



## Japanese-Language Education Overseas

By helping people in other countries learn the Japanese language, the Japan Foundation contributes to better understanding of Japan and cultivate friendships around the globe. The Japan Foundation promotes Japanese-language education overseas through organizing Japanese-language courses, administering the Japanese-Language Proficiency Test worldwide, and developing teaching materials. It also sends Japanese-language specialists abroad and provides training programs in Japan.



# Japanese-Language Education Overseas

## Promoting Japanese-Language Education Overseas

The construction of a basic foundation for Japanese-language education is a significant part of the programs. Activities include sharing expertise, conducting a survey of overseas Japanese-language institutions, creating opportunities for information exchange, and providing JF Language Courses mainly at Japan Foundation offices overseas.

## Support for Teachers and Institutions

As guidance from a single teacher can influence a number of students, the Japan Foundation conducts programs aimed at enhancing the teaching skills of educators who teach the Japanese language. The Japan Foundation also provides grants to institutions overseas and supports events to promote Japanese-language education.

## Support for Learners

The Japan Foundation provides both direct and indirect support for language learners. Indirect support involves efforts to enhance the learning environment, including creating learning materials and training future teachers. Direct support involves training programs for learners invited from overseas to study Japanese language and culture (programs for specialists and programs to encourage learners).

## Survey on Japanese-Language Education Abroad

With the collaboration of Japan Foundation's overseas offices, Japanese embassies, consulates, and other entities, a global survey of institutions providing Japanese-language education is conducted every three years. This is the world's only large-scale survey on Japanese-language education. The results of the survey are frequently quoted by the media. The 2009 survey showed there were 3.65 million learners, 49,000 teachers, and 15,000 institutions around the world.

## JF Standard/Japanese-Language Teaching Materials

The Japan Foundation continues to develop original tools to examine teaching, learning, and assessment, and it plays a core role in improving infrastructure for overseas Japanese-language education. The Foundation also develops, manages, and deploys online and audio-visual Japanese-language teaching materials.

## Overseas Japanese-Language Course (JF Language Course)

The Japan Foundation offers a new type of Japanese-language course based on the "JF Standard for Japanese-Language Education" as an easier way to learn and teach Japanese. The course places emphasis on the comprehensive learning of language and culture, and aims at promoting mutual understanding through Japanese language. Approximately 8,000 participants in JF Language Courses were learning Japanese in 24 countries as of the end of fiscal 2011.

## Dispatch of Specialists/Support for Institutions and Projects

The Japan Foundation dispatches Japanese-language specialists and assistant teachers to foreign educational institutions. About 120 teachers are active all over the world. The Foundation provides grants for Japanese-language courses run by overseas NPOs, Japanese speech contests abroad, academic meetings and workshops on Japanese-language education, and training programs for teachers.

## JF Nihongo Network "Sakura Network"

The Sakura Network is a global network linking the core Japanese-language institutions and teacher associations to promote the language and improve the quality of education. The Japan Foundation's overseas offices and influential organizations in educational activities in the whole country/region join forces to support effective education in each country. The core members of the network were expanded to 118 organizations from 42 countries and two regions by the end of fiscal 2011.

## Training for Teachers Abroad (Japanese-Language Institute, Urawa)

The institute provides advanced training for non-native Japanese-language teachers who are already at the helm or soon will be and programs for teachers with short experience to enhance their Japanese-language skills as well as teaching methodology, thus provides different training programs for teachers with different skills and experience. In fiscal 2011, 434 Japanese-language teachers from 57 countries participated in those programs.

## Japanese-Language Proficiency Test (JLPT) (Center for Japanese-Language Testing)

The JLPT is administered in Japan and abroad simultaneously twice a year to evaluate and certify the Japanese proficiency of non-native speakers. In 2011, about 610,000 people, from elementary school students to adults, in 62 countries and regions took the test for different purposes such as for employment, promotion, or university entrance.

## Training for Overseas Japanese-Language Learners (Japanese-Language Institute, Kansai)

The institute provides training programs for those who are influential in bonding ties between Japan and their countries, such as diplomats, public officials, researchers, and graduate students. To encourage Japanese-language education overseas, the institute also invites foreign university and high school students who excel in learning to Japan. In fiscal 2011, 597 people from 100 countries and regions participated in the programs.



1. Trainees at the Japanese-Language Institute, Kansai, learning about the Japanese Red Cross Society's international and domestic relief activities at the Osaka Red Cross Hospital / 2. Foreign Japanese-language teachers learning the language, teaching methodology, and Japanese affairs at the Japanese-Language Institute, Urawa, which aims at the more enriched education / 3. Trainees taking a calligraphy class at the Japanese-Language Institute, Kansai, which offers programs not only to learn the language but also to learn more about Japanese society and culture, such as calligraphy, tea ceremony, Ikebana, Yukata dressing, Japanese drums, and martial arts / 4. Trainees at the Kansai Institute, learning karate / 5. Students at Minsk State Linguistic University in Belarus. Outstanding students may be eligible for a training program in Japan / 6. The International Speech Contest in Japanese held at J. F. Oberlin University in June 2011 (co-hosted by the International Education Center). Ms. Li Ming Yu from China (front row, fourth from the left) won the Foreign Minister's Award / 7. A participant in JF Nihongo/Business Japanese, a Japanese-language course launched in January 2012 by the Japan Foundation, Los Angeles.

## Dispatch of Japanese-Language Specialists and Expansion of Networks for Japanese-Language Education Overseas

### ■ 122 Japanese-Language Specialists Play Important Roles in 38 Countries

The Japan Foundation dispatches Japanese-language specialists around the world to help Japanese-language education take root and become independent in each country. In fiscal 2011, a total of 122 specialists were dispatched to 38 countries. Their missions included training local teachers, assisting the development of curricula and education materials, supporting initiatives for networking among teachers, and giving Japanese-language classes.

In Vietnam, for example, the Japan Foundation's Japanese-language specialists fully cooperate with the project to introduce Japanese language into the country's secondary education curriculum. In 2005, Japanese language began to be taught at some secondary schools in Vietnam as a first foreign language. Through the dispatch of language specialists since 2003, the Japan Foundation has assisted this project by offering training seminars for teachers, developing standard textbooks, and providing teachers with on-the-spot instruction in order to put the education program in place and improve the level of education.

In 2012, students who started to study Japanese as their first foreign language in 2005 will graduate from high school. Some will go to college, and others will start to work. Whatever path they choose, we hope they will be able to communicate with Japanese people in Japanese and serve as a bridge between Japan and Vietnam to foster good relations.

### ■ "Sakura Network" Members Expanded to 118 Organizations Worldwide

The JF Nihongo Network, also known as the "Sakura Network," is a global network linking the Japan Foundation's overseas offices and core Japanese-language institutions and teacher associations working in cooperation with the Japan Foundation. The network aims at promoting Japanese language and improving the quality of Japanese-language education

abroad. We started building the network in 2008 and set the goal of increasing the number of core members to 100 by the end of fiscal 2010. The objective was accomplished early, and the core members were expanded to 118 organizations from 42 countries and 2 regions by the end of fiscal 2011.

Sakura Core Projects have been organized to make greater use of the network, and have implemented a variety of Japanese-language courses at the overseas offices of the Japan Foundation and provided support to programs by other core members with a strong outreach effect leading to growth, expansion, and broader use of Japanese throughout their country or region.

We also run the Grant Program for Japanese-Language Education Activities to provide Japanese-language institutions in countries and regions without our overseas offices with support tailored to the individual needs of each country and region. This support includes grants for teaching materials and salary assistance for lecturers.

Sakura Caravan for Promoting Japanese Language Education and Culture in Cambodia is one of the projects supported by the fiscal 2011 Sakura Core Projects. This project was planned by the Royal University of Phnom Penh with the collaboration of local Japanese-language institutions. Japanese-language teachers toured high schools in rural areas and held seminars with the help of teachers of Japanese culture who taught songs and origami, Japanese-language learners who talked about their experiences, and those who described future possibilities for Japanese-language learners. Students in rural areas with little access to Japanese language were provided with opportunities to become interested in Japan and Japanese language. As this project planted the seeds of Japanese-language learning, it is the mission of the Japan Foundation to nurture these seeds to bear fruit in the future.



Above: Trainees for Japanese-language teachers in Thailand  
Left: Seminar for Japanese-language teachers in Central and Eastern Europe held in Hungary

## JLPT Taken by 490,000 People in 198 Cities in 61 Countries and Regions Abroad

The Japanese-Language Proficiency Test (JLPT) evaluates and certifies the Japanese proficiency of non-native speakers. The test is offered at five levels from N1 to N5, and examinees can choose the level best suited to their proficiency. N1 and N2 tests consist of two sections: "Language Knowledge (Vocabulary/Grammar) and Reading" and "Listening," and N3, N4, and N5 tests consist of three sections: "Language Knowledge (Vocabulary)," "Language Knowledge (Grammar) and Reading," and "Listening."

### ■ JLPT Taken by 490,000 People Abroad

In 2011, the JLPT was held worldwide on July 3 and December 4 with the collaboration of local host institutions, and about 490,000 people in total took the test overseas. In Taiwan, the JLPT was co-hosted with the Interchange Association. (The Japan Foundation assumed responsibility for administering the JLPT in Taiwan from fiscal 2011.) With about 120,000 people taking the test in Japan, the total number of examinees amounted to about 610,000. In Japan, the JLPT is administered by Japan Educational Exchanges and Services, the co-organizer of the test.

The July test was held in Japan and in 96 cities in 20 countries and regions abroad. In the overseas countries where the Foundation administered the test, roughly 250,000 people applied for the test and about 210,000 actually took it.

The December test was held in Japan and in 196 cities in 60 countries and regions abroad. In the overseas countries where the Foundation administered the test, about 320,000 people applied for the test and nearly 280,000 actually took it.

Four cities—Gangneung in Korea, and Nantong, Xining, and Fuzhou in China—were new sites in the July test, and three countries—Chile, Ecuador, and Austria—and three cities—Johor Bahru in Malaysia, Monterrey in Mexico, and Edinburgh in the

United Kingdom—became new venues in the December test.

### ■ Utilizing JLPT Results and Making Online Application More Available

The JLPT has been offered for more than a quarter century since its launch in 1984. With a broader array of test applicants in recent years, the JLPT results are now used in more diverse ways in many countries where the test is administered, for example, as a requirement for university entrance examinations and qualification tests, and as criteria for screening job applicants and making decisions about promotions and pay raises.

Given these circumstances, we are increasing the number of test sites that accept applications via the Internet to facilitate the application procedure for their convenience. Now applicants can apply for the JLPT online in eight countries and regions, including Edinburgh, and Barcelona and Madrid in Spain, where online applications started to be accepted in 2011. Also, in 2012, examinees will be able to view their test results on the Internet in all test site countries and regions.

### ■ Japanese-Language Proficiency Test Official Practice Workbook Published

The Japan Foundation published the *Japanese-Language Proficiency Test Official Practice Workbook* in March 2012. This is the first official practice workbook compiled after the new JLPT started in 2010. There are five separate workbooks available, each of which covers one of the five levels from N1 to N5. The workbook provides almost the same number of questions as the actual test, and contains a sample cover page of the test booklet, sample answer sheets, and a CD (plus the script) of the listening section to prepare users for the test. The workbook can be downloaded for free on JLPT's official website from June 2012 onward.



Above: Examinees taking the JLPT in Seoul, Korea  
Right: Newly published Japanese-Language Proficiency Test Official Practice Workbook



## Support for Teachers to Enhance the Quality of Japanese-Language Education Overseas and Training Programs for Learners to Build a Bridge between Japan and Their Countries

### ■ Participation in Training Programs by 434 Teachers from 57 Countries

One of the main pillars of the Japan Foundation's Japanese-language education overseas activities is support for teachers. The "Survey of Overseas Organizations Involved in Japanese-Language Education 2009" conducted by the Japan Foundation found that Japanese-language education overseas faced problems not only in the shortage of teachers, but also in lack of teaching skills and poor command of Japanese, and the shortage of teaching materials as well. To deal with these problems, the Japan Foundation Japanese-Language Institute, Urawa, supports overseas-based Japanese-language teachers through training programs and the development of teaching materials and educational curriculum.

Since its establishment in 1989, the institute has welcomed over 8,000 participants, building a considerable reputation as a training facility for foreign Japanese-language teachers. In fiscal 2011, the institute provided 19 training programs varying in duration from two weeks at the shortest to one year at the longest, and 434 teachers from 57 countries participated in those programs.

Among the core training programs is the long-term training program for teachers of the Japanese language, a six-month program targeting young foreign teachers with teaching experience of six months to less than five years, and in fiscal 2011, 57 teachers from 30 countries participated in the program. The program included not only courses in the language and teaching methodology, but are also opportunities to experience Japanese culture such as calligraphy, Origami, Ikebana, kimono dressing, tea ceremony and Japanese dance, and study tours to Nikko and the Kansai region.

To take advantage of their stay in Japan, the participants worked hard to improve their command of the language and to have a better understanding of Japanese society and culture. We hope their activities back in their home countries will contribute to the further development of Japanese-language education overseas.



Above: Demonstration of the Japanese tea ceremony at the Japanese-Language Institute, Urawa  
Right: Participants of the Japanese-Language Program for Foreign-Service Officers and Public Officials at the Japanese-Language Institute, Kansai

### ■ Japanese-Language Learners and the Great East Japan Earthquake

Another main pillar is support for learners. The Japan Foundation Japanese-Language Institute, Kansai, established in Osaka Prefecture in 1997 and marked its 15th anniversary in 2012, provides Japanese-language programs for overseas specialists whose jobs require a good command of Japanese, and also for university and high school students studying Japanese overseas. In fiscal 2011, 597 people from 100 countries and regions took part in those programs.

In fiscal 2011, we launched the JET Memorial Invitation Program for U.S. High School Students. The Great East Japan Earthquake took the lives of many people, and among them were Ms. Taylor Anderson from the U.S. state of Virginia and Mr. Montgomery Dickson from Alaska (a participant in the Japan Foundation's 2009–2010 JET Training Program for Teaching Japanese as a Foreign Language). They had come to Japan under the JET program in the hope of serving as a bridge between the two countries, and were working as an Assistant Language Teacher (ALT) in Ishinomaki and Rikuzentakata, respectively, when the disaster hit the Tohoku region. To commemorate the loss of the two Americans, the new training program provides American high school students with opportunities to deepen their knowledge of Japanese language and culture and interact with their Japanese counterparts.

In 2011, the Japan Foundation invited 32 high school students selected from 276 applicants across the U.S. to Japan. During their stay from July 19 through the 28th, the participants took part in training classes at the Japanese-Language Institute, Kansai, visited Osaka Prefectural Semboku Senior High School to interact with its students, experienced homestays, met with JET ALTs and CIRs (Coordinators for International Relations), and went on a study tour to Kyoto and Kobe. In addition, with the cooperation of the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, 19 of the participants visited Iwate Prefectural Kozukata Senior High School, where they interacted with students and made Japanese lanterns with message to be left floating on Lake Yamanaka at an upcoming festival to commemorate the victims of the disaster.



## Original Materials Developed, and Websites for Teachers and Learners Upgraded and Made Available in More Languages

### ■ Pilot Edition of *Marugoto: Japanese Language and Culture* Developed

The Japan Foundation developed the pilot edition of *Marugoto: Japanese Language and Culture*, a coursebook based on the "JF Standard for Japanese-Language Education (JF Standard)." The JF Standard stresses the need to acquire competence in accomplishing "Can do" tasks using Japanese and competence in intercultural understanding, which involves understanding and respecting other cultures by expanding one's horizons through encounters with different cultures. *Marugoto* was designed based on the JF Standard regarding how to define competence in Japanese, set levels, establish objectives, and assess achievements. In fiscal 2011, we developed and produced *A2 (Elementary 1)* after producing *A1 (Starter)* in fiscal 2010. We also developed a website to help learners study by themselves.

### ■ *Minna no "Can-do" Website* Renewed

The JF Standard divides the level of Japanese-language proficiency into six levels (A1, A2, B1, B2, C1, C2), and is described through a set of "Can-do" sentences that indicate what and how well the learner "Can do" in Japanese. The *Minna no "Can-do" Website*, launched in March 2010, is a database of "Can-do" sentences. In fiscal 2011, we enhanced its usability by improving and adding site functions based on the opinions of users.

### ■ The WEB Version of *Erin's Challenge! I can speak Japanese. Now Available in Six Languages*

In April 2011, the WEB version of *Erin's Challenge! I can speak Japanese.* was made available in six languages, with Spanish, Portuguese, Chinese, and Korean versions added to the existing Japanese and English versions. In fiscal 2011, the second year of running the website, we began producing French and Indonesian versions to make *Erin's Challenge!* accessible in more languages, and placed more emphasis on publicity to attract even more users. As a result, with more than eight million hits (page views) by the end of fiscal 2011, the website has been used by a large number of people interested in Japanese language and culture.

### ■ All Five Language Versions of the *Japanese in Anime & Manga Website* Now Available

Japanese anime and manga are gaining popularity among many people around the world, and are part of their motivation to learn Japanese. *Japanese in Anime & Manga* is a website aimed at sparking the interest of anime and manga fans in the Japanese language and offers quizzes and games as fun ways to learn.

In fiscal 2011, the French version was added to the existing English, Spanish, Korean, and Chinese versions, and all 13 contents are now available in the five languages. Also, responding to the requests of users, we added a function to allow them to hear lines and onomatopoeia in manga. With the five language versions now available, the development of the website was completed about two years after its launch, and the site's home page was redesigned as "Global Home" where users can choose a language. With the number of visitors constantly increasing, the website was accessed about 2.4 million times (page views) in fiscal 2011, about 14 percent higher than the previous fiscal year.

### ■ Information about Japanese-Language Learning Constantly Disseminated through *NIHONGO-e-Na*

*NIHONGO-e-Na* is a portal website aimed to introduce Japanese-language learners a wide variety of free websites, online tools, and how to use and take advantage of them so that it can respond to different needs of users. The portal site is offered in English and Japanese with some contents also available in Chinese and Korean.

In fiscal 2011, we continued to add new information by uploading three introductory texts every month to keep up with the ever-changing Internet environment. Total traffic to the site amounted to about 1.02 million hits (page views) in fiscal 2011, a 33 percent increase from the previous fiscal year.

### ■ *NIHONGO de CARE-NAVI* Augmented

*NIHONGO de CARE-NAVI* is a website designed to help people involved in nursing and nursing care learn Japanese and is offered in English and Indonesian. At the request of users, we enhanced its user-friendliness by adding a search function for words, phrases, and sentences according to categories such as "medical departments" and "toilet care."



Above: The "Global Home" page of the *Japanese in Anime & Manga* website  
Left: The home page of the *Minna no "Can-do" Website*

## Release of the Results of the Survey on Japanese-Language Education Abroad, and Strategic Augmentation of the Japanese-Language Course

### ■ Report on Japanese-Language Education Abroad Published

The Japan Foundation conducts the worldwide "Survey of Overseas Organizations Involved in Japanese-Language Education" every three years to grasp the present condition of overseas Japanese-language education, and to make good use of the results in planning and implementing our programs. With the collaboration of Japanese embassies and consulates and Japanese-language specialists around the world, we carried out questionnaire surveys on the number of organizations involved in Japanese-language education, learners, and teachers, purpose of study, and educational problems and concerns in a particular country or region. The results of the 2009 survey showed that there were 3.65 million learners, 49,000 teachers, and 15,000 organizations involved in Japanese-language education around the world. In fiscal 2011, we compiled and published the report on the survey results; it contains not only an analysis of trends by region and level of education, but also a new in-depth analysis of the top 20 countries in terms of the number of learners, including a comparison with past survey results. The report draws much attention from people at home and abroad and its results have been frequently quoted by academic organizations and papers. Detailed information on the surveyed organizations is available on the Japan Foundation's website.

### ■ Enhancing the Japanese-Language Course (JF Language Course) Overseas

In fiscal 2011, the Japan Foundation started to enhance the JF Language Course targeting the general public in order to respond to new demands on education overseas. The results of the 2009 survey on education abroad showed that the number of learners had remarkably increased and that the purpose of study had diversified. While some people study Japanese for practical purposes, such as to study in Japan and to seek employment, an increasing number of people are interested in the language itself or have grown fond of Japanese culture through, for example, anime and manga.

Given these circumstances, the Japan Foundation tries to upgrade its language course by introducing a new curriculum designed based on the JF Standard as a new tool to help examine how to teach and learn the language and how to evaluate learning outcomes.

The JF Language Course provides classes that place more emphasis on understanding of Japanese culture, using materials such as *Marugoto: Japanese Language and Culture*, a coursebook based on the JF Standard. In fiscal 2011, a total of 8,000 people took the courses offered at 21 overseas offices of the Japan Foundation and at Japan Centers in Ukraine and Kazakhstan. In fiscal 2012, we will start to offer the courses in four more countries and continue to promote the comprehensive learning of the language and culture.

### ■ Japanese-Language Education Provided for Nurse/Certified Care Worker Candidates under EPAs

The Japan Foundation provided Indonesian and Philippine candidates for nurses and certified care workers with preparatory Japanese-language education programs before coming to Japan under the Economic Partnership Agreements (EPA) between Japan and their countries. The training programs lasted six months in Indonesia and three months in the Philippines. From Mondays through Fridays they learned basic speaking, reading, and writing skills in classes, and on Saturdays they took programs designed to deepen their knowledge and understanding of the manners and customs of Japanese society and its people, and received lectures on the situation of nursing and nursing care in Japan.

Most candidates were unfamiliar with the Japanese language before they enrolled in the preparatory programs. Even though the training programs required intensive study, the candidates were highly ambitious and motivated to learn, and encouraged each other and worked hard in their classes with the goal of working in Japan. They also eagerly participated in activities such as creating and displaying posters about Japan, vocabulary contests, and recitations.



Above: Japanese-language education for nurse/certified care worker candidates in the Philippines  
Left: A lecture on manners in a JF Language Course offered in Madrid, Spain, in February 2012