

# Living the Lotus 8

*Buddhism in Everyday Life*

2025  
VOL. 239



## Rissho Kosei-kai of Hawaii Hosts Bon Dance Festival on July 11–12



### Living the Lotus Vol. 239 (August 2025)

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Rissho Kosei-kai is a global Buddhist movement of people who strive to apply the teachings of the Threefold Lotus Sutra, one of the foremost Buddhist scriptures, in their daily lives and contribute to world peace. It was founded in 1938 by Rev. Nikkyo Niwano (1906–1999) and Rev. Myoko Naganuma (1889–1957). With the guidance of President Nichiko Niwano, Rissho Kosei-kai members actively share the Dharma widely and engage in peace activities both locally and internationally in cooperation with people from many walks of life.

The title of this newsletter, *Living the Lotus—Buddhism in Everyday Life*, conveys our hope of striving to practice the teachings of the Lotus Sutra in daily life in an imperfect world to enrich and make our lives more worthwhile, like beautiful lotus flowers blooming in a muddy pond. This newsletter aims to help people around the world apply Buddhism more easily in their daily lives.



### Give Only Praise to Other People

Rev. Nichiko Niwano  
President of Rissho Kosei-kai



### The Basis for Raising Human Beings

Among the educators I have learned from, through their writings and other sources, there are two who share a common philosophy. Their idea is that education is not lecturing; to educate is to praise. One of them, Professor Nobuzo Mori (1896–1992), even goes so far as to say that teachers should only open their mouths to give praise.

For example, if the children have not neatly lined up their shoes in the school's shoe locker, it is the teacher's job to tidy them up when the students are not looking. As the children become used to finding their shoes arranged neatly, they gradually start to place their shoes neatly inside the shoe locker on their own, and then the teacher praises the students. This is what Mori means by education and guidance.

Similarly, Professor Ko Hirasawa (1900–1989, former president of Kyoto University) stated that “Education is the study of how to give praise to others,” and regarding the significance of giving praise, said, “The most important thing is to bring out the best in people and then to instill in them joy, courage, and hope” (*Ikiyo kyo mo yorokonde* [Let's live every day joyfully], Chichi Publishing, 1995).

I have already mentioned, several times, the importance of raising human beings, writing things like, “Let's raise people—let's cultivate people who have the mind of compassion” and “Let's raise and nurture the minds of the people who are shouldering responsibility for the future.” This is because the beauty of the kindness in each and every human heart protects our beautiful planet earth and leads to the happiness of all living things that exist in harmony on it. However, these two people, who are experts in education and well-versed in religion and philosophy, say that the basis for raising young people is giving them praise.

Professor Hirasawa also said, “In the depths of your mind, you have many times more wonderful things than you yourself know. No matter what, be confident and do things magnificently.” If these are words of praise, in the educational sense, then it seems to me that raising people means encouraging awareness of buddha nature, and praising them means believing in their buddha nature.

## Believing In and Revering the Buddha Nature

That said, praising others is difficult to do. In reality, we are more likely to end up scolding or nagging, aren't we? There is a proverb that says scolding is as ineffective as "fertilizing wheat after the spring equinox, and parents' opinions after the age of twenty." It is only possible to raise children by scolding them up until about the age of three. After that, and especially once they become adults, no matter how much you scold or lecture them, the important points will not be conveyed unless they have already sunk into their minds.

So what should we do? Just as Isoroku Yamamoto (1884–1943, a marshal admiral of the Imperial Japanese Navy) said, "People are only inspired if you show them how, tell them how, let them try, and give them praise." I also think that instead of scolding others, we should lead by example and praise them when they succeed, which will inspire their minds. In fact, the latter part of this quotation goes on to say, "People will not be successful unless you watch over them gratefully while they are trying and show them that you trust them to do the job." After all, an attitude of completely believing in and revering the buddha nature of other people is important for raising human beings. Here we can also see and feel the love and trust expressed when someone tells another person "I need you." Interactions like this make other people realize their own value and give them the joy, hope, and courage to live. Such interactions also guide their minds to the desire to become like the person who needs them.

A former minister of a Dharma center said, "By telling the members of the merits I have received by listening to them, I am praising them." This teaches us the important lesson that in order to completely believe in and respect the buddha nature of ourselves and others, our minds must be honest and sincere. Otherwise, we cannot truly praise others.

We who hope to raise human beings through our diligent daily practices, while also further developing our own humanity, are always receiving encouragement and praise from the Buddha, too.

From *Kosei*, August 2025





## Your Life Will Change If You Strive to Change Yourself Through the Buddha's Teachings

Ms. Simi Handa, Rissho Kosei-kai of Delhi

### When and why did you join Rissho Kosei-kai?

I joined Rissho Kosei-kai of Delhi (then known as the Delhi Dharma Center) in October 2004 after being introduced by an acquaintance. My motivation for joining stemmed from a desire to cultivate my spiritual growth. This wish was deeply influenced by the path my life had taken up to that point.

I was born in New Delhi in 1965 and was spoiled by my parents, which caused me to develop a short temper and a self-centered personality from a young age. I married at the age of twenty-four and was blessed with two sons. However, due to my personality, I caused my children a great deal of emotional distress. In 1998, I underwent surgery on my uterus, and I also developed osteoporosis. In 2001, I fractured my leg in a traffic accident, and in 2003 I was diagnosed with cancer. That same year, I experienced the deepest sorrow of my life when I lost my beloved mother. These difficult events made me feel as though I was constantly being struck by misfortune, and I lamented my fate and circumstances.

However, after joining Rissho Kosei-kai, my life changed dramatically through my encounters with Mr. Pradeep Saxena, who was then chapter head of the Delhi Dharma Center, and Rev. Mitsuo Saito, who was then director of the South Asia Division. As I earnestly studied the Lotus Sutra and the teachings of Rissho Kosei-kai, I came to realize the importance of seeing every encounter and event in a positive light.

I realized that I should not blame others or my environment for my misfortunes. Instead, it is essential to change myself and live life with a positive and forward-looking attitude. That insight has allowed me to transform how I live my life.

Although I experienced a break of a few years in my practice due to strained relationships, in 2014 I



*Ms. Simi Handa speaking to members of Rissho Kosei-kai of Delhi.*

was appointed as area leader for Rissho Kosei-kai of Delhi. In 2020, I took early retirement from my job as a government officer, and in March 2023, I was appointed as chapter head of Rissho Kosei-kai of Delhi. Since then, I have been striving each day with renewed determination together with my fellow sangha members. With gratitude in my heart and the Lotus Sutra as my compass, I walk the path of bodhi-sattva practice with unwavering resolve.



# Interview

## What brings you the greatest joy in your current role as chapter head?

What brings me the greatest joy is seeing members who were once suffering or burdened with worries being saved by the teachings of the Lotus Sutra and Rissho Kosei-kai. Watching them become truly happy and smile again fills my heart with joy. It is as if the seeds of compassion were planted in suffering hearts and have blossomed into flowers of joy, nurtured by the Dharma rain.

## What kinds of activities are currently taking place at Rissho Kosei-kai of Delhi?

On a daily basis, we conduct morning and evening sutra recitation and offer services at the Dharma center. During the daytime, we mainly hold *hoza*, “Dharma circle,” and Lotus Sutra study sessions. We also actively engage in activities that make a social contribution, such as hosting family education seminars and visiting the homes of the elderly.

In particular, many children in the area surrounding Rissho Kosei-kai of Delhi do not have access to education due to poverty and cannot read or write. To support these children, we donate school supplies and clothing, and youth leaders teach Hindi and English three to four times a week at the Dharma center and nearby parks. We believe that nurturing the minds of children with knowledge and kindness is one of the most sacred acts of compassion.



Ms. Handa (far left, front row) and other recipients of the Gohonzon, “focus of devotion,” after the Gohonzon bestowal ceremony at Rissho Kosei-kai of Delhi in 2022.



Celebrating the eighty-sixth anniversary of the founding of Rissho Kosei-kai in 2024, Ms. Handa (second from right) cuts a cake with other members of Rissho Kosei-kai of Delhi.

## Is there a particular teaching from the Lotus Sutra that is engraved in your heart?

Having worked as a pharmacist in the past, I’ve always had a deep interest in “The Parable of the Medicinal Herbs” from chapter 5 of the Lotus Sutra. This chapter explains that although there are various kinds of grasses and trees of different sizes in this world, the rain falls equally on them all, and each plant grows in its own unique way, blooming with beautiful flowers and bearing fruit according to its nature.

Similarly, although we human beings differ in our abilities and characteristics, we are all equally capable of receiving the Buddha’s teachings and achieving awakening. Everyone inherently possesses buddha nature and is precious at their core. Yet many people are unaware of this truth. As a result, they lose confidence, fall into self-doubt, and are unable to live positively.

That is why I now strive to teach “The Parable of the Medicinal Herbs” to the children around the Dharma center in a way that is easy to understand. I hope they will not live by comparing themselves with others, but rather cherish their own unique qualities and shine brightly in their irreplaceable lives. May each child bloom in their own way under the boundless compassion of the Buddha’s rain.



After the ceremony celebrating the anniversary of Rissho Kosei-kai's founding, Delhi members pose for a commemorative photo. Ms. Handa is in the center of the front row.

## Is there a particular teaching from Rissho Kosei-kai that you hold dear?

When Founder Niwano was sixteen years old, he made the Six Vows on a night train to Tokyo. One of them was “Never quarrel with others. No matter how terribly I am treated, I will endure it as a sign from the divine.”

I always keep these words in my heart. No matter what hardships or adversity I may face in the future, I want to embrace them as opportunities to grow and believe that the Buddha is watching over me. I will continue to train myself, accepting everything as a part of the Buddha's compassionate guidance. I take each challenge as a stepping stone on the path to awakening, with the Buddha's light illuminating my journey.

## What do you find most attractive about Rissho Kosei-kai?

We are often taught that *hoza* is the “lifeblood” of Rissho Kosei-kai, and from my own experience, I believe that *hoza* is a profound form of practice. It's a place where we mutually learn how to view and think about life through the lens of the Buddha's teachings and polish our characters.

When I was new to the organization, it took great courage to speak openly about my struggles and admit my mistakes in front of others. However, when we feel that someone is truly listening and under-

stands us, we feel safe enough to express our honest feelings.

In *hoza*, sangha members sincerely listen to each person's suffering as if it were their own, and they offer compassionate support. Thanks to this mutual support and encouragement, we can open up our hearts without fear. By making the effort to transform ourselves in line with the Buddha's teachings, we can change our lives and gain the confidence and courage to walk the Buddha Way. For this reason, I believe *hoza* is one of the most attractive aspects of Rissho Kosei-kai. It is within the sacred space of *hoza* that the Dharma comes alive, and our hearts blossom through shared humanity and mutual transformation.

## Finally, could you share with us your current aspirations and future goals for your practice?

My greatest wish is to continue working together with sangha members in Delhi to share the Buddha's teachings of wisdom and compassion with courage and sincerity. Alongside our Dharma dissemination, I also hope to continue supporting education for the next generation. Through these efforts, I want to contribute to the development of Delhi and Indian society through meaningful social engagement. With deep reverence for the Three Treasures—the Buddha, the Dharma, and the Sangha—I aspire to offer my life in service of spreading the light of awakening, one heart at a time.



The Handa family celebrates the younger son's wedding in 2023. Ms. Handa is on the far right.



# An Introduction to Rissho Kosei-kai Through Comics

## The Facilities of Rissho Kosei-kai

### Nikkyo Niwano Memorial Museum



Nikkyo Niwano Memorial Museum opened in 2006 to celebrate the centennial of the birth of the Founder. It is a place where visitors encounter the Founder, learn from the Founder, and follow in the Founder's footsteps.

The central hall in the museum serves as the main space, where visitors can touch and feel nature in the Founder's birthplace, Suganuma, especially its changing beauty in each of the four seasons. Around the space, visitors encounter five exhibition corners. They trace the Founder's life by visiting the corners in sequence. The Founder's office has also been faithfully recreated, and visitors are allowed a close look at the writing tools and furniture the Founder used daily in the office.

Through its diverse exhibits and materials, Nikkyo Niwano Memorial Museum offers each visitor the opportunity to encounter the life and spirit of the Founder.



#### Did You Know?

The museum has a special exhibition room where themed exhibitions are held several times a year. Through curating exhibits on various topics—such as the Founder, the Cofounder, and the Lotus Sutra—the museum offers a space where visitors can gain new insights. Entry to the exhibition room is from the garden side of the Horin-kaku Guest Hall.





## The Second Group Pilgrimage Hall



The Second Group Pilgrimage Hall serves as an accommodation facility where members visiting Rissho Kosei-kai's Tokyo headquarters stay. The facility is large enough to accommodate many people at once. The wall of the hall's lobby is decorated with a mural made of painted ceramic panels, curated by the Founder, that depict an image of the three sacred Buddhist mountains: Divine Eagle Peak (Mount Gridhrakuta), Mount Tiantai, and Mount Hiei. In the lobby there is a bronze statue of Founder Niwano. The construction of the mural embodies the Founder's wish for visitors to return to the origins of Buddhism and to embrace Shakyamuni's spirit as their own.



### Did You Know?

Mount Gridhrakuta is located in India, Mount Tiantai in China, and Mount Hiei in Japan (Shiga Prefecture). Mount Gridhrakuta is known as the place where the Lotus Sutra was expounded upon. Mount Tiantai is also a significant site in the history of the transmission of the Lotus Sutra from India to China to Japan. The founder of Japanese Tendai Buddhism, Saicho (767–822), went to Tang, China, as a Japanese envoy and brought the doctrine of the Lotus Sutra to Japan.





# Germinating the Seeds of Awakening

## Chapter 2 To Connect with Others

### Reach Out with the Heart of the Buddha

Rev. Nikkyo Niwano  
Founder of Rissho Kosei-kai



#### **If You Don't Share the Dharma, This World Will Be Lost**

Incidentally, no one is able to share the Dharma skillfully at first. To be sure, it takes experience. It's like Japanese archery—nobody hits the target with a single shot in the very beginning. Most people miss the mark. But with repeated practice, they start to hit the target from time to time. By doing this over and over, they can strike the bullseye more often.

It's the same with helping to connect people with the Dharma or to enhance their connection with the Dharma. By listening to many people's worries during Dharma Circle discussions and hearing the advice offered by Dharma Circle facilitators, you repeatedly engage in connecting people with the Dharma and helping them deepen their connection with it. As you continue doing this, you will eventually be able, just by looking at someone's face, to get it exactly right when you say to them, "You're dealing with this kind of problem, aren't you?" And you'll also have the self-confidence to tell them, "If you think about it in this way, you'll soon find happiness."

In any case, the important thing is to try sharing the Dharma with people. There may be people who don't even try to listen to you. There may be people who, even if they listen, don't understand.



Even so, you shouldn't be disappointed. Like the Bodhisattva Never Unworthy of Respect, by continually calling out to them "You can be a buddha!" a path to liberation for both of you will emerge.

It's worth mentioning that at the time of his awakening, Shakyamuni Buddha thought to himself, "Even if I were to share this profound truth, there might be no one capable of understanding it," and he was conflicted: "Should I teach it, or should I keep it to myself?"

At that moment, Brahma—the highest god of ancient Indian religion—perceived the Buddha's thoughts and lamented, "Oh no! This world will perish! If someone who has awakened to the true Dharma does not teach it, this world will be lost." Brahma then appeared before the Buddha and pleaded with him to teach the Dharma.

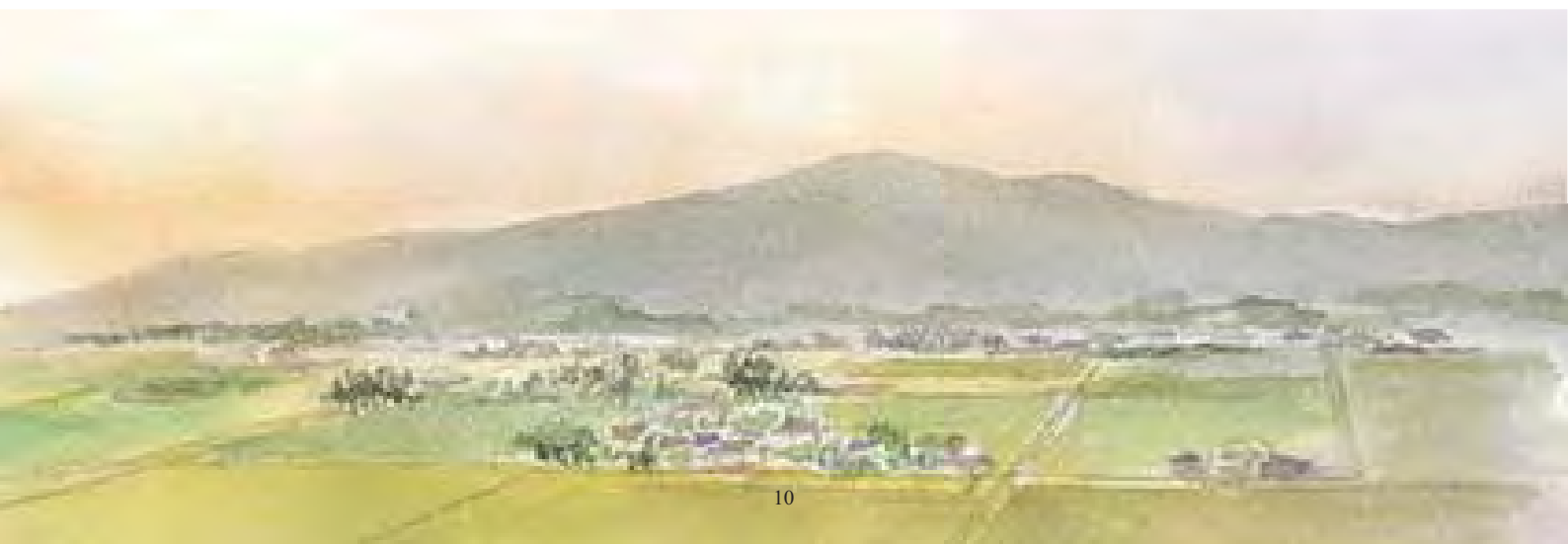
This story is found in one of the early Buddhist scriptures known as the Agama Sutra, but there is a similar episode in the Lotus Sutra's "The Parable of the Conjured City" chapter, in which the Brahma kings' entreaty of the Tathagata Universal Surpassing Wisdom to teach the Dharma is described as follows:

"Then, having extolled the buddha in verse, each of the Brahma heavenly kings said, 'Please, World-Honored One, roll the Wheel of the Dharma, liberate living beings, and open the Way to nirvana.'"

I should add that the words Brahma spoke to Shakyamuni Buddha in the Agama Sutra—"If the true Dharma is not taught, this world will perish"—seem to also apply to the fate of humanity as we move into the twenty-first century. If people throughout the world do not take the teachings of the Buddha—at the very least, his tenet "be content with few desires"—to heart and put them into practice, humanity will walk the path to extinction.

I want everyone at Rissho Kosei-kai to recognize that you have been entrusted with a profound mission and devote yourselves to spreading the teachings with great passion. This, I firmly believe, is the bodhisattva path that aligns with the Buddha's compassionate wish to liberate all sentient beings.

*Bodai no me o okosashimu* (Kosei Publishing, 2018), pp. 81–83





# Director's Column

## What It Means to Understand the Lotus Sutra

Rev. Keiichi Akagawa  
Director, Rissho Kosei-kai International

Hello, everyone. It has been extremely hot every day in Japan. Summers in Japan are humid, and even though this is the same every year, it is still hard to stay in good health during this season. I hope you are all doing well.

In this month's message, President Niwano quotes the words of Professor Ko Hirasawa, who stated, "Education is the study of how to give praise to others" and "the most important thing is . . . to instill in them joy, courage, and hope." The President then teaches us that "praising [people] means believing in their buddha nature."

As I read this passage, I recalled the words of Founder Niwano, who once said in a Dharma talk, "To liberate someone is to give them peace of mind and hope." Recalling this definition of liberation made me realize once again that for spiritual growth, we must have the spiritual pillars of joy, courage, peace of mind, and hope that encourage us to strive for improvement.

The Founder used to encourage us during his lifetime by saying, "Becoming someone who can skillfully connect with others is what it means to truly understand the Lotus Sutra." How can we view each encounter in our daily lives as "an opportunity to raise people with compassionate hearts"? I want to keep asking myself this question, and this month as usual, I will devote myself wholeheartedly to every encounter before me, earnestly striving in the spirit that wherever I am is the place of practice.



*Rev. Akagawa (middle row, far left) and staff members of Rissho Kosei-kai International (RKI) welcome Mrs. Yoshiko Murakami (middle row, center), head of Rissho Kosei-kai of Chicago, and her family and friends at the RKI office in Tokyo.*



# Donate-a-Meal Movement

## Let Your Heart Rejoice

### Voices from the Field and Project Implementation

**Project Area:** Eradicating Poverty and Hunger

**Project Name:** Promotion of Primary Education (School Feeding/Nutrition Program)

**Project Location:** Myanmar

**Implementing Organization:** United Nations World Food Programme Association (UN WFP Association)

**Project Overview:**

In Myanmar, approximately 37.5 percent of the population lives in poverty. Malnutrition among children and regional disparities in education are serious issues. While the primary school enrollment rate is 83 percent, fewer than half those students proceed to secondary education with a particularly high dropout rate among girls. To address these challenges, WFP provides nutritious school meals to preschool and primary school children. The aim is to improve their nutritional status and increase school enrollment rates. This initiative also promotes interaction among parents and community members and raises awareness about food and hygiene.

#### Voices from Beneficiaries and Those Engaged in the Project

**Mr. U. David [pseudonym]** (Program Support Staff, Chair of the Early Child Development [ECD] Committee):

“Before the school feeding/nutrition program, parents who were IDPs [internally displaced persons], including me, had difficulty preparing nutritious meals due to lack of income and limited access to food. Some children could not attend school regularly.

After the program started, children became happier and developed better hygiene and handwashing habits. Parents also gained knowledge about cleanliness and nutrition.

Thank you very much to all donors for giving this important support to our children, especially during such a challenging time.”

*Since the military regime took power in February 2021, conflicts have erupted across Myanmar, putting the lives of citizens at risk. Due to the danger to children’s lives, it is difficult to share photos of the beneficiaries.*

**Project Area:** Eradicating Poverty and Hunger

**Project Name:** Nutrition Improvement through Home Gardening

**Project Location:** Honduras

**Implementing Organization:** AMDA Multisectoral & Integrated Development Services, (AMDA-MINDS)

**Project Overview:**

In Honduras, 15 percent of the population lives below the international poverty line, leading to severe malnutrition. Conversely, obesity is also on the rise due to the excessive intake of sugar and fats and a lack of fruits and vegetables. About 23 percent of the population suffers from high blood pressure, and around 7 percent has diabetes. To address these challenges, this project supported home and school gardening initiatives in highly impoverished areas to promote balanced diets through the cultivation of fruits and vegetables.

#### Voices from Beneficiaries and Those Engaged in the Project

**Mr. Alejandro Briceño** (a second-year junior high school student):

“I’m very happy to have taken part in this project. It was my first experience creating ridges for planting and eating vegetables we grew ourselves using natural farming methods. I really enjoyed working together with my teacher and classmates. Thank you so much!”



Mr. Alejandro Briceño





**Project Area:** Education and Human Capacity Development

**Project Name:** Community Resilience Enhancement Project for Vulnerable Groups Affected by Conflict in the Dimbelenge Region

**Implementing Organization:** Terra Renaissance

**Project Location:** Democratic Republic of the Congo

**Project Overview:** This project in Dimbelenge, a region in Kasai-Central province heavily impacted by conflict since 2016, aimed to protect the lives and livelihoods of women and children while enhancing community resilience. Support was provided through improvements to clinics, the revival of commercial activities such as local markets, and the renewal of livelihoods through technical training programs in palm oil and soap production.

### Voices of Beneficiaries and Those Engaged in the Project

**Ms. Kamba Tuakazika:**

“Due to the conflict, I was forced to flee my village with my two young children, a two-year-old and a newborn, becoming an internally displaced person, forced to live under extremely harsh conditions. After that, I managed to find shelter in a village where my brother lived, and we supported each other to survive. However, without stable work or sufficient food, I lost my beloved child to malnutrition. With subsequent support, I learned soap-making skills and now support my family through this work. Even today, conflict persists in neighboring villages, affecting my close friends and acquaintances. I sincerely hope the conflict will end soon and we can live peacefully together again. I deeply appreciate the warm support from Japan and pray for God’s blessings upon all of you.”



Ms. Kamba, working diligently on soap making

**Project Area:** Healthcare, Medical Services, and Welfare

**Project Name:** HIV/AIDS Initiatives and Birth Registration Promotion Project

**Implementing Organization:** Community of Sant’Egidio

**Project Location:** Malawi

**Project Overview:**

At the DREAM Center, a health and medical facility established by the Community of Sant’Egidio, comprehensive free medical care is provided, including blood testing, nutritional improvement, and counseling. This project particularly focuses on the prevention of mother-to-child transmission of HIV, and thanks to its efforts, 99 percent of children are now born HIV-free. Additionally, in cooperation with government authorities, the project also carries out birth registration for children.



Medical Consultations at the Health Center

### Voices of Beneficiaries and Those Engaged in the Project

**Ms. Purser** (DREAM Health Center Expert Client):

“My encounter with the DREAM program began in 2006, when the new center was opened. I visited the center with my child and, during the support process, discovered that I was HIV positive. It was a painful moment, but I was able to begin treatment immediately, and my daughter is now growing up healthy. Her health is my greatest joy, and I am sincerely grateful to everyone involved.

This project gave me not only medical treatment but also hope and a new purpose. After receiving training, I began working as an Expert Client. My role is to share with other women that it is possible to live a full and dignified life while being HIV positive, and to convey the importance of continuous treatment for both mother and child.

This program has given me a new life. My current goal as an Expert Client is to help other women believe that they, too, have a future.”



Ms. Purser



**Project Area:** Emergency Relief and Reconstruction Support

**Implementation Year:** 2024

**Support Recipient 1:** Emergency support focusing on children's nutrition in the Gaza Strip, Palestine.

**Support Organization:** Japan International Volunteer Center (JVC)

**Amount of Support:** 5 million yen (approx. \$33,300)

**Overview of Activities:**

- Conducting health check-ups
- Distributing milk and high-calorie biscuits to prevent malnutrition
- Providing cash assistance

**Support Recipient 2:** Support project for Ukrainian refugees in Krakow, Poland

**Support Organization:** Japan Chernobyl Foundation (JCF)

**Amount of Support:** 3 million yen (approx. \$20,000)

**Overview of Activities:**

- Distributing basic food, daily necessities, and school supplies to mothers and children who have fled to neighboring countries
- Providing support for emergency health check-up expenses

**Support Recipient 3:** Support for internally displaced persons and landmine victims in Myanmar

**Support Organization:** Japan Campaign to Ban Landmines (JCBL)

**Amount of Support:** 1 million yen (approx. \$6,660)

**Overview of Activities:**

- Providing medical services and support for social reintegration of war and landmine victims
- Providing assistance for restoring safe living environments in evacuation sites
- Providing mobile medical services to remote areas, supplying medicines, and distributing supplementary nutritional food for children
- Supporting the creation of educational materials to raise awareness about the dangers of landmines, in response to the increasing number of child victims



A mother giving a nutritional supplement to her child (© Japan International Volunteer Center)



Letters from Ukraine

**Project Area:** Education and Human Capacity Development

**Project Name:** Dream Gift

**Support Recipients:** Ukraine (2024)

**Project Overview:**

This project enables children in Japan to take part in a Donate-a-Meal initiative through which they send heartfelt letters and essential items as gifts to children living under harsh conditions due to conflict. In return, the children who receive these gifts write thank-you letters back to Japan. The project fosters emotional interactions between children and creates opportunities for them to feel a sense of connectedness.

In 2024, children in Ukraine received 1,353 letters from children in Japan, along with 100 tablets purchased through donations as gifts. Many children in Ukraine are currently displaced and living in shelters, unable to attend school regularly due to repeated air raids and power outages. In response to the children's requests, this year's gift was a tablet, enabling access to remote learning. In appreciation, 402 thank-you letters were sent from Ukrainian children to Japan.

**Voices from the Beneficiaries and Those Engaged in the Projects**

**Children in Ukraine:**

"Thank you so much for giving us these tablets. Please don't forget about us."

"We used to study on old computers, but thanks to these new tablets, doing homework has become easier, and now we can attend online classes."

**Children in Japan:**

"I was wondering what I could do to help children suffering around the world, and I'm so glad there's a Dream Gift project."

"Since joining Dream Gift, when I see news about Ukraine on TV, I feel like my donation is being sent there, and even though it was a distant country before, it now feels closer to me."



A letter from Japan

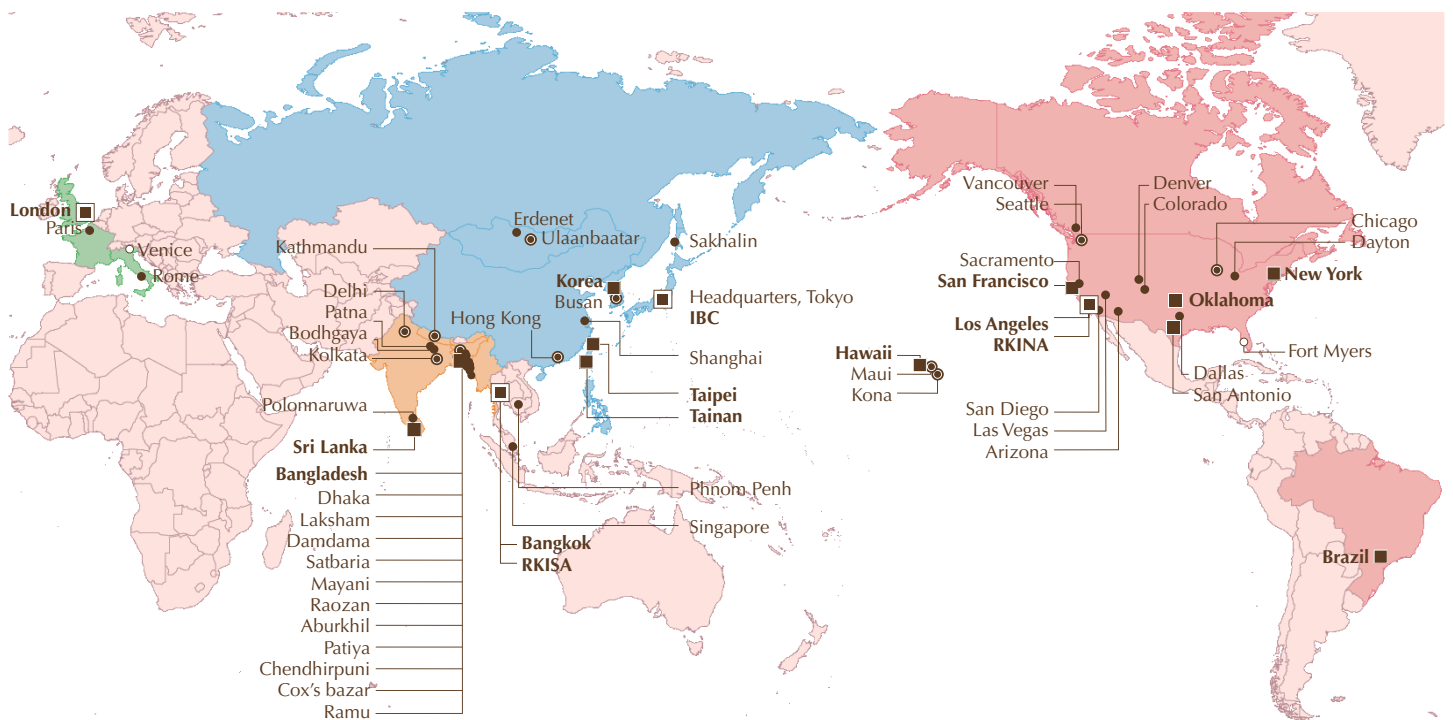


Children receiving their gifts





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local Dharma centers



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