

JENESYS2025 The Philippines-Japan Development Exchange (Dispatch Program of Japanese University Students) Report

1. Program Overview

【Objectives and Overview】

A group of ten Japanese university and graduate students visited Manila in the Philippines from November 25 to December 2 to learn about the country's current situation and its relationship with Japan. During their stay, they attended lectures on poverty and education and conducted field visits to low-income communities, which deepened their multidimensional understanding of the underlying social issues and the significance of Japan's support. The program also included exchanges with students from local universities and home visits with Filipino families. These interactions provided valuable opportunities for both sides to share their cultures and values, while allowing the participants to directly hear local perspectives on development expectations and challenges. Through these engagements, the participating students worked to promote mutual understanding and strengthen the friendship between the two countries.

【Participants】 Total: 10 Japanese undergraduate and graduate students

【Locations】 Manila, the Philippines 10

【Schedule】

■ Online Pre-study Program :

Aug. 26 (Tue)	【Orientation】 First Joint Orientation 【Lecture】 “Welcome to ASEAN-JAPAN Centre” Joint implementation for FY2025 JENESYS ASEAN outbound programs Lecturer: Mr. WATANABE Mitsuo, Tourism Exchange Team, ASEAN-Japan Centre (ASEAN Promotion Centre on Trade, Investment and Tourism)
Oct. 20 (Mon)	【Lecture】 Theme Related Lecture “Lecture on Understanding the Philippines – JICA's Cooperation with the Philippines” Lecturer: Ms. ASADA Eri, Volunteer Coordinator, Volunteer Section, Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) Philippines Office
Nov. 14 (Fri)	【Participant Briefing】
Nov. 19 (Wed)	【Lecture】 Theme Related Lecture “Introduction to ACTION's Activities” Lecturer: Mr. YOKOTA Hajime, President, ACTION Inc.

■ Dispatch Program :

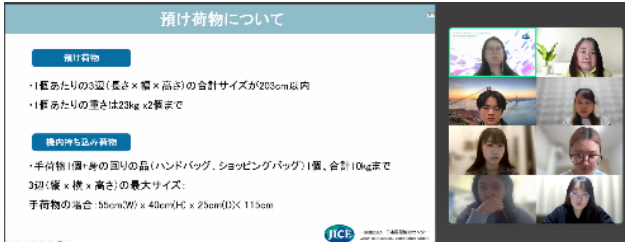
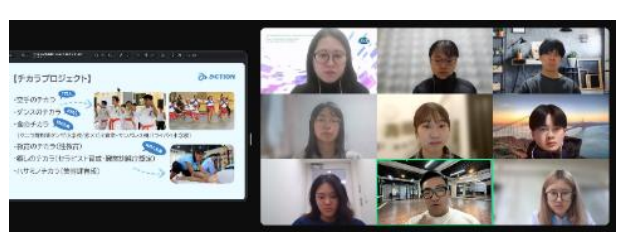
Nov. 25 (Tue)	【Pre-departure Orientation】 Departure from Narita International Airport Arrival at Ninoy Aquino International Airport in Manila
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Nov. 26 (Wed)	【Courtesy Call】 Ms. KANAI Takako, Cultural Officer, Embassy of Japan in the Philippines 【Observation】 Fort Santiago 【Courtesy Call】 Ms. Leah T. Villalon, Executive Director and COO, National Youth Commission (NYC) 【Exchange】 Exchange with JENESYS alumni
Nov. 27 (Thu)	【Lecture】 Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) Philippines Office “Overview of JICA Philippines Office”, “Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers” Lecturers: Ms. ASADA Eri, Volunteer Coordinator, Volunteer Section, JICA Philippines Office Ms. MAEKAWA Miho, Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteer (JOCV) 【Observation】 Visit to the Program Sites of ACTION Inc.; Tanza Elementary School and Barangay in Navotas City
Nov. 28 (Fri)	【School Exchange】 Far Eastern University (FEU) 【School Exchange】 Philippine Women’s University (PWU)
Nov. 29 (Sat)	【Home Visit】 Metro Manila, the Philippines
Nov. 30 (Sun)	【Observation】 Metro Rail Transit (MRT), Light Rail Transit (LRT), Legazpi Sunday Market
Dec. 1 (Mon)	【Workshop】 Preparations for the Reporting Session (summarizing program findings, preparation of action plans) 【Reporting Session】 Presentations of Program Findings and Action Plans Departure from Ninoy Aquino International Airport in Manila
Dec. 2 (Tue)	Arrival at Haneda Airport

2. Program Photos

Online Pre-study Program

	
August 26 【Lecture】 Commemorative photo	October 20 【Theme Related Lecture】 “Lecture on Understanding the Philippines – JICA’s Cooperation with the Philippines”

	
November 14 【Participant Briefing】	November 19 【Theme Related Lecture】 “Introduction to Action’s Activities”
Dispatch Program	
	
November 25 【Pre-departure Orientation】	November 26 【Courtesy Call】 Ms. KANAI Takako, Cultural Officer, Embassy of Japan in the Philippines
	
November 26 【Observation】 Fort Santiago	November 26 【Courtesy Call】 Ms. Leah T. Villalon, Executive Director and COO, NYC
	
November 27 【Lecture】 JICA Philippines Office “Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers” Individual Q&A	November 27 【Observation】 Visit to the Program Sites of ACTION Inc. (Barangay in Navotas City)

	
November 28 【School Exchange】 Far Eastern University (FEU)	November 28 【School Exchange】 Philippine Women's University (PWU)
	
November 29 【Home Visit】	November 29 【Home Visit】
	
December 1 【Workshop】	December 1 【Reporting Session】 Group photo

3. Voices from the Participants (excerpt)

◆ Undergraduate Student

What left the strongest impression on me were the exchanges we had in places we would not normally have access to, including the National Youth Commission (NYC), the JICA Philippines Office, NGO Action, and the Barangay slums. By listening directly to the people who work and live there, we were able to learn about local challenges and everyday realities that cannot be fully understood through textbooks or reports alone.

Moreover, hearing these voices in person encouraged us to reflect deeply on the possibilities for Japan and the Philippines to work together in addressing social issues.

◆ Undergraduate Student

What stood out most was the many opportunities to engage directly with local people. Speaking with them face-to-face allowed us to learn about their daily lives, values, and aspirations—things that cannot be fully conveyed through written materials alone. We were welcomed with great warmth, and their willingness to share their experiences and their communities with us helped us gain a much deeper understanding of the area.

I feel that these moments of dialogue were what made this visit especially meaningful.

◆ Undergraduate Student

Our visit to the Barangay slum community in Navotas City left a strong impression on us. We had understood, at least in theory, that children in low-income areas often live with remarkable brightness and energy, but seeing it firsthand was deeply moving. Encountering these innocent and cheerful children made us genuinely hope for better living conditions for them, and it prompted us to think more seriously about the structural causes of poverty.

This experience also sparked meaningful discussions among our members about how we might support those living in the most vulnerable situations.

4. Voices from the Receiving Parties (excerpt)

◆ Observation Destination Representative

I was really struck by how sincerely the students approached international cooperation and local community issues, and it reminded me how important it is to stay close to what's happening on the ground. This experience really made me feel that what we're doing is "building the future together," and I want to make use of that in my work going forward.

I am also impressed by how the students continue to stay involved with the Philippines and with international cooperation activities. We'll keep supporting them so that this kind of development exchange can deepen even further.

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



本日よりSNS投稿を始めました！
こちらは過去のプレプログラムの様子です 📸
JENESYS2025の準備が着々と進んでいます！
これから更新していくので、ぜひチェックしてください 🌟

We've started posting on social media!
Here are some snapshots from our previous pre-program 📸
Preparations for JENESYS 2025 are moving forward steadily!
Stay tuned for more updates 🌟
#jenesys2025
JENESYS

November 15, 2025 (Instagram)

Undergraduate Student

We've started posting on social media!

Here are some snapshots from our previous pre-program.

Preparations for JENESYS 2025 are moving forward steadily!

Stay tuned for more updates.



November 28, 2025 (Instagram)

Undergraduate Student

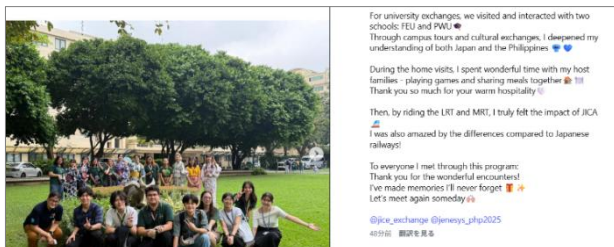
Today we visited Tanza Barangay. Seeing in real life what we had only seen in photos was powerful and eye-opening. Even though the sanitary conditions were extremely poor, the people living there welcomed us Japanese trainees with warm smiles. Loud music was playing, everyone was dancing with so much energy, and the children were happily playing with bright smiles. It made me reflect deeply on what true happiness really means.



November 29, 2025 (Instagram)

Undergraduate Student

Today we visited two universities in the Philippines! The first was Far Eastern University (FEU). When we arrived, each of us was greeted by a student buddy and taken on a campus tour. We toured the university's church, Christmas tree, and history. After the campus tour, both the Japanese and Filipino students gave presentations. We shared our respective countries' cultures and unique features. Finally, we had an activity where we taught local students about Japanese culture! We all had a great time making educational sweets, doing collages, and origami.



December 4, 2025 (Instagram)

Undergraduate Student

For university exchanges, we visited and interacted with two schools: FEU and PWU



December 7, 2025 (Instagram)

Undergraduate Student

Through this study tour, I experienced so much in the Philippines.

Through campus tours and cultural exchanges, I deepened my understanding of both Japan and the Philippines.

During the home visits, I spent wonderful time with my host families - playing games and sharing meals together. Thank you so much for your warm hospitality.

Then, by riding the LRT and MRT, I truly felt the impact of JICA. I was also amazed by the differences compared to Japanese railways!

To everyone I met through this program:

Thank you for the wonderful encounters!

I've made memories I'll never forget.

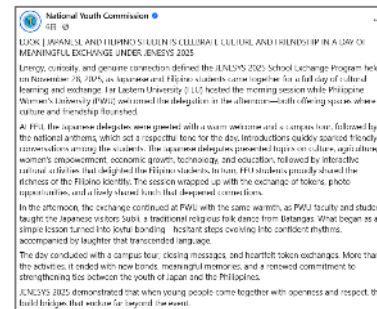
Let's meet again someday.

I love playing with children, so I had a lot of fun during the home visit.

I also had fun making Japanese sweets and dancing with the Philippine universities' students, deepening my friendships!

The Philippines are serious about Christmas, and apparently, they start decorating their trees in September

We also went to markets and to places outside of urban areas, making it a week full of excitement and surprises. This week is firmly etched in my mind as memories.



December 1, 2025 (Department of International Studies, Far Eastern University's Facebook)

BA International Studies students hosted the delegates of the JENESYS2025 The Philippines-Japan Development Exchange (Dispatch Program of Japanese University Students), held on 28 November 2025.

Ten Japanese students from different Higher

December 2, 2025 (National Youth Commission's Facebook)

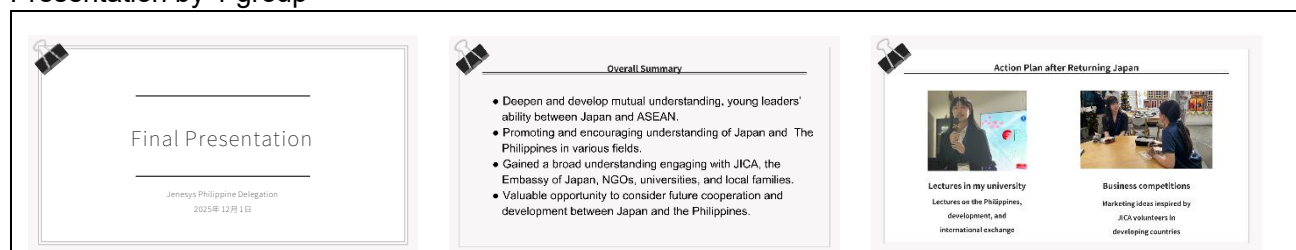
“JAPANESE AND FILIPINO STUDENTS CELEBRATE CULTURE AND FRIENDSHIP IN A DAY OF MEANINGFUL EXCHANGE UNDER JENESYS 2025”

Energy, curiosity, and genuine connection defined the JENESYS 2025 School Exchange Program

Education Institutions (HEIs) in Japan were accommodated by ten FEU BAIS students through a series of presentations, mini-activities, and a campus tour. The students were tasked to present important information about the education, technology, economy, politics, and culture of both Japan and the Philippines.	held on November 28, 2025, as Japanese and Filipino students came together for a full day of cultural learning and exchange. Far Eastern University (FEU) hosted the morning session while Philippine Women's University (PWU) welcomed the delegation in the afternoon—both offering spaces where culture and friendship flourished. At FEU, the Japanese delegates were greeted with a warm welcome and a campus tour, followed by the national anthems, which set a respectful tone for the day. Introductions quickly sparked friendly conversations among the students. The Japanese delegates presented topics on culture, economic growth, technology, and education, followed by interactive cultural activities that delighted the Filipino students. In turn, FEU students proudly shared the richness of the Filipino identity. The session wrapped up with the exchange of tokens, photo opportunities, and a lively shared lunch that deepened connections. In the afternoon, the exchange continued at PWU with the same warmth, as PWU faculty and students taught the Japanese visitors Subli, a traditional religious folk dance from Batangas. What began as a simple lesson turned into joyful bonding—hesitant steps evolving into confident rhythms, accompanied by laughter that transcended language. The day concluded with a campus tour, closing messages, and heartfelt token exchanges. More than the activities, it ended with new bonds, meaningful memories, and a renewed commitment to strengthening ties between the youth of Japan and the Philippines. JENESYS 2025 demonstrated that when young people come together with openness and respect, they build bridges that endure far beyond the event.
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6. Presentations of Program Findings and Action Plan at the Reporting Session (excerpt)

Presentation by 1 group



【Results of the Program】

- We came to recognize that overseas Filipino workers (OFWs) and the service sector play a central role in supporting the Philippine economy, and that Japan's economic and political engagement significantly contributes to improving local living standards.
- Through the work of the Embassy of Japan, JICA, and local NGOs, we learned that effective support is not a one-way provision of aid, but a form of collaborative partnership grounded in the needs of the partner country.
- Visits to schools and living environments in low-income communities taught us that there is no single definition of "happiness," and that understanding the values behind people's smiles and resilience is essential.
- University exchanges and home visits showed us that mutual understanding deepens through everyday dialogue and shared experiences.
- Experiencing urban transportation systems such as the LRT and MRT allowed us to clearly see how infrastructure development directly affects people's quality of life.

【Action Plan】

- We will continue to share our experiences and learning from the Philippines through social media posts—both photos and videos—as well as through blogs we'll write.
- We will hold report sessions and give lectures at our high schools, universities, and other institutions to broaden interest in international exchange and development cooperation.
- We will present marketing and business ideas inspired by JICA volunteer activities at business contests and related events.
- We will maintain ongoing networks with the individuals and organizations we met through the program, with the aim of connecting these relationships to future international cooperation activities.

Implementation Agency: Japan International Cooperation Center (JICE)