Citizen Participatory Cooperation
Promote citizens' understanding and participation in international cooperation

Various Citizen Participatory Cooperation Programs

In order to promote public participation in international cooperation, JICA implements various programs that increase and foster citizens’ interest in international cooperation and help them understand its necessity in more detail.

Citizen Participatory Cooperation Programs....

JICA makes efforts to promote international cooperation by utilizing local communities’ experiences and expertise. Specifically, open seminars and workshops are held with the help of those who are experienced in the subject. By motivating citizens to step forward into international cooperation and providing training opportunities for them, JICA supports improving citizens’ capacity for implementing related activities.

JICA coordinators for international cooperation who are mainly dispatched to prefectural international exchange associations throughout Japan play an important role in these activities. Coordinators give advice to local governments, NGOs, educational institutions, and individual citizens who are interested in international cooperation and jointly hold seminars and events.

Programs to Support Development Education

JICA supports development education under two pillars: 1) sharing knowledge about situations in developing countries and on the relationship between the developing countries and Japan; 2) providing opportunities to help citizens realize what they can do voluntarily.

JICA possesses knowledge accumulated through its long-term activities and research whose purpose is the systemization and analysis of information and experience in developing countries. Sharing such knowledge with Japanese citizens through schemes such as delivering international cooperation lectures to promote their understanding on the situations in developing countries and their relationship with Japan is one of the pillars of the program that supports development education.

In April 2006, JICA opened JICA Global Plaza in Hiroo, Tokyo. Staff called globe guides work in the exhibition and consultation spaces to communicate with visitors such as students on school trips so that they can get a picture of the situations in developing countries and of global issues. Also, by connecting visitors to a developing country via a TV conference, the facility allows visitors to come into contact with actual people from the developing country.

JICA also makes efforts to create opportunities to consider what one can do voluntarily by running essay contests for junior high and high school students, development education study tours for teachers, etc., while strengthening coordination with elementary, junior high, high schools, etc., centering on activities within the framework of integrated study in the school curriculum.

“Partnership” and “Exchange” Programs

JICA Partnership Program.................................

The JICA Partnership Program is technical cooperation implemented jointly based on proposals made by NGOs, universities, local governments or public-interest corporations in Japan (hereinafter called the ‘Partners’) that are willing to contribute to international cooperation. The program commenced as part of ODA in fiscal 2002 with the objective of promoting and facilitating cooperation activities proposed by citizens targeting local communities in developing countries.

Though the programs can be divided into three types, grassroots-level, meticulous programs that directly contribute to improvements in the living situations and incomes of people in developing countries are eligible. JICA domestic offices serve as contact points, widely recruiting ideas for international cooperation activities in developing countries. In order to realize these ideas, opinions are exchanged between partners and JICA in a detailed manner before formulating and implementing projects jointly.

Youth Invitation Program..................................

In the Youth Invitation Program, young people from developing countries are invited to Japan to receive training in their fields of specialization and interact with Japanese people. Young people from 109 countries were received by 47 prefectures in fiscal 2005. Local people in the regions that accept young people experience international cooperation and exchange, and their school visits contribute to the promotion of education for global understanding. For example, the students in the visited schools learn about the country of the visiting participants beforehand, and when the participants actually visit the schools, they exchange songs of both countries.

Young people who have participated in the program continue the exchange with people they have met in Japan and participants from other countries after they return home. Alumni activities are especially active in the countries of Asia. They receive Japanese pupils’ visits and support activities of the Japan Disaster Relief team, thus playing the role of ambassadors of friendship with Japan.