From the Chief Representative

This year marks the 35th anniversary of Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers (JOCVs) programs in Ghana and I would like to take this opportunity to express my sincere gratitude to all Ghanaians and the Government of Ghana for the warm and continuous support they have extended to our volunteers. So far, more than 1,100 volunteers have been dispatched to Ghana and each of them stayed for two years.

JOCVs are motivated & dedicated young people who wish to work with Ghanaians at the grass root level towards economic and social development of this country. They have been engaged in various sectors such as education, health, governmental and social service, and they have worked hand-in-hand with the people and transferred their knowledge and
Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA)’s volunteer program is to support Japanese citizens of various backgrounds and ages who wish to cooperate in the economic and social development of developing countries. Through these activities, JICA volunteers can contribute not only to the development of partner countries but also gain a deeper understanding of the countries and Japan.

As of the 31st of May 2012, 2,764 JICA volunteers were assigned to 82 countries worldwide. In Africa, the total number of volunteers stood at 890 in 23 countries.

Main Types of Volunteers

Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers (JOCVs)

JOCVs are volunteers between the ages of 20 and 39, with the areas of cooperation spanning eight sectors and a diverse range of approximately 120 sub-sectors, including agriculture, forestry and fisheries, fabrication, repair operations, civil engineering, sanitation, education and culture, sports as well as planning and administration.

In principle, JOCVs are assigned to developing countries for a period of two years*. As summarized by the phrase "together with the local community," JOCVs live and work together with the communities in the country to which they have been assigned, speak the language of the community and carry out activities with an emphasis on raising self-reliance while fostering mutual understanding.

* In addition to the regular volunteer dispatch period of two years (long-term volunteers), short-term volunteers can be recruited and dispatched for periods of less than one year in response to local requests.

Senior Volunteers (SVs)

SVs are volunteers between the ages of 40 and 69 and are committed to participating in cooperative activities in developing countries utilizing their experience of many years, including specialized knowledge and technologies.

Areas of cooperation span nine different sectors, including agriculture, forestry and fisheries, energy, health and medical care, and human resources (education, culture, sports, etc.).

The average age of SV is 58. In recent years, there has been an increase in applications from retirees seeking to spend their "second life" in a meaningful way. SVs, like JOCVs, are assigned to developing countries for a period of two years.

As of the 1st of December 2012, the total number of JOCVs stands at 58 (excluded 3 SVs). The tables below show the number of volunteers by category and by region:

**WHAT IS JICA VOLUNTEER?**

As of December, 2012

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>JOCV in Each Region</th>
<th>Total Number of JOCVs 58</th>
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<td>Total Number 58 JOCVs</td>
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**JOCC in Each Sector**

- Education 40%
- Health 29%
- Vocational Training 12%
- Social Welfare 7%
- Others 7%

Thank you.

Jiro INAMURA
Chef Representative, JICA Ghana Office
In Ghana, First batch of 9 Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers (JOCVs) were dispatched on 17th August 1977 based on the Exchange of Notes between the government of Ghana and the government of Japan. Senior Volunteers (SVs) program started in 2005, since then, more than 1100 JICA volunteers have been assigned to work in different communities all over the country in various work fields. Nowadays, more than 60 JICA volunteers including SVs are working and enjoying Ghana.

History of JICA Volunteers in Ghana

Ms. Momoko Yamamoto, Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteer (JOCV) programs (JOCV), arrived in Ghana in September 2011. Ms. Yamamoto has worked at Ghana Health Service (GHS) in Kadjebi District Health Directorate. She mainly works with Reproductive and Child Health Unit (RCH). RCH provides Children Welfare Clinic (CWC) such as infant medical check including mobile clinic, school health, home visit to the children whose mother dead or whose health situation have problems. She works with GHS staff to help their work such as scaling weight of babies, recording mother’s attendance at mobile clinic. She has advocated through pictures and picture story show, called “Kamishibai” in Japanese.

She attended National Immunization Days campaign to provide Polio vaccine to the children under five years old. “I visited villages which are really on the mountainside. I could see the view which I could not see in Kadjebi town. We visited each home and each home locates each mountain! We visited and provided vaccines if the child under five years old was there.”

“Collegues of Ms. Yamamoto said; “Mokoko (Ms.Yamamoto) works very good. She talks to mother friendly so that everyone likes her. Because she is not Ghanaian so that is not allowed to do immunization by her even she is a nurse in Japan, she works very hard. Her contract is left with only one year but I hope she could stay longer or she will come back in the future.”

“Ms. Yamamoto scale weight of baby

When I came to Ghana, I was thinking to do volunteer work by myself.” said Ms. Yamamoto. “However, I felt that I could not do anything alone in this different culture and language. Ghanaian are kind and not hastily. When I told them that I wanted to work regarding with school health, they took me to the responsible person in Ghana Education Service and think together the way to work. I worked as a nurse at general hospital in Japan and through my work; I think prevention is important so that I am interested in community healthcare. I was thinking about many things before I came to Ghana but I think I have helped and learned from them. Therefore, I would like to work requital of a favor to the colleagues and this town that helped me a lot in my rest staying in Ghana. Then, I would be happy if they remember the Japanese like me have stayed in Ghana even after leaving.”

Initially, JOCV had homestay period. She said; “They are Ghanaian whom I met first so whenever I have something happen, I always visit here and share the story with “mama”. When I feel alone, I come to this home. Even just sitting here, I feel better, especially with children.”

“At first, home-staying family taught me Ghanaian cooking. Mama is a Ring mother so she is able to take me to events such as festival in this town and I could sit on special seats. These days, they show me “Ghanaian life”, like suddenly bring up drum, singing, and dancing.”

PROJECT STORY
JICA VOLUNTEER (JOCV) ACTIVITY
Ms. Yamamoto has health talk using “Kamishibai” about mosquito-net to mothers who came to mobile clinic with staff on Better Ghana Service

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Column: Science and Mathematics Sub Committee

JICA volunteer’s Science and Mathematics sub-committee introduced the TLM’s (Teaching Learning Materials) used for Science and Maths lesson in various places every year. This is called a SMART (Science and Mathematics Activity Resource for Teaching) project.

The aims of this programme are as follows;

1. To show and demonstrate effective and local TLMs for science, mathematics and creative arts to participants.
2. To let the participants understand that they are also able to improvise the same materials by themselves.
3. To explain how we can get and make the materials so that the participants will be able to make and prepare the same materials
Fifteen years ago, when Mr. Tatsuya Nagumo first entered the Form three (3) class of the Atebubu Secondary School in the Brong Ahafo region of Ghana, he did not know that a relationship that will last several decades would be initiated on that fateful day. In 2012, many years after he left Atebubu as a Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteer (JOCV) teacher, he makes a dramatic return only find that his students are now grown and they have started families of their own and some have children already. Though, he taught them science and some of the students studied core sciences, surprisingly, his best male science student had turned into a banker and would soon become a chartered banker. However, he was proud to mention that the knowledge of science helped him master accounting and numbers.

In 1998, Mr. Nagumo was dispatched as a Japanese volunteer to teach Integrated Science at the oldest high school in Atebubu; Atebubu Secondary School, popularly called ATSEC. According to him, ‘I was focused on helping the students learn science in an interesting way. I knew it was going to be a little challenging especially because of the language barrier, as many of the students could not express themselves well in English language. I was determined to ensure that they learn and enjoy Integrated Science.’

Emmanuel Musah Abbey, the best male science student under Mr. Nagumo, who now works at the oldest bank in Atebubu (Yapra Rural Bank) as a banker recounted his experience; ‘I remember how effective our teacher was. He was the first Japanese volunteer I ever met, though; I learnt that JOCV had been dispatched to the school in the past. Mr. Nagumo was a disciplinarian and very efficient. He did not condone lateness at all. If you went late to his class, he will not allow you into the class. We learnt to arrive early for his class, because he was very strict. We love his class and method of teaching too, so, we did not want to miss the class. He has imbied in me, the culture of punctuality and up till now, I manage to arrive early to all my appointments.’

Mr. Nagumo visited the old school and noticed many improvements in the structure of the school. He said; ‘There used to be terrible accommodation for boarding students, because many students had to be crammed into the same room. I have noticed the new and modern storey-building hostels that have been constructed to house students and their classrooms are now very neat, lighted, well-ventilated and also in storey-building format. Now, there are telephone booths, school gates, electricity and water supply. I visited Atebubu around 2007 as an JICA expert, but I did not notice such massive difference until 2008. The commendable improvement started around 2008, because the situation of the school and the town in general, from 1998 to 2008 was not different.’

Mrs. Georgina Asiedu, Mr. Nagumo’s best female science student who is now married with children and works as an HIV Data Managress at the Regional Hospital in Atebubu, was very happy to see her teacher after 15 years. She exclaimed; ‘I like him a lot because he was the best teacher I had then. The way he explained science to us, made me understand it better and I became the best female student in science. Now, I have completed my Polytechnic education and working in a hospital. My work is science-related and I am happy I had a good science foundation.’

Talking about fond memories, Mrs. Asiedu recounted that; ‘He is always at the laboratory performing one experiment or another. If you were looking for him, just go straight to the laboratory, you would find him there. He was very dedicated. He was the first Japanese volunteer I met, but now, I have met more Japanese volunteers especially those who have been dispatched to the hospital where I work. They are very friendly and very active in general. As the JOCV in Ghana is celebrating its 35 years anniversary, I wish them well and thank them for all the good contributions they have made in Ghana. Without Mr. Nagumo, I don’t know if I would have loved science and I don’t know if I would have studied to became whom I am today.’

Mr. Nagumo concluded that; ‘I am happy that my students have been able to do something good with their lives and they are helping their community develop. I am impressed. I have very interesting memories of this town and my students. I remember the sporting events we had, the send-off party, the visit to the Kumasi zoo, the old school truck and the way I enjoyed eating yam and banku too. I love the Atebubu town; I will visit here again with my family one day.’
INTERVIEW

GHANA COMMENDS Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers (JOCVs)

Mr. Alex Kwaning, Chief Director of the Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning, the Ministry with oversight for JOCV

In an exclusive interview conducted for Mr. Alex Kwaning, Chief Director of the Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning, the Ministry with oversight for Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers (JOCVs), he commended Japanese volunteers and reiterated the commitment of the Ghana Government to maintain and improve ties with the Japanese Government especially in the area of volunteerism.

Mr. Kwaning deeply understands how well-organized the JOCV scheme is, which is a novelty. He said it is very laudable that Japanese volunteers, technocrats, experts, etc, travel to Ghana and contribute their quota to the development of the country.

He mentioned the tremendous impact by JOCV in Ghana. Over the years, many students, especially those from remote villages and towns have had access to modern learning skills in Science, Mathematics and other subjects delivered by Japanese teachers. Many communities have been saved from epidemics while others have been taught ways to develop, maintain and improve a healthy living. The impact JOCV has had in Ghana has a rippling effect that will be felt now and in future. He mentioned that students who have been exposed to modern science may end up becoming reputable scientists and the pillar of technology for Ghana in no distant future.

He told how much grateful Ghanaians are to have Japanese volunteers work towards the development of the country. According to him, this is evident in the cooperation Ghanaians give the volunteers anywhere they stay in Ghana for their period of service. Ghanaians co-habit with them peacefully. Ghana is a friendly country and her people are very hospitable. ‘It is not surprising to see Japanese volunteers adopting Ghanaian names like Kofi, Ama, etc. It is a testimony of the close affinity and cordiality that exist among volunteers, their counterparts and the communities they are dispatched.’

Mr. Kwaning concluded that; ‘I will encourage JOCV to keep the spirit alive and keep doing the good work it has been doing for the past 35 years in Ghana. I want to assure JOCVs that the Ghanaian people appreciate their gesture and are very grateful for their selflessness and commitment to the development of the country. I want to encourage the Japanese Government to consider expanding the JOCV scheme. The Ghana Government is also very prepared to cooperate with initiatives that will benefit both countries mutually. JOCV, ayekoo and happy anniversary!’

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Brochure of JICA Ghana

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