The background of the image is a photograph of a sky at sunset or sunrise. The sky transitions from a deep blue at the top to a lighter, hazy blue and then to a mix of orange, pink, and purple near the horizon. There are some wispy clouds and a few larger, more defined clouds near the horizon. The bottom of the image is a dark, silhouetted foreground, possibly a field or a forest, which is mostly black with some dark green and brown tones.

**The
HISTORY
of
ISSJ
Since 1952**

The History of International Social Service Japan (I S S J)

~ Extending Caring Hands Across the National Boundaries ~

Yaeko Otsuki, President



The history of International Social Service Japan started in 1952 when American Joint Committee for Assisting Japanese-American Orphans, forerunner of ISSJ, was inaugurated. At that time in Japan, the orphans from World War II and the mixed-race children were a serious social issue. Shedding light on this issue, ISSJ began to secure the lives under stable family circumstances for many of those children. Since then over half a century, with the slogan of “Extending Caring Hands Across the National Boundaries”, ISSJ has been providing many timely services like intercountry adoption, settlement assistance for refugees from Indochina, family reunion over the national boundaries, obtainment of nationality for stateless children, consultation related to international marriage issues like child-abduction and training of international social workers, etc. We would like to express our hearty thanks to Ministry of Health and Welfare and many other government agencies, private organizations and individuals for their kind understanding and supports on our activities all of which have kept ISSJ moving forward for many years. We will persevere in our effort day after day to upgrade our assistance activities.

Kuniko Omori, Vice President / General Director

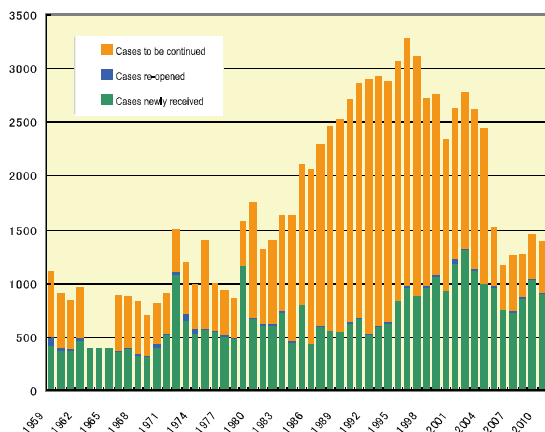
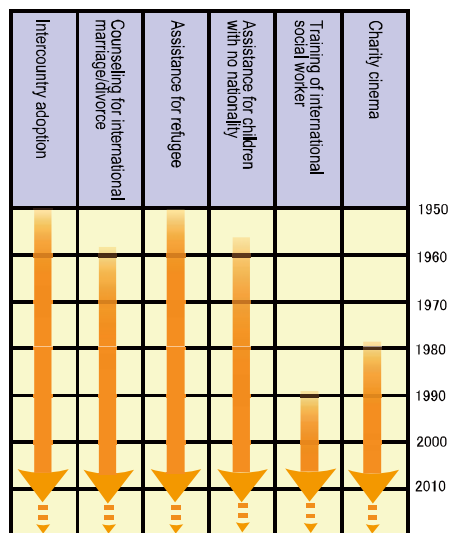


Children’s potential is immense. International Social Service Japan has been pouring half century-long efforts to protect the rights of weak children and their families for the purpose of ensuring stable future filled with hope across the national boundaries, regardless of credo, nationality, religion, culture and race. In 2012, Japanese government moved forward to ratify 1993 Hague Abduction Convention. In this regard, we would like to emphasize that the visiting right of a child rather than that of a parent should be respected. We also believe that it should be our social role to realize the ratification of Hague Convention on Intercountry Adoption, as we have been assisting intercountry adoptions more than 50 years since ISSJ was established. Step by step, we keep moving our activities forward for the people in need of our assistance. We would like to express our sincere gratitude for your support and we appreciate your continued support and encouragement.

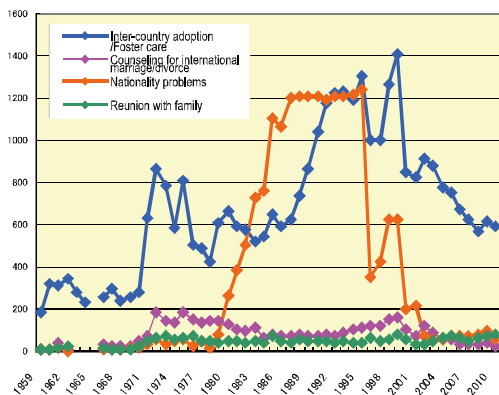
History of ISSJ

Activities

- 1952 Began assisting orphans from World War II and mixed-race children after the inauguration of the American Joint Committee for the Assisting Japanese-American Orphans
- 1955 Began social work on an international level after joining International Social Service (ISS: Geneva Headquarters)
- 1957 Began training program for students
- 1958 Established representative office of ISS in Okinawa
- 1959 Sanctioned by the Ministry of Health and Welfare as Social Welfare Juridical Person, International Social Service Japan
- 1960 Established Kure branch in Hiroshima
- 1966 Began assisting children of interracial origins for their social adequacy (Kure branch)
- 1973 Held Conference of ISS Asian and Oceania Region
- 1974 Hosted the first orientation for prospective adoptive parents
Prepared the survey report on the children of American nationality in Japan and on the protection of their nationality from the forfeit
- 1975 Received the imperial donation from the Emperor for the welfare service to mixed-race children
- 1979 Began assistance for Indo-Chinese refugees
Opened UNHCR-ISS Refugee Settlement Assistance Center (closed in the same year)
- 1980 Conducted the first actual survey on Indo-Chinese refugees
Held the first Charity Cinema
- 1982 Established Settlement Counseling Program for Indo-Chinese Refugees
- 1984 Conducted actual survey on Indo-Chinese refugee settlement assistance (commissioned survey from Foreign Ministry)
- 1986 Began financing aid for Indo-Chinese refugee-students
- 1990 Conducted actual survey on the social adjustment of Indo-Chinese children in Japan
- 1991 Conducted actual survey on Filipino women and children in Japan
Began training program for international social workers
- 1993 Conducted actual survey on Japanese and Filipino married couples
- 1994 Entered into a contract with the Philippines DSWD (Department of Social Welfare and Development) to improve welfare support for Filipino children in Japan
Conducted survey on Indo-Chinese refugees accepted as foster children
- 1995 Implemented medical aid program to Vietnam.
Received official commendation from the Prime Minister for assisting Indo-Chinese refugees
- 1996 Started "ISSJ Kure International Exchange Association"
Began training program in Cambodia
Opened "Phtea Nhor Nhim Day Care Center" in Cambodia
- 1998 Published "Extending Caring Hands Across the National Boundaries – The 45 Year History of International Social Service Japan"
- 2000 Implemented actual survey on the children with no family register and of foreign nationality
- 2002 Held Conference of ISS Asian and Pacific Region
Held ISSJ 50-Year Anniversary Celebration
- 2007 Held Charity Concert
- 2008 Held Intecountry Adoption Conference
- 2009 Closed Kure branch in Hiroshima
- 2010 Held ISS Asia Pacific Regional Meeting in Tokyo



Transition of the cases handled for 60 years



Transition of the cases sorted by counseling contents for 60 years

1. The origin of ISSJ



Leaving for the country of Dad and Mom over the national boundaries



A Happy family with an adopted boy, (ex. "Morning Star" published in Okinawa in 1958)

In 1952, seven years after the end of war, Japan still had a long way to go for the restoration and people were feeling distressed in the poverty and chaos. In such a dark period of time, people of good will lit a little fire in 1952 for saving many lives of so-called mixed-race children born between allied soldiers and Japanese women. Thus, the American Joint Committee for the Assisting Japanese-American Orphans started. Around that time, Japanese society hardly accepted the children of different skin colors, hair colors and eye colors. So the Joint Committee began the intercountry adoption program for those children to live with new families in America that is the country of their fathers.



Adopted children waiting for ISSJ staff and their new family



Leaving for the country where Dad and Mom are waiting



We established representative office of ISS in Okinawa in 1958. Until 1972 when Okinawa was returned to Japan, we had supported intercountry adoption and assisted for family registration and for obtainment of nationality in order to further pursue the custody of mixed-race children in Okinawa.

2. Assistance for Mixed-race Children in Need and their Families



Mr. Takechiyo Matsuda, the founding president, holding in his arms an adopted child who is going to America



Wonderful Christmas with our new family member



Ms. Kimi Ono, the first general director and an adopted child at his departure.

Dear Kimi,
How do you take our latest little adopted baby Charles Warren is just a darling - adjusting beautifully. He arrived in October - we should be able to go to court in May or so to complete the adoption. Carol said when I brought the baby home - "Oh, how long I've always wanted - a baby brother!" He and Bethie just adore

Letter of appreciation

Deeply impressed with the Japan-US activities on the protection of the children who were the victims of the war, Mr. Takechiyo Matsuda, ex- House of Representatives member, worked actively in his firm belief toward the government to establish International Social Service Japan (ISSJ) from the forerunner of the American Joint Committee for Assisting Japanese-American Orphans. ISSJ was sanctioned by Ministry of Health and Welfare as a social welfare organization in 1959. As well, ISSJ joined International Social Service (ISS: Headquarters in Geneva) as its Japan branch. Mr. Takechiyo Matsuda became the founding president.

For many orphans and refugees who were the victims of the First World War, battled in Europe, ISS as international private organization was established to provide homes by means of adoptions, to have custody of foster children and foster parents and to assist for family reunions across the national boundaries, etc., ISS is playing the role as consultative organization for UN Economic and Social Commission. Besides the activities for intercountry adoption, ISSJ also provided assistance for the mixed-race children in need in Japan.



Happy with Mom's loving touch



Happy Christmas with Mom and Dad



An integrated family regardless of nationality and skin colors



Mr. Ferguson of Australia founded Ferguson Fund for interracial children in Kure City and tendered warm assistance



Ms. Ozawa, social worker, called "Mother of mixed-race children" in Kure

For about 10 years from 1945, the headquarters of British Commonwealth Occupation Force had stationed in Kure-city and lots of Australian/Japanese babies were born. Due to the white Australia policy, those children and their mothers could not go along with their fathers (husbands) to Australia. ISSJ Kure Office was established to assist the mothers who had to raise their children by themselves fighting against prejudice and discrimination. By now, those children became grown-ups and Kure Office was closed in 2009, finishing its role of supporting them.

3. Assistance for Adoptions of Children From Philippines and Thailand



Service agreement with DSWD - Philippines



With DSDW Thai social workers



With my new Dad



Orientation for adoption



In the 1980s, the number of people from Asian countries coming to Japan increased to ride on Japan's "richness". And also increased the number of Japanese men's international marriages with Philippine and Thai women visiting Japan with business title "entertainer". Many Philippine and Thai wives who left their birth children or their nieces and nephews without rearers in their countries wanted their Japanese husbands to adopt those children, and these wives asked for ISSJ's assistance. ISSJ, having the service agreement with Department of Social Welfare and Development - Philippines (DSWD) and having solid network with Department of Social Development and Welfare - Thailand (DSDW), is providing assistance for the children of Philippine/Thai nationalities and for their families residing in Japan.

The international marriage often involves the issue of stepchild adoption. Therefore, it sometimes requires for ISSJ to provide counseling for husbands and wives or to help for the familial relations readjustment. Because of the rapidly increasing adoptions of the children by former marriages or of relatives, Japan has also become the country of accepting children for adoption.

Also, among the people who come to Japan to receive some share of its richness, there are some who overstay their visas. Thus there are the children born in Japan who have not processed the nationality acquisition, who have not entered themselves in the family register or who have remained stateless. ISSJ provides increasing assistance for their obtainment of nationality for their repatriation.

4. Communications and Public Affairs



ISS International Cultural Session (1980), Held folkloric dance show and lottery with participation of the ambassadors' wives



In front of the event venue, Tokyo Metropolitan Hibiya Public Hall. With Mr. Ken Yasui, the second President, and Ms. Tomoko Matsushima, MC



Issue newsletters "Intercountry" twice a year for introducing ISSJ activities



Held seminars and sales of Asian products at Grobal Festa Japan 2001 (at Hibiya Park)



Visited Angkor with Cambodia day-care center's supporters in 1999



Held 2007 Christmas Charity Concert for pipe organ and songs



At the twice-a-year Charity Cinema, started from 1980, a bazaar held at the same time. This Charity Cinema is set up and run by "Event Committee" organized by volunteers



5. Assistance for Refugees



For the first time, Vietnamese boat people landed in Chiba, Japan in May 1975



Mr. Keiwa Okuda, ISSJ's third President. At Counselors Workshop for Indochinese Refugees Integration Assistance



Held Counselors Workshop for Refugees Integration Assistance 34 times from 1982 to 1988



Mr. Katuhiko Sakota, ISSJ's fourth President, handing out the financial aid



With foster family members at grandfather's house



Foster parents teaching how to plant potatoes



Japanese language class held at ISSJ from 1981 to 1991. 112 students at a peak period. Had a pleasurable time at Christmas party with prizes in the lottery and Christmas presents





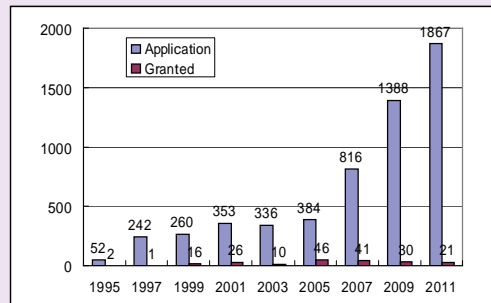
For assisting the social adequacy of the children of long-term residents, held summer camps and took field trips every year since 1986



Tour of a quiz show at TV-Asahi



Received an award from the Prime Minister for ISSJ' s having assisted Indochinese refugees over years (1995)



The trend of the applications for refugee status in japan (Source:Immigration Control Bureau under the Ministry of Justice)

The refugees from Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia are called as “Indochinese refugees”. Among many Vietnamese refugees by Saigon’s fall of 1975, 9 people who were saved by a U.S. ship came to Japan as boat people. In 1978, for the first time, the Japanese government asked ISSJ for undertaking the settlement assistance program. ISSJ promptly organized refugee settlement assistance counselors all over Japan and gave counseling on various issues needed for refugees’ social adjustment to live in Japan. Those were job recruitment, troubles at workplaces, housing, adjustment to local community, school attendance, kindergarten or day-care center problems, help in the face of illness, Japanese language barrier, etc.

We would like to express our sincere gratitude in particular for the foster families in Japan that provided assistance for the children of Indochinese refugees to have access to education and to stand on their own. The number of long-term residents among Indochinese refugees in Japan was 11,319 in total as of December 2005. Besides, being affiliated with UNHCR for the service agreement, ISSJ has been providing assistance to apply for asylum, to solve job, housing and medical issues and mental support for the people who escaped from their home countries persecuted for religions or politics, so-called “individual refugees”. As it is now, ISSJ provides counseling service mainly at East Japan Immigration Center and Tokyo Regional Immigration Bureau. ISSJ also provides the program for the public in order to increase awareness for refugees and asylum-seekers in Japan.

6. Training of International Social Worker

In Vietnam



Dr. Kubota explaining about medical treatment equipment to Vietnamese medical workers



Holding a meeting with Vietnamese social workers

In Japan



Filipino workers receiving on-the-job training at ISSJ

In Cambodia



Children learn how to write and read their names in English and Khmer and also calculating



Providing lunch meals that nourish children's body and mind



ISSJ provided the international social work training to refugee integration assistance counselors for upgrading the service quality for Indochinese refugees. Then, ISSJ invited the people in charge of welfare service from Philippines and Cambodia to Japan and started the international social work training program. In 1995, ISSJ sent medical treatment equipment and materials to Emergency Medical Center in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam as an aid project for Foreign Ministry's NGO, accompanied by the orientation training of Dr. Kubota, ISSJ's trustee. Further, ISSJ assisted the poor young girls with the training program to become beauticians and the social workers with the training program to become professional for taking care of street children.



Children listening raptly to the beautiful melody of the harpist



Fun unique colorful pictures painted by children of Phtea.



In 1996, ISSJ opened “Phtea Nhor Nhim=House of Smiling-Day Care Center” in a poor village near Phnom Penh in Cambodia. ISSJ provided literacy education and hygiene/nutrition education to many children there and also implemented social worker development training. In 2007, ISSJ moved its activity base to the city of Phnom Penh and started the literacy education with free lunch for those street children who cannot receive education at public schools.



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7. International Exchanges



The Second ISS International Conference in Asia (1973). Intercountry adoption, international marriage and divorce brought up for discussion. Went into headlines of newspapers



Participated in Global Consultation Conference in the Philippines (1993)



Mr. Ngabonziza, Secretary-General of ISS, speaking at Asia and Pan-Pacific Region Conference (1986)



ISS Council & Executive Committee Meeting (2010)



Asia and Pacific Regional Meeting in Tokyo (2010)



"2008 Intercountry Adoption Conference" in Tokyo in 2008. Invited specialists from Switzerland, America and Philippines that had already ratified Hague Convention and lively exchanged views with attendees over Japan's earliest ratification of Hague Convention

ISSJ has attended ISS Council & Executive Committee Meeting and Asia-Pacific Regional Meeting to strengthen ISS Network. Furthermore, ISSJ has attended various conference and workshops such as Global Consultation Conference hosted by DSWD. ISSJ itself has hosted international conferences for improving the service level.



"Forum on Children with no nationality, with no family register and of foreign nationality" held in Tokyo in 2002. Lively exchanged views between panelists and attendees.

ISSJ in the Future

International Social Service started its operation in 1924 for saving the people like refugees, asylum seekers, war orphan and the people parted from their families that flooded in Europe after the First World War. ISS now undertakes the role as an advisory organization for United Nations Economic and Social Council. As of January 2013, ISS network is composed of 15 Branches, 4 Affiliated Bureaus, Correspondents active in more than 120 countries, and a general secretariat. The organisation is represented in more than 140 countries with a broad worldwide impact. Regardless of nationality, credo, race/tribe, age and gender, ISS is extending caring hands across the national boundaries in a spirit of the equality of all mankind. ISS HQ in Geneva focuses on the enforcement of network for striving to improve the activities. Utilizing ISS network, ISSJ will continue making steady day-to-day efforts for the development and improvement of international welfare in our country, placing great importance on interpersonal communication. In all ages and in all countries, children are country's riches bearing its future. Adults are responsible for children's growing well in peace. All children are born with endowed rich spirits. The future society will need to tackle such an issue as how to protect and nurture these spirits of children.



Place of ISS Headquarters • Branches (2013)



ISSJ has been working assisted by your donations. However, the funds are short to assist children who are not protected by their birth parents or to support refugees. Your assistance and donations would be deeply appreciated.

We would like to express our sincere gratitude for JKA, The Nippon Foundation, UNHCR, Management Organization for Postal Savings and Postal Life Insurance Postal Savings for International Voluntary Aid, Masonic Foundation of Japan, Community Chest, all of which subsidies, aid funds or individual/corporate supports have been enabling us to continue the activities of International Social Service Japan.



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