JICA DISPATCHES VOLUNTEERS TO THE NORTH FOR THE FIRST TIME

Amongst twelve JICA volunteers who arrived in the island in July 2013, three volunteers will serve in the Northern Province of Sri Lanka. With the dawn of peace in the Country, it has become possible for JICA to send volunteers to the Northern Province, following the dispatch of volunteers to the Eastern Province (in April 2012), after a lapse of 25 years.

Two of the three volunteers dispatched to the North will work with fishing communities that have already received support under a JICA funded seafood processing project. These two volunteers will work in the fields of food processing and sewing, while the third volunteer will work for the Vocational Training Center in Kaithady under the Vocational Training Authority in the field of motorcycle repair and maintenance.

Other volunteers dispatched by JICA include a volunteer in the field of automobile technology who will work for Hardy College of Technology – Ampara, two volunteers in the field of western music who will work for the Mahaweli National College of Education and an NGO named “The Music Project”, an occupational therapist who will work for the Department of Social Services of the North Western Province, two volunteers who will work in the area of special education in support of zonal education offices in Thambuttegama and Akkaraiapattu, a tennis coach who will work in Baticaloa in support of tennis development activities of the Sri Lanka Tennis Association, and two volunteers who will work in support of differently abled children and youth at Mithesevana – Dehiwala, and those who would be identified by the District office of the Department of Social Services in Baticaloa.

These volunteers have been equipped to live and work together with local communities whilst speaking their language, namely Sinhala or Tamil. The main objective of JICA’s Volunteer Programme is to contribute towards the socio economic development of the country through the use of volunteers’ professional skills and experience. The new batch of volunteers will join 40 other volunteers who are already engaged in conducting voluntary activities in a wide range of fields including education, social welfare, community development, vocational training, sports and such.

The strengths of JICA’s volunteers are their practical approach to problem solving, and their grasp of local languages, which enables them to interactively communicate with the local people. These volunteers use extremely creative means of communication, which is essential for effective teaching and training. They are able to positively influence those whom they work with due to their attitudes, strong sense of discipline and high emphasis on team work. These volunteers not only transfer technical skills, but also share knowledge on cultural aspects, and most importantly, build strong and long lasting friendships with local people that outlast their stay in Sri Lanka. Since the inception of JICA’s Volunteer Dispatch Programme to Sri Lanka in 1981, a total of 904 volunteers have worked in the country.

For more information; [http://www.jica.go.jp/english/operations/schemes/citizen/volunteers.html](http://www.jica.go.jp/english/operations/schemes/citizen/volunteers.html)
regions. In accordance with its vision of "inclusive and Dynamic Development," JICA supports the resolution of development issues in developing countries. In Sri Lanka, Japan has been providing financial and technical assistance since 1954, and is the largest donor to the country. On behalf of the people and the Government of Japan, JICA contributes towards the improvement of the lives of people in Sri Lanka.

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