JICA PROVIDES MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS TO PROMOTE ETHNIC HARMONY THROUGH MUSIC

JICA donated musical instruments to The Music Project, an NGO engaged in conducting activities aimed at creating harmony amongst children from different ethnic and cultural backgrounds, through the common language of music. The musical instruments were handed over at a ceremony held on 7th October 2013, with the participation of officials from the Embassy of Japan, Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), and The Music Project. These instruments that included violins, clarinets, flutes, guitars, wind chimes, recorders and melodicas were donated by well-wishers and charity organizations that collected used equipment which they are glad to provide in order to support this worthy cause. JICA, under its Smile for All Programme, facilitated the process required to make this endeavor a reality.

JICA's involvement in supporting the activities of The Music Project is not only limited to what it has done through the Smile for All Programme. Since March 2013, JICA has sent three Japanese volunteers under its Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteer Programme (JOCV), who have conducted music training in collaboration with music trainers of The Music Project in Kurunegala and Mullativu. Recently, 80 Sinhala children from Kurunegala traveled to Mullativu in order to join 90 Tamil children from the north for a four day residential workshop that was sponsored by JICA. Whilst learning music, the children got a wonderful opportunity in interacting with those from ethnic and cultural backgrounds that were much different to theirs. In addition to providing an opportunity for underprivileged children to learn musical skills, these activities would also help such children form a better understanding of each other, and undoubtedly contribute towards fostering ethnic harmony amongst future generations.

Through its volunteer programme, JICA has been supporting western music education in Sri Lanka for a period of over two decades. During this period, ten volunteers have served under the Ministry of Education. Six of these volunteers have worked in support of western music courses conducted at the Mahaweli National College of Education, which produces western music teachers for the school system. Through such support, JICA has ensured that its contribution towards the improvement of western music education in Sri Lanka has had a wide and far reaching impact.
Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) is the executing agency of Japan’s Bilateral Official Development Assistance (ODA). JICA, the world’s biggest bilateral aid agency, works in over 150 countries and 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.