

## 15. Case Studies in Social Education Conducive to Japan's Commitment to Tourism

Leader: BABA Yujiro, Director, Practical Social Education Research Center

### (1) Purpose and Aim of Study

By examining and analyzing learning activities designed to promote greater understanding of distinctive regional features including the natural environment, history, and culture; efforts to preserve and perpetuate traditional regional cultures or focus attention on the natural environment by harnessing the results of such learning activities; and social education programs specifically aimed at local volunteer guides, etc., this study compiles and encourages the use of documentation as reference material to assist prefectures and municipalities in planning and operating learning activities conducive to Japan's commitment to tourism.

### (2) Outline of Research Results

- This study classified and examined social education programs operated by prefectures, municipalities, and social education facilities or groups, where the learning activities were designed to promote greater understanding of distinctive regional features including the natural environment, history, and culture. It also looked at programs involving distinctive local efforts to harness the results of such learning activities. These matters were examined from the perspectives outlined below.

i) Learning activities designed to promote greater understanding of the local region

When local residents learn about the environmental, historical, and cultural features of the area they live in, such learning can give them a greater understanding of the attractions of their region and foster pride in and attachment to the local area.

ii) Social contribution activities making use of learning outcomes

When local residents make use of learning outcomes in the community, it strengthens their sense of belonging to that community and helps to promote resident-driven urban development and regional revitalization, enabling the development of a more attractive region.

iii) Contribution of social education activities to regional development

Through cooperative efforts making use of local features, social education facilities and related organizations or groups can conduct a wide range of activities. As well as helping to revitalize the region, this can create an effective impression for visitors on an ongoing basis.

iv) Activities to preserve and perpetuate traditional local culture

By communicating their efforts outside the region, activities to preserve and perpetuate traditional local culture can not only create stronger ties among local residents and strengthen their pride in and attachment to their region, but also raise residents' awareness of such preservation and perpetuation initiatives and enhance the attractiveness of the region and its allure for visitors.

v) Activities to focus attention on the local natural environment

Encouraging residents and visitors to take a leading role in considering a region's natural environment and creating forums for further learning, and harnessing the results of such activities, can make people aware of the importance of the local environment, reinforce their attachment to the area, and create a strong impression of the region's attractions.

- The practical social education programs considered by the study include examples that could generate a diverse range of results and effects conducive to Japan's commitment to tourism. The study identifies the characteristics of leading examples and indicates direction for further development.
- Rather than plans for special one-off projects that focus on bringing people in from outside the region, most of the examples feature plans that focus on doing something for the residents of the region.
- The leading examples are based on the concept of utilizing the region's various existing learning resources to maximum effect and developing them further.
- Apart from exceptional long-term projects, the programs are all based on three to five year plans.
- Rather than relying solely on government funding, those involved in the programs actively cooperate to source external finance.