



July 2006
Volume 4, Issue 7

Friendship & Co-operation



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First JICA Technical Cooperation Project in the Health Sector in Syria

According to a request made by the Syrian Government, to support enhancing the maternal and child health and reproductive health status in Aleppo Governorate, JICA is going to implement a technical cooperation project on "Strengthening Reproductive Health", which is considered as an initial part of continuous program.

In this regard, JICA expert team has arrived in Syria on Jun.10th,2006 to facilitate the project's activities.

The Project consists of a Project Director, Project Manager and other health personnel on the Syrian side, and a Chief Advisor, A project Coordinator and experts of designated areas on the Japanese side

The duration of the project will be for three years from June 2006 to March 2009, and will target Manbej District. The project will establish a Project Steering Committee, a Project Technical Committee, and Community Based Working Group to promote the project activities.

The expert team started their activities in Syria by visiting the Directorates of Primary Health care in Damascus and Aleppo, which are belonging to the Ministry of Health, Aleppo Directorate of Health, Aleppo Governor, and other concerned Organizations such as WHO, UNFPA, UNICEF,EU, Syrian Family Planning Organization, Women Union, and others.

It is worth mentioning that this project came as a result of the Record of Discussions signed between JICA Syria Office and Ministry of Health, concluding the consultations on the details of the project on October 11,2005



JOCV Leaves Syria

Mr. Yoshiaki KANZAWA; the JOCV volunteer at General Commission for Scientific Agricultural



Research (GCSAR) is leaving Syria after 2 years of Successful mission.

He has worked with his counterparts on experimenting the use of different types of Agricultural Films on summer crops. The objective of the two experiments was to find the proper arrangement for these plants. The results of these experiments will be utilized as one of the references for DEITEX project.



More IT Division Manager

Damascus University & JICA Syria Office held the Opening Ceremony of "IT Division Manager" training course on Sunday 18 June 2006 at Karim Rida Said Conference Center in Damascus University.

During the event, opening remarks highlighted the importance of Capacity Building Program supported by JICA. Dr Wael Mualla, President of Damascus University, pointed out that this training course is considered vital in enabling the University through cooperation with JICA to play a key role by offering training opportunities for Syrian governmental officers. JICA Deputy Resident Representative; Mr. Otake Shigeru, said, that this training course is the third one out of six schedule training courses agreed on 11 May 2005 between the two

sides following the successful implementation of the pilot training course took place in January 2005.



The participants to the 3rd «IT Division Manager» course

The next training course is scheduled in January 2007. JICA Consultant and Course Coordinator; Dr. Ammar Kheirbek, mentioned that 20 participants were accepted to this training course, among the 55 applicants that have been nominated by different

Syrian Governmental organisations.

Three participants came from Homs, and one of them has come all the way down from al-Hasake! The rest are settled in Damascus. They are all working for Public Organisations, managing IT Departments over there, or supposed to be managers later on during their career. Many participants are joining this training opportunity thanks to good reputation gained during the already completed courses.

This Course is scheduled to last till 01 August 2006. At the end of the training, each participant will propose his/her action plan, on how to improve their working environment.

Opening of Training Course Targeting Iraq on Genetic Transformation

Under JICA's Technical Cooperation Project in the field of "Enhancing Human Resources Development in Iraq" and with cooperation with the International Centre for Agricultural Research in the Dry Areas (ICARDA). The third course in FY 2006 was opened.

Mr. Nagasawa, JICA's Resident Representative in Syria, gave a speech explaining about JICA, its message of peace building, and the importance of this training course. He encouraged the trainees to benefit as much as possible from being in ICARDA, and Syria, and clarified that, although this training course is short in term of time but it should give the trainees

a big opportunity to build an active network with ICARDA and among themselves. Mr. Nagasawa urged them to bring their gained experience back home, and contribute effectively in the development of their countries.

While Dr. Samir El-Sebae Ahmad; Head of Human Resources



Development at ICARDA explained about the conception under of Third Country Training Course scheme, and its importance in capacity development for the beneficiary countries.

Furthermore, Dr. William Erskine, Assistant Director General, and Dr. Michael Baum, explained briefly about the training course objectives and importance from the technical and scientific points of view. It is worth mentioning that in addition to trainees from Iraq, scientists and technical officers from Iran, Tunisia, Yemen, Oman, Morocco, Pakistan, and of course Syria has joined the course.



JICA's Seminar on Early Childhood Education

In the framework of JICA's continuous support for pre-school education, JICA Egypt Office organized a workshop from June 4th to June 8th 2006, for supervisors and instructors of preschool level from Egypt, Syria, Jordan and Yemen.

Amongst the altogether 73 participants, Syrian delegation consisted of twelve supervisors from the Women Federation, headed by Mrs. Harbieh Al-Baida, head of the Childhood Bureau, and all the nine JOCV volunteers deployed to Syria in the domain.



Group of Participants from Syria

JICA is working to develop the early childhood education through the dispatch of JOCV volunteers to many countries in the region because of great importance of this stage in children's life, and thus, will affect the development of future generations; those who will lead the country's future development process. The immense responsibility of all related personnel in preschool education and the necessity of continuous training and follow-up courses for the instructors and the supervisors.

The objective of this workshop is to stimulate discussions on the system of preschool

education amongst all related personnel in the four participating countries, as well as problems, difficulties, and suggested solutions in cooperation to be carried out in cooperation with JOCV volunteers.

The results of this workshop were palpable and manifold. The JOCV volunteers did their best to prepare a special guide book to be used by all participants, in addition to the necessary studies for dispatching JOCV volunteers to the recipient organizations. Their local counterparts received a good explanation about the activities of the Japanese volunteers through practical training on how to utilize the educational material, tools, and activities introduced to them.

Moreover, a communication network between the participants will be established for exchanging information on the most effective means for developing the education in the preschool level.

Mrs. Harbieh Al-Baida and Ms. Ai Yoshida, in their presentation, gave a clear description of the present situation in Syrian kindergartens and the action plan for the coming three years.



Mrs. Harbieh Al Baida Presentation

They concentrated on the benefits to be gained from the cooperation with the Japanese volunteers, through workshops conducted in many Syrian cities on educational material, stages of child growth, and on the On-Job Training in the kindergartens conducted by the Japanese volunteers. They also gave an account of tackling the obstacles they face in their daily work.



Practical lectures

The workshop was coupled with field visits to the kindergarten college at Cairo University and several local kindergartens.

Participants evaluated the workshop as "Successful", and determined to transfer their acquired knowledge to their colleagues in their own respective countries.



Inauguration of DEITEX Training Model Farm

On June 1st, 2006, an inauguration ceremony took place for the model farm in Kafer Hour, the small village on the Mountainside of Haramoun in Rural Damascus.



This model farm is one of three farms installed within the activities of Development of Efficient Irrigation Techniques and Extension (DEITEX) Project, as one of the inputs provided by the Japanese Government, according to the project's technical cooperation agreement signed in 2005.

The ceremony was attended by senior officials of the Syrian Government, on the top of which, was Dr. Nabi Rasheed Mohammed; deputy Minister of Agriculture, who represented H.E. the minister, the

sponsor of the ceremony, in addition to representatives of local government and NGOs, and the local farmers.

In his speech, Dr. Nabi, emphasised on the importance of the transfer to the modern irrigation techniques for the Syrian Government, in order to save every necessary drop of water to achieve the desired social and economic development.



DEITEX- Saving Every Drop

Dr. Riad Al- Shayeb; Director of ANRR, explained in his speech, that this project, is a practical demonstration of how to disseminate the research knowledge through extension, and hoped, that farmers will realise the importance of the new techniques, once the sense the

physical benefits of saving water.



Mr. Nagasawa during opening speech

Mr. Nagasawa; JICA's Resident Representative; pointed out from his side, that this project is one of the projects that comes within JICA's important sector on Water Sector Development in Syria, and serving the overall goal of efficient use of the limited water resources to improve the people livelihood, and sustainable development of the country.



The 4th Syrian – Japanese Water Symposium

On June 8th the 4th Syrian-Japanese Water Symposium was held within the activities of JICA's Technical Cooperation Project on Establishment of Water Resources Information Centre (WRIC).

The water symposium objective was to inform all concerned entities, about the progress of the project, along all its activities, coordination, and share knowledge.

Among the attendees, representatives from Ministries of Irrigation, Agriculture and Agrarian Reform, Housing and Construction, General Organisation of Re-

mote Sensing, DAWSSA, ACSAD, and others.

Participants presented their activities, related to water resource management, and exchanged points of view through subsequent discussions.



WRIC project was initiated on the basis of 1996 JICA's Development Study on preparing the master plan for the comprehensive development of water resources in the areas of five water basins: Barada-Awaj, Orontes, Coastal, Aleppo, and Steppe.

WRIC aims at helping the Syrian Government to improve water resources information management throughout the country, and develop decision-makers that can utilize water resources information.

To visit WRIC on the Web, dial <http://www.wric-sy.org>