



2015 Annual Report

April 2015 - March 2016



YWCA of Japan

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We are the power of future

YWCA (Young Women's Christian Association) is an international NGO where, upon a Christian foundation, women from around the world exceed the barriers of language and cultures and work together to encourage women's participation in society and to realize a peaceful world where human rights, health and environment is protected. The movement began in Great Britain in 1855, and nowadays, 25million women are working in more than 120 countries throughout the world. The World Office locates in Switzerland as an organization in consultative status with the United Nations. In Japan, the movement has continued for more than 100 years since its establishment in 1905, contributing to the society in various ways.

YWCA of Japan works with 24 local YWCAs and 36 junior and senior high-school YWCAs, in order to empower women, children and older people, who are put in vulnerable situations. Our work includes the following:

- Education and awareness raising of global issues including peace, human rights and environment, and training young leaders to work on these issues
- Work for the healthy physical and mental development of young people
- Advocacy work, by way of collaborating with UN institutions and NGOs within and outside Japan, as well as outreach including newsletter and website
- Emergency relief activities for disasters and conflicts within and outside Japan
- Leadership training of volunteers to contribute to local communities



◇ Local Associations.....	24
◇ Members.....	2,198
◇ Associate Members.....	187
◇ Jr./Sr. High School YWCAs.....	36
◇ Members.....	766
◇ Program Beneficiaries.....	40822

Summary of 2015

During the reporting period, the YWCA of Japan implemented various programs aiming for the realization of peace. The programs include activities supporting survivors of the 2011 Great East Japan Earthquake, the annual "Pilgrimage to Hiroshima", participation to the World YWCA council, "Nanjing Peace Pilgrimage", and "Thinking of New Energy from Fukushima", a study program targeting high school students. All these programs have been supported by the cooperation of volunteers and generous donors.





Leadership Training

The YWCA of Japan's work addresses a variety of global issues, from Peace, Human Rights, Environment, Violence against Women, HIV/AIDs to Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights. The YWCA implemented the following leadership training programs with emphasis on providing the real experience of meeting people, seeing, listening, walking, talking and thinking, with multigenerational participation, with special focus on young women.

Pilgrimage to Hiroshima 2015 11th–13th August @Hiroshima

Theme: What did the 70 years after the Atomic Bomb mean? –Facing the Future–

A total of 60 people participated in this year's program, including participants from all over Japan from teenagers to older adults, as well as international students, and guests from the National YWCA of Korea and the National Council of YWCAs of China. This year was the 70th year after Hiroshima suffered the Atomic Bomb. The participants listened to the testimony of a survivor of the bomb, and went on a field trip to think about "That Day" when the bomb was dropped. They exchanged discussions about our future, and expressed it through drawings on the last day. The following is a reflection by a participant, given the 70th memorial year:

"It has taken such long years for those in Hiroshima to reclaim what was taken away from them; to forgive the soldiers who dropped the Bomb on Hiroshima; to come to face their own selves.

We must start our prayers and our action from Hiroshima
For the sake of the helpless people who were killed, and are being killed throughout the world in the name of ideologies
That is what we have learned after 70 years.



Junior and Senior High School YWCAs Conference

36 junior and senior high school YWCAs are affiliated with the YWCA of Japan, holding conferences every summer. In 2015, three regional conferences were held. The theme in the Kanto area conference was "4 years after the Great East Japan Earthquake". The participants visited Iioka town in Chiba prefecture, which suffered the worst tsunami damage by the Great Kanto Earthquake in 1923. They visited temporary shelters, listened to the story of the earthquake, had an emergency cooking experience, and reflected upon the earthquake disaster and the future.

- Tohoku/Hokkaido area "Peace", Date: 30th July–1st August
- Kanto area "4 years after the Great East Japan Earthquake–What we must think about now" Date: 30th July–1st August
- Kansai area "What's in a Rice ball– Through a soup kitchen in Kamagasaki" Date: 27th–29th July

Nanjing Peace Pilgrimage 2016

26th February– 1st March @Nanjing, China

– Pilgrimage to Peace Starts from Our Hearts–

This program was co-hosted between the National Council of YWCAs of China and the YWCA of Japan, with cooperation from Nanjing YWCA. 15 participants from Japan and 23 participants from China learned together about history and exchanged views in Nanjing, a city where the Japanese military massacred civilians during the Second Sino-Japanese war.

“I realized that how the youths met each other, participated, discussed and dined together was the best way for people of China and Japan to form mutual understanding. Peace is not just a principle, but something to be built through actual human interaction. I am grateful for all the hospitality from the YWCA of China. I wish to invite them to Japan as well, and strengthen our bond.”(A participant from Japan)



“My way of International Cooperation– A First Step to International NGO”

The YWCA provided a series of training programs to strengthen problem-solving and communication skills, aiming to enable participants to open up new opportunities for themselves and find their own unique ways to social involvement. The program was targeted for people with interest in international NGO work and who wish to enhance their leadership skills or start new endeavors.

① 27th June @Niigata

“The World that Lies before You– International Cooperation by Civilians–”

Lecturer: Hiroshi Sasaki (President, Peace Studies Association of Japan/ Professor, Niigata University of Information and International Studies)

② 31st October @Kofu

“My way of International Cooperation– through Volunteer work in Malawi”

Lecturer: Hanae Yoshino (Teacher of social studies at Yamanashi Eiwa Junior and Senior High School)

“Now, It’s Your Turn!”

Lecturer: Izuho Hagio (Trustee & Director, YWCA of Japan)



Disaster Response

After the Great East Japan Earthquake in 2011, the YWCA of Japan launched the “Com 7300” Committee, with the pledge of continuously working beside the affected people until the children born on the day of the disaster turn 20 years old. The word “Com” means “Together” in Latin language, and “7300” is the number of days in 20 years (365days*20 years). 4 years after the disaster, the affected areas still have not fully recovered. With the issue becoming increasingly forgotten and the overall decrease of relief programs, there is a need for continuous support programs for the affected people. The YWCA of Japan implements such activities based on three pillars: “Refresh”/short-stay programs, Second House Program, and work in the Activity Space Caro Fukushima.

“Refresh”/short-stay programs

322 Participants
During 2015

@Hakodate, Tokyo, Kofu, Shizuoka, Nagoya, Kyoto, Osaka, Kumamoto

Short-stay programs were implemented in various local YWCAs during the school holiday seasons in spring, summer and winter, aiming to provide the children and families living in the affected areas with an opportunity to rest and refresh their bodies and minds.



Second House Program @Yokohama, Nagoya, Kobe

The “Second Houses”, located in Yokohama, Nagoya and Kobe, are a place for families and groups from the affected area to stay and have some relaxing time. This program is another form of “Refresh” program, in which allows participants can use the houses as their own, providing easier access for the people who cannot participate in the above short-stay programs and allowing whole families to participate together. The houses are lent free of charge from owners supporting the activity, and are managed by local YWCAs. The YWCA of Japan provides support for the participants’ transportation free from the affected areas and covers utility costs, with the help of generous donors.



30 families
107people

Benefited from this program in 2015



162 Participants

Visited Caro Fukushima during 2015

Activity Space “Caro Fukushima”

@Fukushima

The Activity Space “Caro Fukushima” locates about 5 minutes’ walk from Fukushima railway station. It is a safe space where women and children living in Fukushima can drop by freely. It occasionally hosts events and seminars, while supporting independent activities by local women.

Seminars and events during reporting period

- 28th May: Succulent bowl planting class
- 10th July: Encountering Different Cultures: Mehndi class
- 16th July: Fukushima Y’s café “Cooking sautéed vegetable and pickles”
- 18th August: “What is Support? – Essence for sustainable support work”
- 24th September: Herb Tea class
- 15th October: Aroma class
- 27th October: Preserved flowers workshop
- 19th November: Fukushima Y’s café– “Cooking Paella”
- 19th January 2016: Succulent bowl planting class
- 21st January 2016: Fukushima Y’s café– “Soup and *mochi* rice cake”



Project “Thinking of New Energy from Fukushima”

12th September 2015– 12th March 2016 (9 sessions)

The YWCA of Japan coordinated “Thinking of New Energy from Fukushima”, a program consisting of 9 sessions targeting high-school students living in Fukushima. Through field visits to sites and people working on natural energy, the high school students learned about alternative energy and ways to utilize it, as well as recycling and sustainable lifestyle. On the final session, the students made a presentation regarding what they can do in Fukushima to promote and expand the use of natural energy. The following is a quote from a student’s presentation:

What we have experienced through the Great East Japan Earthquake and TEPCO Fukushima Nuclear Power Plant accident, we will carry for the rest of our lives. But we cannot stay in the same place. We must move forward, and create a new Fukushima. I want to be able to uphold Fukushima to the world, as a front-line prefecture of renewable energy. We are now standing on a turning point. I ask the grown-ups to listen to us, and lend us your hands.



- No. 1: Sunday 13th September “Kick-off meeting”/venue: Caro Fukushima
- No. 2: Sunday 4th October “What is Solar Sharing?”(Visit to Eco-Ene-Minamisoma Research Institute)
- No. 3: Saturday 31st October “Projects in Tokyo Area” (Visit to Fujino Electricity),
Sunday 1st November “Off-grid Culture Festival”
- No. 4: Sunday 14th November “Build your own Solar Panel”/venue: Caro Fukushima
- No. 5: 15th– 16th December “Natural recyclable lifestyle experience”/ Venue: Tojisha
- No. 6: 20th–24th December “Visiting citizens’ energy projects”/Tokyo and Hyogo Prefecture
- No. 7: Saturday 16th January/venue: Caro Fukushima
- No. 8: Saturday 27th February/venue: Caro Fukushima
- No. 9: Saturday 12th March: “Thinking of New Energy from Fukushima: Students’ Presentation”



Supporting the Olive Tree Campaign



The following is a quote from one of the program participants:

“The Palestinian person that I met said again and again that she did not want to drive the Israelis out; but wanted to find some way they could coexist together. She also said that she wanted the people of the World and the people of Japan to know this situation, and to think about it together with her. The olive trees are an important source of income and food, which supports the lives of Palestinian people. By supporting this project, we can send out a message that we are friends who are together striving for peace. I pray that one day the land will become a safe place to live for all the people whom I met there.”

A donation of 3000 JPY for the Olive Tree Campaign will provide a new olive tree in Palestine. During the reporting period, we were able to plant 224 olive trees thanks to kind donations.

The olive tree, which bears fruit even on a poor soil and lives for 800 to 1000 years, is seen as a symbol of happiness and prosperity. For the people of Palestine, they are an important source of income and nutrients. However, since the beginning of Israeli occupation in 1967, more than a million olive trees that the people of Palestine have cherished are destroyed. The farmers in the area are being deprived of income, land and home, and women and children are forced to live in unstable conditions. The YWCA of Japan supports the Joint Advocacy Initiative (JAI) which protects jobs, environment and livelihood through the peaceful method of planting olives.



Supporting survivors of Nepal Earthquake



The YWCA of Japan called for donations for the support of survivors of the massive earthquake that hit Nepal and parts of India and Bangladesh on 25th April. The generous donations have been used for relief materials including blankets and food for displaced people and local volunteers, peer counseling, and immediate/long term counseling service provided by the YWCA of Nepal.

Supporting survivors of Southern Taiwan Earthquake

The YWCA of Japan called for donations to support those who were affected by the M6.4 earthquake on 6th February in Southern Taiwan. The donations have been sent to the YWCA of Taiwan, for its work in collaboration with other civil society organizations, including sending social workers, consultation service, immediate relief supplies, and documentation support service.

Advocacy

The YWCA of Japan has conducted advocacy activities and appeals on a number of issues including military bases, nuclear weapons and nuclear power plants, expansion of military and violence against women, in its call for a world where women and children can live in peace, free of all kinds of violence.

28th World YWCA Council

11th–16th October, at Bangkok, Thailand

Theme: Bold and Transformative Leadership – Toward 2035

On 11th October, more than 500 participants from 70 countries gathered for this quadrennial meeting in Bangkok Thailand. The YWCA of Japan sent a delegation of 15 participants, including 5 young women.

The meeting discussed the vision of the world and the YWCA in the next 20 years, and a “Bold and Transformative Goal” for 2035 was adopted on the last day: “By 2035, 100 million young women and girls transform power structures to create justice, gender equality and a world without violence and war; leading a sustainable YWCA movement, inclusive of all women”.

The YWCA of Japan conducted workshops delivering the issues of nuclear power plants and military bases through their nature as a form of violence against women. It also took items including tissue paper packages with the Japanese Constitution Article 9 and message cards made from recycled paper cranes from Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park, expressing strong commitment for Peace with Justice. The World YWCA Council adopted the draft resolution on “The Equal Denial of Nuclear Energy/Weapons”, submitted jointly by the YWCA of Japan and the YWCA of Korea with a vote of over 80%, committing to take action and raise voices to address the problem of nuclear energy and nuclear weapons. The text of the resolution is as follows:

The World YWCA, recognizing that nuclear energy (except for medical use) and nuclear weapons are inextricably linked in their nature as a form of violence against women, undermining rights to safety, health, dignity and freedom from violence of women, young women and girls, and should be both denied, resolves to:

- Advocate against the usage of nuclear weapons or energy (except for medical use),
- Work to create alternative, nuclear-free communities with increased roles for women, in line with the UN Security Council Resolution 1325 which calls for women’s leadership on sustainable peace.

The contents of this resolution is based on the idea of “Denial of Nuclear” that the YWCA of Japan has upheld since 1970, and it has a significant meaning that this has been adopted as a common view of the World YWCA movement.



Facebook Campaign “All over the Nation, We’re Angry!”

On 17th July, a series of security laws which would allow the Japanese military to fight overseas, violating the peaceful policy upheld by the Article 9 of the Japanese Constitution, were passed through the Lower House, causing outrage from citizens throughout Japan. YWCAs throughout Japan took part in campaigns protesting against this move.



Week without Violence “Purple Campaign” 18th –24th October

Every year, the YWCA celebrates the Week without Violence on the third week of October, when YWCAs in 120 countries around the world raise voices to stop violence against women and girls, to call for awareness regarding the reality of physical/psychological/sexual violence, and to expand positive actions toward a world without violence. The YWCA of Japan conducted a Facebook “Purple campaign”, where members dressed in purple and shared their photographs expressing the will to abolish violence against women.



Statements/Appeals

- Participated in “Women’s Action in Red’ in Ginza”(14th May)
- Issued “Statement of Protest against Security Bills: Protect Article 9!” (2nd July)
- Joined “NGO No War Network” (19th July)
- Endorsed “International Appeal against Japan-India Nuclear Agreement”(19th July)
- Endorsed “Stop Hate Speech” (19th July)
- Endorsed “Change the Japanese Immigration Control Act!” (19th July)
- Endorsed “1 year passed since Gaza war: why the UN cannot solve it?” (25th July)

Donations Received

We express our gratitude for all our donors for their generous support during the reporting period.



YWCA of Japan supporters fee	2,212,000
“Peacemakers” Donation	2,445,076
Great East Japan Earthquake Survivor Support	6,664,284
Disaster Relief Donations	311,000
Nepal Earthquake Survivor Support	845,629
Southern Taiwan Earthquake Survivor Support	267,168
Olive Tree Campaign	670,260
Donation for YWCA of Palestine	330,000
Donation for World YWCA Council Participation	699,036
“Power to Change” Donation	43,166
Total(JPY)	14,487,619

Messages of Thanks

Mayako Ishii, Chief of Board of Trustees



The YWCA of Japan was able to continue with its work through 2015, thanks to the kind support from our supporters and donors. I wish to express special thanks for the generous donations for our disaster relief and survivor support activities for those facing ongoing difficulties after the Great East Japan Earthquake and nuclear power plant accident, and for those who were affected by the Kumamoto Earthquake in April 2016. The YWCA of Japan is a large organization with 24 local YWCAs and 36 junior and senior high school YWCAs, and we strive to utilize this strength to deliver support activities which closely respond to individual needs of the most vulnerable women, children, older people and people with disabilities.

Three years have passed since the YWCA of Japan officially registered as a “Public Interest Incorporated Foundation” under the new Japanese legislation, and the new organizational structure is beginning to get on track. While it is difficult to define “public interest”, we are committed to our basic position, which is to learn from Jesus Christ and to love our neighbors, and are working without losing hope towards an environment-friendly society which is filled with justice and peace, where everyone’s human rights are protected. Building on the legacies of our predecessors, we are determined to continue our work for the public interest, especially the empowerment of women suffering from inequality.

Naoko Matano, President/Trustee



Since the Great East Japan Earthquake in 2011, the YWCA of Japan has continued projects to support survivors, listening to the voices of women, children and each one of the people who are facing difficulty to even speak up about their situations, and treasuring the life of each single person. There are still many people who are living under severe pressure each day, because of the damages of the earthquake including the nuclear power plant accident. It is vital that we remember them and continue to work with them.

In summer, we are continuously conducting programs including “Pilgrimage to Hiroshima” and “Junior and Senior High School YWCA Conference”, with the participation of young members, who are the bearers of the future.

In October, 15 members including 5 young women participated in the World YWCA Council, engaging in discussions towards a global goal.

All such activities demonstrate the strength of leadership nurtured in the YWCA. I wish to express our deep gratitude for the kind donations and support, which have made our work possible.

We sincerely ask for your continuous support for the work of the YWCA of Japan