This month’s Edu newsletter comes to you in the midst of all the high level activities taking place in Ghana, be it the Climate Change Talks, the Civil Society Parallel Forum, or of course the Accra High Level Forum. As usual the Edu newsletter brings you all you need to know about the JICA Ghana Education programme with each project’s progress report, interesting facts, upcoming events and of course the hot topic of the month. Hope this newsletter finds you well and rested after the summer holiday season, ☻ Mama.

**Hot topic: JICA becomes ‘New JICA’ as of 1st October 2008, what’s in store?**

Apart from the new logo (to be unveiled soon), what’s ‘New JICA’ all about? Well, across Africa, local micro-finance projects and small and medium-sized businesses are being launched with the help of 11.5 billion yen in soft loans provided by Japan Bank for International Cooperation (JBIC). In Central America Japanese volunteers and experts from Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) are helping to combat the deadly Chagas disease, while in China and Myanmar other specialists from the Japan Disaster Relief (JDR) system recently helped some of the victims of an earthquake and cyclone which struck those regions.

All of these projects are part of Japan’s Official Development Assistance (ODA), which until now were administered by separate government organizations, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, JICA and JBIC.

From 1st October 2008, and after several years of major restructuring, all that will change. That part of JBIC that dispenses soft loans and the grant aid dispersed by the Foreign Ministry of Japan will be merged with the Cooperation Agency into one organization; ‘New JICA’. This agency, with some 10 billion dollars of available financial resources, will reputedly be the world’s largest bilateral development organization working in around 150 countries, its core professional staff reinforced at any one time by several thousands of experts and consultants, and both young and senior volunteers working on hundreds of projects.

Uniquely, and for the first time, one Japanese agency will be able to provide technical assistance, yen loans and grant aid ‘all under one roof’. JICA President Sadako Ogata, who will head the expanded organization, said, "This decision marks a major historical turning point, not only for JICA, but also for Japan’s ODA."

What will this mean for Ghana? Watch this space for more information in subsequent editions of the Edu Newsletter.

TVETS project progress report from Mr. Kimura and the project team

Progress of activities for August: (1) Selected personnel have been nominated for counterpart training in Japan; (2) Accra Technical Training Center has become the third participating institute for CBT Piloting (for Plant Engineering). The other pilot centres are Accra Polytechnic (for Mechanical Engineering) and NVTI (for Electronics). (3) The appointment of COTVET management staff including the Executive Director, Administrative Services Manager, Accountant and Auditor are still pending Presidential approval. (4) Printed 500 copies of project brochures to introduce the project (snapshot shown) (5) Conducted a training workshop on Occupational Standard Generation, and (6) we are still in the process of compiling the Baseline Survey results, so far the Industry response to questionnaires have not been forthcoming. → Planned activities for September/October 2008 include: (1) Organizing workshops for Accra Polytechnic and NVTI in September, (2) Drafting Guides to Certification, (3) Printing the Occupational Standard Generation workshop report, and (4) Taking inventory of supplied equipment at Accra Polytechnic and NVTI in late September.

Some more interesting fact(s)

- In keeping with the recent focus on Aid (vis-a-vis Accra High Level Forum), here is an interesting fact: the number of people living in Africa on less than a dollar a day is expected to increase from nearly 291 million in 1998 to nearly 330 million in 2008, even allowing for faster economic growth. If lower economic growth is assumed the number could be as high as 406 million. ("Aid and Reform in Africa", The World Bank 2001.)
  [Source: BBC, Aid to Africa: Facts behind the fiction http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/programmes/if/4118808.stm ]

INSET project progress report from Mr. NAGUMO and team

August progress to present: after several revisions of the 2nd Edition of the Sourcebook Module 3 (SBI/CBI Manual), the third edition will be published soon. Looking ahead, planned tasks include: (1) a coordinating meeting with District INSET Coordinators scheduled for 19th and 20th Sept 08 at GESDI. (2) The 4th and final Joint Coordinating Committee (JCC) meeting would take place on 14th Oct. at M-Plaza Hotel, to share progress of the project, the nationwide expansion of INSET from June 2009, and to bring on board new members. (3) Extra training for National Trainers is also scheduled as follows in an effort to continually build the capacity of INSET providers:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Training</th>
<th>Venue</th>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Target</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>JICA Training and Dialogue Programs “Seminar for Educational Evaluation and Monitoring”</td>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>22/10/08-15/11/08</td>
<td>Teacher Education Division Akrokeri Teacher Training College (TTC)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASEI &amp; PDSI Approach in Secondary Mathematics and Science Education in Africa</td>
<td>CEMASTEA, Kenya</td>
<td>06/10/08-31/10/08</td>
<td>8 personnel from Wiawso, St. Francis’s, OLA, St. Joseph’s and Bagabaga TTC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JICA Long term training in Japan “Master s in Educational Development”</td>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>Apr 2009-March 2011</td>
<td>Akatsi TTC</td>
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</tbody>
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More information on project website (Japanese) http://project.jica.go.jp/ghan/0604654/02/news.php

And finally, a key advocate and leader in implementing the INSET project, Ms. Ruth Wolanyo Zagblenku, the District Director of Education for Akatsi passed away in August 2008, may her soul rest in peace.
**The annual Holiday School in Tamale by JOCVs**

The ‘Holiday School’ is a summer workshop organized by JOCVs (Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers) who teach Science and Mathematics in Ghana. The main purpose of the Holiday School, organized yearly, is to continually seek ways to enhance the teaching and learning of science and mathematics with practical activities. This year, 65 students and teachers from JOCV recipient schools participated in the workshop, with more than 30 JOCVs delivering interesting lessons; much to the enjoyment of all participants. Below are selected images from the Holiday school:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Solar cooker: an egg can be boiled in 2 hours under direct sunlight</th>
<th>All participants: Junior and Senior High School students, Teacher Training College students, Teachers and JOCVs</th>
<th>Bottle flutes: each bottle, filled with a different amount of water, makes a different sound</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><img src="image1.jpg" alt="Solar cooker image" /></td>
<td><img src="image2.jpg" alt="All participants image" /></td>
<td><img src="image3.jpg" alt="Bottle flutes image" /></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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**News / what’s happening in the Education Sector group (JICA Ghana)**

- 22nd Sept 08 @ 2pm – Skills Development / TVET seminar by Prof Yoshida (Hiroshima University), who has been conducting research (funded by Japan’s Ministry of Education), in conjunction with researchers from Cape Coast University (including Dr. Joseph Gharney Ampiah) on skills development in the context of the new education reform. As the study is intended to contribute to Japan’s international cooperation in TVET, it is hoped the discussion with relevant personnel in Ghana will enrich the research. Venue - conference room 1b (1st floor) of JICA Ghana Office.

- Best Teacher Awards; Best foreign volunteer teacher category: JICA’s nominee this year is Mr. Naotsugu WAKABAYASHI, who is a JOCV Science and Math teacher assigned to Dahin Sheli Junior High School in the Northern Region. Mr. WAKABAYASHI was nominated because he is an earnest teacher, has excellent skills in organizing practical lessons, and continually organizes study lessons for teachers in his school, as well as going to surrounding schools to assist in improving their student’s calculation abilities. He has also developed excellent human relations with his colleagues and students. The awards ceremony takes place on 7th October 2008 at Sunyani.

- Update on the Proposed School Construction project: we are expecting the basic design mission team in January 2009; this is after the lifting of the hold on all Community Empowerment Grant Aid scheme; which coincided with this year’s mission free period: 15th Sept. to 28th Nov. 2008, leaving not much time before the impending presidential election on 7th December 2008, hence January being the earliest date to receive the mission.

**Useful website:** Don’t forget we are online; old/new copies of this newsletter are available via the JICA Ghana English website: [www.jica.go.jp/ghana/english/others/index.html](http://www.jica.go.jp/ghana/english/others/index.html)

**Have your say:** and finally, thank you for your reports, views and comments which make up this newsletter. Keep them coming including your feedback on the hot topic in this issue, the address to use is: gn_osu_rep@jica.go.jp  Thank you.