JICA VOLUNTEERS TO FOCUS ON EDUCATION AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

The latest batch of Japanese Overseas Cooperation Agency (JICA) volunteers arrived in Sri Lanka on 9th January 2014. These volunteers are here to provide services in specific fields of expertise, under JICA’s ongoing Volunteer Dispatch Programme.

This new batch of 9 volunteers join 50 other volunteers who are already engaged in conducting voluntary activities in a wide range of fields in various parts of the country. The new volunteers will work in various fields of education, skills development and social welfare. The volunteers include two volunteers in the field of early childhood education and primary education who will be assigned to the Zonal Education Office in Mannar, and a volunteer in the field of air-conditioning and refrigeration who will be assigned to the Vocational Training Authority – District Training Center in Vavuniya. It is the first time JICA is dispatching volunteers to the above areas. The other volunteers include a lecturer in Japanese language education who is assigned to work for the University of Sabaragamuwa, a mathematics teacher who will be assigned to the Akkarapattu Zonal Education Office, a ceramics specialist who will work for the University of Visual & Performing Arts, a western music teacher who is assigned to the Ministry of Education, a volunteer who will support awareness programmes of the Solid Waste Management Support Center, and a physiotherapist who will be assigned to District Social Service Office in Batticaloa.

JICA 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 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 916 volunteers have worked in the country.
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.

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