

JENESYS2019 ASEAN Visit Program 4th Batch Program Report

Theme: Japanese Culture Exchange

Country: Thailand

1. Program Overview

As part of the JENESYS2019 exchange program for promoting understanding of Japan, 16 people including Japanese high school students and teachers were sent to Thailand on an 8-night, 9-day tour from December 10 to 18, 2019. The members participated in the program under the theme of “Japanese Culture Exchange,” aiming at promoting the understanding of the politics, economy, society, culture, and history of Japan and also actively sending out information to appeal Japan.

During the stay in Thailand, the members made study visits to the sites of Japan’s ODA projects and local companies, through which they deepened their knowledge of the relationship between the two countries and also of Japan’s international contribution. They learned that Japan had been significantly influencing and contributing to the society and economy of Thailand. In addition, during school exchange activities and homestays, they explained the features of Japanese culture and deepened mutual understanding with peer students and local people.

During the program, the members sent out messages to the public via an SNS regarding what they were interested in and what they experienced with the aim of promoting the understanding of Japan in Thailand and building a basis for trust relationship between Japan and Thailand. At the debriefing session held before their return to Japan, each group of participants made a presentation on their action plan focusing on how they wanted to make use of their experience in Thailand after returning to Japan.

**【Participants】 7 students and 1 teacher from Saku Chosei Senior High School (Nagano)
7 students and 1 teacher from Ritsumeikan Keisho Senior High School (Hokkaido)**

2. Program Schedule

Tuesday, December 10

【Arrival in Thailand】

Wednesday, December 11

【Orientation】 Embassy of Japan in Thailand

【Courtesy call】 Office of Children and Youth Protection and Stability Support, Ministry of Social Development and Human Security, the Government of Thailand

【Observation】 Bangkok (Grand Palace, Wat Arun, Yingcharoen Market)

Thursday, December 12

【Lecture】 JETRO Bangkok Office (theme: Business Development of Japanese Companies in Thailand)

【Lecture】 JICA Bangkok Office (theme: Japan's Developmental Cooperation in Thailand)

【Visits to ODA sites】 Commercial port construction project (Laem Chabang Port), water supply improvement project (Bangkhen Water Treatment Plant)

【Lecture】 Chulalongkorn University (Theme: AUN/SEED-Net, a wide-area collaboration project of engineering universities)

February, December 13

【School exchange】 Satriwithaya Girls School: Participation in classes, opinion exchange, presentations (theme: The Appeals of Each Participant's Hometown; Introducing Hokkaido and Saku City, Nagano Prefecture)

【Homestay】 Meeting with host families

Saturday, December 14

【Homestay】 Bangkok

Sunday, December 15

【Observation】 Ayutthaya Province

【Volunteer experience】 Wat Sra kaeow orphan school volunteer program

Monday, December 16

【Visit】 Visit to PERSONNEL CONSULTANT MANPOWER (THAILAND) CO., LTD.

【Visit】 Visit to Duang Pradeep Foundation (Education foundation in Thailand)

【Workshop】 Preparation for result debriefing session

Tuesday, December 17

Result debriefing session

【Departure】

3. Photos

	
<p>December 11 【Orientation】 Embassy of Japan in Thailand</p>	<p>December 11 【Courtesy Call】 Office of Children and Youth Protection and Stability Support, Ministry of Social Development and Human Security</p>
	
<p>December 11 【Observation】 Bangkok</p>	<p>December 12 【Lecture】 JETRO Bangkok Office</p>
	
<p>December 12 【Lecture】 JICA (Contribution of Japan to Thailand)</p>	<p>December 12 【Visit to ODA Site】 Laem Chabang Port</p>



December 12 【Visit to ODA Site】
Bangkhen Water Treatment Plant



December 12 【Visit to ODA Site】
Chulalongkorn University



December 13 【School Exchange】
Satriwithaya School



December 14 【Homestay】



December 15 【Volunteer Experience】
Thai Orphan School Volunteer Program



December 16 【Visits】
Personnel Consultant
Manpower Thailand



December 16 **【Visit】**
Duang Prateep Foundation



December 17 **【Result Debriefing Session】**

4. Feedback from the Participants (Excerpts)

◆ **High School Student** (Saku Chosei Senior High School)

I was impressed above all by the “smiles” of my host family. They were always smiling, and I felt I was happy to be able to stay among them. I could understand why Thailand is called “the land of smiles.” The host family with charming smiles kindly took me to a place called Siam Square in the evening of the first day. Siam Square is said to be a place like Shibuya in Japan. The prosperity of Siam Square with many buildings and plenty of food struck a stark contrast with less developed towns in the same country. This disparity seems to keep on expanding. My host family is probably leading a fulfilling life every day, and I was hosted by a family in the so-called wealthy class. It was because of this reason that I could spend a good time without any inconvenience, but if I had stayed with a poor family, I might have experienced things that are unconceivable to occur in a rich family. So, I thank a lot of my host family and I think we all should consider seriously about the problem of disparities.

◆ **High School Student** (Saku Chosei Senior High School)

I heard that the water used at stalls is dirty and unsanitary. Tap water is also unsuitable for drinking, as it is as dirty as the ice under the fish sold at markets in Japan. While inbound is on an increase, people want to see more growth in outbound business in the future. So, I want to work hard and try to build a bridge for this goal.

◆ **High School Student** (Ritsumeikan Keisho Senior High School)

As the destination of the local school visit, I went to Satriwithaya High School. I knew in advance that the school was a large school with more than 3000 students, but when I actually saw it, I was stunned by the really large number of students. I felt nervous to introduce myself and say greetings in front of them, but I was comforted by their warm welcome. The buddies who attended the class with us were very good at Japanese and had no trouble communicating. The only Thai we could speak was a little greetings, and I wanted to start learning some Thai taking this opportunity. We made flower garlands and danced together. I was happy to be able to experience the local culture. We also made some presentation of Japanese culture, and they heard it with delight. I hoped that this could be an opportunity for them to like Japan more and more.

◆ **High School Student** (Ritsumeikan Keisho Senior High School)

While we visited many places and heard many talks, I realized that the country still has many problems related to the gap between the rich and the poor, as we can see from the fact that Thailand is the world’s most disreputable country with disparities. The people from Chulalongkorn University talked about marine plastic issues, for which we had been considering an action plan, as well as PM2.5 and air pollution from new perspectives. There were many themes that were new to us and difficult for us to understand, but this experience was truly precious for us, as we aspire to work in the world. As there are many developing countries, I felt the need for Japan to play a leading role and provide assistance as a developed country. At the same time, since Asian countries are developing rapidly nowadays, I felt there is a possibility that we may lag behind if we keep going on like this. This is a problem that our generation must consider.

5. Feedback from the Host Side (Excerpts)



◆ School Officials

This was a splendid opportunity for the students from both Japan and Thailand to learn about people, culture, etc. I believe Japanese students learned new things through interactions with local people. Japanese students were positive in communicating with local students, and Thai students are grateful for that. Japanese students kindly asked questions of local people, making the exchange meeting a great success.

◆ Students

The interaction with Japanese students made me truly want to travel Japan. I think this exchange program enabled us to share knowledge of the two countries, deepen the friendship between the two countries, and improve relationship. The students from Thailand learned how they can communicate with and deepen ties with people from abroad despite the difference in religion and culture.

6. External Communication

<p>2019年12月19日 18:16</p> <p>タイに来て8日目、ついに最終日を迎えることとなりました。企業訪問は昨日で終わりです。今日はこれまで見てきたタイの現状をもとに、私たちに出来ることは何か、考えてきたものをアクションプランとして発表しました。</p> <p>立命館慶祥高校は近年増えている海洋プラスチックの削減のために、タイ国内で問題視されているポイ捨てを減らす方法を考えました。教育の格差の問題があることから、まだ小さい子供たちに環境問題について親しみやすい絵本を作り、私たちの学校から北海道、日本、そして世界の子どもたちに環境問題について考えてもらう方法を提案しました。帰国後も活動は続きますが、精一杯取り組んでいきます。</p> <p>そして午後はワット・プラ・クア、別名エメラルド寺院と呼ばれる王宮に行きました。これまでのタイの研修の集大成として、タイにいれるのも、それまで共に活動してきた仲間と一緒にいれる時間も長くはないと思つと複雑な気持ちもありました。ですが景色は本当に穏やかで美しく、私たちの背中を押してくれるように感じました。</p> <p>あっという間の8日間でしたが、今回学んだことは一生忘れません。私たちに素晴らしい経験をさせてくださった方々、支えてくれた方々には感謝しかありません。本当にありがとうございました。</p> <p>#JAD1210</p> 	<p>2019年12月14日</p> <p>~タイ派遣4日目夜、5日目~ 1泊2日でホームステイをしました。</p> <p>最初は不安だったけど、ホストファミリーに出会った瞬間から優しく扱ってくれてたくさん良くて頂きました。あと、タイドレスも着ました。そもそもタイドレスの事をよく知らなかったけどすごく可愛くて嬉しかったです。タイの歴史を知れるミュージアムにも行けて、日本と似た文化や違った文化に触れることが出来ました。すごく短い時間でもすごく温かく迎えてくれたホストファミリーにととても感謝しています。</p> <p>#JAD1210</p> 
<p>To counter the recent increase in marine plastics, we considered the ways to reduce littering, which is regarded as a problem in Thailand. Considering the problem of disparities in education, we propose the production of picture books on environmental issues, which are easily understood by small children, and let children think about environmental issues, spreading the message from Hokkaido to Japan and to the world.</p>	<p>We also wore Thai dresses. we knew little about Thai dresses to begin with, but they were so cute and we were happy to wear them. We visited a museum on the history of Thailand, and experienced cultures similar to and different from those in Japan. We are very grateful to our host families, who welcomed us with great kindness despite the shortness of our stay.</p>

7. Action Plan Presented by Participants at the Reporting Session (Excerpts)



▪ Active Dissemination of Information

I was taught that “Thailand has the most serious gap between the rich and the poor,” and I was really shocked to see the situation of things in the slums. In particular, the visits to the orphanage and the kindergarten in the slums were shocking, and I thought what we could do for the children. I noticed that a reason why the gap is not filled lies in the fact that poor people do not think they are “poor” and they are satisfied with the current situation. As I think we can approach a solution by letting people know the real situation in Thailand and gather like-minded people, I want to continue active dissemination of information.



▪ The fact that “Japan also has the problem of disparities”

With respect to the action plan for the future, what we focused on was the fact that “Japan also has the problem of disparities.” Before trying to address the big problems in foreign countries, our conclusion is that we first should look at the problems in our own country. There are many children in Japan who cannot receive sufficient education because of economic hardship and other reasons. We have come to the point where we start researching NPOs and volunteer organizations supporting such children and participating in their activities. As I keep contact with the people at DCY, I want to disseminate what I have learned through volunteer activities in Japan to relevant bodies, such as DCY, the Japanese Embassy in Thailand, and JICA.



▪ Awareness of issues in Thailand

The problem of marine plastics is becoming increasingly serious in Thailand. A baby of dugong, an endangered species, was rescued in April 2019, but was found dead in August due to the clogging of the digestive tract with pieces of plastics. This sad incident was also reported in Japan. One of the causes is disposal of plastic waste.

▪ Action plan

“Production of picture books for environmental education for children who will bear the future”

- ① We plan and conduct reporting of our training programs at grade assemblies, and by doing so, we encourage people to share the same awareness of issues as we.
- ② We expand the circle of activity by announcing the production of the picture books and inviting people to participate.
- ③ We read the picture books to children at kindergartens and nursery schools.
→Through direct communication, we let as many children as possible think about the environment.
- ④ We expand the circle of activity from Ritsumeikan Keisho Senior High School to Junior High School and other affiliated schools.
In addition, we ask for the cooperation of people from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and JICA so that the picture books are distributed widely to many people.
- ⑤ We translate the picture books into Thai and spread them to Thailand through cooperation with the students we interacted in the country.

In addition, we enlist high school students in Thailand to produce picture books or other materials on the situation in Thailand. We ask them to produce picture books suitable for Thailand and expand the activity at schools in the country.

Project implementing body: JTB Corp.