

JICA is a Japanese government agency responsible for executing Japanese Official Development Assistance (ODA). JICA has 96 overseas offices (as of Jul, 2022) and conducts ODA projects in 139 developing countries (during fiscal year 2022). JICA has offices in St. Lucia, Jamaica, Belize and the Dominican Republic in the Caribbean. We are enhancing the capacity of the DR office to serve better to Caribbean people.



JICA Dominican Republic becomes the office responsible for CARICOM member states

As of October 1st, 2024, the JICA Dominican Republic Office has officially taken on the responsibility of overseeing operations for CARICOM member states, marking the launch of a new division dedicated to this region. In addition to the Dominican Republic and Haiti, the office will now serve 12 other CARICOM countries (St. Lucia, Jamaica, Antigua and Barbuda, the Bahamas, Barbados, Dominica, Grenada, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Trinidad and Tobago, Guyana and Suriname), making it the regional base office for 14 countries in the Caribbean.



Mr. Kota Sakaguchi, JICA’s Chief Representative of JICA Dominican Republic expresses passion about the office’s new role to promote and strengthen the Japanese cooperation in the region. He highlighted that JICA’s long-standing cooperation with CARICOM has laid a solid foundation for this new initiative, and that the organization is eager to continue the work with regional partners to address the unique challenges of Small Island Developing States (SIDS). Under this new structure, Mr. Sakaguchi hopes that JICA can continue to build on past successes, while exploring new avenues for collaboration, particularly in strengthening sectors such as education, health, water and sanitation, agriculture and fisheries, climate change and disaster management.

In light of this transition, **Mr. Hisashi Suzuki, Director of the new Caribbean division in JICA Dominican Republic**, visited the CARICOM Secretariat on September 4th. This visit aimed to explain JICA’s new operation management and explore avenues for strengthening and expanding cooperation between JICA and CARICOM.

In addition to the meetings with the CARICOM Secretariat, Mr. Suzuki’s tour, which spanned from September 1st to 11th, included courtesy visits to the Japanese Embassies in Barbados and Trinidad and Tobago, the Ministries of Foreign Affairs in Barbados, Guyana, and Trinidad and Tobago, and key partners and stakeholders across the region to discuss the progress of ongoing projects and potential new opportunities. Other notable highlights of this visit were the introduction of a Japanese expert, Mr. Matsumura, to the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA) in Barbados, and visits to JICA’s “Project for the Introduction of Renewable Energy and the Improvement of Power System” in Guyana.

The visit by Mr. Suzuki served as an important step in laying the groundwork for this new chapter of JICA’s cooperation in the Caribbean. As the division becomes fully operational, JICA will prepare to deepen its engagement with CARICOM member states, and by collaborating closely with the Jamaica and St. Lucia offices, strengthen its support to promote the sustainable development and resilience of the region.



Our Newcomer to the Region! Let us introduce Mr. Naoki Matsumura attached to CDEMA



I arrived in Barbados at the end of August 2024 as a **JICA Regional Policy Advisor for Disaster Risk Reduction** for the **Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA)**. I have been working in disaster risk reduction and water-related fields for more than 20 years, especially in the South Asia region.

Before coming to Barbados, I served as a Special Adviser in the Disaster Risk Reduction Group, Global Environment Department at JICA HQs, where I was involved in promoting to achieve Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 at various international conferences/seminars and building networks of disaster risk management professionals.

During my tenure in JICA HQs, I had a chance to participate in the **15th CDEMA Technically Advisory Committee (TAC) Meeting** held in Trinidad & Tobago in April 2024 and the **4th International Conference on Small Island Developing States (SIDS)** held in Antigua & Barbuda in May 2024, where I got acquainted with many stakeholders in the Caribbean region.

Similar to Japan, the Caribbean region is formed of many islands and has many similarities with disasters in Japan, such as hurricanes, floods, landslides earthquakes, and so on. South Asia and Bangladesh, where I have worked for many years, are also countries where similar cyclones, floods, and earthquakes occur frequently. I believe that the efforts to reduce disaster risks experienced in Japan and South Asia will be useful in the Caribbean region.

In particular, the amount of damage caused by hurricanes and other disasters in the region can sometimes exceed a country's GDP, so I believe that not only strengthening post-disaster response and recovery capacity but also preparing in advance and pre-disaster investment by taking structural measures to reduce risks will become extremely important for the future in the Caribbean region.

I am very proud to be a new CDEMA family member in this memorable year of the **Japan-CARICOM Friendship Year 2024**. As a new CDEMA family member, I would like to contribute disaster-related capacity building and promote disaster risk reduction efforts in the countries together with CDEMA's wonderful crew.

I look forward to interacting with readers of the newsletter and hope to work together!

JICA Volunteer

JICA's volunteer programs support activities by Japanese citizens who wish to cooperate in the economic and social development as well as the reconstruction of developing countries. 1,105 volunteers have been working with CARICOM nationals so far (as of June 2024).



Belize

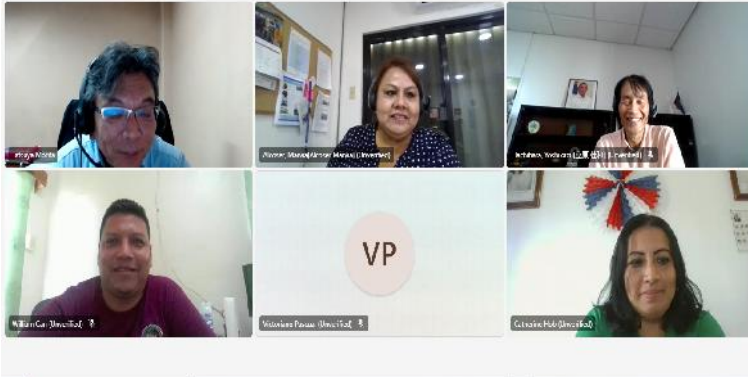
Mr. Tatsuya Nakadai, Primary School Education, teaches an art class at Gulisi Community Primary School.

Ms. Ana Shirai, attached to Corozal Town Council, recycles PET bottles with local children at summer camp.



The Knowledge Co-Creation Program (KCCP)

JICA's Knowledge Co-Creation Programs are a form of technical cooperation that JICA carries out in Japan. Some of the knowledge that Japanese society has accumulated, including its background in areas such as organizational know-how and social systems, can only be understood through first-hand experience. The programs are an important means of technical cooperation which supports human resource development and resolving issues in developing countries.



Ms. Catherine Hob (below far right), Agriculture Information Officer of the Ministry of Agriculture, Food Security and Enterprise of **Belize**, participated in the KCCP “SHEP” in February 2024. She informed that she has imparted the SHEP Approach learnt in Japan to her colleagues and that she is now working closely with farmers to increase their income and productivity through the SHEP Approach in the online meeting attended by her supervisor, Dr. Victoriano Pascual, Chief Agricultural Officer, and Mr. William Can, District Agriculture Officer.

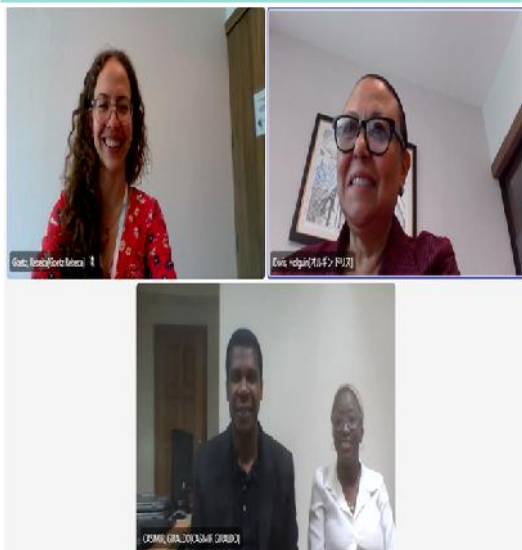
JICA Chair offers future leaders of partner countries the opportunity to learn about Japan's modernization and development experiences.



The 4th JICA Chair was held at **Sir Arthur Lewis Community College (SALCC) in Saint Lucia**. **Mr. Manabu Saito** gave the lecture “Improving Productivity in the Service Sector- Lessons from Japanese Experiences”. **Dr. Cletus I. Springer**, Chair of the SALCC Board of Directors and Honorable Consul of Japan stated that he was happy to see the deepening of exchanges between Japan and Saint Lucia through JICA Chair.



JICA Haiti Office



Always concerned and determined to strengthen the capacities of its staff for better performance in the exercise of their professional task, JICA through its office in the Dominican Republic carries out the On-the-Job Training (OJT) program for the strengthening of the management of cooperation by the National Staff..

In **Haiti**, taking advantage of the suspension of operations of the JICA office due to the security situation, JICA executes this program to strengthen the management of cooperation by NSs.

In this program, JICA offers a series of training themes that it considers essential for the cognitive and pragmatic development of national staff to better exercise their function. The program includes training sessions covering JICA's bilateral and multilateral cooperation policy; the implementation of projects and the role of national staff from the design phase of a project to the ex-post evaluation phase, and the coordination of the KCCP program, to achieve better outcomes of the JICA cooperation through this tool.

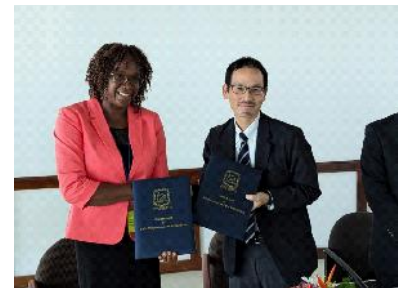
Through this training program, national staff acquire knowledge and obtain information that will enable them to better understand and grasp the key concepts of their task and to carry out their work with much more professionalism, care, tact, skill and enthusiasm. Our thanks go to the JICA team, and especially to Suzuki Hisashi san and Doris Holguín san, who are in charge of this program.

Emergency Disaster Relief

JICA dispatches Japan Disaster Relief (JDR) teams and provides emergency relief supplies when major disasters occur, mainly in but not limited to developing areas, in response to requests received from the governments of affected countries or international agencies.



Emergency relief supplies for Grenada arrived in the capital, St George's, on 22 July, 2024. A handover ceremony was held at the **National Disaster Management Agency (NaDMA)**, attended by **Hon. Joseph Andall, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Export Development**, **Mr. Terrence Walters, National Coordinator of the National Disaster Management Agency**, **H.E. Yutaka Matsubara, Ambassador of Japan** and **Mr. Ichiro Mimura, Chief Representative of JICA St Lucia Office**.



Emergency relief supplies to St Vincent and the Grenadines arrived in Kingstown on 10 July 2024. The handover ceremony at the Argyle International Airport was attended by **Mrs. Sandy Peters Phillips, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade**, **Mr. Nelson Stoddard, Deputy Director, National Emergency Management Organization (NEMO)**, **Mr. Naoki Saito, Second Secretary, Embassy of Japan**, and **Mr. Ichiro Mimura, Chief Representative, JICA St Lucia Office**, and **Mr. Anthony Regisford, Honorary Consul of Japan**.



The Project for Strengthening Sustainable Use and Management of Coastal Fisheries Resource in the CARICOM Countries hosted a regional seminar “**Fisheries Data Analysis with R 2024**” from Sept. 2 to Sept. 5, 2024. Six fisheries data analysts from OECS Countries were invited. The Seminar focused on learning practical and versatile analysis skills that will enhance their work. **Mr. Tetsuya Miyahara, Japanese Expert**, explained the drone data analysis.



JICA's Advisor, Mr. Tatsuya Morita, visited **St. Kitts and Nevis, Antigua and Barbuda and Dominica** in July 2024. He had discussions with the **Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Agriculture**, agencies responsible for renewable energy and solid waste management in each island.

My First Experience in the CARICOM Region



Hi, This is **Ryota Fukumoto** from **Latin America and the Caribbean Department at JICA Headquarters**. I visited **Jamaica** in September to have discussions with the officials of several government agencies such as the **Ministry of Finance and ODPEM (Office of Disaster Preparedness and Emergency Management)**. The main objective of my trip was to check on the progress of ongoing projects and discuss the formation of new ones. During my visit, I had the opportunity to visit the areas affected by Hurricane Beryl, which caused extensive damage across Jamaica in early July, notably impacting the southern coast, with significant damage to homes, crops, and infrastructure.

Japanese Government provided emergency relief goods on July 15 in response to the Hurricane disaster upon the request from the Government of Jamaica. On September 4, I visited Manchester Parish with some staff from JICA Jamaica office guided by Manchester Municipal Corporation officials, to check the storage status of emergency relief goods the Japanese government provided and the distribution operations, and had the opportunity to speak with victims who utilize the supplies. All the victims we met were grateful for the supplies, for example, one of them said that the tarpaulin came just in time, as the one he had on his roof got damaged the same night because of strong winds. At the same time, however, several issues were identified despite the hard work of all involved. In some parishes, there were delays in distribution due to a lack of the availability of their existing



human resources at the regional level. I believe this could be solved through JICA cooperation for national and local organizational capacity building with reflecting the response to Hurricane this time.

JICA's basic policy of cooperation for CARICOM is to overcome the vulnerabilities faced by Small Island Developing Countries (SIDS), and so far, JICA has provided cooperation to the disaster prevention sector in Jamaica through CDEMA advisor in Barbados, the project of tourism crisis management, and improvement of emergency communication system which was used in response to Hurricane Beryl and proved to be highly effective. In addition, we can provide a loan called SECURE (Stand-by Emergency Credit for Urgent Recovery) which enables cooperation at the Recovery Stage by making

quick disbursement for the demand for funds, although it has not yet been realized in Jamaica. Thus, JICA's strength lies in its ability to combine various schemes, such as technical cooperation, grant aid, and loans, as well as the dispatch of JICA volunteers.

As there are limited opportunities to visit the site while working at headquarters, this visit was a valuable experience for me. I would like to express my gratitude to all those involved. Based on this experience, as a country officer at headquarters, I will take the lead on future cooperation with the relevant departments within JICA and the government of Jamaica by leveraging the agreed items of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction and the strengths and assets of Japan and JICA.



UPCOMING
EVENTS

Nov. 4, 2024, **Japan-CARICOM Friendship Year 2024** - Highlighting Past and Future Cooperation in the Caribbean Water Sector in **Guyana**