

Kyoto City Council on Multicultural Policy
FY2012 Report

<Suggestions to Kyoto City>

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by the Kyoto City Council on Multicultural Policy

Suggestions to Kyoto City

1 Forming the network of and fostering human resources for multicultural symbiosis

[Suggestions]

- 1-1. Kyoto city should implement measures to foster human resources for multicultural symbiosis and for connecting the different organizations and interested people.
- 1-2. Kyoto city should support forming network among those who are engaged in multicultural symbiosis and other related organizations to promote mutual cooperation.

Reality and problems

• There are many volunteer groups and NPOs who are engaged in multicultural symbiotic activities such as holding consultation service, Japanese classes, disaster prevention programs with multilingual approach and other multicultural events. Some university students contribute greatly to the revitalization of a local community by participating in its events together with the returnees from China. In these events, people who can connect the university, returnees and community residents can play an important role.

On the other hand, there are some communities where people from the same country and of same faith gather to help each other, to spread their culture in Japanese society and to interact with each other.

In order to promote multicultural symbiosis, coordinators must be needed to act as a bridge between various entities such as foreign residents, community residents, citizens' activity groups, governments and universities.

It is important to train various types of people by holding training sessions and lectures for multicultural activities with the cooperation of Kyoto International Foundation and the ward offices.

• Moreover, it is desirable to form a network so that the above mentioned groups and individuals share knowledge, experience and information with each other. For instance, if a group who holds Japanese classes for foreign residents and a group that works for disaster prevention with multilingual approach hold meetings and study sessions, and report their activities, it will serve as

the place for sharing information and fostering human resources.

Multicultural symbiotic programs are not only for the foreign residents but also for those who have got Japanese nationality, who were born by international marriage and others who have their roots in foreign countries.

2 Providing information to those who have their roots in foreign countries, and improving opportunities for people who have different nationalities and culture to learn from each other.

[Suggestions]

2-1 The city should effectively provide information necessary for those who have their roots in foreign countries so that they can spend a comfortable life in Japan. Such programs, for example, should include Japanese language classes and disaster prevention.

2-1 The city should provide more opportunities for them to learn Japanese language and Japanese customs. It should also provide opportunities for people who have different nationalities and cultures to learn from each other.

Reality and problems

The City should provide useful information in easy methods to those who have their roots in foreign countries so that they can live safely and comfortably in Japan. The information should include Japanese language classes, lectures about disaster prevention, health, educational and welfare services, and community activities.

It is important to know what kind of information is needed for them and what is the effective way to deliver such information. It is also important to provide information in easy way by using easy Japanese or using multiple languages.

In the wake of Great East Japan Earthquake, people's awareness about disaster prevention is increasing. It is important to provide information and education on disaster prevention for those who have their roots in foreign countries. Japanese language skill is indispensable for living in Japan. Therefore, detailed information about Japanese classes must be provided consisting of

venues, fees, levels and contents of teaching materials. The contents should cover various aspects of life such as employment, childcare, medical consultation and government services. Information about the availability of nursery service should also be provided.

Governments, private sectors and NPOs should work together to provide unified information about Japanese classes, disaster prevention and other matters through the internet. Kyoto International Foundation and the ward offices also must provide detailed local information.

Those foreign residents who have recently arrived in Japan have little knowledge about Japanese lifestyle and social rules such as traffic manners, garbage disposal rule and observing silence during night. Lack of such knowledge may cause misunderstanding and trouble between foreign residents and their local residents.

It is desirable that the Japanese classes be a place not only for learning the language, but also for learning Japanese lifestyle. They should better provide consultation service to their students. As for the Japanese teachers, they will learn the languages and cultures of the countries their students are from. They will also learn what their students think of Japanese lifestyle and rules. This will inspire them to rethink about Japanese culture and society and learn a lesson from that.

Local residents with different nationalities, languages and cultures should form such a relation that they learn from each other, so that they could understand different cultures, think highly of their own cultures and customs, and protect them.

3 Interaction and revitalization of communities through multicultural approach

[Suggestions]

3-1. Kyoto city should implement measures to increase the opportunities of interaction between those who have their roots in foreign countries and their community residents by encouraging them to join the community autonomic organizations and the community events.

3-2. Kyoto city should take measures to revitalize local communities through the active participation of those who have their roots in foreign countries as the leaders of the community.

- There are many foreign residents who want to join local events such as athletic meets, disaster drills and festivals so that they can have the opportunity to interact with local residents. Recently the number of community residents who belong to the community autonomic organizations and *Chonai-kai* is decreasing. As a result, the community ties are becoming weaker. Therefore, it is recommended to make fliers in easy Japanese to explain the systems of community autonomic organizations and *Chonai-kai* and encourage foreign residents to participate in the community events.

Some dormitories for foreign students offer those foreign students who have just arrived in Japan such programs as learning Japanese lifestyle and culture through interaction with their local residents. There are some foreign student communities who engage in cleaning their neighbourhood and work as welfare volunteers; and some foreign schools which are active in participating in the community activities. Kyoto city should support such multicultural activities.

- There are some foreign residents who want to join the rescue activities of their communities. It is desirable to provide such people the opportunity to work as volunteers in various fields.

On the other hand, community residents will have a chance to know different cultures through interaction with foreign residents. Active participation of these foreign residents in the community events will revitalize the community and improve its charm. For instance, foreign residents can introduce their cultures at a community event, serve as a teacher of foreign language, or serve as an interpreter for other foreigners who cannot speak Japanese.

Nurturing coordinators for multicultural symbiosis and creating network among various concerned groups, mentioned in Suggestion 1, and creating a place for leaning different cultures from each other, mentioned in Suggestion 2 will revitalize communities by multicultural approach.

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