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Photo credit: Alliance of Friends for Medical-care in East Timor (AFMET)

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The Ajinomoto Group is working to solve issues in the field of food and nutrition in communities and implement a variety of initiatives around the world.

### Vietnam School Meal Project

Since fiscal 2012, Ajinomoto Vietnam Co., Ltd. has been promoting the School Meal Project in Vietnam as part of efforts to leverage leading Japanese expertise particularly in child nutrition policies concerning school meals.

Many regions in Vietnam are still unable to provide school lunches. Even urban elementary schools providing school meals have difficulties developing nutritious lunch menus. This stems from the lack of adequate knowledge regarding nutrition among school lunch staff and the lack of a comprehensive national policy for dieticians. There is also inadequate awareness of the importance of the daily diet even among teachers and parents.

Ajinomoto Vietnam Co., Ltd. launched a medium-term project in partnership with Vietnam’s Ministry of Education and Training, Ministry of Health, its affiliate the National Institute of Nutrition (NIN), and local governments, believing that the Japanese school meal system could be applied to address these issues.

In the first year, fiscal 2012, ideas were exchanged with school principals, school lunch staff, health personnel, and parents in the cities of Ho Chi Minh and Da Nang to develop and introduce pilot school lunch menus that are delicious and nutritionally balanced. In fiscal 2013, menu books that reflect these two regions’ distinctive food culture were developed to standardize menus, and nutrition-related educational materials were provided for children to use during a daily, pre-lunch food education period. From fiscal 2014, these initiatives are being expanded to northern Vietnam, while development of a software system for designing nutritionally balanced menus has also been underway.

In fiscal 2015, with the formal decision by Vietnam’s Ministry of Education and Training to deploy this project nationwide, Ajinomoto Vietnam Co., Ltd. began distributing its nutrition software system to some provinces in October 2016, and will continue conducting outreach programs to make nutritionally balanced school lunches available across Vietnam.

### Key steps of the project

1. Standardize elementary school lunch menus in major cities
2. Develop kitchen models to improve school cooking facilities
3. Develop and distribute nationwide menu-design software with nutrients calculation function

### Initiatives at major cities hosting the project in fiscal 2015

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>City</th>
<th>Initiatives</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Hai Phong  | - Held project meetings with school principals, vice principals and city councils in 14 districts to finalize menus  
             - Distributed menu books to schools under the project |
| Hanoi      | - Held project meetings to gather feedback from the two local governments of the pilot schools and stakeholders  
             - Distributed trial menu books to schools under the project |
| Da Nang    | - Held cooking seminar for lunch staff who cannot properly prepare the project menus |
| Ho Chi Minh| - Increased the school lunch budget in several schools to improve the project menu adoption rate |
The Ajinomoto Group has launched the Vietnam Nutrition System Establishment Project (VNEP) in 2011 in an effort to expand nutrition-related programs and education in Vietnam. The project emerged from joint research conducted by the National Institute of Nutrition (NIN) and the Institute for Innovation of Ajinomoto Co., Inc. in 2009.

Until now, there has been no education system for training dieticians in Vietnam or even a certification system for dieticians. In August 2012, Ajinomoto Co., Inc. and Ajinomoto Vietnam Co., Ltd. signed an agreement with Hanoi Medical University and NIN to train dieticians as part of VNEP. The Nutrition and Dietetics Laboratory was established at the Hanoi Medical University in October that year with funding from the Ajinomoto Group. In November, Vietnam’s Ministry of Education and Training approved the country’s first four-year nutrition bachelor course for dietitian at Hanoi Medical University. There were 47 students in the inaugural class in September 2013, and then 36 and 63 students for the next consecutive years. Ajinomoto Vietnam Co., Ltd. granted full-year scholarships to 10 students each in 2013 and 2014 and to 14 students in 2015 with the top scores in the entrance exam for the program. Ajinomoto Co., Inc. and Ajinomoto Vietnam Co., Ltd. have been assisting the development of the undergraduate program curriculum and course materials for a professional program, as well as conducting lectures on nutrition physiology at the professional program. It provided an opportunity to deepen their understanding of Japan’s nutritional system and the Ajinomoto Group’s research in the field of amino acids and nutrients, as well as to think of future activities and initiatives related to nutrition in Vietnam.

The most important task going forward is the creation of a system enabling program graduates to become active members of society as dietitians. First, a regulation specifying the status of dietitians (job code) was passed in October 2015 and put into effect in November by the Vietnamese government through the Group’s efforts. This laid the foundation for dietitians to serve as public officials. The second step is to create the necessary working standards in preparation for when these students become dietitians after graduation. To achieve this, the Group conducted trainings in Japan in 2015 for eight nutrition-related officials from Vietnam, as well as trainings and workshops in the three major cities (Hanoi, Hue and Ho Chi Minh) in Vietnam, using the International Promotion of Japan’s Healthcare Technologies and Services under the Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare. In the Vietnam training, workshops were held for many nutrition-related personnel to explain the educational system for training dieticians, provide the latest information regarding the job code, and present Japan’s nutritional system.

These initiatives are expected to improve the nutritional environment at hospitals and schools, among others, since the educational and legal systems are established to foster expert dietitians who will be involved in their nutritional management. In the future, the Group aims to establish various systems to help make working as a dietitian easier, through expanding the dietician training system and job code across Vietnam and creating nutrition standards, guidelines, licensing system, etc., that serve as specific occupational guiding principles for nutritionists.

1 In cooperation with the Japan Dietetic Association (JDA), Jumonji University, and the Kanagawa University of Human Services (KUHS)
2 Operated by the Japan International Cooperation Agency, this project promotes private-sector technology to facilitate social and economic development in developing countries.
3 In cooperation with NIN, JDA, KPU, Bach Mai Hospital, Hue University of Medicine and Pharmacy, Ho Chi Minh City Medicine and Pharmacy University, and Ho Chi Minh City Nutrition Center

Ajinomoto Group Sustainability Data Book 2016
AIN program: Nutritional improvement in developing countries

As a group of companies that contributes to human health globally, the Ajinomoto Group considers the improvement of nutrition in developing countries an important mission.

From 1999 until 2016, the AIN program has supported 79 projects in 14 countries, led by local people and rooted to the native environment and their food culture. The number of beneficiaries has reached 140,000 people, with a total of 310 million yen in assistance (As of August 31, 2016).

The Ajinomoto Group provides financial assistance and advice for improving nutrition to NGOs and NPOs around the world and to governmental and educational institutions. Every year, proposals that aim to improve food and nutrition are solicited by the program; the projects are selected based on investigations by experts and onsite inspections by employees of the Ajinomoto Group.

Improving nutrition is explicitly given as an important issue in the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which were adopted as the 2030 goals by the UN General Assembly in September 2015. Through food and nutrition in its initiatives, the AIN program also contributes to increasing women and minority empowerment and education. With the SDGs, the AIN program will further evolve as an international cooperation initiative for creating a healthy society through nutritional improvements.

Improved meals from AIN supported projects

Lima, Peru: Dish fortified with iron by adding a finely diced ingredient made with solidified animal blood to prevent anemia

Bangladesh: Beta-carotene rich vegetable cut into pieces and added for vitamin and mineral supplementation in making baby food

Cusco, Peru: A high-protein, low-calorie salad using tarwi (beans from the Lupinus species), a local ingredient passed on from the Inca Empire, and yuyucha (freshwater algae)

Myanmar: Menu rich in vegetables and protein. Reduces salt by further improving the umami flavor

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

Goal 2: End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition, and promote sustainable agriculture

The AIN program is also linked to many of the other goals (such as goals 3, 4, 5, 6 and 17).
Projects supported in fiscal 2015 and 2016 (as of August 31, 2016)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FY implemented</th>
<th>Period (in years)</th>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Project name</th>
<th>Implementing organization</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Cambodia</td>
<td>Project for improving children’s nutrition condition, achieving self-support of foodstuff and expanding preschool education by providing lunch at nursery (Kandal Province)</td>
<td>Caring for Young Refugees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Vietnam</td>
<td>Integrated Management of Acute Malnutrition in Ethnic Minority Areas (Quang Nga Province)</td>
<td>Plan Japan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Bangladesh</td>
<td>Development of School Meal Project with local people’s participation in collaboration of 2 districts in Bangladesh (Jessore District, Panchagarh District)</td>
<td>Japan Bangladesh Cultural Exchange Association (JBCEA)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Peru</td>
<td>Promoting healthy living for low-income families in Cusco (Cusco City)</td>
<td>Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) Japan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Malaysia</td>
<td>Improvement of the women’s lives in fishing community through food processing (Penang State)</td>
<td>PARC Interpeople’s Cooperation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Cambodia</td>
<td>Improvements in nutrition and health by canteen and nutritious training for the ultra poor (Siem Reap Province)</td>
<td>International NGO Kamohashi Project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Vietnam</td>
<td>Project to support educational activities for mothers to improve the quality of complementary food in rural areas (Hau Giang Province, Thai Nguyen Province)</td>
<td>International Life Sciences Institute Japan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Bangladesh</td>
<td>Nutrition initiative: Nobo Koli (Fulbaria)</td>
<td>Vision World Japan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Myanmar</td>
<td>Project of food processing for better nutrition (Pa’O ethnic group, Southern Shan State)</td>
<td>Terra People ACT Kanagawa/TPAK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>East Timor</td>
<td>Comprehensive program on nutrition and food for young mothers to improve the health situation of their malnourished children (Ilorim Subdistrict, Lautem District)</td>
<td>Alliance of Friends for Medical-care in East Timor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Cambodia</td>
<td>Nutrition improvement for families and community development by empowering mothers in the poor areas (Phnom Penh City)</td>
<td>Japan Lay Missionary Movement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>China</td>
<td>New Efficient Food for Desert — Development &amp; Extension of Mascovy Duck (Alashan, Inner Mongolia)</td>
<td>OISCA Japan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>India</td>
<td>Nutrition improvement project of poor village through school lunch (Sujata Village, Gaya District, Bihar State)</td>
<td>Team Peace Challenger</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Bangladesh</td>
<td>Child Nutrition Improvement Project in Salt Affected Area in Bangladesh (Bagerhat District, Khulna Division)</td>
<td>Alliance Forum Foundation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Bangladesh</td>
<td>Adolescent nutrition and helth promotion project (Jessore District)</td>
<td>Asia Arsenic Network</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Myanmar</td>
<td>Nutrition improvement for children under five years old by promoting vegetable gardening and small-scale livestock farming (Ayeyarwady Region)</td>
<td>CWS Japan</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

AIN program case reports

Bangladesh

Collaborative development of school meal with local people

Organization: Japan Bangladesh Cultural Exchange Association (JBCEA)
Project site: Sharsha, Jessore District
Assistance period: 2013-2015

Purpose
Building a sustainable model for the school meal project through community participation

Major accomplishments
Launched a school meal model that uses nutritionally balanced meals with soybeans and can be independently operated by local people

Success factor
Came up with a self-supporting operation together with the local people, and formed an executive committee composed of local people

Number of beneficiaries
Around 2,000

Main activities
- Building a model for the school meal project that is independently operated by local people, and providing well-balanced lunch meals to school children
- Organizing and guiding the school meal executive committee
- Workshop to raise awareness in potential committee members
- Creating a school vegetable garden and growing food for the school meal by children and teachers

In the future
Developing a school meal operations manual in preparation for promoting the school meal project model
### Myanmar

#### Project of food processing for better nutrition in Myanmar

**Organization:** Terra People ACT Kanagawa/TPAK  
**Project site:** Hti Ham Swe Village, Sengu Village, and surrounding area, Taunggyi Township, Southern Shan State  
**Assistance period:** 2014-2015

**Purpose**

Acquisition of food processing technology by villagers that will lead to better nutrition using preserved foods from the harvest during winter and off season. Improving income and enabling a steady lifestyle by creating a market for processed goods.

**Major accomplishments**

With the construction of a food processing center, a venue was provided for learning food processing technology and marketing through trainings (domestic and overseas), while clearly assessing local health issues, which paved the way for the production and sales of processed foods.

**Success factor**

By placing villagers at the center of activities and establishing a village committee, an autonomous organization that can sustainably improve nutrition in the area was created.

**Number of beneficiaries**

Around 1,000

**Main activities**

- Establishment of a processed food development committee, conducting surveys of health issues, constructing the AIN food processing center
- Conducting trainings domestically and in Thailand, and holding training report presentations
- Creation of trial products, marketing research, market development, and sales

**In the future**

To develop new menus for improving nutrition that will lead to better health and increased income in minority areas, and promote the program from the model village to other villages and regions.

### Peru

#### Promoting healthy living for low-income families in Cusco

**Organization:** Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) Japan  
**Project site:** Cusco City, Cusco  
**Assistance period:** 2014-2015

**Purpose**

Promoting healthy nutritional intake among beneficiaries.

**Major accomplishments**

Aside from the reduction of the ratio of overweight or obese from 79.5% to 77.5%, the ratio of persons with 88 cm waistlines or more, which is a risk indicator for lifestyle diseases, greatly decreased from 66% to 41%, and 42% of participants were able to reduce their weight by 3 kg or more.

**Success factor**

To help participants continue with their efforts, mothers participating in the seminar, including their families and neighbors, were made to understand the importance of lifestyle improvements, and were encouraged to conduct the activities in groups.

**Number of beneficiaries**

150 women from low-income families and their families

**Main activities**

- Healthy meal preparation through educational sessions, personal visits and group workshops, and guidance on a reasonable daily exercise
- Monitoring to check BMI, waist measurements, and implementation of exercise and healthy meal preparation

**In the future**

There was active engagement among beneficiaries, with the exchange of healthy recipes, formation of exercise groups, etc., which shows potential for independent development and expansion of such activities in the future.
Activities of the Ajinomoto Group’s Foundations

The Ajinomoto Group has established foundations in four countries that award scholarships and engage in food and nutrition activities tailored to meet the specific needs of each country and region.

### Japan

**Ajinomoto Foundation for Dietary Culture** *(Established in Japan in 1989)*

**Main activities**
- Operates the Dietary Culture Library and open exhibits (color woodblock prints, etc.)
  The library is digitizing its collection of cookbooks, etc. from classical documents and other materials on dietary culture since the Meiji era (mid-19th century), in collaboration with the National Institute of Japanese Literature. Scheduled for public opening from fiscal 2017.
- Holds public symposiums and public lectures
  Held a symposium on the theme of communal dining, in commemoration of the 100th issue of *vesta*, a quarterly magazine on food culture. The ties between people through food were examined from various angles, and the future possibilities in society were explored (October 24, 2015).
- Plans and runs food culture forums (interdisciplinary panel discussions on food culture)
  With the annual theme “from gathering to cultivating,” the path that led to the transformation from a gathering economy to an agrarian economy was traced, and the future issues and direction were discussed (Held three times in June and September 2015, and March 2016).
- Publishes and distributes *vesta*, a quarterly magazine on food culture, and other materials
- Information dissemination through the Internet

**Ajinomoto Scholarship Foundation** *(Established in Japan in 2005; forerunner Suzuki Scholarship Foundation established in 1957)*

**Main activities**
- Grants scholarships to students from five ASEAN countries (Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Thailand, and Vietnam) for a total of three years of study in a master’s course (majoring in one of the sciences, including one year as a research student) at the University of Tokyo.
- Provides student loans for Japanese students taking science programs in upper division classes at the undergraduate level or in graduate school.

### Brazil

**INSTITUTO AJINOMOTO** *(Established in Brazil in 1999)*

**Main activities**
- Supports a sports organization for children with disabilities
- Implements activities to contribute to the local community (donates school supplies to elementary schools, etc.)
Results (as of June 2016)
60 school canteens completed in 53 provinces serving more than 12,500 students

Better Nutrition, Stronger Nation Project

In 2010, the Ajinomoto Foundation in Thailand launched a project to build canteens at 50 schools in five years to mark the 50th anniversary of Ajinomoto Co., (Thailand) Ltd. The project completed 50 school canteens in 43 provinces by 2014 serving more than 10,000 students. In 2015, the project was extended for five years through a basic agreement reached with Thailand’s Ministry of Education to support the construction of 50 more school canteens by the end of fiscal 2019. Ten new canteens serving more than 2,500 students in 10 provinces were completed in fiscal 2015. In addition, nutritional education will be provided to elementary school teachers and lunch staff in these new school canteens in fiscal 2016.

Peru

Fundación Ajinomoto para el Desarrollo de la Comunidad
(Established in Peru in 2003)
Main activities
- Supports project to prevent anemia and malnutrition
- Trains schoolchildren to become role models and active promoters of healthy food habits at their schools
- Holds health and nutrition workshops and lectures (72 events in fiscal 2015, with 2,685 participants in total)
- Provides economic support (scholarships) for students majoring in dietetics
- Sponsors the “Ajinomoto Foundation Prize” (a contest to promote bibliographic research among university students)

Thailand

Ajinomoto Foundation (Established in Thailand in 1976)
Main activities
- Administers support for a building educational facilities at a camp for university student volunteers
- Provides support (scholarships) for students majoring in science, technology and engineering
- Promotes employee volunteer projects (providing lunch to children of low-income households)
- Provides support to people in the colder regions of north and northeast Thailand (provided 2,500 coats and 5,000 blankets to students in 2 provinces)
Support for Areas Struck by Natural Disaster

Natural disasters are a tragic part of life in every part of the world, and local communities damaged in disasters need help with reconstruction. The Ajinomoto Group uses the expertise gained through its food and healthcare businesses to provide support for each area’s particular needs.

### Ajinomoto Group’s emergency assistance

#### Disasters in Japan (activities until end of July 2016)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Recipient</th>
<th>Aid amount</th>
<th>Relief goods</th>
<th>Quantity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kanto and Tohoku torrential rains of September 2015</td>
<td>(for disaster victims) NPO in disaster relief RESCUE STOuard</td>
<td>Ajinomoto KK Okayu (shirogayu)</td>
<td>13,608 packs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>amino VITAL® Jelly Multi-energy</td>
<td>5,000 packs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>AQUASOLITA® 500 ml</td>
<td>24,000 bottles</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(for relief supporters) Japan Ground Self-Defense Force, Tokyo Fire Department, police</td>
<td>amino VITAL® Gold</td>
<td>10,350 packs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>amino VITAL® Perfect Energy</td>
<td>10,350 packs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japan Platform</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2016 Kumamoto Earthquake Disaster Donation, Japanese Red Cross Society</td>
<td>20 million yen</td>
<td>–</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>–</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Kumamoto City Hall</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Japan Ground Self-Defense Force, Kumamoto Fire Department, Kumamoto Prefectural Police</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Disasters outside Japan (activities until end of July 2016)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Recipient</th>
<th>Aid amount</th>
<th>Relief goods</th>
<th>Quantity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nepal Earthquake</td>
<td></td>
<td>1 million yen</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Floods in South Indian state of Tamil Nadu (state capital Chennai)</td>
<td>Recovery relief aid to schools in neighboring areas</td>
<td>492,067 Indian rupees</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reconstruction fund, Tamil Nadu state governor</td>
<td>147,566 Indian rupees</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Both aids are provided through Japan Platform.

### TOPICS

**AJINOMOTO GENERAL FOODS, INC. provides coffee to shelters and other areas**

From May to July 2016, AJINOMOTO GENERAL FOODS, INC. provided around 3,000 cups of coffee, among others, to nine evacuation and community centers.

Notably, the Blue Express* visited the Mifune Sports Center on July 3 (Sunday) with 250 evacuees and the Mashiki Town Sports Gymnasium on July 9 (Saturday) with 890 evacuees, and provided coffee and Japanese sweets to the evacuees.

The heartwarming coffee was well received, with 540 and 590 cups served in the towns of Mifune and Mashiki respectively.

*A touring van used in a campaign to promote coffee culture in the Kyushu area
Ajinomoto Group’s initiatives for Great East Japan Earthquake reconstruction


The Ajinomoto Group donates a portion of the proceeds from certain products to aid reconstruction in areas that were affected by the Great East Japan Earthquake.

“Joy of Food” project

Ajinomoto Co., Inc. have been implementing the “Joy of Food” project since fiscal 2011, which gives customers the opportunity to support reconstruction in Tohoku by purchasing food products.

Go Tohoku! Cultivate for Tomorrow Project

Since fiscal 2011, Ajinomoto Frozen Foods Co., Inc. has been conducting a project that donates one yen from the sale of each package of frozen Gyoza Chinese dumplings (four varieties) to organizations assisting agricultural revitalization in the Tohoku region.

AGF Blendy Utsuwa no Kizuna Project

AJINOMOTO GENERAL FOODS, INC. donated a portion of the proceeds from sales of Blendy® instant coffee to assist the pottery industry in Tohoku with needed repairs. Since its launch in 2012, the focus of the project has shifted in 2014 from repairs into efforts aimed at reviving the pottery industry in Tohoku.

France: Ajinomoto Europe S.A.S.

Rice ball workshop to forge ties between Paris and the areas affected by the Tohoku earthquake

Ajinomoto Europe S.A.S. has been supporting the hardest-hit areas through food since 2011. This year, to forge ties between Paris and the areas affected by the earthquake, a rice ball workshop was held for visiting families at the Jardin d’Acclimatation, which was created to present the world’s trees and animals during the world’s fair.

Of the roughly 60 people who participated with their families on the day of the workshop, many participants have never seen Japanese rice before and children did not know anything about Japan. During the demonstration, most were amazed at how easily the balls of rice could be formed. Both the young and old had fun helping each other make rice balls, while also learning of the plight of children in Tohoku. Starting with regular rice balls, they were soon shaping them into popular characters after a little practice, until finally packing them into bento boxes to take home. They also left heartfelt and encouraging messages from France to the children in the disaster areas. The workshop was attended by Mr. Endo, the head of the association of people from Fukushima Prefecture, who acted as coach and teacher for rice ball making.
Since October 2011, the Red Apron Project is Ajinomoto Group’s ongoing initiative to support reconstruction after the Great East Japan Earthquake. Cooking classes held at temporary housing assembly halls and other activities are conducted in the three prefectures of Iwate, Miyagi and Fukushima, in collaboration with local governments, social welfare councils, diet improvement promotion councils, NPOs, universities, and temporary housing community councils.

**Project beginnings**

In July 2011, Ajinomoto Co., Inc. appointed a dedicated project supervisor to work in the disaster-stricken areas. The region’s food and nutrition issues were brought out by interviews with officials from local governments, social welfare councils, universities, and NPOs, among others. One issue was the emerging health problems caused by unbalanced diets, which was partially due to people tending to cook less in the temporary housing’s small kitchens. In the new communities formed by the temporary housing, social interactions between residents were also weak, and many of the elderly tended to feel isolated and withdraw from others.

The Ajinomoto Group devised a plan to help with the local resident’s nutritional problems, as well as help build new communities, by “cooking together and eating together” well-balanced meals.

Mobile cooking classes started in October 2011 organized by the local governments, social welfare councils, diet improvement promotion councils, NPOs, universities, and temporary housing community councils, with the Group providing expertise such as nutritious recipes, the mobile kitchen, and other equipment.

**Partner-led collaborative activities**

1. Make cooking groups participatory

   One aim of this project is to connect participants through cooking to help rebuild communities. The experience of cooking together is just as important as eating together in deepening relationships. And for the Tohoku region where salt intake is high, low salt menus are provided to aid in maintaining health.

2. Make collaborative partners the organizers of the cooking class

   This strategy was taken so that by providing the gathering place and guiding people, the people helping with the community’s social problems, such as local governments, NPOs, social welfare councils, diet improvement promotion councils, and temporary housing community councils, form stronger bonds with the local people. In contrast, with a single corporate organizer, the initiative may turn into a one-off event that is difficult to sustain. These people helping with the community’s social problems are designated as “collaborative partners.”

3. Make collaborative partners decide on the theme of the cooking class

   The themes of the cooking classes in the project vary according to each area’s challenges. If social withdrawal of men is a serious issue, for example, then a cooking class for men is held. The collaborative partners decide on such themes, since they know more than anybody else the issues facing each area and can carry out the activities in consultation with the community.
1. Human connections
Through this project, the Ajinomoto Group was able to meet the people in social welfare councils and diet improvement promotion councils. These people have been working closely with the community on social and nutritional issues since before the earthquake. By meeting them through the project, the Group has learned about the social issues in each community and what the Group can do to help with these issues.

One of the lessons learned is that corporate contribution to society does not necessarily have to be money or goods. Rather, corporations need to consider the social issues at the community level from such people's perspective, before suggesting solutions that leverage the core business and expertise of the company.

For Ajinomoto Group, this translates to food and nutrition, which led to the proposal of a mobile cooking class—the heart of this project.

2. Learning opportunity for employees
For Group employees donating their time as volunteers, supporting the affected areas through food and nutrition is a source of renewed pride as a member of the Ajinomoto Group.

Many of those who volunteered said that they experienced first-hand how food is the basis of life. Researchers, finance department staff and other employees who usually do not have the chance to interact with consumers also said, “Hearing words of gratitude from the people in affected areas made me think about my own purpose as a member of a food company.”

The project is a great opportunity for employees to experience Ajinomoto Group’s mission to “contribute to the world’s food and wellness, and to better lives for the future.”

3. Sharing expertise by publishing book
The project published a book titled “Fukko-Gohan (food during the reconstruction period)” in May 2016 through SHOGAKUKAN Inc. The book conveys the restorative “power of food” in this period of recovery from the disaster, through the voices of people in Tohoku who worked together with the Group as collaborative partners.

![Project achievements](image)

- **Total participants**: 32,010
- **Events conducted**: 2,085
- **Places conducted**: 47 municipalities in 3 prefectures
- **Partners in the local community**: Together with around 300 people
- **Employees donating their own time**: 1,951

As of August 31, 2016

Website for the book “Fukko-Gohan” (on the SHOGAKUKAN website)
https://shogakukan.co.jp/books/09388485 (Japanese)

Support for Areas Struck by Natural Disaster

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**Scope of activities**

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- **Events conducted**: 2,085
- **Places conducted**: 47 municipalities in 3 prefectures
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Support for Areas Struck by Natural Disaster

Report on reconstruction support initiatives and activities co-creating value with each area

In July 21, 2016, Takaaki Nishii, the CEO of Ajinomoto Co., Inc., visited the prefectural offices of Fukushima, Miyagi, and Iwate to report on Ajinomoto Group’s activities supporting Tohoku. He also informed them of the donation to prefectural libraries of the book “Fukko-Gohan (food during the reconstruction period)” edited by Ajinomoto Group’s Red Apron Project, which showcases the power of food.

At Fukushima Prefecture, the CEO Nishii said, “I just participated in the health and nutrition seminar (cooking class) of the Red Apron Project at Koori Town in Fukushima Prefecture. The class became lively as soon as the cooking starts, and by the time everyone ate, the participants were talking freely to each other. The strength of food to make bonds always makes me wonder.” This was the fifth time he had participated in this initiative. Governor Masao Uchibori of Fukushima showed his appreciation by saying, “There is nothing better than food to revive the spirit. Cooking and dining together is one of life’s basic happiness.”

In Miyagi Prefecture, the CEO Nishii reported on activities supporting the recovery of fisheries in collaboration with communities on “Miyagi fishery products day” promoted by the Miyagi Prefectural Government. In Iwate Prefecture, he reported on initiatives such as reducing salt intake on “Low/proper salt day in Iwate” together with the communities.

From the Red Apron Project to the business activities conducted by local Ajinomoto branches, the heads of local governments have deepened understanding and strengthened further cooperation for Group initiatives that promote ASV and co-create value together with society and communities.

Revitalization of industries through marketing, sales and CSR collaboration

As a result of steady efforts on a daily basis by the Red Apron Project, the Ajinomoto Group has earned the trust of its local partners including the government. This trust is transforming into the development of a new business model “solving local issues through core business” in partnership with government.

For example, under the common goal of helping the recovery of Miyagi Prefecture fishing industries with the Miyagi Prefectural Government, the Group had success in the collaborative sales promotion of Miyagi seafood products and Ajinomoto products in retail stores (supporting “local consumption of local production” within Miyagi Prefecture), and in offering menus using Miyagi seafood and Ajinomoto products in office lunches (supporting “outside consumption of local production” in Kawasaki City, Kanagawa Prefecture).

The Group will continue to explore ways of collaborating and to support Tohoku reconstruction through the revitalization of its industries using the Group’s core business.
The Association of Producer Fish Markets in Miyagi Prefecture

Producer fish markets are situated in ports where fishery products are unloaded from the ship. The fishery products procured here are then sent to consumer fish markets, exemplified by Tsukiji market. The association was established in 1974 with the aim of coordinating mutual collaboration, providing stable supply and demand of fishery products, and working for the healthy growth of fish markets.

One yen from the sales of every box of HON-DASHI (3 varieties) shipped from March to May 2015 was donated to the activities of the Association of Producer Fish Markets in Miyagi Prefecture for a total of 9 million yen.

Nutritious recipes using ingredients under the theme of “Miyagi fishery products day” was presented in the Health and Nutrition Seminar held in Miyagi Prefecture.

The Association of Producer Fish Markets in Miyagi Prefecture are engaged in activities geared toward stimulating “local consumption of local production” of fishery products from Miyagi Prefecture, by showing local consumers the rich local marine resources and making them recognize the charm of local areas.

Beginning with Red Apron Project, Ajinomoto Co., Inc. is helping revitalize Miyagi Prefecture’s fishing industry

Donating a portion of sales

One yen from the sales of every box of HON-DASHI (3 varieties) shipped from March to May 2015 was donated to the activities of the Association of Producer Fish Markets in Miyagi Prefecture for a total of 9 million yen.

Collaboration with local supermarkets

Efforts promoting sales of fishery products in partnership with the Miyagi Prefectural Government. The initiative has so far extended to seven companies, promoting silver salmon, Japanese flying squid, etc. around supermarkets in Miyagi Prefecture.

Developing seafood recipes

Nutritious recipes using ingredients under the theme of “Miyagi fishery products day” was presented in the Health and Nutrition Seminar held in Miyagi Prefecture.

The Association of Producer Fish Markets in Miyagi Prefecture

Producer and consumer fish markets in Miyagi Prefecture from the Miyagi Prefecture official website

Producer fish markets
Consumer fish markets
Since May 2016, menus using Miyagi seafood products are offered every month on “Miyagi fishery products day” at the cafeteria in Ajinomoto Co., Inc.’s Kawasaki Administration & Coordination Office. This initiative is carried out by the Commercial Sales Division (3rd Group for Restaurants, Tokyo Branch) of Ajinomoto Co., Inc. Since the office lunch operations are being conducted by a client of the company’s commercial products, Ajinomoto Co., Inc. and its client joined together to support the recovery of Miyagi Prefecture’s fishing industry by offering menus using Miyagi seafood and company products.

Collaboration with local seaside women in Ishinomaki District, Japan Fisheries Cooperative in Miyagi Prefecture

The power of local seaside women from women’s groups in fishery cooperatives, who are active leaders in revitalizing the community around the fishing industry, is indispensable to its recovery. In a trial collaboration with local seaside women, the “Red Apron Project,” together with Miyagi Prefecture, sponsored a Health and Nutrition Seminar organized by the women’s group of Ishinomaki district branch of Japan Fisheries Cooperative in Miyagi Prefecture in September 2015.

Conducting the Health and Nutrition Seminar using seasonal seafood ingredients

Around 20 local residents participated in the nutrition lecture and cooking, using skipjacks in season to go along with “fishery products day.”

Outreach program to prevent locomotive syndrome

To emphasize the importance of eating fish, information on preventing locomotive syndrome was also shared together with the fish menu at the Health and Nutrition Seminar.

Exercise and protein in the diet is important to prevent locomotive syndrome! Tuna, Pacific saury, Japanese horse mackerel, mushrooms, and others, are rich in Vitamin D, which aids in the absorption of protein.