

Citizen Participation

Making International Cooperation Part of Japanese Culture

JICA promotes and supports international cooperation activities by Japanese citizens. Through partnership with citizens, JICA aims to contribute to development issues with various approaches to promote understanding in international cooperation, and further to return the benefits of ties with developing countries to Japanese local communities.

Out of these activities, partnerships with NGOs, local governments, universities, and research institutions as well as support for development education are introduced below.

Partnerships with NGOs and Other Organizations

JICA works to strengthen partnerships with NGOs through (1) dialogue, (2) cooperation, and (3) activity support.

(1) Dialogue

In fiscal 2017, JICA deepened discussions with NGOs about a number of topics through the NGO-JICA Dialogue Meeting and other occasions. These topics included (1) how to improve the quality of projects and engage a wider range of people/organizations under the JICA Partnership Program (JPP), and (2) how to better contribute to local-area vitalization in Japan by utilizing the knowledge and experience gained through our cooperation with developing countries. The Dialogue Meeting confirmed the directions and specifics of future partnership activities.

(2) Cooperation

JICA implements JPP projects jointly with Japanese organizations, including NGOs that are ardent about implementing international cooperation projects. In fiscal 2017, 40 projects for 21 countries were adopted. In addition, the JICA Donation Fund which receives donations from citizens, corporations, and groups, financed 12 projects in nine countries, including Japan.

(3) Activity Support

JICA provides training programs that support the organizational management and enhance project execution capabilities of NGOs and other organizations engaged in international cooperation activities. It also operates the NGO-JICA Japan Desk in 20 countries to enhance cooperation between these



JICA offers sewing training on the island of Panay, the Philippines, for community self-reliance support in cooperation with an NGO.

organizations and JICA in the field.

Partnerships with Local Governments

Not limited to contributions to developing countries, JICA is also involved in activities which promote vitalization of regional areas in Japan. For example, JICA cooperates with Japanese local governments, which are positioned as particularly important partners of JICA, in their efforts on internationalization of the regions, overseas activities of local governments and industries, and other related ventures chiefly under the Local Government-Type JICA Partnership Program.

In this context, JICA and local governments have been promoting mutual cooperation by signing enhanced cooperation agreements. In fiscal 2017, JICA concluded such an agreement with Ama-cho, Shimane Prefecture, which is well known for its track record in local revitalization. The agreement confirmed the parties' commitment to work together to support development in developing countries and local revitalization in Japan by utilizing their expertise and experience.

Partnerships with Universities

As challenges faced by developing countries have become even more difficult and complicated, partnerships with universities and research institutions are increasingly important for proceeding with international cooperation initiatives because of their extensive and advanced knowledge.

Partnerships between universities and JICA are put into practice through various approaches, from the participation of faculty members in JICA's research projects to the comprehensive implementation of technical cooperation projects in developing countries under contract to JICA.

JICA provides training opportunities for people from developing countries who will likely play a leadership role in their countries or otherwise contribute to solving some of the challenges in their countries. To this end, JICA invites such people to study in master's or doctoral courses at Japanese universities as JICA participants (long-term). JICA has recently been working on the strategic expansion of the acceptance of participants (long-term) to ensure that those who have studied in Japan work hard as leaders back home and maintain and strengthen relationships between Japan and their countries over the medium- and long-term.

● Toward Stronger Partnerships

JICA has a comprehensive cooperation agreement or memorandum of understanding (MOU) with universities in Japan to systematically promote and strengthen broad-based partnerships. In fiscal 2017, JICA concluded a comprehensive cooperation agreement with one university, bringing the total number of such universities to 36.



Participants (long-term) from various countries surround JICA President Shinichi Kitaoka. JICA offers opportunities to learn about Japan's development experience in partnership with the National Graduate Institute for Policy Studies (GRIPS).

● New Initiative for the Acceptance of Participants (Long-Term)

To accept participants (long-term) in a more unified and efficient manner, JICA signed a separate MOU with 29 Japanese universities that accepted them during fiscal 2017. Of these universities, 18 already began accepting participants (long-term) under the MOU.

Also in fiscal 2017, JICA launched the "Understanding the Japanese Development Experience," a short program to promote better understanding on Japanese experience of modernization and economic development. A total of 197 participants took part in this program in fiscal 2017.

To Promote Understanding of International Cooperation among Schoolchildren and General Citizens

—Programs for Supporting Development Education—

● JICA Global Plaza

At the JICA Global Plaza, located in Ichigaya, Tokyo, the Nagoya Global Plaza in Nagoya City, Aichi Prefecture, and the Hokkaido Global Plaza in Sapporo City, Hokkaido Prefecture, people with abundant experiences in international cooperation

serve as Global Concierges, and they lead visitors to exhibitions that encourage seeing, listening, touching, and thinking. Public relations and communication activities on international cooperation are undertaken also at JICA's domestic offices.

In fiscal 2017, these three Global Plazas held exhibitions on the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Students as well as many officials at private businesses and local governments visited these exhibitions, deepening their understanding of the SDGs.

● For Promotion of Development Education at Schools

JICA's activities to promote development education include on-demand-delivery of lectures for students and training for teachers. The objectives of these activities are 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.

Goal 4 of the SDGs (Quality Education) calls for, among other things, education for sustainable development. The New National Curriculum Standards, effective from fiscal 2020, stresses the importance of fostering creators of a sustainable society.

In this context, JICA has an increasingly larger role to play in classroom settings as it boasts expertise, information, and human resources in international cooperation. In many parts of Japan, JICA has already begun to work not only with people involved in development education and education for international understanding but also with teachers and school administrators, NGOs, and administrative agencies involved in environmental education and multicultural coexistence. JICA also collaborates with the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology of Japan in such areas as the Super Global High School (SGH) Program.

Collection of 10-Minute Movies for Classes

Video Teaching Materials that Encourage Viewers to Think of Global Issues as Their Own Problems



In a class using a JICA video material, students watch intently how a class is given at a school in Niger.

The New National Curriculum Standards call for fostering creators of a sustainable society and coping with globalization, among other things. Schoolteachers are well aware of the need to address these challenges; however, they do not have enough time to prepare classes for these purposes because they have too many other things to do.

Such circumstances have prompted JICA to develop 10-minute video teaching materials that can be used in classes as they are. The idea is to encourage students to think of global issues as their own problems while minimizing burdens on teachers.

The videos deal with four themes: international cooperation, education, refugees, and Islam. These active-learning materials are designed for students to express their own

views after seeing them. These materials are available on the website of JICA, together with reference materials and some cases in which they are actually used in class.

At the Training Program for Development Education Leaders held at the JICA Global Plaza, 23 teachers discussed how to use these teaching materials. Back in their classrooms, these teachers gave classes using these videos under the guidance of the Japan Association for International Education.

The teachers appreciated the videos. Some said that the videos encouraged students to have meaningful discussions about the issues that defy definitive answers. Others reported that students became aware that global issues are relevant to them. The videos are increasingly in use at school now.