

Citizen Participatory Cooperation

Making International Cooperation Part of Japanese Culture

JICA promotes and supports international cooperation activities by Japanese citizens as bridges between developing countries and Japan. JICA refers to such cooperative activities as Citizen Participatory Cooperation and undertakes a variety of initiatives.

Through Citizen Participatory Cooperation activities, JICA aims to contribute to developing countries, to promote understanding of and participation in international cooperation by Japanese citizens, and further to return benefits to Japanese local communities. It is also expected that international cooperation will become a part of Japanese culture through promotion of Citizen Participatory Cooperation as two-way initiatives that invigorate both developing countries and Japan.

See pages 112–115 for more information about volunteer programs and pages 118–119 for Partnerships with NGOs and Other Organizations regarding the JICA Partnership Program and support programs for NGOs.

● Using Japan's Domestic Offices as International Hubs

JICA has 15 offices in Japan. These domestic offices undertake activities such as visiting programs focused on promoting understanding of, and providing opportunities for participation in international cooperation.

Additionally, JICA's international cooperation promotion officers at local government entities nationwide, who play the role as liaisons linking JICA with local communities, hold events or seminars and also are available for consultation regarding the series of international cooperation programs, especially citizen participatory cooperation.

At the JICA Global Plaza in Ichigaya, Tokyo, and the Nagoya Global Plaza in Nagoya City, Aichi Prefecture, people with abundant experiences in international cooperation and global issues serve as Global Concierges, and they lead visitors to exhibitions that encourage seeing, listening, touching, and thinking. Through these exhibitions, with intelligible explanation, visitors can virtually learn and experience various conditions in developing countries and become aware of global issues as well as international cooperation activities to tackle with their issues. Global Plazas feature on-site cafes that allow visitors to enjoy international cuisines and sell fair-trade commodities. In addition, plazas have spaces for holding seminars and meetings about citizen-led international cooperation activities as well as presentations on the outcomes of such activities. In February 2015, JICA Global Plaza broke the 1.2million mark in total visitors, while there were about 420,000 visitors in total to the Nagoya Global Plaza. [[→ see the Column](#)]

● Efforts to Promote Understanding about International Cooperation

Programs for Supporting Development Education

In various scenes, including school education, JICA supports development education programs at educational forums in partnership with NGOs, local governments, and schools in order



International Cooperation Lecture

to foster abilities to understand various developmental issues that the world faces and their relationships to Japan, to treat them as their own problems and proactively study them, and to participate in efforts to overcome them.

For children and students, the International Cooperation Lectures, which mainly deploys former Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers as lecturers, are delivered 2,000 times per year in schools. There is also an Essay Contest on International Cooperation for Junior and Senior High School Students, an essay-writing competition that receives about 70,000 total applicants per year, for essays on themes related to international cooperation.

For teachers, the Study Tour Program for Teachers allows teachers to observe the actual conditions in developing countries

Nagoya Global Plaza Celebrates Its 5th Anniversary; the Number of Visitors Exceeded 420,000

The Nagoya Global Plaza opened in 2009 and celebrated its fifth anniversary in June 2014. Since its opening, the Plaza has been used by many people as a place to deepen their knowledge and understanding of international cooperation, and a place for communication, exchange, and training for various organizations.

The cumulative total number of visitors exceeded 420,000 in February 2015. Meanwhile, the UNESCO World Conference on Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) was held in Nagoya in November 2014, and JICA made a booth presentation as a side event. In July, prior to the conference, the participants in the ESD Children's Conference in Aichi-Nagoya visited the Nagoya Global Plaza to improve their understanding of international cooperation.



and then put their experiences into practice in their classes once they have returned to Japan. JICA provides about 20 courses per year and about 170 teachers participate in the program every year. In fiscal 2014, JICA provided the Meeting on Sharing Practices, intended to follow up with teachers who were actively involved in development education after they returned from the Study Tour Program for Teachers. In March 2015, the meeting participants made presentations under the theme of practicing Inquiry Studies in International-Understanding Education [→ see the Column]. At each domestic office, JICA holds the Training Program for Development Education Leaders, designed to provide methods and case examples regarding development education in which more than 9,000 teachers in total participate every year. JICA also creates educational materials for international-understanding education and development education. Please visit JICA's Global Plaza website where these materials can be viewed: [→ <http://www.jica.go.jp/hiroba/menu/education/index.html>].

● For Development of Global Human Resources

Along with promoting prioritization of development education in school education, JICA is also engaged in forging collaboration with the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) as well as the prefectural boards of education. In addition to this, JICA is also working on correlating school curriculum guidelines with development education in order to gain an understanding from officials involved in educational administration. From December 2011 to March 2014, JICA Global Plaza and the National Institute for Educational Policy Research jointly carried out a project titled Comparative Study on International Education for the Global Age. For future revision of education curricula, MEXT is now considering “21st century competencies,” which are composed of basic literacy skills, collaborative thinking and problem solving abilities, and practical abilities. With regard to these skills and abilities, the results of the survey conducted in this project show that development education or international-understanding education will be effective for acquisition of collaborative thinking and problem solving abilities and practical abilities. JICA continues to contribute to the development of global human resources through initiatives to support development education.

In June 2012, a proposal titled Strategy for Developing Global Human Resources was advocated by the Council on Promotion of Human Resource for Globalization Development, chaired by the Chief Cabinet Secretary. As an activity in light of the strategy, JICA is providing the Field Study Program for College Students on International Cooperation in order for undergraduate students to acquire a global perspective and skills to identify and resolve problems. In 2014, JICA provided 40 college students with international cooperation field-survey exercises in Indonesia and Cambodia as well as prior and subsequent training programs in Japan.

● For Practice and Promotion of Development Education at Schools

In order for teachers to carry out development education, it is also important to gain understandings from those involved in educational administration, including prefectural boards of



A picture from the agricultural course, one of the courses for international understanding for undergraduate and graduate students conducted by JICA's Tsukuba International Center

education. On this account, JICA started providing educational supervisors with Overseas Study Tour Program for officials involved in educational administration in fiscal 2014. Along with developing partnerships with the education centers of local governments, JICA affiliates sometimes deliver lectures at teacher-training events conducted by local governments for the purpose of facilitating the understandings of JICA projects and developing countries. The Global Plaza further contributes to the enlightenment by lending its showpieces in Saitama and Gunma prefectures as well as to the Niigata Prefectural Education Center for exhibition. In an induction training course for newly hired teachers in Saitama Prefecture, all participants visit the exhibition.

Aiming to Practice Inquiry Education: 2015 Report Meeting on Lesson Practices Which Deals with Development Education and International-Understanding Education

In March 2015, the Report Meeting on lesson practices at schools was held at JICA Global Plaza as an opportunity for the teachers who are involved in development education and international-understanding education, focused on various challenges in the world, including those in developing countries, to present the results of their lesson practices and to learn from each other.

The theme for the report meeting this time was Practicing Inquiry Education in International-Understanding Education. As an example of the lesson practices at school, there was a presentation on a program for the International Cooperation Guide for High School Students—Project-Based Learning Version. The process and the results for fostering abilities to create new values were reported, through activities such as fieldwork in Thailand, where the learning covered not only understanding of different cultures and foreign languages but also realization of various challenges, including poverty and environmental issues on a global scale, development of the ability to identify issues by oneself, and experience of the discovery process for problem solving. Furthermore, there was a variety of reports, including the one on virtual experience of recovery support.

