



UNHCR
The UN Refugee Agency

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Learn and Support Afghan Refugees -- Girl Scouts of Japan and Scout Association of Japan (Boy Scouts) collaborate to support refugee activities to mark the World Refugee Day

Tokyo, Monday 28 May (UNHCR) - On 26 May, Girl Scouts of Japan, Scout Association of Japan (Boy Scouts), and Japan Association for UNHCR reached an agreement to jointly support “UNHCR Project for Afghan refugees” and issued a joint statement.

On the occasion of the World Refugee Day, the two youth associations will mobilize their support base with the local communities to jointly participate in Japan Association for UNHCR’s campaign for Afghan refugees. They will solicit other civil society groups such as the Rotary Club to participate in the local-based collaboration projects.

Saburo Takizawa, UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) Representative in Tokyo states, “It is rewarding to announce today that the Girl Scouts and Boy Scouts agreed to jointly provide support, through Japan Association for UNHCR, to refugees. The Associations’s concerted action is in line with the theme of this year’s World Refugee Day-- Co-existence. I hope this initiative will generate feelings of “empathy”, “sharing” and “leadership” that would help build a society not only to “live together” with refugees but to co-exist. Enhancing local collaboration should increase greater public awareness to the work of the UN Refugee Agency and plight of refugees.

Girl Scouts of Japan has been engaged in the Peace Pack Project since its launch at the 28th World Conference in Denmark in 1993 as a joint project with UNHCR. From 1994 to 2003, more than 160,000 peace packs containing items as stationeries were sent to Afghan refugees in Pakistan. Monitoring mission to Pakistan was held 7 times. It is assumed that the value of the total contributions amounts more than 400 million yen. Since 2005, the Peace Pack Project has been helping Myanmarrese refugees in Thailand.

The Scout Association of Japan (Boy Scouts) is celebrating its 100th year of the World Scout Movement. In 1997, Boy Scouts organized a nation-wide fundraising campaign. In that year alone, the Association raised about 8.2 million yen to support UNHCR. Back in 1995, at the 18th World Jamboree in the Netherlands, Mrs. Sadako Ogata, then the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, and the Secretary General of the World Scout Movement signed a memorandum of understanding which stipulated collaborations of two organizations.



As a kick-start, on Sunday, 17 June, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, and Rotarians in Musashimurayama-city, Tokyo, will jointly organize a fundraising activity. Donations collected by their collaborated effort will be earmarked for "UNHCR project for Afghan refugees" and be donated to the Japan Association for UNHCR. For any collaborative efforts thereafter, the two youth Associations, in consultation with Japan Association for UNHCR, will decide how best to use contributions in support of refugee programmes.

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