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Contributing to the communities in which we operate across the JT Group is part of our responsibility as a corporate citizen. We are guided by the JT Group Corporate Citizenship Activity Policy, which focuses on community needs in four areas: social welfare, including poverty reduction, assisting disadvantaged elderly people, adult education, and support for those with disabilities; arts and culture; environmental protection; and disaster relief.

We provide support in a number of ways, including through financial contributions and corporate philanthropy, employee volunteering, and an independent charity, the JTI Foundation (www.jtifoundation.org). In 2013, we invested a total of ¥7,780 million in corporate citizenship and community involvement activities (2012: ¥6,197 million). This includes financial donations to organizations such as the Eliminating Child Labor in Tobacco Growing Foundation and a diverse range of community involvement activities within our tobacco supply chain.

Providing training and employment support for disabled people

In 2012, in co-operation with the Kyrgyz Society for the Blind and the Deaf, JTI launched a project to establish mini-centers in five regions of Kyrgyzstan to provide computer training for visually impaired and deaf people. With the aim of helping develop independence and providing social activities, the project launched 11 mini-centers and by the end of 2012, 108 participants had passed computer training courses.

In 2013, the project was modified and expanded based on the experience gained in 2012. This included the launch of 'Equal Opportunities', a social center in Bishkek offering a range of new computer training courses as well as programs to facilitate social integration and independence. The new courses include:

- Computer technology courses for the blind and visually impaired, which comprise 164 hours in class, 164 hours of homework, and 82 hours of individual work
- Computer technology courses for the deaf and hearing-impaired users, which comprise 80 hours in class, 80 hours of homework, and 40 hours of individual work
- Orienteering with a cane, which includes 30 hours in the classroom and 120 hours of practice outside the classroom
- GPS navigation in the city for the blind, which includes 80 hours in class, 120 hours of practical work, and 40 hours of homework



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The bigger picture

Legal support

Alongside the courses, the center also provides legal advice to trainees and is assisted by a legal advisor, herself visually impaired, who monitors and analyzes legislation in the Kyrgyz Republic on the rights of people with disabilities. Employment legislation for disabled people and government benefits for legal support of program participants is also monitored.

Employment

Another important function of the center is an employment program for those who have passed courses at the center, as well as for citizens with disabilities who have applied for help. Within the employment program, several databases have been established to record information on disabled people seeking work, available jobs, and the most popular or suitable vacancies among disabled people. In March 2014, as part of the employment program, the Equal Opportunities center launched a joint project with call center provider Positive Contact, which selected candidates to work as call center operators. Seven

participants started training in the call center in April 2014 and all will be employed by the call center upon completion of their training.

“I was afraid to go out. Only on the initiative of my wife did I walk somewhere. Usually, I spent days just listening to the TV. Through a blind neighbor I learned about a society of the blind and the deaf, and decided to join it. And today, I already signed up for a computer course at Equal Opportunities.”

Igor Pustuyev
Equal Opportunities service user

According to the Ministry of Labor,⁵ there are over 155,000 people with disabilities in Kyrgyzstan, including 25,000 blind and deaf. Annually, a quota of 500–700 jobs is allocated to disabled people by employers; however, in practice, employment is provided to not more than 200 people a year.

⁵ http://www.vb.kg/doc/273385_v_bishkeke_otkrylsia_centra_po_obycheniui_trydoystroystvy_lovz.html

Supporting environmental protection

Restoring forests in Japan – the JT Forest

Since 2005, we have worked to protect the environment by conserving and developing forests across Japan with our JT Forest initiative. The initiative assists local communities in their efforts to protect and enhance areas of forest by leasing them for a fixed period and establishing forest development plans that respond to a specific forest's needs. We provide support for the identified development plans in consultation and cooperation with various stakeholders, including experts, local communities, and local governments. The ultimate goal of the JT Forest is to create thriving forests that are used and maintained in a sustainable way.

The JT Forest currently operates in nine forest areas (see map), working on issues such as reviving previously deforested areas and conducting forest maintenance, including thinning, weeding, developing narrow paths for regular use, and protecting young trees from damage caused by wild animals. We also run Forestry Program days, where JT employees, local residents, and local government officials can come together to work on forest preservation.

Shakotan (Hokkaido)

since December 2010

Tsuruoka (Yamagata)

since April 2009

Nakatsugawa (Gifu)

since April 2008

Yunomae (Kumamoto)

since April 2009

Kosuge (Yamanashi)

since March 2006

Shigetomi (Kagoshima)

Nakahechi (Wakayama)

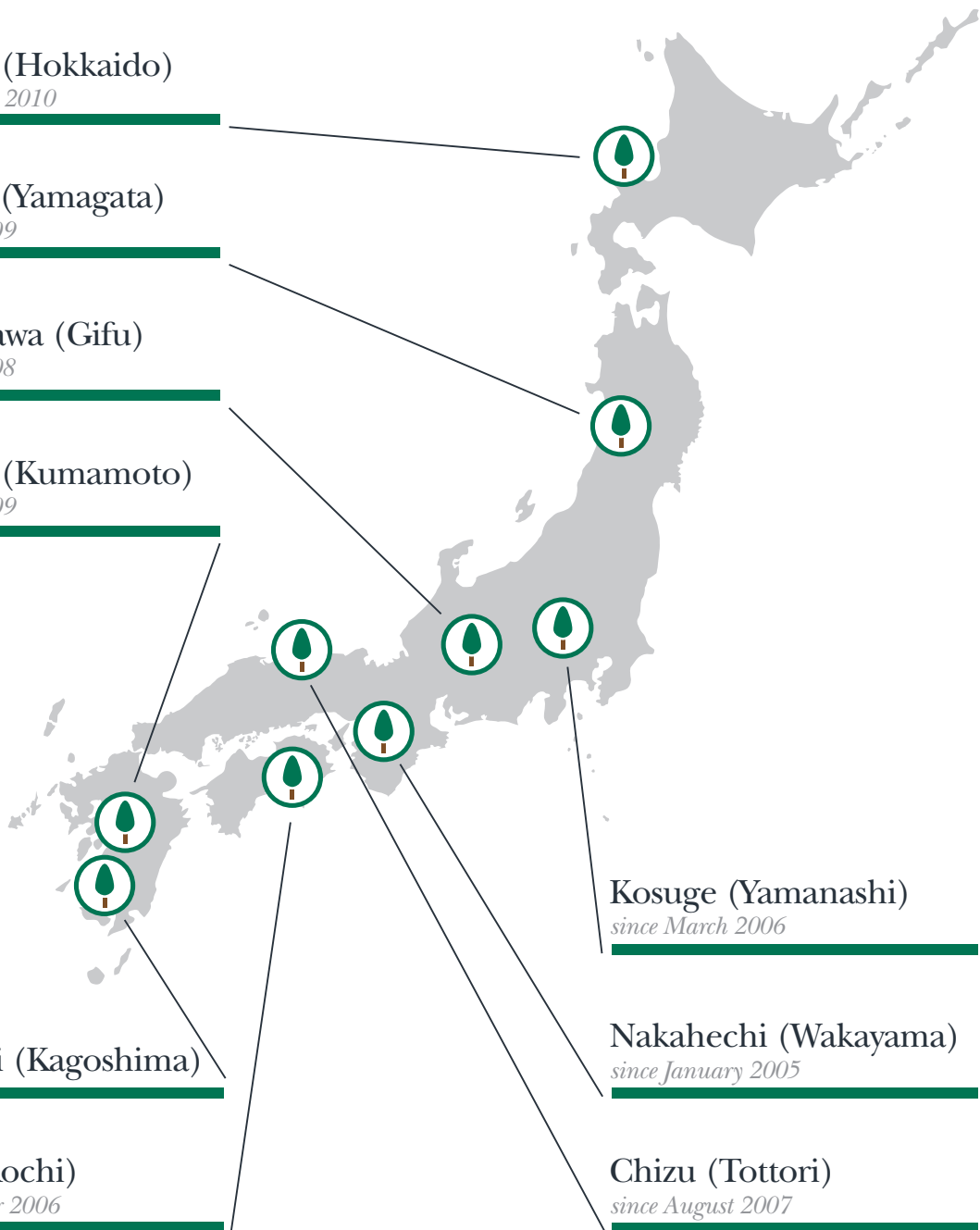
since January 2005

Nahari (Kochi)

since November 2006

Chizu (Tottori)

since August 2007





The ceremony for renewed agreement for JT Forest Tsuruoka

Extending our support

In 2013 and early 2014, we renewed three JT Forest conservation agreements in Gifu, Kumamoto, and Yamagata Prefectures. In 2013, we renewed our agreement with Yunomae-machi, in Kumamoto Prefecture, which was due to expire in March 2014, for a further five years. The JT Forest project in Yunomae has thinned the forest, improving its ability to protect soil and absorb rainwater, and planted trees to attract and support wildlife, including Japanese deer and Japanese dormouse. These maintenance and conservation initiatives will continue and be expanded during the extended agreement period.

In early 2014, we also renewed our forest conservation agreement for the 'Yamagata Forest of Kizuna' with Yamagata Prefecture, Tsuruoka-city, and Shimogawa Production Forestry Cooperative. The new five-year agreement will continue to enhance coastal sandstorm control and improve the forest, where environmental education for the community's younger generation can be provided.

Supporting disaster relief and recovery

Although it has been three years since the Great East Japan Earthquake hit the Tōhoku region of Japan, the recovery effort is ongoing. Many people are still struggling to re-establish their lives and livelihoods. As a result, both human and financial resources remain in high demand for the restoration of affected areas.

Immediately after the earthquake and tsunami, we supported the urgent disaster relief efforts in the worst affected areas. Over the longer term, we have supported the recovery effort with donations, teams of volunteers, and programs of support for non-profit organizations (NPOs) working in areas trying to recover and rebuild following the disaster. These programs are carried out as part of the 'JT NPO Support Program', which has been providing support to Japanese NPOs since 1999. Based on the acute needs of the affected areas, however, we decided to launch a new support program in 2013.

The 'JT Reconstruction Support Project' supports NPOs working to reconstruct and revitalize communities in three areas most badly affected by the disaster – Miyagi, Iwate, and Fukushima Prefectures. Its goal is to provide a greater level of funding for these NPOs, ensuring stability for their future activities.

The JT Reconstruction Support Project is operated on our behalf by the Japan Earthquake Local NPO Support Fund, which screens applications from organizations for financial support.

The screening body, which is mainly made up of independent experts, assesses applications four times each year. In total, the project will provide a fund for three years to support around 20 NPOs annually with grants of three to five million Yen for each.

Examples of activities supported to date include:

- Support for female-led business start-ups that work to help communities' everyday life in tsunami-devastated areas
- Preventing isolation of community members living in both temporary housing and their own houses
- Creation of jobs for women while helping them balance the parenting of young children in the affected areas
- Support for families with disabled children in disaster areas
- Projects to clear debris from the sea-bed in tsunami-affected areas
- Creation of cooperative business models both with local people and those from outside affected communities
- Support projects to empower women who immigrate to Fukushima

<i>FY2013</i>	<i>1st. term (Oct 2013)</i>		<i>2nd. term (Jan 2014)</i>		<i>3rd. term (Apr 2014)</i>		<i>Total</i>	
Activity base	No. of NPOs	Grants (million Yen)	No. of NPOs	Grants (million Yen)	No. of NPOs	Grants (million Yen)	No. of NPOs	Grants (million Yen)
Iwate Pref.	0	0	2	7.12	1	5.00	3	12.12
Miyagi Pref.	3	13.46	1	4.40	3	10.10	7	27.96
Fukushima Pref.	2	9.12	2	7.70	3	12.50	7	29.32
Total	5	22.58	5	19.22	7	27.60	17	69.40