

Online Debriefing Sessions of the Projects from the Grant Program “Migrants and Japanese Society”

Report

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THE TOYOTA FOUNDATION

Introduction

Under “Migrants and Japanese Society,” the Special Subject launched by the Toyota Foundation in 2019, the Foundation provides grants for surveys, research and practical activities that are expected to contribute to building a comprehensive system for accepting foreign residents in Japan. This year, we again held online sessions with the representatives of the projects under our grants and made the archive available on our YouTube channel. The first session was entitled “Financial Inclusion and Changing Awareness” and the second was “Employment Support and Human Resource Development.” In each session, two projects reported on the background, progress, and future prospects of their initiatives, followed by lively Q&A sessions with the moderators and listeners alike.

While last year’s online sessions focused on areas related to overall daily life, such as medical care, support for children, and consultation systems, this year’s theme focused on the work aspects of life. Needless to say, one cannot separate life from work. To create an environment and systems that allow people from overseas to obtain jobs and continue working in Japan, it is also important to change the awareness and promote mutual understanding of everyone living in Japan. We hope that this report will be helpful to the future activities of those who are active in the fields of accepting foreign human resources and multicultural society.

The Toyota Foundation’s YouTube Channel
<https://www.youtube.com/c/TheToyotaFoundation>



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Schedule

Session 1

Tuesday, September 27, 2022

Financial Inclusion and Changing Awareness

Speakers:

Tetsuo Kato CEO, REEP Foundation

Yu Shinagawa CEO & Founder, An-Nahal Inc.

Moderator:

Shingo Ashizawa Professor and Vice President, Kansai University of International Studies



Session 2

Friday, October 21, 2022

Employment Support and Human Resource Development

Speakers:

Maho Hadano Coordinator, Door to Asylum Nagoya (DAN)

Yuri Sadoi Professor, Meijo University

Moderator:

Sayuri Ogino CEO, B&M Inc.



*Affiliations and titles are those at the time of speaking.

Session 1: Financial Inclusion and Changing Awareness

Speakers



Tetsuo Kato CEO, REEP Foundation

He has been involved in development of social businesses and non-profit organizations in Asia and Japan and has provided approximately 5 million USD to 48 organizations. He was selected as one of “100 Japanese Who Will Win in Asia” (AERA). He is the author of “Changing the World from the Bottom” (Diamond, Inc. 2011).



Yu Shinagawa CEO & Founder, An-Nahal Inc.

Yu Shinagawa is an entrepreneur passionate about diversity and inclusion to create collaborative and innovative society through embracing individual differences. She founded An-Nahal Inc. in 2019 and provides consulting and human resource development within companies with the themes of diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging as well as entrepreneurship education for foreign nationals through partnerships with industry, government, and academia. She has been involved in global talent development, education projects with the World Bank and other international organizations as well as at an NPO as a job assistant for asylum seekers. She is also a fellow of Japanese Women’s Leadership Initiative in 2019 by Fish Family Foundation in Boston.

Moderator



Shingo Ashizawa Professor and Vice President,
Kansai University of International Studies

Shingo Ashizawa is a professor and Vice President at Kansai University of International Studies in Kobe. His research involves the comparative study of higher education management. He serves as an advisor for MEXT on UNESCO’s Tokyo Recognition Convention Committee. Currently, Prof. Ashizawa is leading a joint-research project supported by the JSPS (Japan Society for Promotion of Science). The project focuses on foreign credential evaluation and the comparative study of the National Qualifications Framework. His publications include “The impact of Tokyo Recognition Convention and Digital Student Portability (2019),” and “Student Mobility Trends and the Role of University Networks in the Asia-Pacific Region -UMAP and Its New Initiatives (2019).” Prof. Ashizawa received the Fulbright scholarship twice and studied at the Harvard Graduate School of Education. His past professional experience includes positions at Keio University, Osaka University, Meiji University and Toyo University.

Session 2: Employment Support and Human Resource Development

Speakers



Maho Hadano Coordinator, Door to Asylum Nagoya (DAN)

Maho Hadano is the coordinator of Door to Asylum Nagoya (DAN), an NPO that assists refugees and asylum seekers in the Aichi Region. She is originally from Kani in Gifu Prefecture. She spent roughly three years in the USA during elementary school. A friendship with a Palestinian classmate motivated her later in life to become an advocate for asylum seekers and refugees. After entering university, she became more attuned to the experiences of asylum seekers in Japan and subsequently became involved in holding interdisciplinary lectures and exhibitions concerning refugees. She has also run Japanese language classes for these groups, interpreted for them during legal consultations and translated documents to be submitted for refugee applications. To better engage in the field of refugee and asylum seeker support, Maho has been involved with Door to Asylum since its founding in 2012.



Yuri Sadoi Professor, Meijo University

Yuri Sadoi is a professor, Faculty of Economics at Meijo University Japan (Ph.D. Kyoto University). After graduating from Doshisha University, she worked in the Human Resources Development Department of Mitsubishi Motors Corporation. After that, she received a master's degree in international relations from Washington University in St. Louis USA, a doctorate from the Graduate School of Human and Environmental Studies, Kyoto University, and worked for four years as a researcher at the International Institute for Asian Studies (IIAS) in the Netherlands. Since 2014, she has worked at Meijo University specializing in Asian Economics and human resource development.

Moderator



Sayuri Ogino CEO, B&M Inc.

She graduated from Soka University in 2006 with a degree in Business Administration. She joined Works Applications, Co. Ltd. and worked as an SE for about nine years. She then returned to her home prefecture in 2015 to join KJS Company Ltd. in Miyazaki, where she participated in an e-learning research project in Bangladesh. In 2016, she started a recruiting business at B&M, Inc. and has been matching and supporting the acceptance of more than 60 Bangladeshi IT engineers in collaboration with industry, academia, and government in Miyazaki. She obtained a national certification as a career consultant in 2021.

Session 1 Financial Inclusion and Changing Awareness

Date: Tuesday, September 27, 2022



Institutions and changing awareness in Japanese society, such as access to financial services for foreign residents and attitudes toward employment and corporate acceptance of foreign students were discussed.

Project Introduction

Grant Project: Prototyping financial inclusion system for financially excluded foreign residents based on participatory research for financial exclusion of foreign residents in Japan

Representative: Tetsuo Kato CEO, REEP Foundation

Overview: This proposal suggests implementing participatory research about the reality of financial exclusion of the foreign residents in Japan with Dai-Ichi Kangyo Credit Cooperative and the Japanese Practitioners for Banking on Values (JPVB). Based on the findings from the research, it will develop prototypes of the guarantee scheme for the financially excluded foreign residents in Japan. In line with these activities, it also aims to put into practice the financial scheme and the dormant account fund. As Dai-Ichi Kangyo Credit Cooperative has recently started the financial loan service to foreign residents in Japan, the development of financial inclusion scheme for them is dawning. By developing a new financial inclusive scheme as well as recognizing the reality of financial exclusion of foreign residents in Japan, we expect to make a new financial market, which inclusively serves services to foreign residents in Japan. Eventually, facilitating financial inclusion for foreign residents leads to social inclusion where they can live a comfortable life and actively plays a role in society with no prejudice.

Progress update: According to our internet research, we found that Japanese literacy and the number of people who can trust and talk about financial issues are the keys to financial inclusion. We will identify good patterns of financial inclusion trust building toward a sustainable guarantee system.

Grant Project: Research and Analysis of Changes in Mindset and Behavior of International Students and Human Resources in Companies through Mutual Mentoring and Systematization of Training Model

Representative: Yu Shinagawa CEO & Founder, An-Nahal Inc.

Overview: This project analyzes the changes in awareness and behavior of international students in Japan universities those who are not familiar with Kanji and Japanese managers through mentoring and proposes measures to develop the careers of foreign professionals in Japan and the Japanese managers who work with them. We will extract success factors and conditions for replication from the results obtained in the pilot and share them as best practices. (1) International students: Gained more opportunities such as job and internship opportunities (2) Japanese: Behavioral changes were observed, such as becoming more positive about working with foreign colleagues and being assigned to projects with multinational members. In addition, while referring to the precedent cases of three organizations in Nordic countries that are engaged in mentoring between foreign talents and local citizens, we will provide opportunities for mutual mentoring to a total of 50 people (25 foreign students and 25 Japanese), and investigate and analyze the changes in awareness and behavior of both parties and the relationship through dialogue. We will create a handbook to be used for international student career support at universities and HR development in companies and publish it on our website and through seminars.

Progress update: Phase 1 of the program has started. Online one-on-one peer mentoring and face-to-face workshops were conducted with all participants.

Confronting the Reality of a Major Nation of Immigrants



Kato

Japan is already a major nation of immigrants. Foreign residents make up 2.3% of the population, or 6% of the young population. However, there are few policies and cases that are seriously addressing the issue of loans and financing for foreigners. The reality is that there is financial exclusion. While residency status is often renewed after two to three years, full-scale loans are generally for five to six years, and lending money beyond the limit of the residency status is risky, which creates a bottleneck. We hope that our initiatives will be a catalyst to change the trend.

I am looking forward to your recommendations for financial inclusion in the future, reflecting on history and comparing the situation with other countries, including the actual situation of immigrant communities and the limitations of mutual aid.



Ashizawa

Business people and international students learning from each other as equals



Shinagawa

The results will ripple out through mutual mentoring between international students from non-Kanji countries and Japanese corporate managers, and through follow-up surveys. Mutual mentoring is based on equal learning rather than hierarchical relationships. Japanese will learn the perspectives necessary to build global and diverse teams in their own companies from the international students. International students learn from the Japanese how to shape their careers in Japan, highlight their strengths on their resumes and be careful in what they do and say in interviews.

I think this is essentially an area that universities need to handle. Universities have also been working to support the careers of international students, but haven't been so successful in producing results. I think mutual mentoring is an important point of view.



Ashizawa

Q&A

Q Are there any cases of lending to foreign entrepreneurs?

Kato: I think that lending to foreigners starting businesses is an unexplored area. What I hear most about starting a business is opening a general store for one's fellow community. For example, for people from the Islamic world, halal ingredients are essential, so some people run stores based on requests from the community. In other words, since it resembles cooperative purchasing, it is easy to predict their profitability and provide loans. However, it is difficult to connect with financial institutions. If we can make good connections here, I think we will see more loan cases.

Q Trends in corporate hiring practices and recruitment of foreigners

Shinagawa: It depends on the size of the company and its track record in hiring foreign talents, and the fact that the companies we are involved with do not employ many specified skilled workers or technical intern trainees, but we feel that more and more companies are conscious of building long-term relationships. Even if it is only for a short period, they want foreign talent to have a good work experiences, and we feel that they are trying to build a good long-term relationship with their foreign personnel as a partner with whom they may someday work together in their home country.

Conclusions

Even though the themes and workplaces may differ, it is important to be able to find common issues as we have done today. The path is broadened by bringing different specialties to the discussion, such as cultural anthropology, and insights from various places, such as communities, universities, and businesses.

Session 2 Employment Support and Human Resource Development

Date: Friday, October 21, 2022



We discussed employment support for refugees living in Japan and human resources development for engineers from ASEAN.

Project Introduction

Grant Project: Survey on the actual conditions of employment of refugees living in the Tokai region and efforts to improve their working environment

Representative: Maho Hadano Coordinator, Door to Asylum Nagoya (DAN)

Overview: From the perspective that refugees are foreign human resources, staff of the Door to Asylum Nagoya, which has been supporting refugees living in Tokai area for many years, and refugees who have been granted refugee status or permission to stay in Japan with humanitarian reasons, have teamed up to listen carefully to the voices of those who have been granted refugee status or humanitarian status, those who have applied for refugee status, and those involved in their employment.

First year: Through the following interview surveys, we will organize the issues involved in improving the working environment for refugees.

1. Survey on the lives of refugees or those with humanitarian status who live or used to live in the Tokai area
2. Survey of refugee applicants with work permits, mainly regarding their actual conditions of employment
3. Survey of employers of refugees and companies and organizations involved in employment

Second year: Based on the results of the first year's survey, we will formulate and implement several action plans to improve the working environment for refugees, while considering how society should be and what kind of support is needed to bring out the "zest for living" in each refugee.

Progress update: Interviews were conducted with refugees and asylum seekers. A survey of companies and organizations involved in the employment of refugees was also conducted.

Grant Project: Issues and Measures for Human Resource Development of ASEAN Engineers Working in Japan

Representative: Yuri Sadoi Professor, Meijo University

Overview: Amid a long-term shortage of engineers, the utilization of foreign engineers in Japan is an extremely important issue in the future. The purpose of this project is to focus on foreign engineers from ASEAN countries who are working in Japanese manufacturing and IT companies, and to investigate and analyze the actual situation of human resource development in ASEAN countries and education and training in Japan, and to consider a mutually beneficial and sustainable human resource development method. As the government is making adjustments in the direction of relaxing the status of residence for foreign workers, the number of engineers from ASEAN countries who wish to work in Japan and the number of Japanese companies that use them are expected to increase. There are still many unstable factors in securing and retaining foreign engineers. In this project, joint surveys will be conducted from both sides of ASEAN countries and Japan. In cooperation with local university researchers and practitioners, we will investigate and analyze the usefulness of the organization, system, and utilization of human resource development institutions, and present our ideas on how to make them effective in Japanese companies.

Progress update: In addition to preparing for surveys in each country, the team conducted Japanese language online classes at JICA's Myanmar-Japan Center for Human Resources Development, conducted field research in Vietnam, and held online exchange meetings with young Vietnamese IT entrepreneurs.

Refugees as attractive human resources to build Japanese society together



Hadano

Many refugees (asylum seekers) came to Japan without any choice as a place to escape and came to Japan without time to prepare in advance or learn the Japanese language. While living in Japan as applicants awaiting refugee status, they are faced with issues such as Japanese language proficiency and difficulty finding work. Meanwhile, there are many people in their home countries with appealing experience and expertise, such as civil architects, entrepreneurs, medical doctors, ministerial secretaries, and NGO staff. We would like to support them from the stage when they are applying for refugee status, with an eye toward the day when they become established in and are contributing to Japanese society.

The fact that talented people are coming to Japan as refugees is important information for companies seeking human resources, but it is not widely known. I think it is important to know and inform people about the refugees who are, in fact, close to us.



Ogino

Showing indicators of the abilities of foreign human resources



Sadoi

In the case of automobile manufacturing, there is a skill map that is adapted for factory floor workers, and we are testing its application to engineers to visualize their skills. For example, skill maps for the factory floor include indicators such as being able to follow a manual, being able to teach others, and being able to make improvements, which can also be applied to engineers. In the case of IT, programming languages and technologies are changing rapidly, and it is not possible to elevate one's skills just by doing the programs provided by the company. We are considering using how much foreign human resources themselves are using their own time on learning as an indicator.

I think this is a valuable initiative from the perspective of matching human resources, since skill indicators can convey the attractiveness of talent to the host company in an easy-to-understand manner.



Ogino

Q&A

Q What is the difference between a person with a residence status of Engineer/Specialist in Humanities/International Services and a refugee or an asylum seeker from the perspective of the hiring company?

Hadano: The Engineer/Specialist in Humanities/International Services visa will be renewed as long as the persons continue to work. On the other hand, many of those seeking asylum are staying on a Designated Activities visa, which is renewed for six months. They do not know when the results of their asylum applications will be determined, and the approval rate is low. If the application is denied, the visa expires, and the applicant is unable to work. I believe that even if the refugees and asylum seekers have the skills, hiring companies are hesitant to take that risk because they do not know when the visas could expire.

Q What industries' human resources do you focus on?

Sadoi: Human resources for manufacturing and IT. Since I have originally researched local human resource development in the auto industry, my area of expertise is in the auto industry and engineers involved in manufacturing, among other manufacturing industries. As for IT, I have been watching Japan's recent focus on DX.

Conclusions

Supporting and fostering the employment of foreign human resources is not limited to Japanese assisting and guiding foreigners. There are also realities such as cashless payments being more advanced in the foreigners' home countries than in Japan. It is important to promote initiatives that are win-win scenarios.

Information exchange meetings by grant recipients

Workshops were held exclusively for those involved in grant projects to share information and exchange opinions with the aim of sharing knowledge and experience in accepting foreign residents in Japan.

Session 1

Post-grant Development

Date: Wednesday, July 20, 2022

Venue: The Toyota Foundation

Topic Contributors

Yuko Takeda

[Implementation and dissemination of “plain Japanese” training for health care professionals and students through a workshop assisted by foreign residents in a community (D19-MG-0035)]

Yoshihiko Doi

[A Strengthening Project of a Multilingual Consultation Service System Through Public-Private Partnerships—Towards Reaching Sustainable Management of (Japan’s) Newly Formed Multi-Cultural General Information Consultation System “One-Stop Centers” (D19-MG-0062)]



Session 2

Networking

Date: Tuesday, January 24, 2023

Venue: Kyoto University

Topic Contributors

Ayako Kohno

[For Japanese medical care to be better for people from Islamic countries in Southeast Asia as well: Interactive communication strategy and social implementation through mixed-methods research (D19-MG-0016)]

Toshihiro Menju

[National Network for Inclusive Future (NANIF) (D21-PI-0002)]



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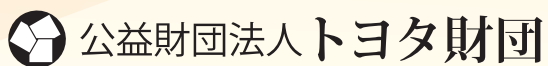
The Toyota Foundation is a grant-making foundation established in 1974 by the Toyota Motor Corporation. It views events from a global perspective as it works to support activities that bring broad, long-term benefits to society. The Toyota Foundation identifies issues in a wide range of areas in line with current needs, including human and natural environments, social welfare, and education and culture, and provides grants for research and projects that address these issues.

Special Subject: Migrants and Japanese Society

The acceptance of foreign nationals into Japanese society shifted in 2019 toward the Japanese government considering and implementing specific measures to improve the environment for such people, including the creation of new residence statuses, from the perspective of supplementing the labor force in specific fields such as nursing care and construction. The full-fledged acceptance of foreign nationals will be a major change for Japan's society and economy over the long- and super-long terms, and the impact will be extremely large. Therefore, the Toyota Foundation has launched a grant program for the Special Subject "Migrants and Japanese Society" in FY2019, which specifically addresses the grant area related to "international movement of people" that the International Grant Program has been dealing with.

The grant of the Special Subject, "Migrants and Japanese Society," will be given to projects that study any of the five issues below and implement measures to address these issues (for example, building a mechanism or system to solve an issue or improve a situation) during the grant period.

- (1) Creation of an environment for maximizing the skills and potential of foreign talent
- (2) Minimizing gaps among foreign residents in their access to information
- (3) Examination of human and other resources in support of the care and support systems for foreign residents
- (4) Attracting skilled human resources from abroad
- (5) Lessons from insights and experiences gained through Japanese companies' overseas operations



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