

PRINCESS BASMA INAUGURATES JICA VOLUNTEERS' FORUM

By: *Hani Kurdi*



HRH Princess Basma Bint Tala in a group photo at JICA Volunteers Forum.

Under the patronage of HRH Princess Basma Bint Talal, JICA conducted a forum on JICA Volunteers Program Dissemination in Amman on June 22nd, 2010.

The Forum was attended by His Excellency the Ambassador of Japan to Jordan Mr. Tetsuo Shioguchi, the Chief Representative of JICA Mr. Shigeru Okamoto, government officials and volunteers' counterparts.

HRH said that JICA, being the largest agency in the world, is working to implement many technical assistance programs and financial partnership in Jordan with governmental and non-governmental organization in vital sectors, such as industry, agriculture, environment, engineering, health and family planning. HRH added, "It needs a lot of bravery by the volunteer in a country with a different language and culture." HRH expressed the hope that more Japanese volunteers would come to Jordan to further cement the relationship between the Kingdom and Japan and that they would find warmth and friendship in Jordan and return home with good memories.

For his part, the Japanese Ambassador, Tetsuo Shioguchi, said HRH Princess Basma was making great efforts to support the empowerment of women, noting that women's cultural exchange program between Jordan and Japan was the initiative of Her Highness. This program was launched in 1993 and held on an annual basis and provided opportunities for women leaders of Japan and Jordan to exchange knowledge and opinion with regard to women's issue in the two countries. He also mentioned that the total volume of cooperation to Jordan by the government of Japan in the past decades is estimated at more than three billion US dollars.

JICA Chief representative in Jordan, Shigeru Okamoto, addressed the gathering by saying, "Most of these volunteers are utilizing their skills, experience and creative ideas, but it should be noted that they need some warming-up time before they start their activities because most of them are not accustomed to living in the Arab world." He called on people in the recipient organizations to give new JICA volunteers a chance by understanding and supporting their efforts.

It's worth mentioning that 587 volunteers have worked in Jordan since 1985. The program aims at contributing to the socio-economic development and reconstruction of developing countries, strengthening friendship and mutual understanding between developing countries and Japan as well as giving back to Japanese society the fruits of volunteer-activity experience.

The event included presentation of volunteers program, music class lesson, filmed activities of volunteers and video messages by volunteers counterparts.

JICA Volunteers Counterparts organize a workshop in Duhlail on CBR

By: Iyas Salim

Dulail center for Care and Rehabilitation hosted a workshop on June 15th under the theme of “Team work and Coordination” in the field of CBR, Community Based Rehabilitation for Persons With Disabilities. It was the initiative of Jordanian Counterparts of JICA Volunteers who work with Persons With Disabilities. Mr. Akram Al Sumadi, Director of Dulail Center welcomed guests and talked about activities and programs. The presenters who came from New Hope Center of the Ministry of Social Development, Baqaa Camp Center of UNRWA and NGO named Maan South. Center elaborated on important topics such as occupational therapy, special education, physical therapy, family participation, and local community role, networking with local resources in enhancing better results of CBR and economically empowering PWDs.



Participants at Dulail CBR workshop

In behalf of JICA Office, Mr. Morimoto, Senior Representative, thanked everyone especially the Ministry of Social Development for facilitating the workshop adding that there are twelve volunteers currently working in the field of PWDs and that it is crucial to build good working relations with their counterparts. Representing Ministry of Social Development, Ms. Fawziyya thanked JICA for the continuous support in the area of PWDs. “As you all can see JICA Volunteers come from very far place like Japan to help. All due to respect to that. At the same time we must exert more efforts to help our PWDs”, Mrs Fawziyya added.

Samurai Cup takes school children to new challenges

By: Iyas Salim



Children enjoying Japanese games

The Samurai Cup Day kicked off on July 15th with excitement, competition and new games for the children of Refugee Camps of Hiteen and Jerash.

The children of the two refugee camps arrived early in a surprisingly cool July morning to participate in a day full of sports, completion and excitement. Thanks to the spirited efforts by two young JICA Volunteers, Mr. Shota Yoshikawa and Mr. Shu Saito, who introduced new Japanese games such as the popular Dodge Ball, Shogai Butsu race, literary means Obstacles race, and Mukade race. The two volunteers worked with their counterparts to train students in these games for fun and action. It took weeks of preparations leading to the Day of Samurai Camp.

Japanese Ambassador, Mr. Shioguchi attended the event along with Mr. Richard Cook, UNRWA Chief of operations in Jordan and Mr. Okamoto, Chief Representative of JICA Office in Jordan. Mr. Shioguchi praised the efforts of JICA Volunteers and pointed out the importance of the cooperation with UNRWA. Mr. Okamoto delivered his speech in Arabic urging students and every one to enjoy the event and have fun in the spirit of sportsmanship. The Japanese game, Dodge Ball, was obviously a big favorite among school children. As soon as the whistle blew, ushering the start of the game, screams and loud shouts filled up the playground from both players.

It was the game of Shogai Butsu race which means obstacles race, that children learned to love it and quickly adopted it. They loved the challenges that different stages of the game presented such as the Mukade race and pushing the ball with a sweeper and eventually blew into a bowl of flour seeking a hidden candy. Faces were covered with white flour and a candy in the mouth. The scene made the rest of children laugh and truly enjoys the special moments.

On JICA Volunteers

By Dr. Hussein yagi, Head of Asian languages Department, University of Jordan

For many years before I joined ranks, JICA had been helping the Japanese program at the University of Jordan by providing it with teachers and technicians. For the three years since I joined this University, I came in contact with JICA volunteers but only as an acquaintance. Throughout the current academic year, however, I came to know these volunteers more thoroughly in my capacity as head of the department where Japanese is taught. I can, therefore, give this testimony with confidence that it is a true depiction of reality.



Dr. Hussein Yagi

Throughout the year, the JICA volunteers proved beyond any reasonable doubt to be up to the responsibilities of university faculty. They quickly learned the code of behavior and adhered to it faithfully. They quickly learned how to teach in a student-centered learning environment. They quickly learned that human values transcend all cultures and languages.

The training that JICA gives to its volunteers before they leave Japan and after they arrive in a host country is fruitful indeed. This training is reflected in the behavior of the volunteers.

Almost immediately after they had started work at the Department of Asian Languages, the JICA volunteers fit in. Not only were they able to figure out our expectations and met them fully, but they also fit in the culture. You would hear them greeting a shop-keeper in Arabic and ordering the items that they wish to purchase. You would see them organizing student activities as though they were Jordanian. Their open-mindedness and selflessness enabled them to empathize with their students, establish rapport with them, and influence them to learn.

JICA Volunteers launch a Photo Exhibition: Salt Views in Japanese Eyes

By: Iyas Salim



Volunteers of Salt Exhibition

As Salt is a city that breathes history and traditions making it one of Jordan's most historical towns. In order to preserve the heritage of Salt and promote its unique value as a tourist attraction, four JICA Volunteers launched a photo Exhibition under the title of "Salt Views in Japanese Eyes" that covered the period from May 19th until June 6th. The Volunteers made sure to show the exhibition in three important locations within Salt city, cooperating with the Municipality of Salt City, particularly, the City Development Projects Unit.

Motivated with energy and enthusiasm, the four young volunteer women took Photos of landscape, daily life, sook (local market), local delicacies and popular dishes, social ceremonies, cultural portraits and historical landmarks. The exhibition showed photos full of energy, diversity, life as the Japanese volunteers Ms. Kayo Murakami, Ms. Akiko Ogino, Ms. Aiko Fukui and Ms. Kaoru Amimoto, explained each photo to curious visitors.

Ms. Akiko, a bright young woman, looked cheerful as she explained to visitors about the importance of teaching children how to protect, preserve and appreciate heritage sites that are considered part of children daily environment. To achieve that, Ms. Akiko designed replicas of the most famous landmarks and buildings within Salt. She and the children used pieces of cakes to make the replicas.

JOCV Program in Jordan is about transfer and support of skills

By: *Mazen Tarifi JICA Alumni Association of Jordan*

Modern Education experts agree that Man's observations of other cultures and daily life is a source of progress and a way to gain knowledge. Many people share the experience of daily life in order to learn from each other. Human contact is necessary to achieve the skills and knowledge.

JICA Jordan has been working hard to promote efforts to support various institutes in Jordan through the program of JOCV. The purpose is to enable various organizations to effectively participate in the progress of society and solve problems.



Mr. Mazen Tarifi, JAAJ

JICA Volunteers activities in Jordan are focused on the following; Collaboration on the spirit of one team, trusting own abilities and those of others, learning and empowering with knowledge and transferring Japanese experience and a commitment to high standards particularly in the area of T.Shaped skills. In addition to that, it is about facilitating and supporting IT technology and innovativeness. Some volunteers work with JICA Alumni Association of Jordan in the field of teaching Japanese language. The volunteers, definitely, participate in transferring their experiences and culture to the Jordanian society at large through the various activities that Alumni organize with many sectors and organizations within Jordanian Society.

Smile Cup 2010 summer

By: *Iyas Salim*



All smiles at Smile Cup

School girls, representing Palestinian refugees in Jordan, gathered to participate in a day of a sporting event named "Smile Cup 2010 summer". The event materialized as a result of cooperation between UNRWA and JICA Volunteers and took place at the playground of UNRWA's Education Development Center, located on the outskirts of Amman City. As the summer holidays had just begun, the June event came as a great opportunity for the school girls to meet new friends from other areas and spend a day full of sporting games and excitement.

JICA volunteers Ms. Yukari Kimata and Ms. Megumi Toki joined efforts together to train the girls for the event's games such as Dodge Ball and Rope Jumping, called in Japanese, O-Nawatobi. "This is a great chance for the girls to arrive here today and participate with others in the games for enjoyment." said the energetic Yukari. Mr. Shioguchi, Ambassador of Japan, praised the cooperation between UNRWA and volunteers. He added, "I certainly hope today's event would enhance the friendship and mutual understanding between the Jordanians and the Japanese people." Currently, JICA is dispatching thirteen volunteers to Palestinian refugees in Jordan. They are supporting the lives of refugees in different areas such as sports, kindergarten, arts, working with PWD, music. Mr. Okamoto, Chief Representative of JICA, thanked everyone for their efforts, "Today's event is for you and hope you enjoy it and participate in a spirit of sportsmanship," He added. Medals and Cups were awarded.

