



Bunkyo University Volunteers 2001-2012: Chronicle of Volunteering for International Peace Cooperation

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Introduction

The aim of this article is to chronicle the student volunteer activities of the Faculty of International Studies, Bunkyo University, since 2001, and to review the outcome of student experiences in the light of education for global citizenship and international understanding. The significance of global citizenship is accentuated as the foremost goal of faculty education², where volunteerism is regarded as essential and where students are encouraged to be actively involved in the international community. Volunteerism in the faculty is thus considered as an important means of raising awareness for international cooperation and global contribution, including the promotion of peace and human security. Those who have experienced volunteer activities in developing countries and post-conflict regions—as well as in the northern Pacific coastal areas of Japan that were bitterly

hit by the earthquake and subsequent tsunami on March 11, 2011—realise that people need a great deal of help from others and that people can offer help to others themselves. This suggests that those young people who know the value of volunteering will be the cornerstone for a future wherein people live together and support one another. This article highlights the footsteps of the Bunkyo volunteers and offers ideas for future volunteering activities.

1. Volunteers in 2001: First Visit to Post-conflict Kosovo

A team of twelve students made an initial visit to post-conflict Kosovo from August 25 to September 11, 2001. Professor Kyoichi Nakamura initiated this first activity of the “Bunkyo Volunteers”³ through the Faculty of International Studies, Bunkyo University, after serving with the UNMIK⁴ in Kosovo. The team

¹ Professor, Faculty of International Studies, Bunkyo University

² <http://www.bunkyo.ac.jp/faculty/kokusai/features/contribution.html> (referred on October 1, 2012)

³ “Bunkyo Volunteers” is an autonomous students group who dedicate themselves to works for others, in particular, in the peace building settings abroad. It was launched in 2001, having Professor Nakamura as an advisor.

⁴ UNMIK=United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo

was supported by ADRA Japan, one of Japan's leading international NGOs engaged in housing and school rehabilitation in Kosovo. Volunteer activities included the reconstruction of a high school (Malisheve High School), where students built a garden terrace flanked with flowerpots and where they joined local counterparts to create wall pictures to decorate school hallways. Through this and other work activities, the volunteers had an opportunity to grasp difficult situations objectively, and they learned how international assistance was implemented on the ground. The Bunkyo students also visited an elementary school in Mitrovica that had been separated by a river into two sections: the ethnic Serbian community in the north and the ethnic Albanian community in the south. Students at this school had experienced the terrors of an ethnic conflict in which their families were killed in skirmishes between rivaling ethnicities.

2. Volunteers in 2002: Kosovo, Timor-Leste, Uzbekistan and Nepal

2.1 Kosovo

A team of three students participated in volunteer activities organized by ADRA Japan in Kosovo from February 23 to March 24: public health education, smoke-free education, school rehabilitation, calendar distribution, and meeting with an Albanian girl (Besjana Mousullieu) who had suffered serious burns on her head and face when her house was burned down by a grenade attack. The Bunkyo Volunteers launched fundraising support so that this Albanian girl could receive plastic surgery in Tokyo.

2.2 Timor-Leste (East Timor)

A team of twelve students visited Timor-Leste

on two occasions—from February 19 to March 8 and from August 20 to September 3. They participated in two major activities while in East Timor. The first was to visit an orphanage in inland Timor-Leste, Baguia, which had been overlooked by international relief services. Before their departure, volunteers raised funds to help the orphanage and collected clothing, sports and musical goods for the orphans. The team later provided public health education for disease prevention, teaching the importance of washing hands and using toilets properly. The Bunkyo team also joined a project site of OISCA, a leading Japanese NGO, in order to plant mangrove for environmental preservation.

2.3 Uzbekistan

A team of two students visited Uzbekistan from February 15 to March 15, 2002. They participated in the following: (1) in a Japanese language teaching program at Japan Center, (2) in an orphanage visit to "Kind Garden" and (3) in a cultural exchange and home stay with locals.

2.4 Nepal

A team of two students visited Nepal from March 1 to March 11 to participate in a project for sufferers of Hansen's disease. This project was supported by an international NGO, ADRA Japan.

3. Volunteers in 2003: Timor-Leste, Kosovo, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Rwanda

3.1 Timor-Leste

There were two volunteer teams in 2003. Eight students visited Timor-Leste from February 18 to March 4 and six students visited from August 22 to September 5. Both teams raised funds for relief and collected things like clothing and sporting

goods prior to their visit. They camped at an orphanage in Baguia Village as they had done in 2002, promoting the “kamado” project in order to help local people save firewood for cooking. Their activities included a cultural exchange at Rikisha Junior High School, field study at the OISCA Training Center, mangrove reforestation, and a courtesy visit to the Embassy of Japan and the JICA office in Dili, capital of the newborn country.

3.2 Kosovo, and Bosnia and Herzegovina

Two volunteer teams visited the post-conflict Balkan areas in 2003. The first team of two students visited from March 21 to April 6 and the second team of four students from July 28 to August 20. The latter travelled from Belgrade to Kosovo over the notorious bridge between Serbian-influenced Mitrovica (north) and ethnic Albanian-ruling Mitrovica (south). The bridge remains a symbol of ethnic hostility.

The first team met locals who had suffered from years of ethnic conflict in Kosovo. They later visited Bosnia and Herzegovina for briefing sessions at the Embassy of Japan, as well as other related NGO offices, such as JEN at Sarajevo.

The second team participated in an international seminar organised by the Kosovo Center for Human Rights (KCHR), Peja, from August 1 to 7. They stayed at local homes in Peja so as to help the people financially and experience the Kosovo lifestyle. The program included a roundtable session on human rights issues in Kosovo; the screening of a documentary film on the conflict in Kosovo, called “The Road from Pain to Hope”; and a visit to refugee camps and villages of repatriation, cultural heritage, war, etc.

After the seminar, they travelled by bus to

Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) via the Croatian and Montenegrin coast—since there was no direct transportation from Kosovo to BiH. In BiH, the major activity of the second team was to participate in the youth program (workshop) organised by UNDP—including young people of different ethnic backgrounds gathered from around the Balkans and others parts of Europe. They also had a briefing session regarding the Srebrenica Regional Recovery Program at UNDP Srebrenica and visited a NGO project site at Skelani, funded and supported by the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) and war memorial sites. Prior to this trip they had raised funds of about 220,000 yen and collected stationary, clothing and other goods for relief. They donated these goodwill gifts to the children of local schools.

3.3 Kosovo Internship

One student and one graduate worker (the latter of whom had volunteered in Kosovo in 2001), volunteered to intern at UNDP in Pristina, Kosovo, from May 12 to July 30. Their major task was to assist the Kosovo Youth Network as assistant officers whilst attending a series of events organised by UNDP and also by UNHCR, Pristina.

3.4 Rwanda

From August 21 to September 19, one student visited Rwanda to help in a project called “Japan One Love” that promoted a self-support business for those who had lost body parts during the conflict. She worked for the attached restaurant and managed the business with other Japanese staff. During her stay, she visited an orphanage and other project sites at Kigali that were supported by the Japanese NGO. She took along some sports

goods donated by a Japanese company. The most remarkable experience of her stay was an independent trip to a local museum, where she viewed the mummified bodies of many who were massacred during the conflict, including small children and babies.

4. Volunteers in 2004: Timor-Leste, Niigata Prefecture (Japan)

4.1 Timor-Leste

A team of ten students visited Timor-Leste from August 3 to August 17. Prior to their visit, the team collected donations, relief goods and clothes for the orphans at Baguia Village. They also visited an OISCA training center at Rikisha while at the World Vision office in Dili, the Embassy of Japan, and the site of mangrove forestation. At the Baguia orphanage, the team volunteered to clean up rooms, facilities and other areas that were littered with waste. They hired some local people to paint the surroundings and walls, using some of the funds raised in Japan. During their stay at Baguia, they resided with locals so as to gain a greater understanding about their living conditions.

4.2 Niigata, Japan

A big earthquake hit the Niigata Prefecture on the Japanese Sea Coast in October. Scores of Bunkyo students launched relief fund-raising campaigns in the streets. A total of twenty-four students went to Niigata to participate in emergency relief works organized by NGOs and local administrations, camping out at a nearby gymnasium and other facilities.

5. Volunteers in 2005: Timor-Leste and Bosnia and Herzegovina

5.1 Timor-Leste

The team of ten volunteer students went to help children in a remote village of Timor-Leste from August 22 to September 4. This visit was the sixth visit of the Bunkyo volunteers to the Pacific island since 2002. They continued to support the orphanage in Baguia village on the foot of the nearly 3,000-meter-high mountain range. They were engaged in the works of repairing the orphanage building, planting trees, donating stationary and sporting goods to the village school, and offering environmental education to children and villagers. They also participated in health care services, mangrove planting and forestry (re-)development projects, agricultural training, etc., which were organized by OISCA International.

5.2 Bosnia and Herzegovina

A team of ten students volunteered to help young people in Bosnia and Herzegovina from August 24 to September 7. They visited youth centers in Hambarine and Ljubija of the Prijedor region, northwestern Bosnia, and engaged in international exchange with those from all walks of life in Srebrenica, eastern Bosnia—donating stationary, musical instruments and sporting goods which were then collected in Chigasaki, home to Bunkyo University. As represented by the Omarska camp, Prijedor is infamous for the ethnic cleansing of Muslim citizens in the early days of the Bosnian War, while Srebrenica is remembered as the site of the worst massacre in post-war Europe. This volunteer visit to Srebrenica occurred shortly after the 10th anniversary observance of the massacre tragedy. The team visited the Memorial Park

cemetery that sits on a peaceful and sprawling hill in nearby Potocari.

5.3 Kosovo

Two students made a field study visit to Kosovo from March 1 to 8, staying with local people in Peja. During their time there, they visited the art school (Odhise Paskali), an elementary school, a school in a Serbian enclave, and the homes of physically and mentally handicapped people, accompanied by a Japanese member of staff from World Vision Kosovo.

6. Volunteers in 2006: Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, New York, Kosovo, Philippines, and Uganda.

6.1 Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina

A team of sixteen volunteer students visited a refugee camp in the suburbs of Zagreb, Croatia, and a youth center in BiH from August 21 to September 1. The refugee camp was founded during the Bosnian War with support from the Japanese government, initiated by Mdm. Sadako Ogata who was then UN High Commissioner for Refugees. At the peak period in late 1990s more than one thousand refugees were struggling to overcome their experience of anguish in the camp. When the student volunteers visited in August 2006, nearly two hundred people were still living in the camp at Zagreb. It was simply too difficult for them to return to their hometowns after their lives had been torn apart so completely.

For the young Japanese volunteers—who had not yet known real conflict—this visit to the camp

was a first encounter with the real human tragedy incurred by war. The refugee experience was far beyond the reality they could imagine. After a few days work at the refugee camp, the students were guided to Prijedor, in northeastern Bosnia, another epicenter of the war tragedy. The students there witnessed firsthand the genuine scar of so-called ethnic cleansing or genocide, visiting the now defunct concentration camp and massacre site at Omarsca and the Identification Center at Sanskimost, where hundreds of bodies were still undergoing forensic identification.

A visit to Srebrenica, another eastern Bosnian town, added another choking moment to their experience as they strolled the sprawling graveyards called Memorial Park. The park is growing yearly as identified bodies are finally returned to bereaved families. An epitaph in the cemetery reads: “Never Again Srebrenica”.

6.2 New York

Responding to growing needs and interests of students who would desire future careers at UN-related organisations, the first study program at the UN Headquarters in New York was launched from February 28 to March 7, 2006. Ten students participated in briefings on the following topics: a UN overview, UNDP, PKO, Human Security, Disarmament and Translation. Ms. Mayumi Watabe⁵, the UN Human Security Officer, facilitated these sessions at the UN headquarters. In addition to the UN study, the students participated in two volunteer activities: (1) an educational visit and cultural exchange at Norman Thomas High

⁵ Ms. Watabe is currently a lecturer at the Graduate School of International Cooperation Studies, Bunkyo University. She also contributes an article to this journal.

School, located in the Midtown area of Manhattan, and (2) a soup kitchen project for homeless people. It was a significant experience for the students to learn about the needs of homeless people and the role of social support—and they could not have imagined the homeless situation before coming to New York. The participants also visited Ground Zero and the nearby Trinity Church where they learned how terrorism changed the lives of ordinary people and impacted the American society.

6.3 Kosovo

Two students visited Kosovo from September 1 to 5 en route from Bosnia and Herzegovina through Montenegro. They renewed the presence of the Bunkyo volunteers in Kosovo, visiting war memorial sites, the villages of both ethnic Albanians and Serbs, and the world heritage sites of the Serbian Orthodox Church in Decani.

6.4 Philippines

Three students volunteered to help people in the Philippines from August 1 to August 12, joining the work camp program conducted by a Japanese NGO “Food for the Hungry.” They helped construct a fence around a school basketball court and they joined in other activities such as delivering food to village people in need, visiting high schools for sporting events, and so on. All three gained unforgettable experiences with the local staff as well.

6.5 Uganda

One student joined a Japanese NGO work camp (“Food for Hungry”) in Uganda from August 15 to August 29. Her major task was to engage in building a school in Kyoga village. She also visited

schools in Buntaba, Namasumbi, and Misombwa where she received support from the Japanese NGO. She had an opportunity to visit local homes and witness the severe conditions of family life—where many small children had to leave their homes in order to provide for their families.

7. Volunteers in 2007: New York, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Philippines, Uganda and Bolivia

7.1 New York

The second study program at the UN Headquarters in New York was implemented from February 28 to March 7. A group of 10 students participated. There were two volunteer activities organised by Ms. Noriko Hino, a representative of a New York-based NPO called “New York de Volunteer.”

One volunteer activity was to help in the “soup kitchen” so as to provide homeless people with hot meals in a church called the Bowery Mission; this church also functioned as a learning center for helping adults to improve their professional skills and find jobs. The less fortunate people gathered for the meal and appreciated the Bunkyo student entertainment by singing and talking after they served the meal.

Another volunteer activity was to be with children who were mentally and physically challenged in an NPO called “The Association to Benefit Children (ABC)”, which was also guided by Ms. Hino. The students spent an exciting time together, introducing Japanese culture by putting on yukata and teaching calligraphy to the children.

The Bunkyo students also visited Columbia University for an exchange with Japanese students. Their Columbian counterparts, in their 3rd year of

university, communicated only in Japanese.

7.2 Bosnia and Herzegovina

A team of 5 students visited Bosnia and Herzegovina from August 22 to September 1. In Sarajevo, they had three activities: (1) a visit to the Embassy of Japan; (2) a visit to the Community Gardens for multi-ethnic coexistence activities; (3) a visit to the training center of land mine detective dogs and demining center, both of which were run by an NPO “Norwegian People’s Aid”.

Their major volunteering in BiH included activities at youth centers in Prijedor, Hambarine and Lubija. The volunteers brought donations that were raised on the campus and in the local streets. These went towards purchasing necessities for the children. They taught Japanese culture through calligraphy and songs, and they played together with traditional Japanese toys. They also visited Bihac, Sanski Most (the place for identification of missing bodies), Srebrenica and Mostar.

7.3 Philippines

A team of three students visited the Philippines from August 2 to 14 to participate in a work camp organised by a Japanese NGO called “Japan International Food for the Hungry (JIFH)”. Their major task was to repair the basketball court for children in the slums and to share time with children by teaching musical instruments.

7.4 Uganda

Two volunteer students joined the work camp in Uganda from August 16 to 29. This program was organised by JIFH and comprised the same activities as in 2006.

7.5 Bolivia

This was the first time for the Bunkyo volunteers to join the work camp in Bolivia, a program organised by JIFH. One student participated in the program from August 16 to 29 in a mountain village located 3000 meters above ground level. The student’s main task was to build toilets in a school at the Charamoco village.

8. Volunteers in 2008: New York, Bolivia, China

8.1 New York

The third UN study program was conducted with thirteen student participants from February 27 to March 4. The program included volunteering at the East Harlem Spanish Community Center that was organised by “New York de Volunteer.” The NGO also arranged a special workshop for carrier development, inviting four Japanese professionals who were working in New York. There was an educational exchange at the Department of Japanese Language Studies, Columbia University.

8.2 Bolivia

Four volunteers participated in a work camp in Bolivia and were engaged in making chairs for the village community center. They learned to communicate with local children, using Spanish and the regional language.

8.3 China: Yunnan Province

Two students participated in a JIFH program in Yunnan Province. They took a long bus ride from Kunming to a mountain village where they visited schools for Tibetan students and taught Japanese language and culture.

8.4 Indonesia

Thanks to extensive assistance from OISCA International (a prominent Japanese NGO engaged in rural developing activities in Asia) eight students visited the area in northern Sumatra that was devastated by the Indian Ocean Tsunami in 2004. Reconstruction and rehabilitation were still under way in 2008 and OISCA International was one of a few international NGOs continuing to offer assistance. The Bunkyo team visited Sumatra, traveling from Medan to Lhokseumawe on to Banda Ache, the last of which was both the provincial capital and the hardest hit in the storm. The Bunkyo team visited orphanages and public relief facilities in the cities to console and encourage local people with gifts, storytelling and entertainment. Along with the relief activities in Niigata in 2004, the on-the-ground relief operations in Sumatra offered an important lesson for the Eastern Japanese Earthquake relief operations later launched by the Bunkyo volunteers.

9. Volunteers in 2009: New York, Kosovo, Uganda, Bolivia

9.1 New York

Eight students participated in the fourth UN study program from February 27 to March 4. Its activities were the same as in previous years.

9.2 Kosovo

Four volunteer students visited Kosovo from August 31 to September 9. As usual, they had raised funds to donate to a relief program organized and implemented by Ms. Fumi Onodera, a Japanese woman representing a US-based NGO, "Youth with the Mission". The activities included several visits to widows who had lost their hus-

bands during the conflict.

9.3 Uganda

Two students participated in the work camp from August 14 to 28. The program was the same as in previous years.

9.4 Bolivia

One student participated in the work camp from August 14 to 28. The program was the same as in previous years.

10. Volunteers in 2010: New York, Kosovo, Bosnia and Herzegovina, China

10.1 New York

Seven students participated in the fifth UN study program from March 2 to 8. In a cultural exchange with Columbia University students, one of the Bunkyo students demonstrated "Iaido" to the other participants, exposing them to a traditional martial art.

10.2 Kosovo and Bosnia and Herzegovina

A team of six students visited Kosovo en route to Bosnia and Herzegovina from August 22 to September 2. Ms. Fumi Onodera guided them to visit local homes and meet children. Mr. Ali Asllani guided them to visit a Serbian school in a Serbian enclave near Peja. The Bunkyo team donated clothes, sporting goods and stationary on its visits. A small fund donated to Mr. Onodera was used to purchase firewood for the widows.

10.3 China: Yunnan Province

One student participated in a volunteer program at Yunnan Province (the same program as held in 2008) from August 3 to 14.

11. Volunteers in 2011: New York and Tohoku, Japan

11.1 New York

Eight students participated in the sixth UN study program conducted from February 24 to March 4. Their activity was similar to the program held in previous years. The program was carried out just before the great earthquake jolted Japan.

11.2 Tohoku, Japan

The year 2011 turned out the worst humanitarian disaster in Japan's postwar history. The East Japan Great Earthquake was accompanied by a giant tsunami and a nuclear power plant disaster that wreaked havoc all over the northeast Pacific coast of Japan. Nearly 30,000 people fell victim. Because of the scale of disaster in Japan, the Bunkyo volunteers gave up all overseas volunteering later in the year. Instead, they were mobilized in groups to Ishinomaki City, Miyagi Prefecture, where the largest number of victims were counted. Based in the northern district of the city, the Bunkyo volunteers participated in various emergency relief works organized by NGOs and local administrations. The volunteers also launched their own relief efforts for junior high school students in order to console them in the aftereffects of the disaster. Many of them had lost brothers and sisters or other family members in the Tsunami raid. The local youngsters gathered every evening at the volunteer lodge for a special time of schooling, tutorials and recreation. The relief operation continued through the rest of 2011 and into 2012. More than 150 students participated in the relief operation in Ishinomaki, while more than 500 students in total were rallied to assist fund raising campaigns in the streets and in stations near the

Bunkyo campus in Chigasaki and Fujisawa.

12. Volunteers in 2012: New York, Kosovo, China, Cambodia, San Francisco, India and Tohoku, Japan

12.1 New York

Ten students participated in the seventh UN study program from February 28 to March 7. The New York program was almost the same as in previous years. Ms. Kyoko Gasha, a reporter at Reuter, New York, invited the participants to her office/media studio in order to brief them on her activities and work.

12.2 Kosovo

Three students visited Kosovo from August 31 to September 10, winning a university scholarship for extra-curricular activities. Prior to their visit, their communication with local students had begun through Skype and Facebook. With the support of Ms. Onodera (a representative of a local NGO) they visited people who had suffered during the conflict and began to learn the situation of post-conflict Kosovo. Their major event was a meeting with students at the University of Business and Technology—where they exchanged views on the human disasters in Kosovo and Japan. They also visited local schools and engaged in cultural exchange.

12.3 China: Yunnan Province

One student participated in the same volunteer program from August 10 to 21, which was held in the Yunnan Province.

12.4 Cambodia

From September 3 to 7, thirteen students went

to Cambodia to visit two local orphanages. They helped children who had lost their parents due to war and abandonment. This volunteer activity was a part of the seminar study organised by Professor Akasaka in the faculty.

12.5 San Francisco

From September 6 to 14, one student participated in a program in San Francisco, conjointly organised by Japanese and American NGOs. She was involved in a local community service project for people in need.

12.6 India

From August 19 to 31, one student visited India to participate in a rural development project

organised by LIFE, a Tokyo-based NGO engaged in rural development activities in India and Indonesia.

12.7 Tohoku, Japan

After the disaster in 2011, a number of students participated in the East Japan earthquake relief fund-raising campaigns—and dozens of students continued their activities in Ishinomaki City during their summer holidays.

13. Overview of Volunteer Activities:

In this section, an overview of volunteer activities from 2001 to 2012 is presented in the following table. This overview is categorized into target communities and program focal points.

Table 1

Year	Date	Area	Focal Point	Volunteers in No.
2001	8/25-9/11	Kosovo	Faculty	12
2002	2/23-3/24	Kosovo	Faculty	3
	8/20-9/3	Timor-Leste	Faculty	8
	2/19-3/8	Timor-Leste	Faculty	4
	2/15-3/15	Uzbekistan	Local NGO	2
2003	2/18-3/4	Timor-Leste	Faculty	8
	8/22-9/5	Timor-Leste	Faculty	6
	7/28-8/20	Kosovo/BiH ⁶	Faculty	4
	5/12-7/30	Kosovo	Internship at UNDP	2
	8/21-9/19	Rwanda	Local NGO	1
2004	8/3-8/17	Timor-Leste	Faculty	10 (+4) ⁷
	11-12	Niigata	Faculty/NGO	24
2005	8/24-9/7	BiH	Faculty	7 (+3)
	8/22-9/4	Timor-Leste	Faculty	8 (+2)
	3/1-8	Kosovo	Faculty	2

⁶ BiH=Bosnia and Herzegovina

⁷ The number in parenthesis shows the number of students who engaged in domestic activities only. The number is included in the total.

2006	8/21-9/1	Croatia/BiH	Faculty	14 (+2)
	2/28-3/7	NY, UN	Faculty	10
	9/1-9/5	Kosovo	Faculty	2
	8/1-8/12	Philippines	NGO (JIFH ⁸)	3
	8/15-8/29	Uganda	NGO (JIFH)	1
2007	8/22-9/1	BiH	Faculty	5
	8/2-8/14	Philippines	NGO (JIFH)	3
	8/16-8/29	Uganda	NGO (JIFH)	2
	8/16-8/29	Bolivia	NGO (JIFH)	1
	2/28-3/6	NY, UN	Faculty	9
2008	2/27-3/4	NY, UN	Faculty	13
	8/14-8/29	Bolivia	NGO (JIFH)	4
	7/29-8/12	China	NGO (JIFH)	2
	8/25-9/5	Indonesia	Faculty/NGO	8
2009	2/27-3/4	NY, UN	Faculty	8
	8/31-9/9	Kosovo	Faculty	4
	8/14-28	Uganda	NGO (JIFH)	2
	8/14-28	Bolivia	NGO (JIFH)	1
2010	3/2-3/8	NY, UN	Faculty	7
	8/22-9/2	Kosovo/BiH	Faculty	6
	8/3-8/14	China	NGO (JIFH)	1
2011	2/24-3/4	NY, UN	Faculty	8
	3/11~	Tohoku, Japan	Faculty/NGO	150 +
2012	2/28-3/7	NY, UN	Faculty	10
	8/31-9/10	Kosovo	Student ⁹	3
	8-9	Tohoku, Japan	Faculty/NGO	12
	9/6-9/14	San Francisco	Local NGO	1
	9/3-9/7	Cambodia	Faculty/NGO	14
	8/10-8/21	China	Local NGO	1
	8/19-8/3	India	Local NGO	1
The total number of volunteers				441 + ¹⁰

Most of the activities were conducted during the spring/summer when the students had a long holiday season (except for emergency relief work

which occurred after the earthquake at Niigata in 2004 and in Tohoku in 2011). There were seventeen total target communities and the students vis-

⁸ JIFH=Japan International Food for the Hungry

⁹ This is the first step for Bunkyo students who wish to visit Kosovo by themselves.

¹⁰ The total will exceed 500 if the number of students who volunteered extensively for Tohoku etc. is included. This illustrates the total number of activities that can meet the requirements for recognition of “Volunteer Filed Work” credit in the faculty curriculum.

ited fifteen countries, including Japan. Target communities and programs are categorized as follows:

Target communities of volunteering:

1. Volunteering for post-conflict areas: Kosovo, Timor-Leste, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Rwanda, Cambodia
2. Volunteering for developing areas: Uzbekistan, Philippines, Uganda, Bolivia, China, India
3. Volunteering for local communities: New York, San Francisco in the US
4. Volunteering for the refugees/people who suffered in the disaster: Ache, Indonesia, Niigata and Tohoku in Japan

Types of programs:

1. Faculty programs organised by the International Volunteer committee: Kosovo, Timor-Leste, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Indonesia, New York in the US, Niigata and Tohoku in Japan
2. Faculty programs organised by affiliated NGOs (JIFH and other NGOs): Philippines, Uganda, Bolivia, China
3. NGO initiated programs (Other NGOs): Cambodia, San Francisco, India
4. Student initiated projects/activities with local NGOs: Rwanda, Uzbekistan, Kosovo (2012)

Conclusion

During their tour of the United Nations conference building, students encountered a mosaic by Norman Rockwell entitled “The Golden Rule”. This

piece depicts people of different nationalities standing together alongside the words: “Do unto Others as You Would Have Them Do unto You.” This simple message reminds us to seek multi-ethnic coexistence as well as peace cooperation. Likewise, UNESCO emphasises individual readiness when it comes to problem solving within the community, the nation and the world (UNESCO, 1974).

The Preamble to UNESCO’s 1946 Constitution states that we have to construct defenses of peace in the minds of people, so as to avoid war. Volunteer experiences will testify how youths can cultivate peace in their minds—sometimes by visiting unfamiliar places and getting to know people through their work. Moreover, volunteers learn that we are all connected in this globalised world and that no one can maintain peace and prosperity when others are in distress. Thus, an awareness of peace and human security can be enhanced through many volunteer activities.

Through such volunteer activities, the students can also acquire communication skills, and accordingly gain self-confidence by engaging with interactive projects. International volunteer activities can be highlighted as some of the most effective means of improving language skills and increasing intercultural competence as well. However, some Japanese students often reflect that they could have done much better if they had been able to speak “English¹¹” more fluently. This suggests that students can be both intrinsically motivated and realise what they need to accomplish even after they experience volunteering

¹¹ In this context, “English” means “English as a Lingua Franca”—which is used as a means of communication when they do not know the language of the other.

abroad.

Lastly, it has been my great privilege to facilitate Bunkyo volunteer activities as a member of the International Volunteering Committee (IVC)¹². As a researcher, my interest in “English as a Lingua Franca for intercultural communication” has flourished through these opportunities—and the diverse volunteer activities offered so much inspiration for my own research focusing on communications in post-conflict regions, specifically in areas where language issues are considered critical for stabilizing an individual community. I would like to extend my sincere appreciation to all who committed their time to volunteer activities, as well as to the many who supported Bunkyo volunteers with such passionate hearts and souls.

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¹² IVC became an official committee of the Faculty of International Studies, Bunkyo University, in 2003, and recently merged with the UN Academic Impact Committee in 2012.