

Japan Saves Refugees, and Refugees Save Japan: The Keyword is Agriculture

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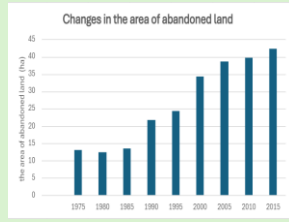
ABSTRACT

The problem of depopulation in Japan is getting more serious, and this is behind the rise in abandoned cultivated lands. On the other hand, the number of refugees has increased remarkably due to conflict, war and political instability all over the world. Therefore, we will consider the measures that will be a benefit for both refugees and Japan at the same time, with a solution centered on agriculture.

BACKGROUND

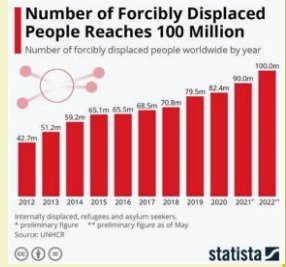
Cultivated abandoned farmland

The area of abandoned land in 2020 is 244,200 hectares. The rise in abandoned land is often attributed to the aging of and a shortage of farmers. Moreover, the number of people who retired farms and keep having their own land has been increased.



Refugees

The number of people forcibly displaced has reached 100 million as of 2022 because of the Palestinian conflict and the invasion of Ukraine. Although there are refugees who can go home, this is a very rare case. Many developing countries are not actively accepting refugees escaping conflict, so many people are struggling to live their lives.



RESEARCH

Population decline in rural areas is a serious issue. Another problem is the decline in interest in agriculture. Therefore, if refugees could be accepted as a source of labor, it would be a benefit for farming villages and farmers. We interviewed farmers and people from overseas.

[Interview with the Japanese farmers]

Q. How do you feel about accepting refugees?

A. I don't want to accept them.



Farmers
(in Japan)

- I don't want people from overseas to be involved in it easily (because Japanese agriculture produces high quality products)
- I can't afford the salary
- I don't want to learn English

[Interview with the foreign workers in Wakayama Pref.]

Q. Would you like to invite your family to Japan to farm and live with you?

A. 14 out of 15 want to live there. 1 is not sure yet.



Foreigners

- Convenient to live in terms of transportation and environment.
- Live in Safety
- Have good food
- Want to share the beauty with my family

[Result]

There seems to be resistance to accepting or even working with refugees. However, many people from overseas seem to want to live in Japan.

ACTION

Eliminating Japanese prejudice and preconceptions about refugees

① Have foreigners be hosted in the farmer's house and having them help with the farming

➡ They can understand the differences in values that they have and come to accept each other.

② Encourage the farmers who host refugees to interact with other farmers as much as possible so that they can be included in the community

➡ If it becomes commonplace to have people from overseas in the community, there will be less resistance to people from overseas.



With families
With children



In Japan

Spend time in a global environment

Less likely to have prejudices and preconceived notions about people from overseas in the future

CONCLUSION

These days, Japan is getting popular because people all over the world admire its cultural background. The change of the view of not only refugees but also people from other countries will have a positive influence on our lives. In addition, these actions would contribute to achieving several SDGs. That means cooperation with people all over the world now is required deeply. If the system that refugees and countries which accept them gave great advantages for each other, fewer people would suffer from conflict, violence and calamities.

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