

Message from JICA's chief representative

“20 years of JICA Jordan office, 37 years of Japanese ODA to Jordan”

By: Mr. Toshiaki Tanaka



Chief Representative Toshiaki Tanaka

I have been appointed to the Chief Representative of JICA Jordan office last December. This year 2011 marked the 20th anniversary of JICA Jordan office which was established in 1991. I am very happy to take over this position in the 20th anniversary of the office. Japanese ODA to Jordan started much earlier than the establishment of JICA office. The first ODA loan to Jordan was provided in 1974, the same year when Embassy of Japan in Jordan was established. The first technical cooperation project started in 1977, though technical cooperation to Jordan may have started earlier, and the first grant aid to Jordan was provided in 1979.

Since then, the Government of Japan has provided Jordan with total amount of more than 200 billion Japanese yen as ODA loan, more than 60 billion yen as Grant aid and nearly 30 billion yen as technical cooperation.

In 1985, two agreements between the two countries on JICA activities were concluded. One is the technical cooperation agreement and the other is the agreement on Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers. On the basis of the agreement, JICA started JOCV program in Jordan and established JOCV coordination office which was followed by the establishment of JICA Jordan office. For the promotion of South-South Cooperation in the region, Japan-Jordan Partnership Program was agreed in 2004, furthering Jordan's position as a donor country and entering a new stage of relationship between the two countries.

In 2006, Japan Bank for International Cooperation (JBIC) inaugurated Amman office, which was integrated with JICA Jordan office in 2008 when new JICA was established as a result of a merger of JICA with ODA loan operation of JBIC. The new JICA integrated three major types of Japanese ODA: ODA loans, grant aid and technical cooperation.

Looking back to the long history of Japanese ODA to Jordan, I am feeling the responsibility as the Chief Representative of JICA Jordan office to continue the achievement of past activities and further enhance the cooperation between Japan and Jordan in various areas in order to meet the needs of Jordan for economic and social development and also for the stability of the region.

Official Opening of Historic Old Salt Museum

By: Eng. Adel Zureikat



Opening ceremony at salt museum

Under the patronage of H.E. Ms. Suzanne Afaneh, Minister of Tourism and Antiquities, the opening ceremony of Historic Old Salt Museum (HOSM)-Abu Jaber House- was held on November 2nd, 2010 attended by H.E Mr. Tetsuo Shioguchi, the Japanese Ambassador and Mr. Shigeru Okamoto former Chief Representative of JICA Jordan Office along with other high ranking officials.

In 1999, the Government of Japan extended around 70 million USD worth soft of loan in Japanese Yen to the Government of Jordan for implementing the Tourism Sector Development Project (TSDP).

Historic Old Salt Development is one of seven sub-projects under TSDP, including renovation of Abu Haber House, one of the largest merchants' houses during Ottoman period, turned into the Historic Old Salt Museum.

HOSM is considered a new type of museum which is different from the conventional museums in Jordan as it introduces also the concept of the ecomuseum. Therefore; HOSM will not only introduce traditional culture, history and heritage of Salt to tourist and Jordanians but it will also guide visitors on how to discover Salt, through suggesting certain trails or observation points.

Moreover, such a Project will help in promoting Salt as a unique tourist destination. It will also assist in improving the economic situation of Salti people, through creating job opportunities and improving the financial revenue for shop owners in Salt, while conserving valuable heritage and traditional life.

Workshop on Licensing System for Service Connection Installation

By: Eng. Waleed Sukkar



Experts giving lectures

On November 8, 2010 Water Authority of Jordan (WAJ) in cooperation with JICA conducted a workshop on Licensing System for Service Connection Installation, attended by different stakeholders; WAJ engineers, Ministry of Public Works, Vocational Training Corporation and Contractors Association, aiming at enhancing and upgrading contractors qualifications in service connection installation. It is a well-known fact that most of leakage cases happened along service connections. Major causes are generally derived from aged deteriorated pipes, poor Workmanship during pipe connection and installation, use of substandard pipe materials and improper trench preparation for protecting pipes from damage.

Among these causes, there are many causes we can avoid if the contractor work properly according to WAJ instructions as well as WAJ makes strict supervision to the contractors during the installation of the service connections. This will eventually contribute to the reduction of Non-Revenue Water (NRW).

There is existing registration procedure for the contractors who work for service connection installation, but it is necessary to enhance this procedure because in many cases the contractors neglect the WAJ instructions at site. Moreover, the water utilities are utilizing polyethylene pipes which are relatively new pipe materials for the governorate water utilities.

With such a background, WAJ has started to discuss the new quality control system by introducing the contractor licensing system for service connection installation. According to the new system, any contractor without this license is not eligible for the contract of service connection installation. Besides, each licensed contractor should have at least two employees who have certificates for service connection installation through the training course provided by WAJ.

The Training provides the essential knowledge and skills on service connection installation, they are; understanding of outline of the licensing system, clear understanding of WAJ responsibilities and contractors responsibilities, understanding of WAJ standards for trench preparation and pipe laying work, Theoretical and practical acquisition of pipe connection techniques, and Skill upgrading for polyethylene pipe installation, as polyethylene pipe is becoming more dominant pipe materials for service connection in the Kingdom.

TCTP on Criminal Identification for Iraqis

By: Suha Bakir



Handing over certificates to participants

In accordance with JICA's South- South cooperation Scheme, JICA Jordan Office has cooperated with Public Security Directorate (PSD) in organizing training courses for Iraqi officers in the field of Criminal Identification and relevant scientific techniques and technical methodology,. The cooperation between PSD and JICA started in 2006 under Third Country Training Program (TCTP) and continued for 3 years.

The Cooperation between JICA and FLD consisted of training topics such as weapons and tool marks analysis, document analysis, photography analysis, crime scene, finger prints analysis, explosives, gunshot residues analysis, narcotics and drugs. The training comes under JICA's Program "THE THIRD COUNTRY TRAINING PROGRAM FOR CAPACITY BUILDING TOWARD CRIMINAL JUSTICE AND TECHNICAL SKILL IMPROVEMENT ON CRIMINAL IDENTIFICATION". The overall goal of the Courses is to contribute in getting the Criminal Identification Department of Iraq prepared for achieving criminal justice and fighting crime effectively and enable them to serve and protect their country's security and stability.

Upon Iraqi government request for building their capacities in fighting terrorism and crimes, the PSD and JICA will cooperate for the sixth year in sequence to organize several training courses, whereas an agreement was signed for the next 3 years that includes advanced training on the previous mentioned topics in addition to training on Cybercrimes, K9 training and Quality assurance for leaders.

Launching of Quality / Productivity Improvement (Kaizen) Project for SMES

By: Eng. Adel Zureikat

The Project on the Dissemination of Quality/Productivity Improvement (Kaizen) Practices for SMEs was launched on December 20, 2010. The two-year-and-a-half project, implemented by (JICA) in collaboration with Jordan Enterprises Development Corporation (JEDCO), will help enhance the competitiveness of the Jordanian economy. The project will motivate the private sector to enhance productivity and competitiveness at a low-cost approach for enhancing quality, productivity and efficiency of companies.

Kaizen, which was created in Japan following World War II, is a system of continuous improvement in quality, technology, processes, company culture, productivity, safety and leadership. It involves every employee as each is encouraged to come up with small improvement suggestions on a regular basis. The system involves every employee in making changes in most cases small and incremental.

The Project will include the promotion of Kaizen at twenty individual company level and conducting training programs for 10 local consultants that will be trained to train on the practices to ensure the sustainability of the program. In addition, the project includes training of staff at relevant public entities, organization and institutes on Kaizen practices and entails building a mechanism to disseminate, promote and upgrade the Kaizen practices in the Kingdom. "Nowadays, Kaizen is widely recognized and accepted by many companies worldwide even by non-Japanese companies as an approach to reform the management and operation of the company," Yasuhiro Morimoto, senior representative of JICA office in Jordan said at the ceremony. The launching ceremony has been attended by H.E Mr. Yarub Qudah, CEO of JEDCO, Mr. Yasuhiro Morimoto, JICA Senior Representative and high rank officials from relevant organizations, chambers, and private sector representatives.



Launching of Kaizen project

Japanese language Program in Jordan: Rooted in a long history with an ambition for future

By: Ivas Salim

Japanese Language program enjoys a long history in Jordan. It all started seventeen years ago in 1993 when JICA and the University of Jordan launched the first Japanese Language Education program in the Kingdom of Jordan. The program continued to thrive year after year as JICA responded by recruiting more Japanese language teachers from Japan to meet up demand. The number of all Japanese teachers so far stands at 17 volunteers from 1993 till 2011.



A student dressed in Yukata experiencing the world of Japanese culture

Currently, we have two teachers, Hirayma Sensei and Adachi Sensei, working hard, utilizing their skills in introducing and teaching Japanese language in a fun and professional approach.

It is a shared ambition of both the University of Jordan and JICA Volunteers to promote Japanese Language and recruit more students. University of Jordan recently permitted students of all faculties to register for a foreign language calculated as credit hours. It is a great opportunity to attract potentially new students.

Moreover, the Japanese Embassy held the annual fifth Japan Festival, December 2010, at the university of Jordan for two days drawing in university students and local community to learn about Japanese culture and language. The colorful festival exhibited karate, Okinawa folk songs posters, leaflets and media products.

The Amman Radio Hayat FM station covered the Japan Festival Event and hosted Japanese Teachers and Jordanian students for a radio talk on Japanese Language. Jordanian Students have been engaged in Japanese speech contest for the past thirteen years under the patronage of the Japanese Embassy where some of them go as far as composing Japanese poetry of HAIKU; the shortest literature in Japan made of three metrical phrases of 5, 7 and 5 containing seasonal references.

With the dedication of the teachers and the staff of Jordan University, namely, the Department of Asian languages, Japanese language learning poses a promising future where current number of students stands, so far, at more than a hundred to become the cultural and lingua ambassadors between Jordan and Japan.

Office Kaizen: JICA Jordan Office aims for team work and continuous improvement

By: Iyas Salim

JICA Jordan Office has completed the first phase of Kaizen activities which started in April 2010 and ended in December 2010. It was the first time to implement Kaizen as a systematic approach in JICA Jordan Office under the guidance of Mr. Ieki, JICA Expert for Kaizen in Jordan.

Several items within office were considered for Kaizen activities such as Documentation and filing, cleanness, Safety, Electronic Data and so on. Three teams were set up in order to cover as many items as possible in office for the purpose of improving work environment and efficiency. The three teams divided the Kaizen time-duration into three stages keeping in mind the realistic approach in performing and achieving desired results.

By December 2010, some lessons were drawn from kaizen activities which were shared by all staff. Here are highlights of the lessons learnt; reducing “danger” of daily work, improvement on electronic data of share- folder but still needs continuous work, easier to find files than before. Moreover, the general sentiment is that it is important to keep up momentum and that progress would not be realized as rapidly as many wish, however, all in all, it is a good activity.



Kaizen is a continuous team work

The following are worthwhile recommendations that resulted from the experience and could become useful for future similar activities. Next stage of kaizen needs to be slow but steady such as an hour a week would be considered a reasonable pace of Kaizen action. It is important to think of ways of keeping up enthusiasm and momentum. Kaizen is a Japanese concept in origin and we need to adapt it into an Arab frame of value-system to internalize it into the local culture.

In all, kaizen activities have presented a strong experience. It is only the beginning as most of us have discovered that kaizen is simply a way of life. Many thanks to Mr. Ieki for his diligence, advice and friendly guidance and the same goes to those who contributed to Kaizen in JICA Jordan Office as every staff plays an indispensable role in overall Office kaizen.

