The editorial team would like to thank all for their contributions to the Anigye Newsletter. The Newsletter continues to maintain its objective of bringing happiness to readers through informing and entertaining. Do share your happiness with a friend by giving him or her a copy of the Anigye Newsletter!

Message from Resident Representative of JICA Ghana Office

Four months have passed since I took office as the Resident Representative of JICA Ghana. I have spent the past months visiting some government Ministries, Departments, Agencies and colleague international aid organizations to acquaint myself with them and share development experiences. It is my wish and hope to have a cordial working relationship with them during my term of office.

I have also had the opportunity to visit the northern and other parts of Ghana. I was impressed by the geographical and cultural diversity and friendliness of the Ghanaian people.

Within the past couple of years, the country has been politically and socially stable. With several feature products, such as Kente cloth, gold, and cocoa, Ghana has been developing, and the number of tourists arriving in Ghana is increasing every year as Ghana aims at becoming a middle-income country in the year 2015.

This year, Ghana is hosting a number of world wide events; the United Nations Conference of Trade and Development (UNCTAD) meeting last month (April), and the Accra-High Level Forum meeting in September. This shows that Ghana has actively taken the initiative not only in West Africa but also in the whole Africa.

In Japan, we will host the "Tokyo International Conference For African Development IV" (TICAD IV) in Yokohama this May, and also host the G8 Hokkaido-Toyako Summit in July. The main issue of these conferences is African development.

We, JICA, intend to fully support these conferences so as to have the voices of African countries heard by the world, and have concrete outputs toward a "Vibrant Africa".

In October this year, JICA and JBIC (Japan Bank for International Cooperation) will merge into new JICA; an organization that would be able to extend technical cooperation, grant and loan assistance, all under one roof. The merger will create one of the world's largest bilateral development agencies, with an annual budget of approximately US$8.5 billion.

We intend to pursue synergy effects using these three schemes to help implement more effective and efficient assistance to developing countries.

We will do our utmost for New JICA to provide better assistance to the Ghanaian people and to become a good partner for Ghana.
Featured TOPICS—TICAD is coming soon!

The Fourth Conference on TICAD, The Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD) is scheduled to come off on 28th May 2008. The conference will be attended by African heads of state and foreign ministers. Before we talk about the main issues to be discussed on TICAD IV, let's review what TICAD is and then look at some of main points to be discussed.

What is TICAD?

In 1993, Japan in collaboration with the UN, UNDP and the World Bank, initiated a forum for African development, hence TICAD was born. The Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD) echoed the declining international commitment to the support of African development after the cold war. After the TICAD I, successive TICAD II and III focused on trade and investment, consolidation of peace as well as environmental conservation and energy.

TICAD IV “Towards a Vibrant Africa”

Africa has overcome various difficulties and takes steady steps toward its growth and development. A number of African countries have been recording high rates of economic growth. Africa as a whole has maintained more than 5% of economic growth since 2004. TICAD IV will focus on such positive trends in Africa and discuss various measures to shore up “A Vibrant Africa”, by mobilizing knowledge and resources of the international community. Three priorities for this conference are as follows;

1. Boosting Economic Growth in Africa
   - Strengthening support in order to make the current strong economic growth in Africa self-sustained, more pro-poor and inclusive (in areas including trade and investment, infrastructure development, and agriculture)

2. Ensuring “Human Security”
   - Realizing a society in which people can live in dignity and enjoy “freedom from fear” and “freedom from want” by protecting and empowering individuals and communities.
   - Enhancing assistance for Africa to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).
   - Supporting the consolidation of peace and democratization.

3. Address Environmental Issues/Climate Change
   - Strengthening capacity of African countries to effectively respond to global environmental issues, such as Africa is one of the most vulnerable continents to climate change.

It is expected to have concrete outcomes by the end of conference. This is going to be a significant international conference before G8 summit to pave a way for Japanese assistance for African development. Let’s keep an eye on this conference!

Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers (JOCV) Activities-

TOPIC

What is this? Save the Earth through the recycle of ‘pure water’ plastic bags

Goods made from sachet

One thing that most of JOCV members feel uncomfortable about in Ghana, is not being called “Oboni” (which means ‘white person’ in the local language Twi) by small children on the streets, but to eyewitness scattered trash in public spaces, market centres, road sides, school yards, and even in the class room, (not exaggerated). Some JOCV members are aware of this phenomenon and have started some earth friendly actions! The picture on the left is one of them, and other goods made from used ‘pure water’ bags, and various similar products are available now in JICA Plaza! If you are interested in seeing the recycled items, please drop in at JICA Ghana Plaza and see things for yourself.

(PS: ‘pure water’ is purified drinking water in a sachet plastic bag.)

In response to this global issue, one of JOCV members, Ms. FUKUOKA Masayo (Community Development worker), who is assigned to a local NGO, Conservation Foundation, located in Agona Nkwanta in the Western Region is now planning to organize a Pure water bag recycling contest. With the support of Blow Plastic Inc. a recycling company based in Accra.

At the contest, contestants need to collect used pure water bags in their community which could be bought by Blow Plastic Inc. Through this process, communities would also be cleaned up by the contestants. Contestants should be school students, who can nurture their knowledge and ideas on environmental issues. In the next issue of the Anigye Newsletter, we will report on the development of this wonderful event!
Voice from Trainees

Sakura ga kirei de daisuki desu! (The Cherry Blossom was so beautiful and I loved it)

I was privileged to travel to Japan this spring (mid-March to early April 2008) on a short course on School Health in connection with the West African Centre for International Parasite Control project. I visited a few places to attend lectures and hold discussions on school health which included a visit to the Minamiyama Primary School in Siroi City, Chiba Prefecture. The school had won an award as a Health Promoting School over 5 years ago but still maintained good personal hygiene and environmental sanitation Measures taken include proper hand washing which the children did religiously. Education on comprehensive health including sex, mental and practical oral hygiene started right from Primary One by qualified health officers. It was the first time for the school to receive a visitor from Ghana and the reception was warm and exciting, ending in an equally warm and nutritious school lunch.

I then made an equally important visit to the Japan Toilet Association where I gained insight into simple but unique ways of maintaining toilets to improve sanitation which contributes to effective control of some common parasitic diseases such as intestinal worms.

During the weekend, we took a boat ride from Ryogoku (the district base of Sumo in Tokyo) to Odaiba, the “fun and tourist” district also in Tokyo to enjoy more Cherry blossom viewing before returning to Accra in the middle of the week. Oh! What a memorable visit! Isogashii no naka de mo tanoshikata desu. JICA makoto ni arigatou gozaimashita! (I enjoyed a lot though it was a tight schedule. Thank you very much, JICA, for all this opportunity!)

Dr. Irene Ayi (Research Fellow, Parasitology Department, NMIMR, Legon)

Japanese Culture “Let’s Talk about Fashion”

Beautiful batiks and dresses always catches a ladies’ eye and heart. This is not only the case in Ghana but also in Japan (or is it worldwide?). As Ghana has traditional types of dresses and batiks, Japan also has traditional dresses made of special cloth called Kimono. The cloth is made of silk, and Japanese people wear it on special occasions. However, for more casual occasions especially in summer, there’s a similar dress made of cotton batik called Yukata. Whereas Kimono requires the wearing of many undergarments, yukata doesn’t, so Japanese people enjoy wearing yukata in summer. These days, Japanese ladies really like to wear yukata especially during July and August; the time in which traditional summer festivals are taking place (similar to the traditional festivals in Ghana which take place all year round). It is very common for Japanese ladies to go on dates wearing Yukata with their boyfriends as part of the “dating-costume”. Actually, some Ghanaian materials are very suitable for sewing Yukata, and one of our alumni JOCV sewed it with Ghanaian materials a couple years ago. It could be great if we could have a “fashion show” showcasing traditional dresses one day!! Why don’t we show off our traditional dresses to everyone?

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HAVE your SAY...

The editorial team wishes to thank you for your reports, views and comments which make up this newsletter. Please keep them coming including your feedback on all the topics in this issue. Thank you and see you on the next edition of Anigye news letter!
News from Featured Sectors

Health

Health sector welcomes its New Section Chief and other staff
The end of March witnessed the arrival of Ms. Yoko Matsuwaza as the Assistant Resident Representative in charge of the Health sector. She replaced Mr. Yuji Nakagawa who moves to the Education sector. Before her arrival, Ms. Matsuwaza worked in the Africa Division of JICA Headquarters (Japan) where she had the opportunity to travel extensively in Africa. The Health sector also received a new Planning Formulation Advisor (PFA), Ms. Kayo Yokomori, and an expert for “Project for HIV and AIDS Prevention through Education (HAPE project)”, Ms. Etsuko Yamaguchi who replaces Ms. Yukiko Sakurai.

Guinea Worm Eradication Project to end in November 2008
The 4-year Guinea Worm Eradication project with the Ghana Health service which has provided assistance in the area of strengthening surveillance and the provision of safe water is scheduled to end in November 2008. The total amount budgeted for the cooperation period was approx. $1.780 million. And for the past 4-years, 6 vehicles, 42 motorcycles and 701 bicycles, as well as 800,655 pipe-filters have been provided for the project.
Another 3-year project on Guinea Worm Eradication with the Ghana Health Service is expected to commence in December 2008. This project will focus on the provision of safe drinking water. A Japanese Water Engineer has been dispatched as part of the Technical Assistance to the Guinea Worm Eradication Program.

Expanded Program on Immunization (EPI)
The current assistance to the EPI program in Ghana is in its fourth year of the five-year plan as scheduled by the Ghana Health Service. The assistance package for the first three years included Tetanus Toxoid (TT) vaccine doses for Supplementary Immunization Activities (SIA) at 27 high risk districts. The fourth year will focus on maintenance especially of women in Reproductive Ages (WIFA) of between 15-49 years as they attend ante natal clinics (ANC) in the 27 high risk districts.
Other equipments supplied include cold chain equipments with the supply of cold rooms to regions and refrigerators to districts, syringes, safety boxes and thermometers.

WACIPAC Project to host International workshop
An international workshop for policy makers will be held in July 2008. Participants for the workshop will be drawn from all 10-member countries, including ministers from Ministry of Health and Ministry of Education, Science and Sports. The workshop will focus on the achievements of Parasite control activities in member countries and the way forward. Coincidentally the WACIPAC project ends in December, 2008.
*In addition to projects explained above, JICA has operated more activities on Health sector. If you want to know more, please check our website addressed on the last page!

Governance

“Capacity Development of Government Administration Project”
The Office of the Head of Civil Service (OHCS) and JICA since February 2007 has been implementing a 3-year project named Capacity Development of Government Administration (CDGAP). The overall goal of this project is to strengthen the training and management functions of OHCS to build a more efficient and effective civil service. This goal will be achieved through the primary objective of effective managing of service-wide training on governance-related issues such as Ethics, Leadership and Quality/ Productivity Improvement targeting middle-level civil servants.
This project has all the characteristics of a novelty and underscores Japan's philosophy of supporting "self-help initiative" that fosters ownership and promotes sustainability. The pooling together of resources of OHCS and JICA has led to the refurbishment of the Civil Service Training Centre in terms of physical infrastructure and supply of office equipment such as desks, chair, photocopy machine, computer and a printer.

Refurbished Training Centre after JICA/OHCS Cooperation
The training centre which has been equipped with a stand-by generator is now able to offer increased number of training courses and is attractive to senior civil servants and private sector. The project is currently on course with development and pre-testing of training modules in ethics and leadership completed as well as training of cadre of trainers. In the near future, OHCS is hoping to share its experience in Civil Service Capacity Development within the ECOWAS sub-region-Sierra Leone and Liberia, in the spirit of sub-regional collaboration and south-south cooperation.