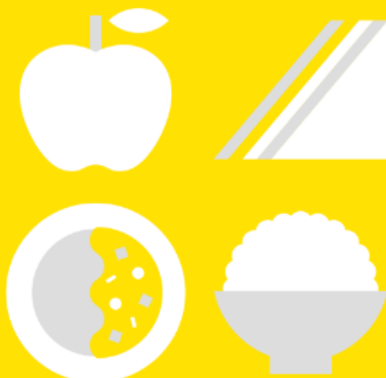


難民支援協会 2020年度 年次報告書

JAR ANNUAL REPORT

English Ver.



LEGAL ASSISTANCE



SOCIAL ASSISTANCE



JOB ASSISTANCE



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT



ADVOCACY & NETWORKING



PUBLIC RELATIONS

2020 2020.7-2021.6

Vision and Missions of JAR

Vision

To create a society in coexistence with refugees, ensuring their safety and dignity.

Missions

To give refugees who have come to Japan the support they need to overcome their difficult situation by their own strength and live with hope for a better future.

To improve the legal system and social environment of refugees in Japan; to proactively encourage understanding and empathy toward refugees.

*Our new vision and missions were adopted in June 2021 as a result of reconsidering our understanding of the difficult situations in which refugees living in Japan find themselves, as well as the purpose of our activities.

Message from Chair of the Board

Over the past year, we have continued supporting refugees despite the restrictions caused by the COVID-19 situation. We sincerely appreciate all of your support and consideration for refugees. We were especially encouraged to see how widespread empathy toward refugees was in the case of the parliamentary debate regarding the Immigration Control and Refugee Recognition Act; this is a strong indication that many people consider the situation of refugees as a problem of their own society. With our supporters, JAR can continue providing assistance to refugees and contributing to the creation of a society allowing coexistence.

Chair of the board 石川 恵子



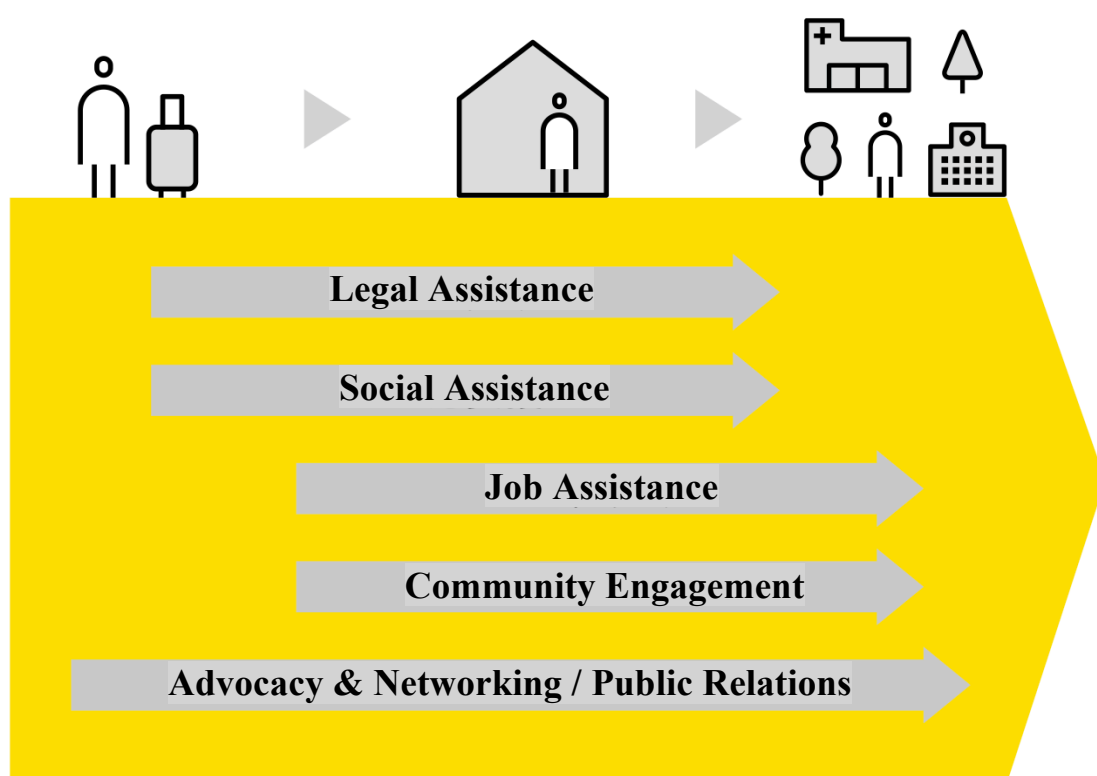
JAR's Activities

JAR's Activities

Refugees face harsh realities soon after coming to Japan, such as difficulties applying for refugee status and not having housing or work permission.

In spite of the anxiety of waiting for the result of their application, refugees fight to make a living. Their situation is severe and isolated.

Refugees desire a sense of security by having stable residence status with which they can foresee the future and by belonging to society or local communities.



To create a society in coexistence with refugees, ensuring their safety and dignity.

The Highlight of JAR's Activities in FY 2020

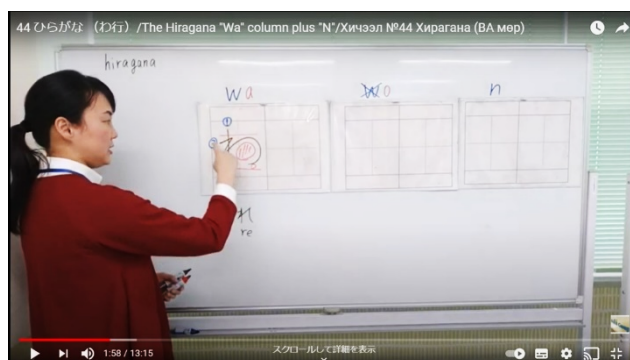
Support for Refugees under the Long-lasting COVID Situation

Due to the impact of the COVID-19 situation, we have had to shorten the length of consultations at the JAR office and limit the number of visitors to 10 a day. Due to immigration restriction, our focus was on refugees who have been living in Japan. There were rarely any inquiries from refugees who just arrived in Japan; likewise, there were few inquiries about new applications for refugee status or about support for housing. We thought it crucial for refugees be able to consult and connect with JAR during the pandemic, and thus we managed to find a way of assisting them by opening the office not every day but twice or four times a week, depending on changes in the COVID-19 situation. We have also increased our flexibility in assistance, such as creating an environment where our staff can provide telephone consultation from home, calling refugees to confirm their situation, and sending food packages to refugees. When we sent refugees emails regarding information about the coronavirus, some of them responded that they had in fact felt sick and wanted to see a doctor, which visualized the needs of refugees and enabled us to provide support. Although there were few instances, we were also able to help refugees get vaccinations in cooperation with a local clinic.



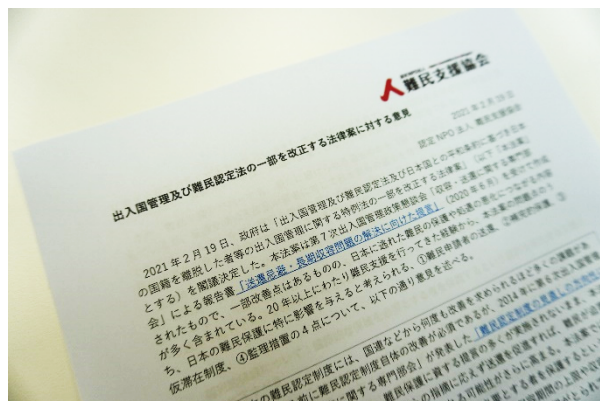
Job Assistance in a Harsh Employment Environment

COVID-19 has greatly affected even the refugees who have successfully found a job. The businesses that refugees are in were damaged by reductions in working hours, and job openings were limited. JAR responded to this harsh situation by developing the content of the Employment Preparation Japanese Program and by providing refugees with personal job assistance, taking into account demand from Japanese firms. The outcome of these activities was 33 refugees successfully getting a job, despite such severe circumstances.



JAR's Activities Concerning the Reform of Immigration Control and Refugee Recognition Act

A Bill for Amendments to the Immigration Control and Refugee Recognition Act was addressed in Diet deliberations. This bill would have enabled deportation for those who were on their third refugee status application or later. JAR issued an opinion paper, appealed to the Diet as well as civil society, receiving a great deal of attention.



Refugee Trends in 2020

82.4 million people around the world (the biggest number to date)

fled from their homeland because of conflict or persecution. In contrast, there was a deterioration in conditions conducive to allowing those fleeing their homeland to gain acceptance as refugees. For instance, borders were closed due to the pandemic, making it difficult for refugees to seek asylum. The number of refugees provided resettlement* also fell off sharply to one-third of that in 2019.

*The transfer of a refugee, with their consent, from their first country of asylum to another state that has agreed to accept them.

In Japan, only 47 people

were recognized as a refugee. There were 3,936 applicants, a decrease of 62% compared to the previous year. Their lives while waiting for the result were much more difficult because of COVID-19, and the waiting duration has been protracted to an average of four years and four months. 2021 is the 40th anniversary of Japan's accession to the Refugee Convention. As we approach this milestone, we must reconsider the development of our systems and create a society that is refugee-friendly.

JAR by the Numbers in FY 2020

JAR supports refugees who have fled to Japan due to conflict and persecution.

50 countries

People from Africa, South Asia, and other various countries consulted JAR in person.

43 people & **100** cases

Medical treatment was provided through negotiations with hospitals and with financial support.

325 people & **1,300** cases

JAR provided in-person counseling and personal assistance regarding living in Japan and the procedure of application for refugee status.

1,284 cases

JAR sent food and other provisions to refugees who could not visit the office due to the pandemic. We also supplied meals at the office.

748 people & **5,458** cases

In response to the pandemic, JAR gave assistance via telephone and email.

(These numbers are people who received our support online/not in person; the numbers include those who got assistance both at the office and online.)

About **650** people

JAR connected refugees and local communities through community engagement, including activities such as study sessions. (This includes refugees, refugee communities, organizations, and local residents)

29 people

JAR provided accommodation at a shelter for refugees who became homeless.

33 people & **21** firms

Many graduates from JAR's Employment Preparation Japanese Program successfully got a job.

Activity Report

Legal Assistance

- in cooperation with lawyers, we provide support obtaining refugee status for those who need protection.

What we do:

Provide information regarding application for refugee status, help refugees prepare documents, develop several networks with cooperators, including lawyers.

FY 2020 Highlights

Legal counseling in accordance with each refugee's needs and expansion of information related to refugees' country of origin

We gave advice to each refugee, such as “what preparation should be done before the interview for the recognition of refugee status.” In addition, we held an online workshop for lawyers, which resulted in new representatives. Our efforts to organize the information about refugees' countries of origin and provide a Japanese translation expanded to 25 countries. This information is attached to documents of application for refugee status as a witness to confirm persecution, and it was also effectively used by lawyers and supporters who assist refugees.



Social Assistance

- to bring out each refugee's “strength,” we provide support from the time they come to Japan until they gain full independence.

What we do:

Personal counseling, assurance of food, clothing, and shelter, grant allowance for emergencies, development of networking with medical institutions, etc.

FY 2020 Highlights

Food assistance to help refugees in need

The pandemic has forced refugees, who were already living without bare necessities, to live in a more severe condition than before. Some report, “A person who helped me is now unemployed because of the pandemic.” Under such circumstances, we started to deliver food and other provisions to prevent refugees from facing a lack of food. Our food assistance includes halal food and fu-fu (which is a traditional, staple food in Africa). To add, we offer lunch boxes at the office in cooperation with a neighboring restaurant and our supporters.



Job Assistance

- we combine refugees' eagerness to work and companies' needs and assist refugees so that they can work in safe conditions with a sense of security.

What we do:

Hold the Employment Preparation Japanese Program, job matching between firms and refugees who have a work permit, etc. (JAR is qualified for job matching assistance.)

FY 2020 Highlights

Personal support for refugees under the condition of fewer job offers

We held the Employment Preparation Japanese Program online, and 17 out of 22 participating refugees completed the course. Its curriculum included preparation for online interviews, which have become widespread due to the pandemic. Through the program, we explained to refugees the importance of gestures, eye contact, and clear statements. Our support for individuals resulted in 33 refugees successfully joining 21 firms in 13 industries.



Community Engagement

- we help refugees build connections to integrate into society.

What we do:

Influence those in locations of concern, such as municipalities and hospitals, strengthening relationships with them.

FY 2020 Highlights

Enablement of refugee assistance amid the pandemic in cooperation with local supporters

Together with the supporters of international residents, we distributed masks and sanitizers and provided multilingual information on COVID-19 preventive measures. Our assistance, in cooperation with local children's cafeterias (which offer meals to those in need), corporations, and farmers, expanded into the supply of food and drinks, as well as flu vaccinations for children. Moreover, we created a support book with other organizations to promote information disaster response with respect to diversity in case of natural disaster amid the pandemic.



Advocacy & Networking

- we advocate policies to the government and members of the Diet, aiming at the establishment of a system where refugees are properly protected and accepted.

FY 2020 Highlights

Aiming at the establishment of a legal system where refugees are properly protected

We published an argument regarding the Bill for Amendments to the Immigration Control and Refugee Recognition Act and took actions to influence the government and members of the Diet in order to

prevent the level of refugee protection from deteriorating and instead improve the refugee protection system and its application. We also shared the voices gathered from a Twitter campaign (for details, please refer to the “Public Relations”) with the members of the Diet. Thanks to an opinion hearing* which was carried out together with other organizations, it was revealed that some 90% of the respondents, including refugee-supporting groups and lawyers, were not in favor of “Monitoring Measures,” likely to be newly established to replace internment. This was cited in an interpellation several times.



*Conducted by Forum for Refugees Japan, a networking group of refugee-supporting organizations in Japan.

Public Relations

- we develop understanding and empathy to achieve a society that encourages co-existence with refugees.

FY 2020 Highlights

Twitter campaign “#Not Deportation but Protection of Refugees” (original hashtag is in Japanese)

A lot of refugees cannot speak up against the Bill for Amendments to the Immigration Control and Refugee Recognition Act due to the language barrier or other various risks. We instead asked Japanese people through tweets to show interest in the issue and to express their thoughts. In response to our 84 tweets in total, there were about 25,000 likes and retweets.



To add, 45 interview reports were published by mass media and web outlets, addressing the conditions of refugees from various perspectives. We also started to work hard on PR through Instagram. In our web magazine *Nippon Fukuzatsu Kiko*, an article about the life of the owner of a Shan ethnic restaurant received the biggest attention.

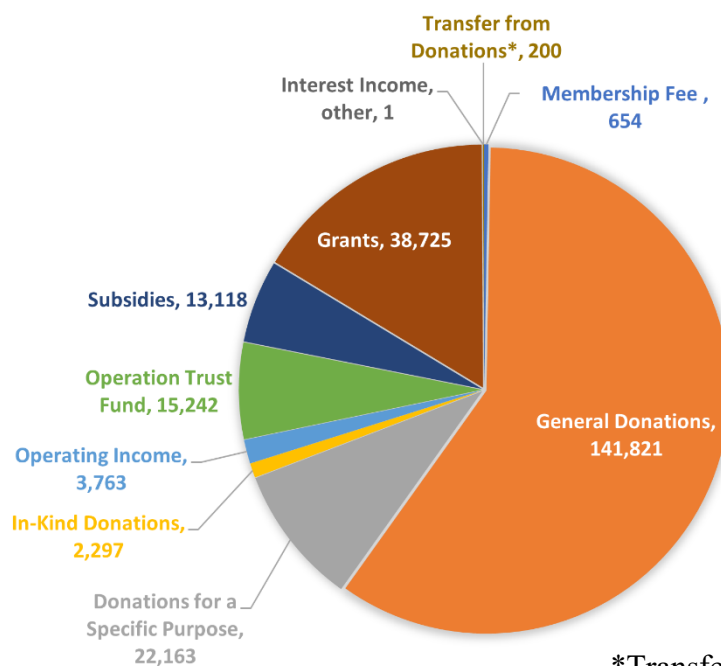
Accounting

Our activities were supported by donations, grants, in-kind donations, and other services and assistance from many of our supporters.

Revenue

Total
237,988,632 yen

Unit: 1,000 yen

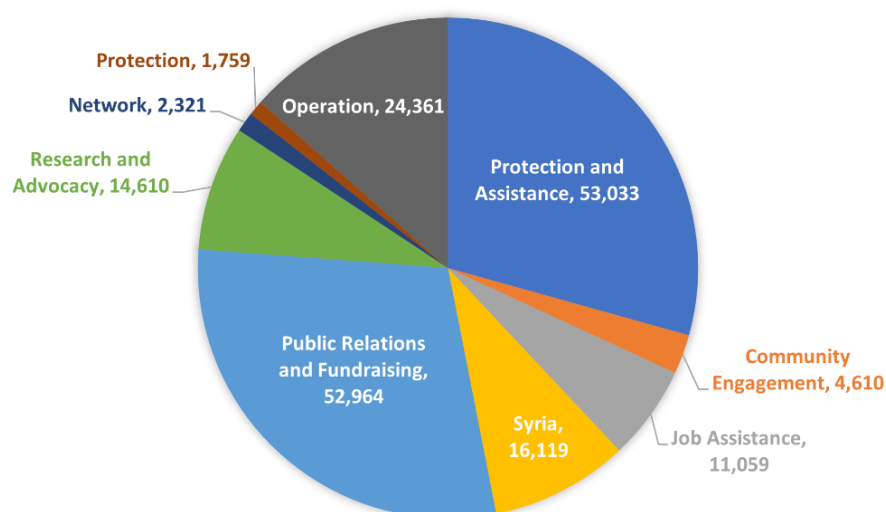


*Transferred from restricted net assets

Expense

Total
180,840,643 yen

Unit: 1,000 yen



Members of the Board (in alphabetical order)

Chair of the Board

Ishikawa, Eri (secretariat of JAR)

Vice-Chair

Nakamura, Yoshiyuki (professor)

Directors

Fujimoto, Toshiaki (professor)

Hata, Kentaro (staff of an organization)

Ishii, Hiroaki (director of an organization)

Iuchi, Setsuo (director of a corporation)

Niijima, Ayako (secretariat of JAR)

Oe, Nagako (lawyer)

Seki, Sosuke (lawyer)

Shibasaki, Toshio (senior advisor of a corporation)

Takimoto, Tetsuya (staff of an organization)

Yoshiyama, Masaru (secretariat of JAR)

Auditors

Nomura, Akio (director of an organization)

Watanabe, Ken (lawyer)

Senior Advisors

Arakaki, Osamu (professor)

Ichikawa, Masashi (lawyer)

Mori, Kyoko (professor / social worker)

Moritani, Yasufumi (associate professor / mental health social worker)

Nagamine, Yoshimi (journalist)

Suzuki, Masako (lawyer)



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