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The Program for Human Resource Development for Peacebuilding

Report of Program Activities

Hiroshima Peacebuilders Center (HPC)
URL: http://www.peacebuilderscenter.jp

Hiroshima Peacebuilders Center
We Aim to Develop Peacebuilding Experts
Messages from Key Agencies

Mr. Fumio KISHIDA  Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan
Pursuing Human Resource Development for Peacebuilding from the Perspective of “Proactive Contribution to Peace”

Civilian experts with strong capabilities and deep expertise in a wide range of fields are needed more than ever in the process of peacebuilding from conflict prevention to reconstruction and development in post-conflict situations. However, there is a serious lack of qualified personnel. As a “Proactive Contributor to Peace” based on the principle of international cooperation, Japan aims to nurture through this program civilian experts, who are capable of contributing to peacebuilding on the ground. Japan also expressed its renewed commitment to human resource development for peacebuilding at the United Nations General Assembly last year. I sincerely hope that the participants of this program will follow the path of their predecessors around the globe and become peacebuilders, forging peace and stability in the international community.

Mr. Richard DICTUS  Executive Coordinator, United Nations Volunteers (UNV) Programme

In countries or regions severely falling short of the threshold of peace and inclusive social and economic development, it has been proven over time and again that volunteers play a key role. Volunteerism facilitates a strong transition between emergency relief and rebuilding processes in the field. Volunteerism leverages and strengthens capacities in communities faced with situations of chronic vulnerability.

UNV is enthusiastically promoting the Program for Human Resource Development for Peacebuilding volunteers to make development and peace action in some of the most difficult settings in the world. These young men and women in early stages of their careers bring valuable experience and enthusiasm to their assignments. And, as is so often heard in this line of work, what they take back home with them is even greater – the invaluable experience of having lived and worked side by side with people of other cultures and countries to improve the lives of others.

Mr. Sukehiro HASEGAWA  Chair of HPC Council for the JFY2014 “Program for Human Resource Development for Peacebuilding” / Visiting Professor, Hosei University and United Nations University / Former Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General for Timor-Leste

The roles of peacekeepers and builders have been changing rapidly along with the changes taking place in the nature of peace itself. When the United Nations was founded in 1945, peace was meant simply as an absence of war and armed conflict between states. As conflict became intra-state or regional in nature and scale after the end of the Cold War at the end of 1980’s, peacekeeping operations were designed to manage and contain conflict. In the 1990’s and the early-years of the new century, the role of peace operations became not only to manage and stop relative conflict, but also to address root causes of conflict and build sustainable peace based on rule of law and democratic principles. As the nature of conflict became ideological and local in recent years, peacebuilders are now required to master the basic knowledge of state-building, human rights, rule of law and democratic principles and also to understand what motivates and influences the behavior of people in conflict-prone countries. Ultimately, peacebuilders are expected to help national leaders and people to change their minds and mentality, while noting that each country and society has its values, principles and customs that are unique. The role of peacebuilders is to help integrate in a balanced manner these local and universal norms and codes of human behavior. Political and civil rights based on human rights and freedoms need to be balanced by “virtue” and “compassion” that societal and communal leaders must possess. It is imperative for peacebuilders to understand and adapt their peacebuilding skills to these changing requirements of the new era.
About the Program for Human Resource Development for Peacebuilding

Establishment of the Program

In 2002, the Advisory Group on International Cooperation for Peace (AGICP) was convened to examine and strengthen Japan’s support for the consolidation of peace and state-building efforts in conflict-affected countries. Chaired by the former Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations, Yasushi Akashi, the AGICP produced a report in December of the same year calling for the creation of an interconnected and comprehensive system to develop, train, recruit, and deploy personnel for international peace operations by promoting coordination between the public and private sectors.

Consequently, an Action Plan was introduced in April 2004 to lay-out specific measures for human resource development. In December of the same year, a seminar was held to explore the importance of personnel training as part of international peace cooperation.

In response to these developments, the establishment of the “Peace Program for Human Resource Development in Asia for Peacebuilding” was announced at a seminar event titled “People Building Peace: Human Resource Development in Asia for Peacebuilding,” which took place at United Nations University in August 2006. At subsequent events including the East Asia Summit held in January 2007, the idea of a Human Resource Development Program was further expanded to include participation from the Asia region.

With the aim of facilitating Japan’s further contribution to global peace and development, the Program was conducted for 7 years from JFY2007 to JFY2013 and the JFY2014 Program was also implemented by the Hiroshima Peacebuilders Center (HPC). Graduates of the Program are now making active contributions to peacebuilding in South Sudan, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Afghanistan, and other numerous locations.

Implementing Bodies of the Program

The JFY2014 Program was implemented by the Hiroshima Peacebuilders Center (HPC) in cooperation with the United Nations’ Volunteers (UNV) Programme.

Hiroshima Peacebuilders Center (HPC)

HPC is a legally independent body that conducts human resource development and research activities in the field of peacebuilding. HPC was commissioned for the Program for Human Resource Development for Peacebuilding by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan in JFY2014 and implemented the program drawing on its experiences over the past 7 years.

United Nations Volunteers (UNV) Programme

The United Nations Volunteers (UNV) Programme is the UN organisation that contributes to peace and development through volunteerism worldwide. Volunteerism is a powerful means of engaging people in tackling development challenges, and it can transform the pace and nature of development. Volunteerism benefits both society at large and the individual volunteer by strengthening trust, solidarity and reciprocity among citizens, and by purposefully creating opportunities for participation.

UNV contributes to peace and development by advocating for recognition of volunteers, working with partners to integrate volunteerism into development programming, and mobilizing an increasing number and diversity of volunteers, including experienced UN Volunteers, throughout the world. UNV embraces volunteerism as universal and inclusive, and recognizes volunteerism in its diversity as well as the values that sustain it: free will, commitment, engagement and solidarity.

UNV administers the Overseas Assignment component of the Program.

The Concept of the JFY2014 Program for Human Resource Development for Peacebuilding

Primary Course

Coursework in Japan

The Program Associates (PAs) from Japan and other countries lived together under the same roof for 7 weeks to improve their peacebuilding-related knowledge and skills by learning from one another. Participatory problem-solving workshops, open discussions, and individual career consultations as well as lectures were incorporated into the coursework to create an effective approach to peacebuilding support. Based on advanced studies on peacebuilding, HPC organized the Coursework by inviting qualified facilitators of the highest caliber and collaborating with overseas training institutes as well as international organizations such as the United Nations. Consequently, the PAs were able to build networks with practitioners actively working on the frontlines of peacebuilding.

Overseas Assignment (OA)

After the Coursework in Japan, Japanese PAs are deployed to the offices of international organizations involved in peacebuilding activities and work on the ground as UN Volunteers for a maximum of 12 months. Practical experience in the field is essential for becoming a professional peacebuilder. The OA is designed as an opportunity to apply knowledge and skills learned through the Coursework in Japan to practical peacebuilding activities.

Seminar on Introduction to Peacebuilding

Workshop on Peacebuilding

Held for the first time in 2014, the 2-day “Workshop on Peacebuilding” specifically focused on gender issues. The Workshop on Peacebuilding, targeting those who already have significant experience in peacebuilding, aimed to strengthen the participants’ knowledge and awareness of gender issues as they relate to peacebuilding and develop the means to leverage these in the field.

Human Resource Development and Career Formation through the Program

Mr. Hideaki SHINODA

MOFA / The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan

“Peacebuilding and the Rule of Law”

State Sovereignty as a Historical and Political Concept

Characteristics of the Training Courses

Providing opportunities to gain knowledge and practical skills that are beneficial in career development

Knowledge beneficial to career development covers a broad range of theories, norms, and policies on peacebuilding. Not only do we provide the necessary knowledge directly but we also adopt simulation sessions to develop various kinds of abilities to cope with aid coordination and project management. Those sessions are designed to offer the opportunity to gain experience of problem-solving in a group work environment simulating reality in the field. These are useful capacities for the PAs of the Primary Course, especially the Japanese PAs who are deployed in peacebuilding for the completion of the training course.

Providing the environment to sharpen mind-set for career development

It is important to continuously think about why and how we are involved in peacebuilding in order to develop long-term careers. We aimed to deepen the motives and commitment of each participant toward peacebuilding. Furthermore, career development within international organizations such as the United Nations require multi-dimensional “competencies” of individuals. We understand the Primary Course training itself as an experience of dynamic activities of multinational teams aiming for common goals, which provides concrete experiences useful to develop competencies.

Providing opportunities to build human networks between practitioners, graduates, and international Program Associates

Having senior associates and friends to consult, compete with and learn from, is crucial in the long-term career development. There is no single fixed path to develop a professional career for peacebuilding where people with diverse educational backgrounds and job experiences are engaged. Hence, it is important to know about as many careers as possible and then to create a vision of your own career. HPC takes extra steps to facilitate networks between PAs, graduates and facilitators who have rich knowledge and experiences so that they can build active interactions, share concerns, extend a circle of people with common objectives and establish relationships of mutual trust.
World-Class Facilitators Train Field-Ready Experts

The Courseroom of the Primary Course in Japan was carried out mainly in Tokyo and Hiroshima for about 6 weeks from January 23rd to March 6th, 2011. The Course was designed for those who have the strong determination to develop their careers in the field of peacebuilding. This fiscal year, 30 Program Associates (PAs), composed of 15 Japanese and 15 Asian, African, and Middle Eastern PAs, participated in the Primary Course. Led by experts in the field of peacebuilding, the Courseroom enabled the PAs to obtain the necessary practical knowledge, skills, and experience as peacebuilding experts. The Courseroom entailed conflict analysis, planning, coordination between diverse organizations, and management of activities based on local environment. Furthermore, in order to maximize the effectiveness of the training, HCP organized role-playing and group work exercises on various themes. After the completion of the Courseroom in Japan, Japanese PAs are dispatched to field offices of international organizations to engage in peacebuilding activities as UN Volunteers. We anticipate the progressive success of this year’s PAs who have taken their first step forward to become experts in peacebuilding.

Curriculum / Facilitators

Week 1

Mr. Hidetoshi Shimoda
Mr. Yuya Uesugi
Mr. Ayako Suzuki
Mr. Naoki Saito
Mr. Hideki Shimoda
Mr. Yui Uesugi
Mr. William Barriga
Mr. Toshiyuki Ohashi
Mr. Hiroshi Fujisawa
Mr. Kazumasa Oka
Mr. Yuji Oku
Mr. Kazuko Endo
Mr. Kohei Hoshi
Mr. Takahiro Hoshi
Mr. Kazumasa Nakanishi
Mr. Shinya Okumura
Mr. Miki Teru
Mr. Subohiro Hasagawa
Mr. Japan Ground Self-Defense Force (JGSDF) Garrison in Komakado, Shizuoka Prefecture

Week 2

Analysis

Mr. Marshall Conley
Mr. Akira Suzuki
Mr. Naoyuki Ohashi
Mr. Hirono Fujisawa
Mr. Kyoichi Oso
Mr. Yuya Hoshi
Mr. Naoki Kazumoto
Mr. Miki Teru
Mr. Subohiro Hasagawa

Week 3

Planning

Mr. John Campbell
Mr. Leesa Robinson
Mr. Minako Kato
Mr. Sojiro Nakamura
Mr. Yohei Nakamura
Mr. Kenjiro Murakami
Mr. Satoru Nakamura
Mr. Koosuke Seki
Mr. Kenichi Kobayashi
Mr. Koichi Terano
Mr. Shoichi Hasagawa

Week 4

Coordination

Mr. Koichi Komatsubara
Mr. Tsuyoshi Nakamura
Mr. Naoyuki Ohashi
Mr. Hideki Shimoda
Mr. Yui Uesugi

Week 5

Management

Mr. John Campbell
Mr. Leesa Robinson
Mr. Miki Teru
Mr. Subohiro Hasagawa
Mr. Hideki Shimoda
Mr. Yui Uesugi

Week 6

Skill Up Session / Career Design

Mr. Miki Teru
Mr. Chao-Sing Chen

Peacebuilding is a complex endeavor which involves actors from various levels – international actors ranging from international organizations to non-governmental organizations as well as local actors if one considers about sustainability of peace which is being built in a society. Focus is also necessary in considering the engagement of new emerging donors in peacebuilding. One of the keys to peacebuilding is collaborations among this wide-range of actors.

Because the actors involved in peacebuilding are diverse, establishing a global network of peacebuilders composed of both Program Associates/participants and facilitators is beneficial to all of them. This is just as important as the contents of the Courseroom. This nature of the Program, I believe, is one of the reasons why this Program is called the Human Resource Development for Peacebuilding.
Primary Course Overseas Assignment

Peacebuilding Work Experience on the Ground as a UN Volunteer

After the Courserwork in Japan, Program Associates (PAs) of the Primary Course are dispatched on their Overseas Assignment (OA) for a minimum of 12 months through the United Nations Volunteers (UNV) Programme to peacebuilding missions such as field offices of UN organizations around the world. Duty stations are determined by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan through a matching process between PAs and UNV based on experience, suitability, and career plans of PAs as well as the needs of host agencies.

Practical field experience is essential for becoming a professional peacebuilding personnel. Through the OA, PAs will not only receive training but also work as UN Volunteers in the field offices of international organizations. This is a valuable opportunity for them to apply the theories and skills acquired in the Courserwork in Japan to actual field activities while also gaining on-the-job experience.

In previous years, PAs have been deployed to various UN missions, funds, and programs such as United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), World Food Programme (WFP), International Organization for Migration (IOM), etc. Their duty stations have been in various regions including Africa, Europe, Middle East, Central Asia, South-east Asia, and Central America. Through OA, the Program aims to develop field-ready personnel and deploy experts capable of succeeding in the world. Furthermore, the OA is designed for PAs as a step to develop their career in the field of peacebuilding. The Japanese PAs of FY 2014 will soon depart for their OA after completing the Courserwork in Japan.

UNV is responsible for administering the OA component of the Program. Following the extensive matching process, PAs are dispatched to the UN and other agencies on the frontlines of peacebuilding to directly work with vulnerable groups, such as refugees, women, children and other victims of conflicts.

Examples of Duty Stations for the Overseas Assignment

Program Associates of the Primary Course in FY 2013 Deployed as UN Volunteers in 2014

- UNDP (United Nations Development Programme)
- KOICA: Zambia / Tanzania - Goverment-funded
- WFP (World Food Programme)
- UNICEF (United Nations Children’s Fund)
- UN Women (United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women)
- UNHCR: Yemen / Ecuador
- UNHCR: United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
- Japan
- UNICEF: Office of the United Nations Resident Coordinator (UNRC)
- Philippines
- UNICEF: Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights

JFY 2007-2013

- Total positions of the UN organizations and others: 85
- Total number of Duty Stations for the Overseas Assignment: 43 countries and territories

Due to the on-going political and humanitarian crises in various countries, the number of Duty Stations in FY 2013 was increased from FY 2012.

Message Mr. John CAMPBELL
I would like to express my deepest gratitude for the opportunity to participate in the “Program for Human Resource Development for Peacebuilding” initiated by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan and Hiroshima Peacebuilding Center (HPC). Coming from a private global consulting firm and NGOs, I had joined this Program to enrich my field experience and expand my career in the area of peacebuilding and educational development.

The Courserwork did not only bring my basic knowledge of peacebuilding, but also established a perfect foundation for the Overseas Assignment as a UN Volunteer. Through the lectures, simulated exercises and sharing of experiences with the international participants, I greatly appreciated working with fellow peacebuilders from diverse backgrounds and top-class facilitators who had led and have been leading peace related activities in the world. The stimulating interactions certainly broaden my perspective and provided me an opportunity to develop my thoughts in career development.

I strongly recommend this Program to anyone who aims to develop his/her career within the UN organizations and who seeks to contribute in peacebuilding by realizing the continuing success of our co-program associates as well as the longitudinal convention of this Program.

Message Ms. Tomoko NAKAJIMA
I would like to express my deepest gratitude for the opportunity to participate in the “Program for Human Resource Development for Peacebuilding” initiated by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan and Hiroshima Peacebuilding Center (HPC). Coming from a private global consulting firm and NGOs, I had joined this Program to enrich my field experience and expand my career in the area of peacebuilding and educational development.

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Seminar on Introduction to Peacebuilding

Invaluable Lectures and Interactive Discussions

The Seminar on Introduction to Peacebuilding was conducted at the United Nations University in Tokyo from December 15th to 19th, 2014. This Seminar was offered to Japanese nationals who have an active interest in the area of peacebuilding. For FY2014, a total of 30 participants were selected through open recruitment and recommendation from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan. The diverse participants included students, government officials, staff from non-governmental organizations, lawyers, nurses, and development assistance workers. After clarifying that the objective of the seminar was to contemplate careers in peacebuilding, the seminars covered basic theories of peacebuilding and methodologies for conflict analysis. The Seminar also offered some perspectives on the relationship between development and armed conflict. Through group discussions, participants were able to engage with the lecturers in active debate and exchange comments. On the final day of the Seminar, the participants discussed and gave group presentations on the future of Japanese peacebuilding. We strongly believe that the inclusive environment with specialized lectures and participants from diverse backgrounds provided the opportunity for participants to broaden their views on building careers in peacebuilding.

Message
Mr. Yasushi KATSUMA
Professor, Graduate School of Pacific Studies, Meiji University

I conducted a lecture on “Humanitarian Assistance and Peacebuilding,” referring to my related experience as a member of the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) staff in Afghanistan as well as my recent research on Japan Platform’s humanitarian assistance for Syria that is carried out by Japanese NGOs.

The characteristics of humanitarian assistance radically changed during the 1990s. The UN adopted a coordination mechanism, operationalized a reform to foster integrity between peacebuilding and reconstruction assistance, and introduced the cluster approach. On the other hand, as military organizations increase their presence in the field of humanitarian activities, the UN agencies and NGOs are now facing the necessity of civil-military coordination.

The participants of the Seminar were not only students but also practitioners from a variety of fields, such as NGO staff, consultants, and government officials - I tried to introduce practical aspects to the students during the course, while providing theoretical frameworks and policy backgrounds for practitioners. Since there is no straightforward answer to the mounting number of issues, critical thinking skills are crucial in the area of peacebuilding. I encouraged active participation by facilitating discussions in case studies, so that the participants would be able to develop the ability to think by themselves.

Despite the limitation of the Seminar, the covered major topics, providing an overview of peacebuilding issues. The participants can then deepen their knowledge respectively upon the topics which interested them during the Seminar. I closed the lecture by explaining the types of posts available within the UN and other international organizations in order to offer some insights for career development, which was followed by interactive discussion among the participants.

Message
Mr. Yasue YOSHINO

My career is unique. I became a nurse after working as a systems engineer in the private sector for 7 years. I seek the opportunity to use my unique experience to contribute to peacebuilding in post-war countries/areas.

The participants of the Seminar have various profiles, such as advocates, consultants, CDF personnel, students etc. All of them have great interest in peacebuilding. We could inspire each other by exchanging opinions about peacebuilding and talking about our Future careers.

The Seminar gave us a lot of new knowledge and new perspectives. The lectures are so experienced in the field of peacebuilding that it was an invaluable experience. On the other hand, I was shocked and felt powerless when I learned how difficult it is to build peace in historically or/and ethnically complicated countries/areas.

Nevertheless, I was greatly encouraged to do my best when the lecturers frankly told us about their experience and tips on how to contribute by gaining employment in the UN. I appreciated this opportunity. I would like to gain practical experience in the post-war countries/areas in the near future.

Message
Mr. Shohei SUGITA

While working as a lawyer, I studied about projects on legal assistance carried out by the Japan Federation of Bar Associations. I decided to participate in this Seminar, wishing to obtain the basic skills to understand the possibilities of the implementation of legal assistance projects and their expected outcomes within the area of peacebuilding, not only in the field of development.

The Seminar equipped me with basic knowledge within the scope of peacebuilding and career development. The Seminar offered me a diverse curriculum to learn comprehensively through interactive seminars and workshops which covered a wide range of fields and approaches from conflict resolution, international law and economic development to geopolitics. Furthermore, through interacting with the participants from various backgrounds during the Seminar, I was able to rethink the concept of peacebuilding. It is related issue from a cross-sectional perspective. I wish to contribute personally in the area of peacebuilding through legal assistance as a lawyer, with skills to assess the impact of the projects from the perspective of both peacebuilding and development.

I would like to express my appreciation to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan (MOFA) and the people of RPC for the grateful encounter, and also wish for the wonderful opportunity to enhance my understanding of peacebuilding.
A Primary Course Graduate at the Helm: A Workshop on Gender Issues in Peacebuilding

The 2-day Workshop on Peacebuilding was held from December 20th to 21st, 2014 at the National Olympic Memorial Youth Center in Tokyo. The Workshop targeted experienced personnel who have already been engaged in peacebuilding. The Workshop, conducted in English, aimed to strengthen the understanding of how if specifically aimed to impart participants with skills, knowledge and experience in gender issues in relation to peacebuilding.

The facilitators included Ms. Marie Onnwa (Advisor for Sexual Violence in Conflict for UN WOMEN Democratic Republic of Congo) and Ms. Mariko Uno (Professor, Waseda University). Ms. Onnwa, a graduate of the initial year of the Program for Human Resource Development for Peacebuilding, Mr. Tajdug Singh Warach (Former Major General, UN Peacekeeping Operations (PKO) of the Indian Army), and Ms. Jane Rhodes (Police Reform Advisor, the Standing Police Capacity, UN), all of them with rich experience in UN PKO missions. The facilitators guided participants through interactive sessions that included lectures and Q&A sessions.

Ms. Onnwa introduced legal, political and strategic frameworks on gender issues, explaining UN Security Council Resolutions (UNSCR) 1325 and other related UNSCRs. Ms. Onnwa discussed the nature and causes of gender violence during armed conflict and its impact. Ms. Onnwa emphasized that in order to address gender violence, long-term commitments by various actors are necessary. Ms. Warach discussed from the military perspective the challenges of addressing gender issues in peacebuilding. Ms. Rhodes emphasized the necessity for sensitivity towards gender issues within police activities in post-conflict environments. Additionally, the participants were divided into groups for a simulation exercise which aimed to develop practical views on the implementation of UNSCR 1325 and 1820, followed by active discussions.

As a lead up the 15th anniversary of UNSCR 1325 this year, the initiative of the Government of Japan (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan) to host the Workshop titled gender and peacebuilding is timely, representing the Government of Japan’s commitment to advance gender issues in international peacebuilding. It was participated by member states and NGOs from all over the world. The Workshop aimed to discuss the UNSCR 1325 and its implementation and to explore the specific challenges of peacebuilding in gender issues.

I was interested in this Workshop because, although I have certain knowledge about Gender Development in my work experience in women’s economic empowerment, I have participated in the UNSCR 1325 and its implementation and to explore the specific challenges of peacebuilding in gender issues.

The under the gender inequalities in society, the highest risk of violence against women and the greater the inhibitions of those affected by violence. Sexism in conflict is often used as a weapon of war. Ending impunity in this matter is essential. The Workshop was well-structured and the participants learned much from the resource persons through lectures and role-play. The challenges faced in increasing the number of female police officers shared by one of the resource persons was especially thought-provoking. The case confirmed that one cannot just increase the numbers of police women when there are few women who have been trained to be police officers or even women who have obtained basic education. There is no doubt that women have to be involved in all processes of peacebuilding. However, it is realized that if equal opportunities are not provided to women even in time of peace, in reality, women’s participation in peacebuilding is difficult. Without women participation, it is impossible to foster sustainable peace in society. I hope this Workshop will be integrated as a regular workshop of the Program because it is also important for Japan to take an active role in this sphere.
I joined “the Program for Human Resource Development for Peacebuilding” 8 years ago when the scheme was launched for the first time. At that time, the scheme was totally at a loss concerning career development. My main objectives were to explore the widest possible career opportunities and to identify the opportunities that suit my experience and ambition. I enjoyed and valued the Course very much. It gave me the chance to gain a more comprehensive picture of the broader defined concept of “peacebuilding” and different themes within the field of peacebuilding. I met many knowledgeable and inspirational people there including resource people and 29 course mates, all bringing a variety of different experience. I was dispatched to the Peacekeeping Operation in Darfur, Sudan, upon completion of the Course, which I had been keen to become involved with. All of this exposure greatly helps me to re-strategise and to find where to concentrate my efforts to advance my career.

Since 2005, I have been working with the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) in the Child Protection sector. I joined the organization as a Junior Professional Officer (JPO) in Sierra Leone and worked there for 4 years. After 1.5 years interruption for family reason I rejoined UNICEF in my current position since June 2014. During the past 7 years my private life has drastically changed. I have had two beautiful daughters. My husband (who is also in humanitarian and development work) and I have managed to maintain our family life and to grow both our careers slowly but steadily by alternating being the “breadwinner” and utilising opportunity to study.

I have been fortunate to come across many graduates of the scheme in the past 7 years. I often bump into one or two of them wherever I travel to. I have also got a few good friends who work in the same field and with whom I can discuss not only about career development but also how to balance work with family life – not an easy task but it can be done!

Before applying to the Primary Course, I was working as a finance lawyer in New York and Tokyo. Being a political science major in university, I was always interested in international organizations and peacebuilding, and I became acquainted with legal assistance work after furthering my understanding of peacebuilding. However, I was not ready to immediately make the jump since I did not have sufficient experience in the field. I decided to apply to the Course since it offered both domestic and overseas trainings, and seemed like it would offer a good first step in pursuing a career related to legal assistance.

The 6-week training in Japan was a great experience. The lectures provided an overview of the skills and knowledge necessary to work in an international organisation through lectures and practical scenarios, where participants had to be different “actors”. Looking back, there were many things that I did not fully understand at the time, but have later come to hand (most recently, the safety training we had at the Self-Defense Force base was useful when I went on a mission to Afghanistan). In addition, the time we spent with our fellow PAs was invaluable. The international and Japanese PAs got along very well, and many of us still keep in touch.

My Overseas Assignment was in Lao PDR with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC). I was part of the Crime Prevention team and worked on projects related to human trafficking, corruption and counter-terrorism. It was an extremely educational experience, and was fortunate to have good superiors and colleagues. Even though I was new to the organization, I was able to be the coordinator on projects and even represent the organization at several meetings and events.

Currently I am a Junior Professional Officer (JPO) at UNODC in New York. Skills I learned through the Coursework in Japan training sessions such as inter-agency coordination and programming, and my experience with UNODC in Laos, including the implementation of projects and budgeting, allow me to effectively handle my current responsibilities. In all honesty, I do not think I would be where I am today if not for the Course.

Messages from the Primary Course Graduates

Ms. Eri Mathers SUZUKI
Primary Course Graduate of FY2007
Child Protection Specialist, United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), Regional Office for South Asia

Mr. Shigeuyuki ITO
Primary Course Graduate of FY2012
Programme Analyst, Protection, Antipersonnel and Security Team, Bureau of Policy and Programme Support, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), New York

Professions of Japanese Program Associates (PAs) before participating in the Primary Course

Before participating in the Primary Course, Japanese PAs engaged in a wide variety of fields such as NGOs, UN organizations (including internships), the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), private companies (including the education sector, finance sector, construction industry, general trading companies, journalism, etc.), graduate schools, research institutions and civil service.

Career Development

Current Placements of 89 Japanese Primary Course Graduates

The Graduates are employed by the UN and other organizations in the field of peacebuilding.

Current Placements of 89 Japanese Primary Course Graduates after the Primary Course (Cumulative)

Placements of Japanese Primary Course Graduates after the Primary Course (Cumulative)

UN Organisations
- UNDP (United Nations Development Programme)
- UNHCR (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees)
- UNICEF (United Nations Children’s Fund)
- UNAMID (United Nations Mission in Darfur, Sudan)
- UNFICYP (United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus)
- UNOCI (United Nations Operation in Côte d’Ivoire)
- UNRWA (United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees in the Near East)
- UNRWA Jordan (UNRWA’s Office in Jordan)
- UNWFP (United Nations World Food Programme)
- UNWFP (Department of Peacekeeping Operations)
- UPF (United Nations Police Fund)
- UNMOGIP (United Nations Observation Mission in Guatemala)
- UNOCI (United Nations Operation in Côte d’Ivoire)
- UNOCI Jordan (UNOCI Jordan Office)

Government Agencies
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan

IDOs/NGOs/CSOs

International Organisations
- ICN (International Committee of the Red Cross)
- ICRC (International Committee of the Red Cross)
- ICRC (International Committee of the Red Cross)
- ICRC (International Committee of the Red Cross)

Others
- IGS Institute for Global Environment Strategies
- Research Institute of Tamaikawa, Japan
- Anti-Tuberculosis Association
- International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies