



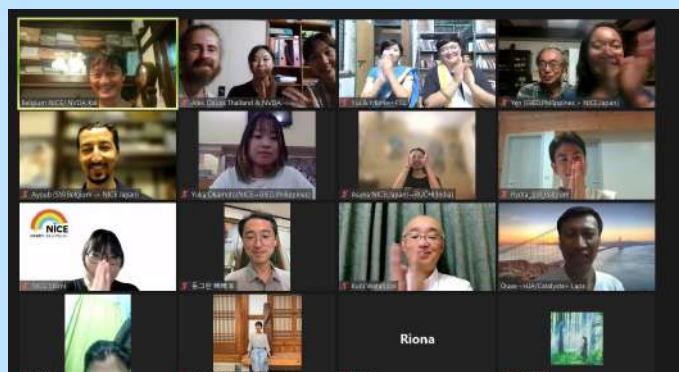
# NEWSLETTER

**Network for Voluntary Development in Asia (NVDA)**

September 2023



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How is everyone doing after July and August with many projects?

There have been many changes at NVDA. First of all, we have a new Secretariat (Nori) who started working on August 1st.

Second, AVS (Asian Voluntary Service) was held from Aug. 1st to Sep. 16th. The revival of AVS is especially good news. We are sure there are still some effects of Covid-19, but we wish you all the best in your activities!

## Activities Report : AVS

**Asian Voluntary Service (AVS)** is a special program of NVDA to exchange the LMTVs (Long and Mid Term Volunteers) focusing on five themes (environment, rural development, culture, education and human rights) in the workcamp (group) format. It started in 2014. 84 volunteers from 14 countries hosted 40 projects of 11 countries till 2017.

We restarted it in the new format of exchanging office interns & project leaders in 2023! 10 vols. from 4 countries were working wonderfully in 7 following NGOs of 6 countries for 47 days (Aug. 01-Sep. 16); **NICE (Japan)**, **Dalaa (Thailand)**, **CYA (Cambodia)**, **RUCHI (India)**, **FSL (India)**, **GIED (Philippines)** and **SVI (Belgium)**.

Volunteers participated in workcamps and internships at each hosting organization. AVS was supported by the Mitsubishi UFJ Foundation in Japan.

The workcamps cover a wide range of topics, including English education for children, preservation of traditional culture, environmental protection, women's empowerment, etc.

At the end of the AVS period, an online open event "AVS Night" was held where volunteers presented their activities and frankly discussed culture shock, memorable events and other topics to over 30 zoom participants and through the Facebook Live (click [here](#) to see the video. Presentation starts at 13:15).

Public participants commented that the content was very good and stimulating, and that they would like to participate in the IVS projects in the near future!.



### **Mimie [Dalaa Thailand→FSL India]**

Indian people is kinda friendly and down to earth and I love that they have a positive attitude towards foreigners. What is the best memory here I would say when I missed the bus to go office when I was buying snack and then the seller shouted at another bus and asked conductor to help me. It was such a nice moment



### **Honoka [NICE Japan→Dalaa Thailand]**

The language barrier is the biggest challenge for me. I was confused and felt so bad during conversations with people who could not speak Japanese or English because even though they tried to say something to me and say Thai slowly, I couldn't understand. However, by learning Thai words, body language, and smiling, this feeling went away a little and communication became smoother.



## IVS Starting Stories

**Sivasangari Ramasamy, MOVE Malaysia**

I participated in an NGO called Yayasan Salam, a government-funded organization, in 2004. They initiated the Youth International Workcamp program, which I joined. This happened shortly after I graduated from university. During this program, I had the opportunity to meet Kai and a team of volunteers from NICE. It wasn't your typical workcamp; it felt more like a student excursion and cultural exchange.



Kai approached me and suggested that I implement a similar program at the school where I was planning to teach, a school for mentally handicapped children. In March 2005, I began working with the children. At that time, I didn't have much knowledge about workcamps. Kai brought ten Japanese volunteers to Malaysia, and they stayed with my family in our house, which was a bit congested but enjoyable.

We had to walk for about an hour to get to the school every day and then walk back



home for another hour. We cooked and ate together, and it was during a meeting with Kai and the camp leader that I realized this was what's called "workcamp". From that point onwards, I started developing the project.

Ultimately, I had the opportunity to attend a training program in Europe in 2007, and it was a transformative experience. It expanded my perspective and inspired me to inspire others. I believe that every individual can find their unique way to contribute positively to their community and the world.



Unfortunately, due to personal reasons, I couldn't fully commit to it at the time. I had periods of being in and out of the project. In 2017, I was able to restart it, but then the

COVID-19 pandemic forced me to halt everything. Now, I've resumed the project.

In 2017, when I got married, my husband learned about my work with the workcamp and encouraged me to restart it. He recognized the importance of what I was doing, something not commonly done in Malaysia. I've consistently received positive feedback from the volunteers I've sent to various social projects that require a lot of human energy. Sending volunteers has been helpful for these organizations, as it lightens the staff's daily routine.



Despite certain projects not continuing for various reasons, the people we've worked with still appreciate our efforts. When I reflect on it, I see that I'm doing something good. I'm not giving these organizations money, food, or physical items, but I'm sending volunteers, creating a win-win situation where both the organizations and the volunteers benefit.

I've been a teacher for 22 years, and my plan is to leave my job at the end of 2024 to focus more on sending Malaysians out for volunteering. I also want to organize volunteering training and seminars in

Malaysia, leveraging our network of partner organizations across Asia. It may start small, but I believe it will grow rapidly due to its potential.



I'm not entirely sure where my passion for helping others comes from. While others may pursue material goals, I feel it's something passed down from my family. My grandfather came to Malaysia to work and selflessly provided food and lodging to a struggling sister's family, even though he ended up losing everything. My father, coming from a humble background, also helped those in need, despite having to support a family of six. He regularly made donations to schools and orphanages, even when we were not wealthy.

I believe in the power of volunteering to bring joy to people's lives. By sending volunteers to assist with various projects, I create a win-win situation where both the recipients and the volunteers benefit. My goal is to continue this legacy of service.



# Members News

## NICE - Japan

has recently been affiliated in [1% For The Planet](#), "a global network with thousands of businesses and environmental organizations working together to support people and the planet", thanks to the recommendation by the Citizen Watch Co., Ltd, with which NICE (and CYA - Cambodia) has been working together since 2017 for the group workcamps and donation project "Eco Tree Action".

We are not sure yet what kind of and how much impact could bring from this platform to us and IVS movement, but looking forward to having new power to achieve our goals of a Colorful & Healthy World!

1% FOR THE PLANET

Join Donate Login

Support for people and the planet—certified.

Join 1% for the Planet

Collective action adds up.

1% for the Planet is a global network with thousands of businesses and environmental organizations working together to support people and the planet.

patagonia Klean Kanteen OXO AVOCADO Cell Signaling BOXED WATER 818 TEQUILA Sunski cotopaxi peak design PUKKA WOOLRICH

**\$500M+** TOTAL CERTIFIED GIVING

**112+** COUNTRIES REPRESENTED

**5700+** BUSINESS MEMBERS

**6300+** ENVIRONMENTAL PARTNERS

1% FOR THE PLANET

Directory Resources Account Shinichiro KAITAWA NICE (Never-ending International workCamps Exchange)

**NICE (Never-ending International workCamps Exchange)**

INTERNATIONAL VOLUNTARY SERVICE, ENVIRONMENTAL, EDUCATION, BIODIVERSITY & WILDLIFE

- IVS (International Voluntary Service) NGO based in Japan
- Organizing various types of workcamps toward Colorful & Healthy World
- Organized 6,530 workcamps & exchanged 8,456 volunteers in 33 years
- Working on Environment/ Development/ Culture/ Education/ Human Rights
- Partnership with 162 IVS NGOs in 89 countries & 115 Local partners in Japan

NICE was founded on the 1990 Feb. 4th by the unknown 7 youth who had joined IVS projects abroad with the strong intention of KAITAWA Shinichiro (aka) who joined the international workcamp in Poland during his one year break from the university. In 1990 Sep., the first international workcamp of NICE was held at the foot of the Mt. Fuji in Japan.

**Our Mission**

Achieve a Healthy & Colorful World by 1) Improving the social & environmental situations by direct actions, 2) Empowering NPOs/ local communities and raise awareness & actions and 3) Promote global friendship/ cooperation and personal growth!

**Program Details**

See this file for the projects starting in 2023 Apr - Dec: <https://www.nice.gr.jp/2023Apr-Dec.pdf>

Contact Info

Website: [nice.gr.jp](http://nice.gr.jp)

Location: 0-01 Ounizawa, Yokohama-shi, Kanagawa-ken, Japan



## SVI - Belgium

Bonjour! I am Ryota, a Japanese volunteer currently staying in Belgium. During my stay here, I had the chance to participate in a 3-week long work camp and an internship in the SVI office. In the work camp, I got to work with people who have cerebral palsy, which is a condition that affects posture and movement. My volunteer work is spending a nice time with them, such as sharing meals, going outside together, and conducting Japanese workshops.

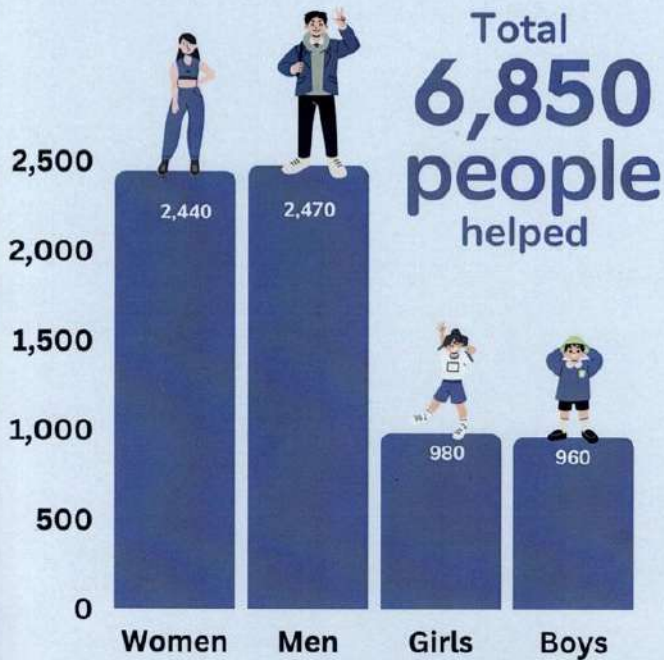
This whole experience has been new and exciting for me. I have understood their disabilities and how beautiful they are as individuals. I appreciate this opportunity and would like to say a big thank you to SVI, NICE, and NVDA for making it happen.

If you are looking to explore Belgium, I highly recommend SVI as the best choice for you. Thank you!





### Huam Jai Asasamak Association (HJA)



#### Overview of activities

- ✓ Raise COVID-19 awareness in communities;
- ✓ Improve water supply & hand washing stations;
- ✓ Support outbreak response planning and local resilience building with the taskforce;
- ✓ Implement income generation activities for vulnerable groups.



#### Mrs. Ver Vanalin

"I am Mrs. Ver Vanalin from MeuangHanh Village, Hongsa District, Xayabuli Province. My family was among the many who were impacted by the Covid-19 outbreak. It was a difficult time for us as we had trouble finding employment to support our family, and we didn't have any additional sources of income to rely on. The pandemic made it hard for us, and we were uncertain how to make it through.

During the challenging times, the EU-funded CiSAC project through HJA started livelihood recovery activities in our district. Our family was fortunate to receive support

in the form of vegetable seeds and equipment to build a shade house. Thanks to this support, we were able to cultivate a variety of crops year-round, regardless of weather conditions.

The project activities began in November 2022 and lasted until February 2023. Remarkably, within just three months, we were able to sell our produce three times and earn an average of 1,000,000 to 1,500,000 kip each time. This significant increase in income positively impacted our family's quality of life. We are grateful for the project's support and look forward to expanding our farming area and developing it into a stable profession."





## Dalaa - Thailand

In the last 3 months, we have been organising a workcamp each month, all of them were about education and activities with youth and children. Even if the number of applicants was very little, the activities went very well especially in the new place in September. We are having quite a few MLTV including 2 AVS volunteers that could help us to run the workcamps and organise special event as a Japanese Summer festival both in DaLaa and in the alternative market we join weekly. To finish this news we are working hard on a new clay house in DaLaa voluntary service community and this is so rewarding.



### Members upcoming projects

\* They are **just examples** and more projects are organized by Member NGOs.  
Dates are indicated by Month/Date order.

#### Nepal (FFN)

Banepa - Rehabilitation still damaged by Earthquake in 2015, construct the elders home, forestation, etc.  
11/01-11/14 and 12/01-12/14 : Community forest.



#### Nepal (VIN )

Okhaldhunga - Permaculture, Sustainable food production etc. 11/26-12/08

#### India (SMILE)

Kolkata and around - Community Festival and Cultural Exchange (UNESCO awarded the festival as Intangible Cultural Heritage Site) 10/15 -11/15



## IVS Impact Stories – from Mongolia & Cambodia

### Mongolia (MCE)

Eco farming, 10/Jul,2022. This workcamp is for helping vegetable farm of orphanage. Summer season is very hot there and kids use to have old shade. Volunteer from Netherlands who joined this workcamp in 2019 made some campaign to raise money to build new shade for kids in hos country. So when we able to host workcamps after 2 years of time for Covid-19, he rejoin the workcamp and we have build 2 new shade for kids.



### Cambodia (CYA)

Children have opportunity to start their English classes again after absented for the pass three years and local people started to welcome our volunteers back in the community again. Some activities have been organized together with local people and local people also can earn their income via center operation as well.

## Upcoming Events

### Mangrove Summit and EC meeting in Cambodia!

Mangrove Summit and EC meeting will be organized in 2024 Jan. or Feb. in Cambodia. Wait for the call for the participants that will be sent to all NVDA members. And anybody in the world is very welcome to join our Special Summit!



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### NVDA Newsletter (2023 September)

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