participants in the event were quite satisfied with what they had cooked. It was an international understanding and exchange event that came with good food.

Cambodia study tour

A Cambodia study tour was planned and carried out by Tsukuba International Center and the Ibaraki International Association for eight days from March 28 to April 4, 2004. It was the first time for a JICA domestic office to run such a study tour. The tour group comprised 14 members, including two accompanying staff and 12 participants recruited from the public. The participants ranged from high school students to seniors.

The tour started by visiting Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers (JOCVs) in Cambodia (a nursery school teacher, a computer engineer, and a Japanese language teacher) and senior volunteers (in soil fertilizers and ceramic production). It was then followed by a visit to JICA project sites, such as an irrigation technology project and a project for improvement of science and mathematics education. Furthermore, it included a visit to the activity sites of NGOs from Japan and other countries in Cambodia. The tour participants had a chance to see local sites involved in various international cooperation and spent eight valuable days.

(Tsukuba International Center)
who are interested in education for international understanding and development education visit developing countries to set material for their class for about 10 days. After coming home, participants teach classes on development education at their own education sites based on their own experiences, and submit reports on the practical lessons. Some of the practical lessons are chosen and compiled in a booklet that is distributed to schools across the country. In fiscal 2003, 126 teachers were dispatched to Fiji, Viet Nam, Tanzania, Ghana, Laos, the Philippines, Bangladesh, Kenya, and Thailand.

4. Practical Development Education Seminar

Practical training is offered to teachers in development education on techniques of development and applying educational materials and methods of participatory study. In fiscal 2003, 46 training sessions were offered throughout the country and attended by 2,118 teachers. In order to match the needs of the educational setting, the program is managed and implemented jointly with educational boards, local international associations, NGOs and teachers engaged in development education.

Aichi Needs Survey on International Understanding and Development Education

Education Addressing Issues Common to All Human Beings

Support for Development Education

Knowing the needs at education sites

"Now that integrated study is incorporated into the curriculum of elementary, junior high and high school education, I wonder how the education sites have changed." This was the question raised during discussions of the study group for an international cooperation lecture-delivery program at Chubu International Center. The study group was working on improving the quality and delivery of lectures. However, they had little access to information about the education sites and it was therefore quite difficult to assess what was actually needed.

This called for the establishment of a committee consisting of teachers in education on international understanding and development from elementary, junior high, high school, and universities, international associations which supports the lecture-delivery program, NGOs, and JICA. It was then followed by a needs survey on international understanding and development education targeting 1,675 schools in Aichi prefecture, including elementary, junior high and high schools, and schools for children with disabilities.

Based on the results of the survey, a proposition for shifting to education addressing issues common to all human beings and a declaration of committee members’ commitment to the development of a systematic curriculum, taking this as an opportunity, were compiled into an action plan. A report was then distributed to all the schools that had taken part in the survey.

The report becomes a required text for lecturers

The content of education on development and international understanding tends to be biased toward JICA’s perspectives as the provider of education. However, we tried to incorporate the opinions and desires of the teachers at educational sites into this report. The report contains a resource database on international understanding and international development in the region to help teachers find out where to access the information whenever they are interested.

We hope this report will be used widely by teachers and educators involved in development education, and at the same time, we strongly recommend that lecturers in the international cooperation lecture-delivery program read it before their lectures. In this way, we believe we can help the lecture-delivery program meet the needs of the education sites.

Some changes have appeared in the request for the lecture-delivery program since the distribution of reports to schools. Through further enhancement of the cooperative relationship that was established on the occasion of the survey, with the boards of education, principals’ association, teachers, and the High School Association for International Education, we believe we can achieve the implementation of high quality development education in the future.

(Chubu International Center)