

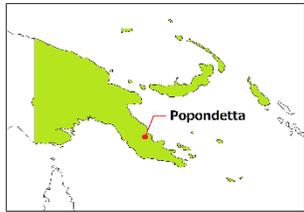


# Creativity and Originality

## Transforming ideas into Reality

JICA Papua New Guinea  
PR

JICA Volunteers  
「Humanity」  
JICA Volunteer's Story  
for tomorrow



### YAMAGATA Ryosuke



Pastor and his wife on a thanks-giving day

Term: 2019/7/23 - 2021/7/22  
Place: Popondetta, Oro Province  
Assigned organization: Oro Provincial  
Education Office/Betel Primary school  
Field: Youth Activities  
Home: YAMAGUCHI Prefecture, Japan

To be a teacher had always been my dream since I was small however, I wanted to broaden my views working as a JICA volunteer. Straight after graduating from university where I studied Education, I joined the JOCV scheme.

### 1. Summary of activities at assigned organization

I have been teaching Grade 3 students (50 students) English and Math at Bethel Primary School to build their literacy and numeracy skills. Also, I put an effort to spread the importance of the cultivation of aesthetic, moral, and religious sentiments.



### 2. Needs and Challenges in assigned organization

**Needs :** Lesson exercises that lead to the improvement of children's literacy and numeracy skills

**Challenges :** Low literacy and numeracy skills

The students have challenges with low literacy and numeracy skills. In numeracy skills, the common mistakes are found when they use double digits because they do not understand the concept of number quite well. In terms of literacy skills, reading & comprehension remains an obstacle due to the unavailability or low number of books. There are classes such as Arts and P.E. on the curriculum, but the classes are not always conducted due to the lack of innovative ideas and or unavailability of materials to use.



Phonics lesson for Grade 3



Grade 3 pupils in Math lessons

### 3. Tackling the Challenges



Grade 3 pupils working on 25 square calculations during recess

We focused on vocabulary building and spelling to improve their literacy skills. We used picture dictionaries to introduce a variety of vocabulary words with pictures and to put the learned words into a rhythm.

For spelling, we taught phonics. We practiced the song over and over so that the knowledge learned would stick.

In order to improve their Math skills, I showed pictures of apples, sticks and other illustrations and instructed them to make connections between numbers and concrete objects. I also gave more opportunities to practice calculations at the beginning of each class. In the art class, I showed them how to make crafts folding paper and simple drawings using everyday materials, as well as dances that could be performed in a limited space.

Boys enjoying making a helmet out of newspaper during art class.



## International exchange with local people, The connections created by living and working with the local people

The people of Papua New Guinea are generous and open-minded, and they warmly welcomed us as JICA volunteers. One of the most memorable occasions is Independence Day 2019. There are more than 800 tribes in PNG, and Independence Day is celebrated across the country with festivals and traditional dances from many different tribes.



Independence Day celebrated with traditional group

Since the celebrations, I have been approached by various people in town. Many people were interested in Japan, so we held a Japanese language class for those who wanted to learn Japanese

I was invited to join a traditional group by a local teacher at a secondary school where another JICA volunteer had worked as an ICT teacher. The group ranged from elders to young people, but they welcomed me, a foreigner who had just been posted to the province, with opened arms. After two weeks of rehearsals, we were allowed to wear the special costumes normally worn by chiefs, and many people were happy to have their photos taken with us.



Japanese language class with other JICA volunteer

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### Feedback Papua New Guinean's experience in Japan

While I am back in Japan, I am involved in two main activities: the first is giving lectures on international cooperation. I visit schools in my Prefecture to introduce the culture of Papua New Guinea and convey the appeal of Papua New Guinea, as well as to introduce the role of JICA and the challenges facing the world.

The second activity is a Study Support Program for junior high school students who come from single-parent families or families receiving school aid in the Prefecture. We provide them with a place to study and help them to learn to get to high school so that they can go onto high school and have a hopeful future.

### Lecture on International Cooperation



A study support program for children from disadvantaged backgrounds

## 5. Thanks



I learned a lot in the eight months I worked in Papua New Guinea. The biggest takeaway has been the realization of the nature of education. In the first few months in Papua New Guinea, I was confused by the different educational environment and had a difficult time however, the Papua New Guinean teachers, who never complained about the not-so-good educational environment, were strong and resilient, and taught me the essence of education: "Education is complete when there are people who teach and learn."