

## Support for Japanese Emigrants and Their Descendants and Enhancement of Collaboration and Relations with *Nikkei* Communities

More than 2.13 million descendants of Japanese emigrants (*Nikkei*) live in Latin America and the Caribbean, making important contributions in many fields. Their presence plays a key role as an intermediary between Japan and the countries where they reside.

JICA, in line with postwar Japanese emigration policy, had been providing assistance to settle in new lands and to stabilize livelihoods for Japanese emigrants who have settled in Latin America and the Caribbean. Today, as *Nikkei* communities have matured and generational transition has taken place, JICA is engaged in support to address new challenges arising from such changes, as well as strengthening collaboration with *Nikkei* communities.

### Main Programs and Activities

#### 1. Toward a New Partnership

The year 2018 marked the 150th anniversary of the first group emigration of Japanese people to Hawaii in the first year of the Meiji Era (1868). JICA President Shinichi Kitaoka gave a commemorative address at the 59th Convention of *Nikkei* & Japanese Abroad in Hawaii (▶ see page 8).

In June 2018, JICA and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) co-organized a forum of the next *Nikkei* leaders in Latin America and the Caribbean, bringing together some 180 people, including next-generation leaders of *Nikkei* communities invited by MOFA, *Nikkei* participants in JICA training programs, *Nikkei* people studying in Japan, *Nikkei* residents in Japan, and Japanese youths interested in *Nikkei* communities in Japan. They exchanged views and opinions actively on various themes.

In January 2019, JICA invited 12 *Nikkei* business leaders from five South American countries to build relationships with them and introduce possible business opportunities in these countries to Japanese private companies and local governments. They visited Fukuoka and Nagasaki, among other prefectures.

#### 2. Dissemination of Knowledge on Overseas Migration

The Japanese Overseas Migration Museum aims to encourage the public to learn about the history of Japanese migration and become acquainted with emigrants and the *Nikkei*. The museum consists of permanent exhibits featuring the immigration records of Japanese emigrants and historical materials donated by them, as well as special exhibitions covering a variety of subjects. Besides the museum library, which contains emigration-related books and films, the museum also provides information on its website and conducts studies and research activities. In fiscal 2018, the museum had 44,296 visitors, and the total number of visitors since its opening has exceeded 560,000.

In fiscal 2018, the museum held three special exhibitions: (1) Brazil-Japan: 110 years of human bonds—Brazilians in Japan—the history and



The forum of next *Nikkei* leaders in Latin America and the Caribbean

everyday lives of *Nikkei* people who have lived in Japan for three decades; (2) Special exhibition commemorating the 150 years of Japanese emigration to Hawaii: The first emigrants and those who followed, as well as the roles played by the Japanese newspaper in Hawaii; and (3) Special exhibition commemorating the 120 years of Japanese emigration to Peru: Yokichi Nouchi—the man who developed the Machu Picchu village—and the history of Japanese emigrants to Peru.

#### 3. Support for Emigrants in Their Countries of Residence

JICA provided subsidies for: the management of *Nikkei* clinics at settlements in Bolivia and the Amazonia Hospital in Brazil while also supporting traveling clinics and programs involving elderly welfare and medical services for settlements in Brazil, Bolivia, and the Dominican Republic; and for programs aimed at the training of local *Nikkei* Japanese-language teachers in Brazil, Argentina, the Dominican Republic, Peru, and Colombia.

#### 4. Educational Initiatives for the Next Generations

JICA organizes programs for junior high school, high school, and college students who are children of emigrants. The programs provide a firsthand opportunity to gain a deeper understanding of Japanese culture and society and enhance their identity as *Nikkei*. In fiscal 2018, a total of 100 students participated.

JICA also offers a scholarship covering living expenses and tuition to support *Nikkei* students attending graduate schools in Japan. In fiscal 2018, six new students participated in this program.

#### 5. Support for *Nikkei* Communities and Local Communities

JICA dispatches volunteers to *Nikkei* communities. They are called *Nikkei* Communities

Volunteers, and they mainly assist with Japanese-language education and welfare services while living with Japanese emigrants and *Nikkei*. In fiscal 2018, 83 people were newly dispatched.

Under the Special Participation Program for School Teachers for *Nikkei* communities, JICA dispatched five school teachers to local government-recognized schools in Brazil in fiscal 2018. Upon returning to Japan, these volunteer teachers are expected to take full advantage of their experiences to assist with the education of *Nikkei* children in Japan.

At the proposal of universities, local governments, public interest corporations, and private enterprises in Japan, JICA also invites training participants from *Nikkei* communities aiming at supporting nation building in their respective countries and promoting cross-border, people-to-people exchanges. In fiscal 2018, the scope of eligible participants, heretofore limited to *Nikkei*, was expanded to include people who are expected to play a leading role in linking Japan with *Nikkei* communities in Latin America and the Caribbean. During this fiscal year, JICA accepted 137 participants for such training.

#### 6. Strengthening Partnerships with *Nikkei* Communities and Japan's Private Sector

JICA dispatches Partnership Promotion Survey Teams to Latin America and the Caribbean with an aim to contribute to economic and social development in the region through strengthening partnerships between Japanese private companies and private companies owned or managed by *Nikkei* in those countries. In fiscal 2018, JICA sent such a team to Peru and Paraguay. Some of the Japanese companies that joined the team now utilize JICA's private-sector partnership programs. Others are even expanding their business to Latin America and the Caribbean or are engaged in international cooperation with the region.