

JENESYS2024 Online Japan-Visit Advanced Program for ASEAN Alumni Report (Theme: Agriculture and Food Systems)

1. Program Overview

【Objectives and Overview】 This program was conducted from March 5 to 14, an 8-day online for JENESYS Program alumni from ASEAN Member States and Timor-Leste. Under the theme of “Agriculture and Food Systems”, the program aimed to further promote past JENESYS participant’s understanding of Japan, strengthen networks, and bolster alumni activities.

【Participants】Total: 30 alumni from ASEAN Member States (AMS)^(Note) and Timor-Leste (participants from FY2015 to FY2023)

(Breakdown) Cambodia 3, Indonesia 8, Malaysia 2, the Philippines 9, Thailand 1, Timor-Leste 6, Viet Nam 1

(Note) ASEAN Member States: Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Viet Nam

【Schedule】

This program was partially conducted in joint with the JENESYS2024 Online Japan-Visit Advanced Program for ASEAN Alumni (Theme: Japanese Language and Culture)

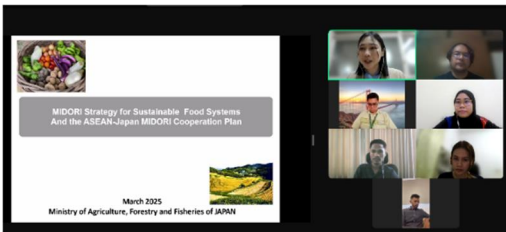
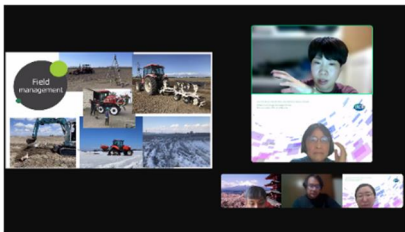
■ Online Japan-Visit Advanced Program:

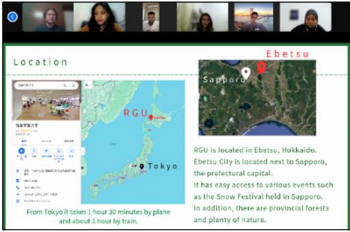

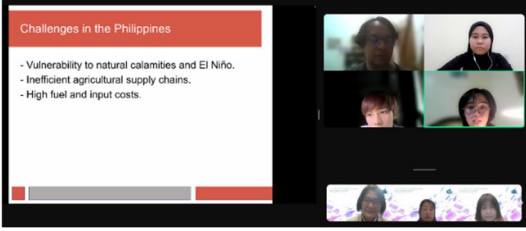

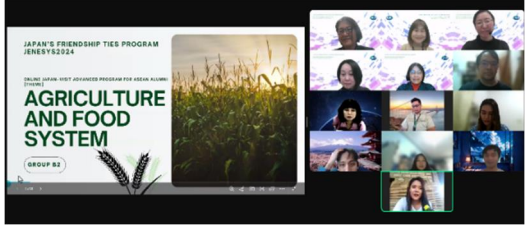
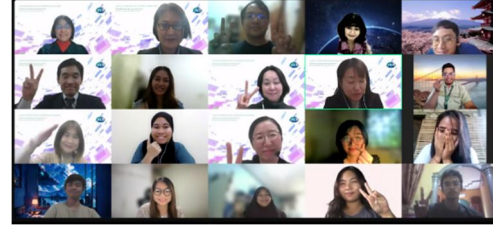
Mar. 5 (Wed)	【Orientation】 【Theme Related Lecture】 “MIDORI Strategy for Sustainable Food Systems And the ASEAN-Japan MIDORI Cooperation Plan” Lecturer: Ms. ATSUMI Kazune, Section Chief, International Negotiation and Cooperation on Climate Change and Agriculture, Global Environment Office, MIDORI Sustainable Food Systems Strategy Division, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries of Japan 【Exchange among Participants】
Mar. 6 (Thu)	【Theme Related Lecture and Opinion Exchange】 “Agriculture in Hokkaido, from the northern part of Japan” Lecturer: Ms. KISHIMOTO Kayo, Auditor, Shinotsu Central Land Improvement District
Mar. 7 (Fri)	【School Exchange】 Rakuno Gakuen University, Students from the English Speaking Club, Suka Rela
Mar. 10 (Mon)	【Cultural Experience】 Nihon Buyo (Japanese dance) and Shamisen (three-stringed Japanese lute) Lecturer: Mukojima Geisha Chikage

Mar. 11 (Tue)	【Exchange among Participants】 Discussion topic: Agriculture and Food Systems
Mar. 12 (Wed)	【Introduction of Alumni Activities】 Panel discussion by JENESYS alumni residing in Japan Discussion topics: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Self- introduction by panelists 2. How did you start working/studying in Japan? 3. Is there anything you should have done to prepare for coming to Japan? 4. Has your impression of Japan changed before and after living in Japan? 5. Message for all JENESYS participants Panelists: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● JENESYS 2018 participant Ms. Myat Kay Khaing Zaw Kay (Myanmar, Graduate Student) ● JENESYS 2022 participant Mr. DHANYAJARATH-BHORN, Ratchakith (Thailand, Graduate Student) ● JENESYS 2019 participant Mr. Harraz Irfan (Malaysia, Graduate Student) ● JENESYS 2016 participant Ms. AYODYA PARAMA PUTRIE (Indonesia, Working Youth)
Mar. 13 (Thu)	【Workshop】 Preparations for the Reporting Session (summarizing program findings, preparation of action plans)
Mar. 14 (Fri)	【Reporting Session】 Presentation of program findings and action plans

2. Program Photos

Online Japan-Visit Advanced Program

	
March 5, 2025 【Theme Related Lecture】 “MIDORI Strategy for Sustainable Food Systems And the ASEAN-Japan MIDORI Cooperation Plan”	March 6, 2025 【 Theme Related Lecture and Opinion Exchange】 “Agriculture in Hokkaido, from the northern part of Japan”

	
<p>March 7, 2025 【School Exchange】 Introduction of Rakuno Gakuen University</p>	<p>March 10, 2025 【Cultural Experience】 Nihon Buyo (Japanese dance) and Shamisen (three-stringed Japanese lute) Participants danced “Sakura Sakura” with their hands</p>
	
<p>March 11, 2025 【Exchange among Participants】 Discussion topic: Agriculture and Food Systems</p>	<p>March 12, 2025 【Introduction of Alumni Activities】 Panel discussion</p>
	
<p>March 14, 2025 【Reporting Session】 Group presentations</p>	<p>March 14, 2025 【Reporting Session】 Commemorative photo</p>

3. Participants' Inquiries and Interests (excerpt)

- ◆ **Regarding: 【Theme Related Lecture】 “MIDORI Strategy for Sustainable Food Systems And the ASEAN-Japan MIDORI Cooperation Plan”**
 - How do you control methane gas emissions from paddy fields?
 - How do you think you can improve sustainability and increase productivity while protecting the benefits of both farmers and the environment?
 - Some of the goals have been set pretty high, but how have farmers responded and do you believe you are actually achieving those goals?
- ◆ **Regarding: 【Theme Related Lecture and Opinion Exchange】 “Agriculture in Hokkaido, from the northern part of Japan”**
 - The average age of farmers in Japan is going up, but how do the farmers cope with this reality?
 - How do you prevent replant failure? Do you use organic fertilizers? Are there any subsidies to purchase land?
 - Has smart farming improved food quality and safety? What changes have you seen in farmers?

4. Voices from the Participants (excerpt)

◆ University Student (Malaysia)

All the lectures were truly phenomenal and eye-opening, providing valuable insights that will stay with us beyond this program. It was inspiring to see both participants and lecturers actively engaging, with thought-provoking questions and insightful answers. Every discussion was deeply connected to the program's theme, making the experience even more enriching.

◆ Working Youth (the Philippines)

I am deeply grateful for the invaluable knowledge and experience I have gained. My understanding of agriculture and food systems has been enriched, and I am inspired to implement sustainable practices.

Engaging with Japanese professionals and students has been enlightening, and the cultural exchanges, including the beautiful Geisha performances, were truly unforgettable. This program has deepened my appreciation for Japan's rich cultural heritage.

◆ Working Student (Indonesia)

Ms. Atsumi's presentation on the MIDORI Strategy for Sustainable Food Systems demonstrated Japan's innovative approach to balancing agricultural productivity with environmental sustainability. The J-Credit scheme and environmental labeling initiatives show practical ways to incentivize sustainable farming practices.

Ms. Kishimoto's insights into Hokkaido's large-scale farming operations and the challenges faced by Japanese agriculture were eye-opening. Her personal experiences as a female farmer establishing networks for daughters of farmers is inspiring.

Chikage-san's wonderful presentation on the traditional performance arts of geisha was truly captivating. The interactive music lesson where she taught us to sing "Sakura Sakura" created a memorable experience that helped us connect with Japanese culture in a personal way. I deeply appreciated learning about the rich cultural heritage of the geisha tradition and the years of dedicated training required to master these traditional arts.

I would like to thank the alumni panelists for sharing their educational and professional journeys in Japan. Their diverse experiences from studying digital transformation to working in energy companies provide valuable perspectives for those of us considering similar paths.

The knowledge and connections gained through this program will undoubtedly contribute to strengthening ASEAN-Japan cooperation in sustainable agriculture and food systems. I look forward to applying these insights in my own context and continuing to build on the friendship between our countries.

5. Voices from the Receiving Parties (excerpt)

◆ Lecturer

Even though the content was mainly about policies and international cooperation, it meant a lot to receive so many comments and questions and to be able to exchange opinions with the participants. I hope we can continue to actively communicate our efforts in the field of the environment, such as efforts to build sustainable agriculture and food systems and measures to combat climate change.

◆ **Lecturer**

It was great to see that the younger generation of ASEAN is attracted to Hokkaido's agriculture and food.

◆ **Lecturer**

I knew that people abroad were interested in Japanese culture thanks to manga and whatnot, but I was still surprised by how focused the participants listened to the lecture, and I also discovered through this experience that people can still dance and sing together even through a screen.

I could tell that they have a great respect for Japanese culture.

6. Disseminations by the Participants (excerpt), Articles, etc.



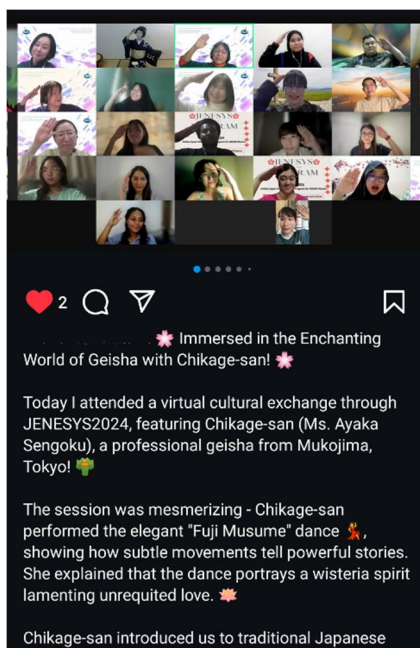
March 5, 2025 (Facebook)

Undergraduate Student (Malaysia)

Honored to represent Malaysia at JENESYS2024 Online Japan Visit Advanced Program for ASEAN Alumni. Exciting news. I'm thrilled to be selected for the Agriculture and Food System group starting from 5th March 2025 until 14th March 2025.

As a Psychology student, you might wonder-why agriculture? Food systems impact mental health, workplace productivity, and societal well-being. Understanding sustainability, food security, and cultural perspectives helps bridge psychology with real-world challenges.

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March 11, 2025 (Instagram)

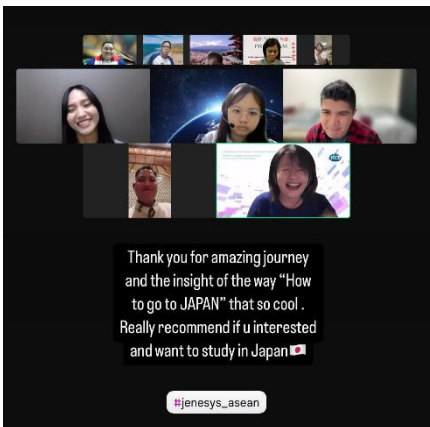
Working Student (Indonesia)

"Immersed in the Enchanting World of Geisha with Chikage-san!"

Today I attended a virtual cultural exchange through JENESYS2024, featuring Chikage-san (Ms. Ayaka Sengoku), a professional geisha from Mukojima, Tokyo!



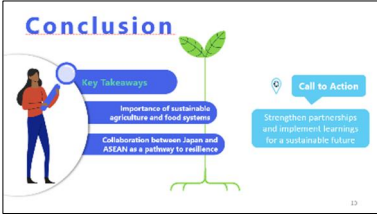
The session was mesmerizing- Chikage-san performed the elegant "Fuji Musume" dance, showing how subtle movements tell powerful stories. She explained that the dance portrays a wisteria spirit lamenting unrequited love.

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	<p>March 12, 2025 (Instagram)</p> <p>Undergraduate Student (Thailand)</p> <p>Thank you for the amazing journey and the insight of the way, “How to go to JAPAN”. That’s so cool. Really recommend if you are interested and want to study in Japan.</p>
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7. Presentations of Program Findings and Action Plan at the Reporting Session (excerpt)

Streaming locations: Tokyo, Hokkaido (Presentations by a total of 3 groups)

Group 1		
		
<p>【Results of the Program】</p> <p>◆ Learnings about Agriculture and Food Systems</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Japan's innovative approaches to agriculture and food systems. As Japan and ASEAN countries face similar challenges, collaboration between regions is key to building resilience in our agricultural systems. 2) Japan's MIDORI Strategy' ambitious targets demonstrate Japan's commitment to transforming its agricultural sector toward greater sustainability. 3) The J-Credit Scheme provides economic incentives for farmers who adopt climate-friendly practices. 4) Japan's advanced agricultural technology is exemplified in Hokkaido's large-scale farming. 5) Japan's remarkable ability to balance tradition and innovation. <p>◆ Learnings about Japan</p> <p>Perspectives on how Japan integrates heritage with progress across various fields.</p> <p>The relentless pursuit of excellence reflects Japan's commitment to continuous learning, precision, and sustainability, which serves as valuable lessons for fostering resilient agricultural systems worldwide.</p> <p>【Action Plan】</p> <p>We will utilize our learnings from the program to conduct the following alumni activities:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Knowledge sharing through social media campaigns, local events, and lectures to spread insights within our communities. 2) An ASEAN-Japan Agricultural Knowledge Exchange Network where alumni and experts can share best practices, research findings, and solutions tailored to local conditions across our regions. 3) Organizing workshops to introduce Japanese techniques 4) Pilot projects to adapt Japan's environmental burden visualization system to raise consumer 		

awareness and incentivize sustainable farming practices.

5) Mentorship programs to connect young farmers with agricultural experts

6) Urban agriculture initiatives to promote local food production, sustainability education, and stronger social connections.

Group 2



【Results of the Program】

◆ Learnings about Agriculture and Food Systems

1) Japan collaborates with ASEAN through the MIDORI Cooperation Plan, emphasizes customized solutions and encourages localized solutions based on each country's needs. Moreover, Japan's Joint Crediting Mechanism implements sustainable projects and the Global MIDORI Cooperation Plan, which extends Japan's sustainability efforts worldwide.

2) Smart agriculture farming approach that integrates technology, data, and automation to optimize the agricultural process to improve efficiency, productivity, and sustainability.

3) Women farmers are limited. But smart agriculture and government support in Japan are improving the situation, encouraging more women to participate in farming and take leadership roles in the industry.

◆ Learnings about Japan

Valuable insights into Japanese culture, education, and heritage, showing a deeper understanding of Japan's values, traditions, and societal structures while enhancing cross-cultural awareness and appreciation, enhanced appreciation for Japan's commitment to balancing tradition with contemporary influences.

【Action Plan】

We will utilize our learnings from the program to conduct the following alumni activities:

1) Research and Innovation partnerships

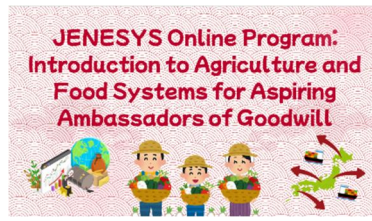
2) Knowledge transfer through public lectures and webinars.

3) Social Media campaigns

4) Create and share educational content

5) Community outreach and volunteering.

Group 3



【Results of the Program】

◆ Learnings about Agriculture and Food Systems

We learned the following through lectures and exchanges among ourselves:

- 1) Differences, weaknesses, and strengths of agriculture and food systems of each other's countries
- 2) Similarities and Differences in food, and education from ASEAN Countries
- 3) Agriculture in Hokkaido nowadays

◆ Learnings about Japan

We learned the following through exchanges with Japanese people and the cultural experiences:

- 1) The journey to become Geisha is an arduous challenge
- 2) Japanese performances focus on details and the cultural experience of the audience
- 3) Languages, Culture, and Problem-solving are needed to study or work in Japan. When sharing questions, Japanese people are very detailed, careful, and answer questions enthusiastically.

【Action Plan】

We will come up with our own JENESYS online program and introduce information about agriculture and food systems to those aiming to become goodwill ambassadors between ASEAN and Japan. The following 4 items are our goals:

- 1) Bring awareness of the different problems in agriculture and food systems across Southeast Asian countries.
- 2) Introduce the different agricultural systems across ASEAN Member States, Japan, and Timor-Leste.
- 3) Develop a connection among the participants through a cultural exchange about their experiences and knowledge about agriculture.
- 4) Inspire the participants to join future JENESYS inbound or online programs.

Implementation Agency: Japan International Cooperation Center (JICE)