

JOCV PROGRAM RESUMES AFTER 3 YEARS IN NEPAL

JICA VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

JICA volunteer program founded in 1965 allows Japanese volunteers to work with the local people for two years to contribute to the country's socioeconomic development, making effective use of their abilities and experiences. The volunteers live among the local people of the country to which they are dispatched to and pursue their activities enabling them to ascertain development needs from the viewpoint of those living there as well as promote mutual understanding and friendship between Nepal and Japan.

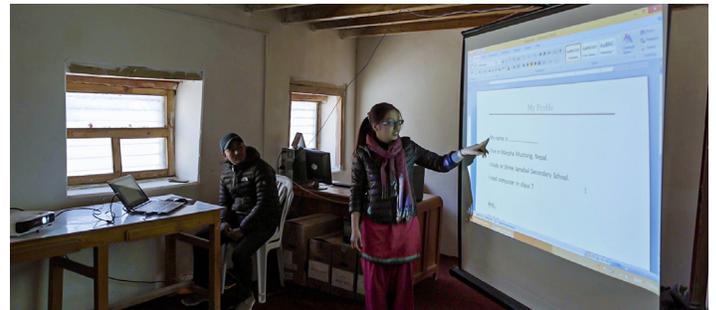
JICA Volunteers work with the grass-root level people to contribute towards the respective country's socio-economic development and making effective use of their abilities, skills, knowledge, and experiences. This has always been the essence of JICA Volunteer Program since its inception.

The first JICA volunteers came to Nepal in September 1970. Since then, their activities have diversified in various sectors and sub-sectors which includes agriculture, health, education, forestry and fisheries, repair operations, civil engineering, sanitation, sports, and culture, as well as planning and administration. JICA Volunteer Program in Nepal is dedicated to the sharing of resources and technology at the grass-root level for Nepal's nation building endeavor through the 'Learning by Doing' approach.

In Nepal, the JICA Volunteer Program has existed for more than 50 years largely due to the efforts of volunteers themselves, local officials and people of Nepal who worked with them and people of Japan who supported the program.



JOCV Ms. Hitomi Hizume (2018-2020) - Community Development Advisor, Lele, Lalitpur.



JOCV Ms. Aya Iwasa (2018 - 2020) - PC Instructor, Shree Janabal Secondary School, Marpha, Mustang.

As of June 2021, a total of 1,436 JICA Volunteers have worked in Nepal. Widely recognized as a program of Japan International Cooperation Agency, Volunteer activities have not only earned high acclaim from Nepal but also received increased praise in Japan.

Each year, JICA volunteers are dispatched for two years who are eager to make use of their skills and experiences acquired in Japan are sent to Nepal. They work in different areas of expertise to take part in various fields across the country and help improve the livelihood of Nepali people.

TYPES OF JICA VOLUNTEERS

JAPAN OVERSEAS COOPERATION VOLUNTEERS (JOCVS)

Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers (JOCVs) are dispatched to work and live with local communities and stakeholders for two-years' service. The objective of this scheme is to assist in the socio-economic development utilizing activeness and passion of Japanese Volunteers as well as promote mutual understanding and strengthen friendship between Nepal and Japan at the grass-root level.

SENIOR VOLUNTEERS (SVS)

Senior Volunteers (SVs) are Japanese Volunteers who are motivated by the volunteering spirit and possess practical Knowledge and technical skills backed up by their own abundant working experiences (normally over 15 years). SVs are assigned to wide range of fields. The objective of this scheme is to utilize accumulated rich experience of Japanese nationals with their successful careers in various fields for the development of developing countries.

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OBJECTIVES OF JICA VOLUNTEER PROGRAM:

- To contribute towards the socio-economic development and reconstruction of developing countries and regions
- To strengthen friendship and mutual understanding between developing countries, regions, and Japan
- To give back to the Japanese society the outcome of Volunteer-activity experience

WHY ARE JICA VOLUNTEERS ACCEPTED IN NEPAL?

JICA Volunteers have been coming to Nepal for more than fifty years. They possess certain specific skills as listed below, which make them viable for working in Nepal.

1. They can speak, read, and write Nepali Language making them accustomed to work immediately in their assigned places.
2. They learn the socio-cultural practices so that accommodating well with the locals at the grass-root level is convenient.
3. They are hardworking and punctual.
4. They are technically sound in their specialized field.
5. JICA Volunteers help to create network with different organizations and the local community through their activities, which makes the social bond stronger.

OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENTS OF JICA VOLUNTEERS IN THE PAST

JICA Volunteer's contribution is immense in Nepal's development process. Many volunteers who have worked in Nepal in the past have worked hard to uplift the life of rural people. A former Japanese volunteer Toru Kondo, chairperson of Society of Agriculture (MDSAC), who helped to introduce apples in Mustang district, spent almost all his life improving livelihoods of people in that region. Many other Japanese volunteers remain loyal to Nepal supporting various causes and Nepalese people remain forever indebted to their continuous support.

This is why JICA volunteers, and their exemplary work are extremely prominent in most parts in Nepal especially in the rural areas. These outstanding volunteers have successfully managed to win hearts of the local people at large with their enduring contribution.

Some of the examples of outstanding collaboration between Nepal and Japan that have successfully influenced the socio-economic lives of Nepalese people are those who have introduced simple, effective, and sustainable skills and technology in Nepal.

Volunteers in agriculture have a long history and so far have achieved significant result in collaboration with experts in this sector. For instance they have contributed in introducing junar (sweet oranges)

in Ramechhap, rainbow trout in Rasuwa and Nuwakot, apples in Mustang. Agricultural milestones in introducing some uncommon varieties of fruits/vegetable etc. such as Tomiyasu Raddish in Kakani, Junar in Sindhuli, Ramechhap, Persimmon in Kirtipur, Rainbow Trout in Trishuli, varieties of mushrooms -Kanya, Button and Shitake can be accredited to contribution of JICA volunteers from the past.

Similarly, introduction of Judo, Karate, Kendo, and Boccia game in Nepal are some notable examples of volunteer contribution in the field of sports.

ARRIVAL OF A VOLUNTEER AFTER 3 YEARS!

During March 2020, JICA volunteers working in Nepal had to go back to Japan due to Covid-19. Since then, JICA's volunteer program in Nepal was on temporary halt. However, after a gap of 3 years, JICA Volunteer Program resumed from July 2023 onwards with new volunteer assignments in Nepal.

Ms. Miki ENOMOTO arrived in Kathmandu on July 04, 2023. With the arrival of Ms. ENOMOTO, JICA assures that more volunteers will be coming to Nepal in the following months.

"Amongst the 17 goals of SDGs, each JICA volunteer is working in Nepal to achieve one or few of its targets. As per the SDG motto 'No One Left behind', our volunteers work at the grass root level with local people, which is the most significant advantage of this program. Simultaneously, the program's biggest achievement so far is facilitating the friendship and partnership between Nepal and Japan. By resuming our volunteer program, we hope to contribute more for the development of Nepal"- said Mr. OKUBO Akimitsu, Chief Representative, JICA Nepal.



Ms. ENOMOTO with Chief Representative of JICA Nepal Mr. OKUBO Akimitsu and other JICA volunteer coordinators in JICA Nepal office upon her arrival.

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Ms. ENOMOTO will be helping with the integrated community development programmes run by JICA Alumni Association of Nepal (JAAN) in places such as Lalitpur and Sindhupalchowk for two years.

JICA has been providing JAAN with JOCV for over two decades for the development of Japanese language, culture, and community development in Nepal.

JAAN chairperson Dr. Ramchandra Bhusal welcomed JOCV Ms. ENOMOTO at the JAAN office and remarked that JOCVs have been playing an important role in expanding bilateral relations between Japan and Nepal to the people to people and bringing in Japanese technology to Nepal.

MORE THAN 50 YEARS OF JICA VOLUNTEER PROGRAM IN NEPAL

To know more about the Volunteer Program in Nepal please click on the links below:

JICA Volunteer Program in Nepal (Brochure);
[News Letter 2022.FH10 \(jica.go.jp\)](https://www.jica.go.jp/newsletter/2022/FH10)

To view the video please
 click in the link below:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=stR6zPztsO8&feature=youtu.be>



ENSURING ACCESS TO 'EDUCATION FOR ALL' BY FACILITATING THE BASIC AND PRIMARY EDUCATION IN NEPAL.

BASIC PROJECT FOR CONSTRUCTION OF PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN SUPPORT OF EDUCATION FOR ALL: GRANT AID (2003-2005).

To contribute towards achieving six education for All (EFA) goals through improving physical facilities of primary schools, the Government of Japan implemented the Grant Aid project for construction of 2,540 classrooms, 52 RC buildings, toilets for 733 sites, and 312 hand pump sets for water supply in 15 districts (Bardiya, Dang, Kailali, Kapilbastu, Nuwakot and Sindhupalchowk, Bara, Dadeldhura, Dhading, Gorkha, Kavre, Makwanpur, Saptari, Sindhuli, and Syangja) between 2003- 2005.

With a Grant Aid amount of 2.27 billion Japanese Yen, the objective of the project was to expand access and to improve retention under the framework of Basic and Primary Education Programme II (BPEP-II) and its succeeding program by supplying materials and equipment for construction of classrooms and other physical facilities.

The project made some important contributions towards improving the physical environments of schools like replacement of deteriorated classrooms with new ones of better quality and provision of gender friendly toilets and water-supply facilities which highly improved the attendance of female teachers and students. The Project contributed to improving the education environment, which was effective for improving internal efficiency as well. Furthermore, the construction of exclusive facilities for resource centers contributed to activating teacher training and information-sharing which led to improved educational quality.



Classroom construction-in-progress



Newly built classroom

JICA in History

BREAKTHROUGH OF THE NAGDHUNGA EVACUATION TUNNEL!



'Nagdhunga Tunnel Construction Project', one of milestone projects in Nepal, just achieved another feat by successfully concluding the breakthrough of the evacuation tunnel on August 07, 2023.

The evacuation tunnel is installed as a separate parallel tunnel to provide safe evacuation to road users in case of an emergency, which also has the facility of ventilators and jet fans.

The breakthrough of the tunnel was carried out in the presence of Honorable Minister for Physical Infrastructure and Transport Mr. Prakash Jwala, His Excellency Ambassador of Japan to Nepal Mr. KIKUTA Yutaka and officials from MoPIT, Department of Roads,

Embassy of Japan and JICA Nepal.

'Nagdhunga Tunnel Construction Project' is the first of its kind in Nepal and its objective is to improve the road condition around Nagdhunga pass, thereby contributing to achieve the smooth transportation network and improve commercial activities between Kathmandu and other principal cities/areas in Nepal as well as abroad. The tunnel highway having two lanes with a total length of 2.7 km is expected to ease the traffic jam along the Nagdhunga-Naubise road section once it comes into operation. Likewise, it will also save time and reduce the consumption of petroleum products and reduce air pollution.



Nagdhunga Tunnel Evacuation Breakthrough before (left) and after (right)

BACKGROUND OF THE PROJECT

Nepal is a mountainous landlocked country with most of the travel depending on roads. Roads are also the main means of trade flow covering around 90% and vitalizing the Nepalese Economy. Nepal has one of the most diverse geographies for a small country. The altitude in the eastern terai starts with the lowest point of 59 meters and reaches the highest peak in the world, Mount Everest (Sagarmatha) with the altitude of 8,849 meters. The access to India from the western side of Kathmandu valley via the Tribhuvan highway and Prithivi highway is the most reliable corridor for foreign trade of Nepal.

Nagdhunga hill is in the Kathmandu-Naubise section of the Tribhuvan Highway, which is the main trade corridor in Nepal. This route also connects Pokhara via the Prithivi Highway from Naubise, which is one of the main tourism destinations, signifying the strategic importance of this road. This route, however, has steep gradient and sharp curves, and the road alignment is not

appropriate for efficient logistics. Especially, those steep gradient and sharp curve sections are located along the road between Thankot-Nagdhunga-Naubise of Tribhuvan Highway. The section passes through the steep Nagdhunga Pass with 500m – 1,500m difference in elevations. This difference in elevation and the steep nature of the terrain makes it difficult to widen the road and improve the gradient. The existing road has to go up and down the Nagdhunga Pass, thus the alignment has various problems like, continuous sharp curves and hairpin curves in 19 locations, steep gradient of 10% making upward travel for big vehicle extremely difficult. This further causes severe traffic congestion, increasing the travel time. There are also dangerous/unstable slopes beside the road, thus risks of road closure due to slope failure is high. With these conditions, the best alternative is a road tunnel for the improvement of the efficiency of the road and mitigating traffic congestion by bypassing the Nagdhunga pass. It will also make trade between Nepal and India more active and contribute to the economic growth of Nepal.

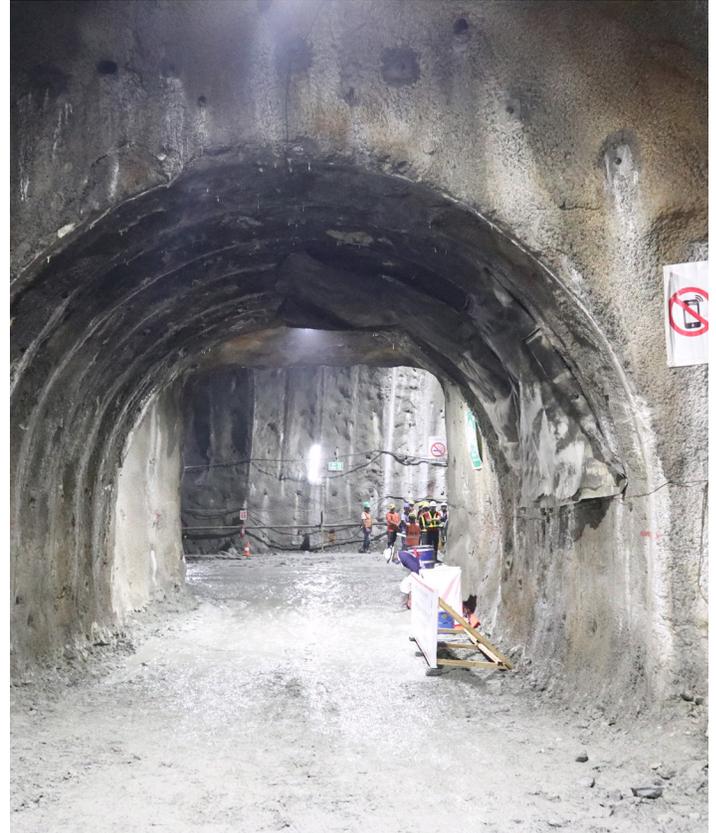


Ninety percent of area in Nepal is mountainous and most popular travel alternative is through roads and since Nepal is a landlocked country about 60% of its imports and exports are traded with neighboring India. The trading of goods and services is carried through the Indian border in Birgunj which pass through Narayngadh, Mugling and Naagdhunga until it arrives in Kathmandu. About 15 kilometers from Kathmandu along the route is Nagdhunga Pass (elevation 800 to 1,500 meters) with a grade exceeding 10 percent. Due to excess usage the steep, curving road causes chronic traffic congestion hence ensuring a smooth traffic flow across the pass after the construction of the tunnel is a major challenge. The tunnel construction is also expected to improve the trading of goods with 6% annual growth in the vehicular movement for commercial activities.

Building of social and economic institutions, which directly lead to economic growth and the improvement of national livelihoods, has been one of the priority areas of cooperation for JICA in Nepal. Thus, the Transport Improvement Program is of high priority to JICA. Similarly, the Government of Nepal's effort in promotion of infrastructure development aligns with the JICA priorities.

IMPORTANCE OF ROAD TUNNEL IN NEPAL

Due to the rugged and mountainous geography, the scope of tunnel road is very high in Nepal. A tunnel can reduce the road distance drastically and make vehicular movement efficient. It will not only save the time of the travelers, but also economizes the travel cost, makes the road safer and contributes to reducing the carbon emission. However, Nepal needs to acquire the tunneling technology and expertise for the development and growth of the Nepalese economy. With the construction of the Nagdhunga Tunnel Construction Project, the process of the technology transfer has started. It will



equip the Government and the private sector engineers, and local contractors with technology, knowledge, and skills for the design as well as the construction of the tunneling technology. Therefore, this project can be taken as the first stepping-stone for acquiring firsthand modern road tunnel construction technology.

The construction of the tunnel began in October 2019 and is expected to be completed by April 2024. Nagdhunga Tunnel is being developed with the concessional loan assistance of JICA amounting to Japanese Yen 16.633 billion.

The importance of “technology transfer” as a feature of Japan's ODA projects is clear in terms of this project. The Government of Japan extends numerous technical cooperation programmes through JICA, which include various training and field visits to Japan. Not limited to these technical cooperation programmes, even in an infrastructure construction site, there is a technology transfer aspect in a Japanese project. In this tunnel construction project, Japanese and Nepali people work together using advanced Japanese technology while overcoming challenges on the spot. The experience gained through this difficult work will certainly improve the skills of the Nepali officials and workers for the future.



SYNOPSIS OF TRAINING SEMINAR AND VISIT TO BANGLADESH

- Mr. Prasanna Aryal (Sr. Program Officer)

- Mr. Gaurav Panthi (Program Officer)



EXPERIENCE AND LEARNINGS FROM "TRAINING SEMINAR ON PROCUREMENT AND CONTRACT MANAGEMENT UNDER JAPANESE ODA LOANS"

Official Development Assistance (ODA) loan supports financial needs of the developing countries by providing long-term and concessional loan. Currently, JICA has four loan projects in Nepal. For the effective formulation and implementation of the ODA loans in the recipient country, the Loan Procurement Policy & Supervision Division (LPPSD), Infrastructure Engineering Department organized a seminar with JICA Bangladesh Office as a host from 24th to 27th July 2023. Altogether 34 JICA staffs from overseas who are directly involved in the Procurement, Supervision and Contract Management implementation of loan projects of Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Bhutan, Sri Lanka, Pakistan, Mozambique, Kenya, Tanzania, Senegal, Uganda and Cote d'Ivoire were invited as participants in the program. The seminar aimed to improve knowledge on procurement and contract management to implement under Japanese Official Development Assistance (ODA) Loan. The seminar was broadly divided into two components – classroom sessions and one field visit.

During the seminar, overseas offices from South Asia including Nepal presented their experience on procurement and management of ODA Loan Projects and so it was a good opportunity to learn from the experience of other countries on the various challenges faced and the approaches to overcome them.

The sessions on JICA procurement guidelines, Standard Bidding Documents and FIDIC (The International Federation of Consulting Engineers) Conditions of Contract were helpful to increase the understanding of procurement and contract management. These

approaches could be applicable for successful implementation for ongoing and future projects in the context of Nepal as well.

The field visit session included, visit to the JICA funded MRT line 6 (Metro Rail) projects in Dhaka. The MRT line with a total length of 21 Km is partially operational and is expected to decrease travel time by 80 minutes after being fully operational. We observed impacts of such massive project and understood the challenges of such projects in terms of its procurement and implementation.

ODA loan caters to financial needs of a developing nation to overcome gaps in the concerned sector. However, the loan projects require effective planning and timely implementation for achieving desired outcome. Hence the Seminar was a resourceful platform to understand 'the basics' of Japanese ODA Loan Projects for procurement and contract management. Also, it was a very good opportunity to receive first-hand information from other JICA colleagues and develop affiliation amongst JICA members.



JICA EXTENDS SCHOLARSHIP FOR YOUNG GOVERNMENTAL OFFICIALS THROUGH GRANT ASSISTANCE IN “THE PROJECT FOR HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT SCHOLARSHIP (JDS)”

JICA and the Government of Nepal signed a Grant Agreement on assistance for “The Project for Human Resource Development Scholarship (JDS)” on July 12, 2023, for the Fiscal Year 2024 amounting to Japanese Yen Four Hundred and Twenty-Four million (424,000,000).

The Exchange of Notes regarding the assistance was signed between Mr. Arjun Prasad Pokharel, Secretary, Ministry of Finance on behalf of the Government of Nepal (GON) and His Excellency Mr. KIKUTA Yutaka Ambassador of Japan to Nepal on behalf of the Government of Japan (GOJ). Similarly, the Grant Agreement was signed between Mr. Shreekrishna Nepal, Joint Secretary, International Economic Cooperation Coordination Division (IECCD), Ministry of Finance on behalf of GON and Mr. IIZUKA Kenichiro, Senior Representative of JICA Nepal Office on behalf of JICA.

With the signing of G/A, JICA will offer 22 scholarships to the Civil Servants of Nepal to study in graduate schools of renowned Japanese Universities. The selected participants enhance their expertise in respective professional areas ranging widely from judicial, economic policy, and develop broad network at the global level.

The objective of the JDS is to strengthen the government's administrative capacities in Nepal for the young and capable government employees who are expected to engage in formulating and implementing social and economic development plans and thus play leadership roles to contribute to the development of Nepal. This agreement expects to expand and enhance the foundation for bilateral relations between Japan and Nepal by means of accepting students from Nepal in Japanese Universities as overseas students.

Government of Japan has been providing this scholarship since 2016. Until now, 105 civil servants have graduated from Japanese universities and are spread across key ministries of Nepal building a strong alumni network. At present, 38 JDS fellows, 35 for master's and 3 for PhD courses are pursuing academic degree in the prestigious Japanese universities.

Mr. IIZUKA Kenichiro, Senior Representative of JICA Nepal stated that, “JICA always have and always will aim to contribute to strengthening human resource in Nepal, which is indispensable for delivering better public services to the people.”

STUDY TOUR FOR JAPANESE TEACHERS GROUP RESUMES



The teacher's group with Nepali students

After an interval of 3 years due to Covid-19, JICA Nepal Office warmly welcomed 10 Japanese teachers and 2 facilitators from Aichi, Shizuoka, Mie, and Ishikawa prefecture for the Study Tour scheme, organized by JICA Global Plaza between 31st July to 9th Aug 2023.

The group visited several JICA Partnership Program (JPP) sites such as Mitra DRR Learning Center, Love Green Nepal Office and Arunodaya School during their stay in Nepal. At the same time, they also visited some local schools to interact with Nepali students. They also experienced local village homestay for two nights in Patlekhet, Kavreparanchowk, where they also observed rich Nepalese culture and participated in the dance program

with the local communities. They were very impressed with the hospitality provided by the villagers during their visit.

Upon their return to Japan, they are expected to conduct global study classes in their school by sharing their unforgettable journey in Nepal.

NETWORKING AND MARKETING EVENT OF PPRR

On 22 May 2023, the Networking and Marketing Meeting for the Handicraft CRPs (Community Resilience Projects) was successfully organized at the Nepal Academy of Tourism and Hotel Management (NATHM) in Kathmandu. Supported by the Project on Participatory Rural Recovery (PPRR), the event provided the CRP community groups who have been producing handicrafts in Helambu Rural Municipality in Sindhupalchowk, Palungtar Municipality and Barpak Sulikot Rural Municipality in Gorkha. There was a total of 80 participants which included community members, NGOs, local government staff, professor, and students of NATHAM. This event provided a unique opportunity to interact with 20 relevant industry and business representatives based in Kathmandu - many of them are forerunners of the handicraft businesses and social enterprises in Nepal.

Many business representatives not only provided feedbacks for further improving designs and quality of the CRP products which were showcased at the venue, but also generously offered support in the form of marketing opportunities, training, and information sharing. The local government representatives also



Business networking opportunities at the event

expressed their firm commitment to continue supporting these CRP groups' enterprises which feature their local culture.

Community resilience is strengthened with promoting disaster preparedness, which is developed by social networks and mutual support mechanisms through these CRPs implementation.

JICA launched the Project for Participatory Rural Recovery (PPRR) in 2019 as one of earthquake recovery projects. The aim of this program is to increase capacity of local governments and community groups through various livelihood-based Community Resilience Projects. PPRR has developed the 'Guidelines on Mainstreaming Community Resilience and Recovery in local plans' which will be shared with local governments.



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