

Religions for Peace Japan Annual Report

RfP Japan presents to the ACRP Executive Committee its National Chapter Report between April 2018 and March 2019.

1. Overview of all the activities carried out by your chapter between April 2018 and March 2019

RfP Japan has been actively involved in domestic and international important issues through inter-religious network and in cooperation with other sectors. Between April 2018 and March 2019, Religions for Peace Japan advanced our projects in following categories:

- I. Networking
- II. Advocacy
- III. Peace Education
- IV. Humanitarian Assistance

RfP Japan holds seven taskforces: 1) Nuclear Ban Treaty Ratification; 2) Climate Change; 3) Reconciliation Education; 4) Refugee Issues; 5) Reconstruction of the Great East Japan Earthquake; 6) Reconstruction Support for Kumamoto Earthquake; and 7) Reconstruction of West Japan Storm and three Standing Committees: 1) Peace Research Institute; 2) Women's Committee; and 3) Youth Committee.

2. Brief descriptions of prioritized activities carried out between April 2018 and March 2019

1) Program #1 Building partnership (SAP Objective 3)

- Name: Japanese-Korean Religious Leaders' Exchange Program 2018

- Dates & Place: 23rd - 26th October 2018, Hokkaido, Japan

Religious leaders from South Korea joined their Japanese counterpart in Sapporo in October last year to deepen mutual understandings and to discuss the means to widen their cooperation in the North East Asia. RfP Japan organized "Japanese-Korean Religious Leaders' Exchange Program 2018" in Hokkaido, the northern island in Japan, together with KCRP (Korean Conference of Religions for Peace) for 4days from October 23. Religious leaders from two nations make mutual visits in the exchange program to build confidence and to enhance unity for peace. A group of Japanese religious leaders visited Seoul in 2016 as the first delegation in the program. A peace symposium was held in Sapporo on October 25 as a part of the program to discuss the ways to deepen the cooperation among the religious leaders of the two nations.



2) Program #2 Engaging in conflict resolution and reconciliation (SAP Objective 2)

- Name: Special Seminar Understanding of People of Yazidi
- Dates & Place: 10th July 2018, Tokyo, Japan

Around 70 participants joined the seminar to learn and understand the situation of people of Yazidi. Prince Breen Tahseen provided the lecture about history of people of Yazidi most of who settled in Northwest of Iran and were attacked by ISIS. As the United Nation recognized it as Yazidi genocide, Prince Breen Tahseen has called the recognition of Yazidi genocide to other countries in the world.



3) Program #3 Engaging in the promotion for peace & Building partnership (SAP Objective 1 & 3)

- Name: IPCR International Seminar on Northeast Asia
- Dates & Place: 27th - 29th August 2018, Koreana Hotel, Seoul, South Korea
- Theme: Challenges for building peace community in Northeast Asia

About 50 participants from China, Japan, and South Korea joined and discussed about Challenges for building peace community in Northeast Asia in the following three sessions: 1) From Peace Community to shared Future Community; 2) Japanese Nationalism and Religions; and 3) The Cooperation between Korea and Her Neighbors in the Korean Peace Process.



4) Program #4 Engaging in the promotion for peace (SAP Objective 1)

- Name: Peace University Symposium
- Dates & Place: 7th March 2019, Catholic Osaka Archdiocese, Japan
- Theme: Caring -Discovering the role of religious people for Common Future-

Towards RfP World Assembly which will be held in Lindau, Germany in this August, over 200 participants listened to Keynote speech, which was given by Rev. Kosho Niwano, President-designate of Rissho Kosei-kai and Co-Moderator of Religions for Peace, in order to understand the theme of world assembly and to prepare appeal and statement from Japan in the assembly. Panel discussion between Prof. Dr. Nobuo Mori, Director

of Shariah Research Institute, Takushoku University and Dr. Mami Yoshikawa, Assistant Professor, Faculty of Theology, Sophia University, was also held with coordinated by Dr. Akira Kaneko Oyasato Institute for the Study of Religion, Tenri University.



5) Program #5 Engaging in the promotion for peace (SAP Objective 1)

- Name: Prayer to victims of Great East Japan Disaster

- Dates & Place: 14th March 2019, Millennium Hope Hills, Miyagi prefecture, Japan

166 participants from 10 religions joined the memorial and religious service to victims of Great East Japan Disaster on the occasion of 8th anniversary.



6) Program #6 Engaging in the promotion for peace (SAP Objective 1)

- Name: Youth Summer Camp 2018

- Dates: 24th - 26th August 2018

- Places: Shinto Shrine, Catholic Cathedral, Islam Mosque, Buddhist temple in Tokyo, Japan

- Theme: Supporting Each Other – Hato Bus Tour for Discovery from GPS to SDGs –

The purpose of this camp is to deepen mutual understanding and trust, to learn about religions and peace and to think about peace activities by dialogue and cooperation. 30 youths from 7 different religious organizations participated.



7) Project#1 Engaging in the promotion for peace (SAP Objective 1)

- Name: Seminar for threat reduction of nuclear weapons
- Dates: 24th March, 27th May, 13th July, 29th September 2018
- Place: Meiji Gakuin University in Tokyo and Kiyomizudera Buddhist temple in Kyoto, Japan

Religions for Peace Japan jointly organized this seminar with Pugwash Japan, International Peace Research Institute Meiji Gakuin University in order to raise awareness of threat reduction of nuclear weapons to civil society.



8) Project #2 Engaging in the promotion for peace (SAP Objective 1)

- Name: Afforestation Project
- Duration & Place: April 2017 to March 2020, Saitama prefecture, Japan

The aim of the project is to regenerate forests and raise awareness of children and youth cooperated with Saitama prefecture's government and Tokorozawa-city. Climate Change Taskforce has an agreement with "Protecting Group of Greenery Area around Horiguchi Tenman Shrine", and been working on "WCRP Reforestation Project of Integrated Life" since April 2017. Target area of the project is 10,000 square meters located in Tokorozawa city, Saitama. Wishing various animals and plants would foster life, we named this area "WCRP Forest of Integrated Life". The 2nd Tree Planting Ceremony was held on 23rd February, 2019. Over 500 volunteers and staff in total participated to the project so far.



9) Project #3 Engaging in conflict resolution and reconciliation (SAP Objective 2)

- Name: Seminar of Training Facilitators for Peace and Reconciliation

- Duration: July 2017 to November 2018 (8 course in total)

This seminar aims to provide a place for multi-religious communities and social actors to equip them with knowledge and skills of peacebuilding and conflict transformation through dialogue and non-violence means. In cooperation with various actors through networks of *Religions for Peace*, the seminar contains lectures and field works to learn from the fields of peacebuilding and reconciliation and practice dialogue with various communities.

#5 "Restoring Unity" in Fukushima city in April 2018

#6 "Setting up the Trend" in Tokyo in July 2018

#7 "Go Beyond Boundaries" in the Philippines in September 2018

#8 "Initiating Actions" in Minamata city in Kumamoto Prefecture in November 2018



10) Project #4 Engaging in conflict resolution and reconciliation (SAP Objective 2)

- Name: Support Project for Syrian Refugee Students
- Duration: March 2017 to present (5 year project)

This project aims to welcome Syrian refugees as students with collaborative work with Japanese language schools or colleges, and lead them to further education or employment for constructing sustainable resettlement support system. *RfP* Japan, partnering with the Japan Association for Refugees - JAR, welcomed 6 Syrian refugees in 2018.



11) Project #5 Engaging in conflict resolution and reconciliation (SAP Objective 2)

- Name: Fukushima Community Project
- Dates: April 2018 to March 2019

After 8 years from the great disaster, Fukushima's reconstruction is still at the difficult situation. Our goal is to support those who lives in places which local government is not able to reach out. Through this project, we are able to listen honest voices and understand challenges of Fukushima. 63 organizations were supported between April 2018 and March 2019. This project now is known widely to supporting communities or organization of Fukushima.



12) Project #6 Engaging in the promotion for peace (SAP Objective 1)

- Name: Ouen (support) Project for Kumamoto
- Duration: March 2017 to July 2018

When the Kumamoto earthquake occurred in April of 2016, there were not enough supports for people who need special care especially for people with physical challenges, elders, children, pregnant and mothers with infants. Not only emergency cares, but there are still in middle of a serious situation. *RfP* Japan's "Ouen Project for Kumamoto" reach out people who need special cares in terms of self-help and mutual assistance, and we hope it would improve welfare in their communities through this financial support. *RfP* Japan supported 12 organizations in total in 2018.



13) Project #7 Engaging in the promotion for peace (SAP Objective 1)

- Name: Guidebook to Prepare for the Disasters: How to Welcome Children with Developmental Disabilities

After 2 years of conception and editing period, Women's Committee of RfP Japan eventually published a "Guidebook to prepare for the disasters: How to Welcome Children with Developmental Disabilities." This guidebook will help both religious facilities/communities and people concerned to learn what to prepare in daily bases and in case of emergency. Publishing event was held on April 2018 at Catholic Kawaramachi Church in Kyoto.

