

# Sustainable Development Goals learning from Mount Hakusan Biosphere Reserve



**Educating the Youth towards Sustainable Future**



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## Purpose of this manual

To act towards the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), it is crucial the enrolment of the higher institutions, as they play main role in national development, and they are main educational force to raise the awareness about the social, economic and environmental issues. Also, SDGs are covering particular range of subjects like, agriculture, health, energy, industry, infrastructure, etc, and educational institutions can significantly contribute weather in research, teaching or community engagement. It is the main role of the academic institutions to develop a training course where students can acquire integrative knowledge and monitor how different socio-economical and environmental sectors depend on each other, and function in an integrative manner. It is important to provide the opportunity for the students to directly collaborate with communities and to address local issues, to monitor the sources of those issues and how the issues of one country are similar with other countries.

However, educators are facing many challenges while applying the SDGs into the curriculum, as there is no concrete methodology for their applications. Due to the big amount of goals, it is hard to grasp all of them in one curriculum, and also it is very hard to divide those goals for particular course, as they are very connected with each other. Another challenge is to implement those goals at the regional level, which sometime can appear that not all goals are relevant to the regional issues. Saying more, not all environmental, social or economic issues are solely about sustainability and its goals, as they are rather issues related to the human-nature interrelationship, cultural identities and basic human values. Achievement of the SDGs requires the bottom-up approach, and in terms of educational implications, it is very much depends on how well the educators are familiar with the diverse and profound concept of sustainability itself.

In our project we decide to create a new methodological approach, through the practical implementation of the SDGs inside the rural areas, and raise awareness in youth towards the social, economic and environment issues. This manual describes the curriculum, conducted by Kanazawa University in Mount Hakusan Biosphere Reserves (BRs), as main function of BRs is to provide the educational platform towards the sustainable development. To raise the awareness towards the SDGs, fieldwork activities were performed through the community-service activities and participatory approaches during summer and winter seasons. Evaluation of all 17 SDGs in Shiramine were conducted by the students during and after completion of the course.

This booklet was developed as the outcome of our project and we hope that it could be effectively used as the manual for the educators to conduct the fieldwork activities towards the practical implementation of the SDGs inside the Biosphere Reserves.

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# What are Sustainable Development Goals?



In September 2015, during the United Nations Summit in New York, world leaders adopted “The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”. The agenda carries the new goals and motivations for the world to act towards the sustainable, resilient future, protect the planet and ensure prosperity for all. Agenda has 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and 169 targets, which balance the environmental, economic and social dimensions towards the sustainable development on Earth. For the next 15 years, all world leaders must come together to achieve those goals which are critically important for the future development of the humanity.

Unique in its kind, the Agenda covers broad spectrum of development issues and increase the focus on developed countries and their role in achieving SDGs by supporting developing countries. All 17 goals are strongly interconnected and depend on each other’s. In order to achieve environmentally sustainable conditions, we need to achieve the stable social, political and economical conditions, with fair distribution of capital and resources, where each individual will be able to meet their own basic human needs. If the economic growth utilizes the natural capital, but in doing so pollutes the air, soil, and water, then at the end it will damage and impair human’s ability for well-being and reduce quality of life. Rather than producing more in quantity, improving qualitative factors will make the system more sustainable and stable. All forms of capital must be utilized in a way that will not compromise the possibilities for future generations to meet their needs.

## ❖❖ List of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) ❖❖

**Goal 1:** End poverty in all its forms everywhere

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

**Goal 3:** Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages

**Goal 4:** Ensure inclusive and quality education for all and promote lifelong learning

**Goal 5:** Achieve gender equality and empower al women and girls

**Goal 6:** Ensure access to water and sanitation for all

**Goal 7:** Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable, and modern energy for all

**Goal 8:** Promote inclusive and sustainable economic growth, employment and decent work for all

**Goal 9:** Build resilient infrastructure, promote sustainable industrialization and foster innovation

**Goal 10:** Reduce inequality within and among countries

**Goal 11:** Make cities inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable

**Goal 12:** Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns

**Goal 13:** Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts

**Goal 14:** Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources

**Goal 15:** Sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, halt and reverse land degradation, halt biodiversity loss

**Goal 16:** Promote peaceful and inclusive societies

**Goal 17:** Revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development



## What are Biosphere Reserves?

Since the 1970's when the UNESCO's Man and Biosphere (MAB) Programme was launched, it has designated the areas with the significant conservational importance throughout the world as the Biosphere Reserves (BRs). This biosphere reserves were designated as the model regions for the sustainable development, whose inhabitants pursue environmental livelihoods and support the development of the sustainable societies and economies of the regions. In 1984, UNESCO has adopted the Action Plan for Biosphere Reserves, underlining the BRs as "protected areas of representative terrestrial and coastal environments which have been internationally recognized for their value in conservation and in providing the scientific knowledge, skill and human values to support sustainable development". At the begging the idea of BR originated as a tool in the field of the environmental sciences to create the international cooperation for the natural conservation, research and educational activities. However later it evolved to become the trend for the international development. Presently, the purpose of the BR is to promote sustainable socio-economic development of the region by integrating the conservation of biological and cultural diversity, based on the efforts of local communities and stakeholders. BRs has three main functions which were stated in Seville Strategy (UNESCO 1995): *conservation* role with the need of maintaining biological diversity, genetic resources and ecosystems; *development* role with the need to associate the environmental protection with the development governing principle in the fields of socio-cultural and ecological sustainability; *logistic* role with the need to establish international network in the frames of MAB for monitoring, research, education and information exchange. BR are not just protected areas, their main function is to demonstrate the balanced relationship between the people and nature for the sustainable development. According to Madrid Action Plan, Education for Sustainable Development programmes promote BRs as a "learning site of excellence for sustainable development", and BRs created a unique and excellent opportunities to act as a learning sites, in ordered to create and implement the national policies and strategies.

To secure the sustainable development BRs have three main zonation systems; *core*, *buffer* and *transition* zones. *Core zone*: often a national park, that requires the legal national protection with limited human activities. The core zone seeks mainly the biodiversity protection, and it can be entered mainly for the research and monitoring purposes.

*Buffer zone*: Provides the habitat for animals and plant species and influenced by human interaction with nature for the conservation and sustainable development. The surrounding buffer zone allows low-impact activities with ecotourism, environmental education, research activities and functions to protect the core zone from human impact.

*Transition zone*: is the human settlements which contributes for the community-based sustainable environmental and social conservation strategies. Transition zone is the most flexible area with various land utilization activities which is supposed to be implemented with the models for the sustainable economic development in collaboration with local communities and different stakeholders.

In total, the world network for the BRs includes more than 650 BRs in 120 countries. The UNESCO's MAB with its Lima Action Plan (2016-2025) underlines the essential role in the implantation of the 2030 Agenda and SDGs, and BRs can serve a learning sites and role models for the sustainable development. As a result, all UNESCO BRs work towards the SDGs to balance the three dimensions of sustainable development: the economic, social and environmental. This global agenda will be succeed only with the engagement of all stakeholders, citizens, local authorities, BR managers, entrepreneurs and social enterprises. In short, BR serves as the learning platforms for regional, national and international dialog and exchange towards the sustainable development. Being as a model for sustainable development and as a successful learning sites, BR in every region needs to implement many learning and educational processes at the local and global levels. BRs should point out the specific possibilities and directions which will bring to the sustainability-oriented lifestyle, and elucidate the role of local people and stakeholders in motivating, inventing and developing of BRs as a foundation for the sustainability learning sites. Being recognized as a learning site, BR was promoted as ecotourism destination for the sustainable development and local traditional knowledge, culture and field experiences of the community will become the key aspect to promote BRs logistic function.

Another important role of BRs, is that they link the biological and cultural diversity of the region, and connect the areas ecologically important for the preservation of the landscape biodiversity, especially across the borders.

### Biosphere Area Zonation





Mount Hakusan (Photo provided by MHBR Council)

## Mount Hakusan Biosphere Reserve

MHBR is one among nine BRs of Japan. It is located on the central part of Japanese archipelago, latitude 36°N and longitude 137°E facing the Sea of Japan side, with the Mt. Hakusan (2,702m) on its heart. The total area of BR is 199,329ha and population 17,023 people. The area is expanded over the four prefectures Fukui, Ishikawa, Toyama and Gifu. The core area has alpine and subalpine zones and is famous for its endemic vegetation and Japanese beech forest in the buffer zone. Transition zone with hilly and mountainous areas are settled by local villages. It was designated by UNESCO's MAB in 1980 and at the beginning only core area with alpine/subalpine zones and buffer zones was recognized. After 30 years, in 2016 transition zone was designated with the mountain villages. MHBR, as a BR, needs to execute three main roles of conservation, development and logistic functions, however, even though that MHBR was designated in 1980, transition zone was recognized only in 2016, and there are still no functions and any implementations conducted by the local authorities or academic institutions as of BR. Heavy snowfalls and different seasonal temperature creates the unique and diverse alpine environment with endemic flora and fauna. The vegetation is distributed with the forest zones of summer green broad-leaved (Japanese beech zone) which comprises the important vegetation element in Mt. Hakusan. This area is also densely inhabited with large mammals like Asiatic black bear, Japanese serow, Japanese macaque, Golden Eagle and mountain Hawk-eagle.



Mt. Hakusan and Shiramine. (Google Map)



MHBR (Google Map)

## Shiramine Village



Winter in Shiramine. (Photo provided by MHBR Council)

Shiramine village, is a small village in a mountainous area to the North-East site of Mt. Hakusan on the 500m altitude along the Tedori River terrace, with the total area 222km<sup>2</sup>, and it is included into the transition zone of MHBR. The main differences of the region from the other villages, is that the area has almost no flat lands, and is considered to be the foothills of the Mt. Hakusan with lots of snow precipitation that can reach above 3-4 meters. Mt. Hakusan is a volcano, with the last eruption recorded in 1579. Due to its location, next to the Hokuriku coast, in winter, seasonal dry northwest winds flows from the Eurasian continent and moisture from the warm Tsushima Current from the Sea of Japan, creates the heavy snowfalls specific to the region. Most of the snow melts in summer and flows downhill by forming water systems, and Shiramine is considered to be one of the main water resource sectors of the Ishikawa Prefecture.

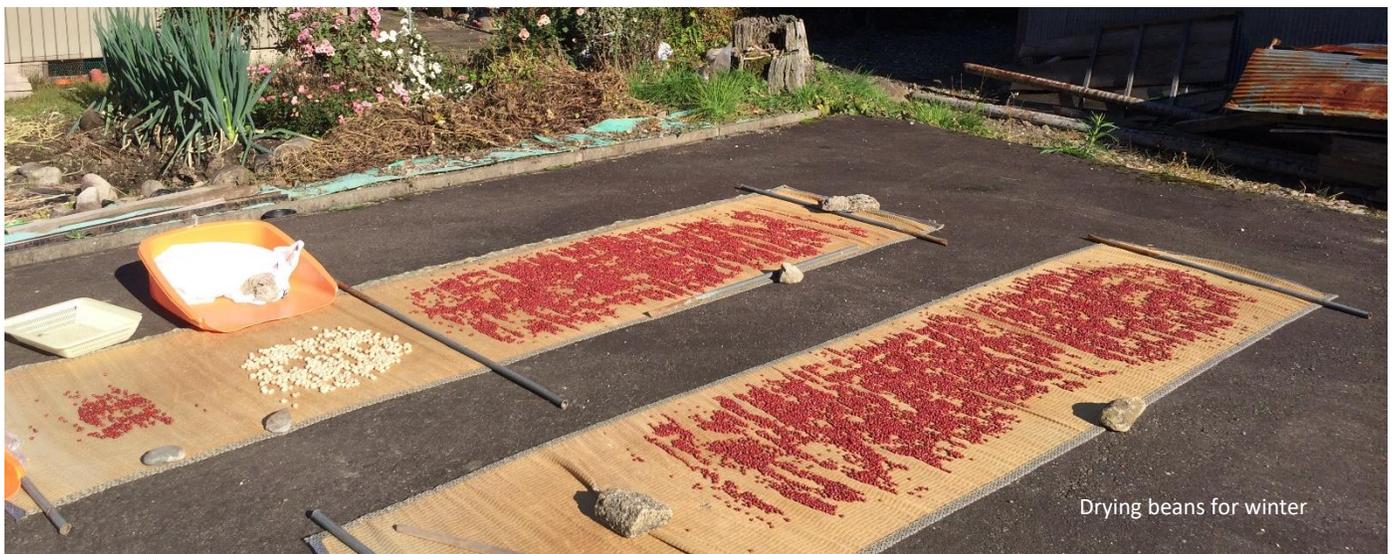


Forestry tools

Human population in Shiramine is around 850. The major industry is forestry and agriculture. Due to the hilly landscapes the forestry, slash-and-burn cultivation, silk raising and hunting were the main practices in the village for many generations. The main lifestyle of the village was named seasonal “Dezukuri” which was practiced until the middle of 20th century. This is the method when, during the agricultural seasons of slash-and-burn (May through November) people were living in the houses at the mountains, and by winter coming (December to April) they were going back to the village. Thanks to the unique lifestyle, well-learned skills of food preservation practice, charcoal production, specific house construction techniques, gathering medical herbs and others, in Shiramine people were able to live in the mountain side all year round, even during the heavy snowfalls and harsh winter times. Due to the advanced well-living skills, Shiramine became one of the leading villages in Dezukuri

practice in entire Ishikawa and Fukui Prefecture. In the 1930s, from 452 houses of Shiramine, the number of Dezukuri

practice was 262 houses, comprising the half number of entire practice of Ishikawa Prefecture. Except the rice, all the food was derived from the forest and mountains. Human interaction with the surrounding nature in the mountains regions, created the unique landscapes, knowledge system and culture which was transmitted from generation to generations during several centuries, until the 1940th. In 1950th, during the period of high economic growth in Japan, and in 1970s under the countries rapid industrialization the main source of energy from fuel woods changed to fossil fuels, and this has dramatically changed socio-economic situation in Hakusan. The shift to the fossil fuels, decreased the demand on wood fuels and charcoals production and the management of the secondary forest declined. Construction of Tedori River Dam for hydroelectric power, water supply and flood control as well as, construction of the innovative road infrastructure, resulted in the merge of 300 households and loss of Dezukuri practice and hunting. Populations migrated from the mountain areas to the urban cities and nowadays, natural resources management and the mountain landscapes of Shiramine have been rapidly changed and ecosystem services are threatened to be loss, due to the depopulation of the area. Depopulation results in the abandonment of the farmlands, loss of the local communities and traditional knowledge. After the road constructions local people started to search for the jobs outside the village, rather than managing the farmlands, and gained income provoked to consume the food bought by money. This resulted in the loss of the forest food culture, and main population stopped to consume and gather forest resources for food, such as, tree nuts, wild-plants, mushrooms and as well as utilization of the medical herbs was changed to purchasing the medicine from the pharmacies.



Drying beans for winter

In 2012, Shiramine was selected as “Important Preservation District for Traditional Buildings” by Japanese Government. Due to the close river terrace settlements, the village had faced great flooding in 1896 and 1934, and houses of local villagers are built on the elevated stonewalls which composes the specific townscape of the region. Besides, due to the heavy snowfalls and sericulture practice, the houses with two or three-story were constructed to be resistant to the heavy snow and used as warehouses. However, because of the depopulation, many houses were left by the owners and the number of abandoned houses are increasing annually. Because of the heavy snowfalls, it becomes very hard to look after the abandoned houses, and they are easily collapse under the heavy snows, which significantly affects the townscapes of the village.



Map of “Important Preservation District for Traditional Buildings” of Shiramine

# Educating the Youth towards Sustainable Development Goals in Mount Hakusan Biosphere Reserve

## I. SUMMER EXPERIENCE

Shiramine which represents the harmonious coexistence between nature and culture started to decline, because of the rapid industrialization and the shift from rural-based to urban-based economic. This resulted in land use decline, field abandonment and depopulation of the rural areas, and there is an urgent need to educate the youth to act towards regional conservation and regeneration.

We decided to develop the integrated conservation and sustainable development oriented model by implementing SDGs in our courses. The educational courses were created at Kanazawa University together with NPO Hakusan Shiramine Nature School, through the fieldtrips in the specific environmental conditions in the transition zone of Shiramine village of MHBR. 17 SDGs were considering by providing 17 community-service activities.

### Objectives:

- ❖ Increase the awareness towards the environmental/social issues and the skills to be applied for the regional revitalization in youth.
- ❖ Use SDGs as the tools for the re-evaluation of the regional “values” and distribute the new perspectives and views to the local villagers
- ❖ Communicate with local through the participatory and volunteering practices conducted inside the village



### Organizers of the Project:

- Kanazawa University
- NPO Hakusan Shiramine Nature School

### Supporters:

- NPO Shiramine Town Planning Council
- Hakusan Tedorigawa Geo-Park Promoting Council
- Mount Hakusan Biosphere Reserve Council
- Shiramine University, Yuki-dharma Café, Hakusan Shiramine Firewood Group
- Private Industries and Individual Entrepreneurs
- Local Villagers

### Participants:

27 International Students from Kanazawa University, coming from France, Canada, Australia, Vietnam, Malaysia, Amerika, Thailand, Taiwan, China and Japan)

### Period of the Activities:

April, May, June, July 2017 with nine overnight-camping's in total

### Instruments:

To ensure the smooth implantation of the project, several instruments, such as social, regulatory and educational were thoughtfully used while conducted the course. Project management documents were prepared in consultation with local stakeholders and villagers. NPO Hakusan Shiramine Nature School was the highest body to conduct all the activities between the villagers and functioned as an advisory during the project period. All final decision making authority belonged to the Kanazawa University. The project was conducted by the participatory approach, by using the community-service activities, volunteering, nature observation and communications with the villagers.

### Subjects covered:

- Biocultural Diversity of Mount Hakusan and Shiramine: Nature, Geography, Climate, Culture and Lifestyle
- Learning from the Elderly, Women and Youth
- 17 SDGs + Community-Service Activities in 17 diverse sectors

### Facilities used during the courses:

Housing: All students were overnighing in the abandoned houses “Yohei” and “Kato” in Shiramine, which are regulated by the NPO Hakusan Shiramine Schools and are used as the community gathering halls.

Transportation: Buses were provided by Kanazawa University and NPO Hakusan Shiramine Nature School

# Entire structure of the curriculum

## FIRST FIELDWORK

- ❖ Introduction about Mount Hakusan and Shiramine Village (Geography, Climate, Culture etc)

<b>April</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Lectures on about Nature, History, Culture and Lifestyle</li> <li>2. Lectures on Hakusan Tedoru-river Geo-parks and Hakusan UNESCO Biosphere Reserve</li> <li>3. Visit Shiramine (Folklore Museum, District of Traditional Buildings, Hakusan Sediment Science Museum others)</li> <li>4. Ice-Breaking Party with the local villager and the students</li> </ol>
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## SECOND FIELDWORK

- ❖ Learn from the Elderly
- ❖ Interrelationship between human and nature through the experiential practice

<b>May</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Learn Shiramine Lifestyle and Culture from the <u>Elderly point of view</u></li> <li>2. Fieldtrips to learn Shiramine Nature and Resources             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Forest Walking (Beech and Cedar Forest)</li> <li>· Hiking to the Mountain-Hill (Nishi-yama)</li> </ul> </li> <li>3. Tasting the Nature Gifts of Shiramine             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Sansai (Edible wild-mountain plants)</li> <li>· Iwana fish (river rockfish)</li> <li>· Wild boar meat</li> </ul> </li> </ol>
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## THIRD FIELDWORK

- ❖ 17 SDGs and experiential practices while performing community-service activities.
- ❖ Learn from the Women and Youth

<b>June</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Learn Shiramine Lifestyle and Culture from the <u>Women point of view</u></li> <li>2. 17 SDGs + 17 Community-Service Activities in diverse sectors:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <i>Tourism Sectors:</i> Management of the tourist facilities</li> <li>➤ <i>Industries:</i> Forest Management, Charcoal Production, Wasabi-Plantations, Chestnut-rice cake producing factory, Silk clothe manufacturing factory, Civil work factory and others</li> <li>➤ <i>Lifestyle:</i> Nursing facilities for the Elderly, Early Child Care</li> <li>➤ <i>Nature Preservation:</i> High mountain botanical garden, fossil survey</li> <li>➤ <i>Private Sectors:</i> Petroleum shop, Yuki-Dharma Café</li> </ul> </li> <li>3. Learn Shiramine Lifestyle and Culture from the <u>Youth point of view</u></li> <li>4. Group working on compilation the Shiramine “Values”</li> </ol>
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## FOURTH FIELDWORK

- ❖ Communicate with tourist and local villagers by participating in Hakusan festival
- ❖ Final Presentation of the Shiramine “Values” to the local villagers in 5 groups

<b>July</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Learn Traditional Dance to celebrate the Mt. Hakusan (Kanko-Dance)</li> <li>2. Participate in local Festival and dance together with 1300 people by celebrating 1300 years of opening Mt. Hakusan</li> <li>3. Participate in festival by pulling wooden jar filled with the water from Mt.Hakusan (Enmeisui)</li> <li>4. Group working on compilation the Shiramine “Values”</li> <li>5. Presentation of the new “Values” for the local villagers</li> <li>6. Final Party with the local villagers by making international food party and cultural exchange</li> </ol>
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# FIRST FIELDWORK

## ❖ Learn about Biocultural Diversity of Hakusan and Shiramine Village (Geography, Climate, Culture etc)

**Period:** April (one day trip into the village)

**Context:** Introduction of Shiramine and Icebreaking

- Lectures on about Nature, History, Culture and Lifestyle
- Lectures on Hakusan Tedoru-river Geo-parks and Hakusan UNESCO Biosphere Reserve
- Visit Shiramine (Folklore Museum, District of Traditional Buildings, Hakusan Sediment Science Museum others)
- Ice-Breaking Party with the local villager and the students

To start our course, it was import to introduce the biological and cultural diversity or Mount Hakusan and Shiramine villages, so that the students would have the basic idea about its geography, climate, culture, local history and lifestyle. Lectures were provided inside the Hakusan and Shiramine village (Annex 1). All lectures were guided by the professional instructors, who gave the detailed expiation on geological and morphological features of Mount Hakusan, as well as introduced the history of the formation of Shiramine village. Introducing the biological diversity provided the basic knowledge of the regional ecosystem, and the students acknowledged the importance of the natural resources to sustain the culture and livelihoods. Cultural diversity fieldtrips brought students closer with the communities and increase the understanding of the daily lifestyles, values and beliefs. Finally, to become more familiar with the community, we conducted the Icebreaking party with local villagers in the abandoned houses, which served as the facility for our homestay.

***Akiya (house with no householder) were used as the overstay facilities during the fieldtrips***



*Yohei House (Left outside view, Right Inside view)*



*Kato House (Left Outside view, Right Inside view)*

**First Trip (Annex 1)**  
Learn about Hakusan and Shiramine Village (Geography, Climate, Culture etc)



*Hakusan National Park Center: Learning about the Shiramine Geography, Climate and Culture*



*Visit Hakusan Sediment Science Museum*



*Visit to Shiramine Folklore Museum*



*Walking in the District of Traditional Buildings*



*Ice-Breaking Party with local villagers*



*Food prepared by the locals*

## SECOND FIELDWORK

### ❖ “Learn from the Elderly”

### ❖ Interrelationship between human and nature, through the experiential practice

**Period: May (2 days, 1 day overnight in the village)**

**Context: Fieldtrips & camping**

- **Learn Shiramine Lifestyle and Culture from the Elderly point of view**
- **Fieldtrips to learn Shiramine Nature and Resources**
  - Forest Walking (Beech and Cedar Forest)
  - Hiking to the Mountain-Hill (Nishi-yama)
- **Tasting the Nature Gifts of Shiramine**
  - Sansai (Edible wild-mountain plants)
  - Iwana fish (river rockfish)
  - Wild boar meat

Shiramine is facing the problems of depopulation and aging, however, elderly people who live in Shiramine, are very active due to the constant connection with nature and active lifestyle. Students met with the 83 years old villager, who was previously the hunter, and the forester producing the charcoals. Still, in spite to his old age, he is very actively working in the forest and produces the charcoals together with some young followers. He gave the talk about how local people learned to use the natural resources to produce the daily utensils, furniture and even the houses. He also talked how it is possible to find the eligible plants and food from the forest, and spend the sustained live while living with nature.

Inspired by the talks of the Elderly, we decided to take the students into the Forest and search for the natural resource, and raise the awareness about the gifts of the nature (Annex 2). Observation of the nature, collecting the edible plants, visiting the river shores, and hiking the mountains were main activities.



## Second Trip (Annex 2)

- ❖ “Learn from the Elderly” and experience the interrelationship between human and nature in Shiramine through the experiential practice



*Lecture about Hakusan in National Park Visitor Center*



*Hiking in the Mountain-Hill of Hakusan*



*Resting next to the Tedori-river flowing from Mt. Hakusan*



*Gathering Wild Edible Plants in the Mountains*



*Tasting local food wild Plants "Sansai" and Iwana Fish*



*Listening to the Elderly's talk about the lifestyle in Shiramine*

# THIRD FIELDWORK

## ❖ 17 SDGs experiential practices while performing 17 community-service activities ❖ “Learn from the Women and Youth”

**Period: June (3 days, 2 nights overnight)**

### **Context: SDGs through the community-service activity**

- **17 SDGs + 17 Community-Service Activities in diverse sectors of the village (Table 1):**
  - Tourism Sectors: Management of the tourist facilities
  - Industries: Forest Management, Charcoal Production, Wasabi-Plantations, Chestnut-rice cake producing factory, Silk clothe manufacturing factory, Civil work factory and others
  - Lifestyle: Nursing facilities for the Elderly, Early Child Care
  - Nature Preservation: High mountain botanical garden, fossil survey
  - Private Sectors: Petroleum shop, Yuki-Dharma Café
- **Learn Shiramine Lifestyle from the Women point of view**
- **Learn Shiramine Lifestyle from the Youth point of view**
- **Group working on compilation the Shiramine “Values”**



Table 1: Community-Service Activities Sectors

	Field Destinations	Sector	Experiences
1	“Shiramine Sangyou”	Forestry	Experience Forest management
2	“Shiramine Maki-no-kai”	Forestry	Wood chopping and charcoal production
3	“Sugita Wasabi En”	Wasabi Plantation	Wasabi cultivation
4	“Gozenso” ryokan	Hotel	Service and learn about local issues
5	“Hakusan En” ryokan	Tourism	Service and learn about local issues
6	“Nagai” ryokan	Tourism	Service and learn about local issues
7	“Sansai” shop	Local products sales	Learn about local services and goods
8	“Shiramine Onsen”	Hot spring, SPA	Provide services for the customers
9	“Yuki-Dharma” Café	Local restaurant	Provide services for the customers
10	“Shinsa” Chestnut-rice cake producer	Small factory	Rice cake production and sales
11	“Kuji” Petroleum shop	Gas station	Provide daily services for the local
12	“Kaze-gumi” Civil work company	Construction	Dam and road construction
13	“Misugi-no-Tomo” Elderly Nursing facilities	Welfare	Provide care for the elderly
14	Early Child Care Facility	Nursery School	Child nursing experience
15	“Kato Kigyou” Silk clothe producing factory	Cloth manufacture	Experience Silk cloth weaving and production
16	Shiramine Fossil Research Center	Scientific Center	Searching for the fossils in nature
17	High mountain botanical garden	Nature Preservation	Preservation of the mountain plants

Third trip was one of the important of the trips, as we provided the community-service activity for the students to experience the real lifestyle of the village, and how it feels to live and work inside the community (Annex 3). All functioning sectors (Table 1), which were active in Shiramine, were carefully chosen and agreed to accept the students. Through the service activities, described above, students were given the chance to experience the real challenges that are faced, to achieve the regional sustainable development and address the SDGs. 27 students were settled all over the Shiramine village, in pairs or alone, and spend the entire day, working in the fields.

Next day, students were able to listen to the talks of the Women and the Youth, who were living inside the villages.

Youth are gradually coming back to Shiramine, and students heart about their motivations to work in the village.

At the end, we conducted group workings, to compile learned SDGs and share experience with each other.

### Third Trip (Annex 3)

❖ SDGs + Community-service activities conducted in 17 destinations



Chestnut-rice cake producing factory "Shinsa"



Wasabi-Plantations in "Sugita Wasabi En"



Charcoal Production in "Shiramine Maki-no-kai"



Silk clothe producing factory in "Kato Kigyou"



Petroleum shop "Kuji"



Yuki-Dharma Café



Special product sales facility "Sansai"



Shiramine Fossil Research Center



High mountain botanical garden



Traditional Japanese Hotels "Gozenso"



Early Child Care Facility



Nursing facilities for the Elderly "Misugi-no-Tomo"



*Hakusan Hot spring SPA*



*Civil work factory private company "Kaze-gumi"*



*Forest Management in "Shiramine Sangyou"*



*Traditional Japanese Hotels: Nagai ryokan*



*Cooking Traditional Food in Ryokan*

**❖ Learning from the Women and Youth, and Group Working**



*Listen to the Talks of Women*



*Listen to the Talks of local Youth living in Shiramine*



*Experience sharing with each other*



*Group Working*

## FOURTH FIELDWORK

- ❖ **Communicate with Local villagers and tourist by participating in Hakusan Festival**
  - ❖ **Final Presentation of the Shiramine “Values” to the local villagers**

**Period: July (4 days, 3 nights overnight)**

**Context: Local Festival and Final Communication**

- **Learn Traditional Dance to celebrate the Mt. Hakusan (Kanko-Dance)**
- **Participate in local Festival and dance together with 1300 people by celebrating 1300 years of opening Mt. Hakusan**
- **Participate in festival by pulling wooden jar filled with the water from Mt.Hakusan (Enmeisui)**
- **Group working on compilation the Shiramine “Values”**
- **Presentation of the new “Values” for the local villagers**
- **Final Party with the local villagers by making international food party and cultural exchange**

Hakusan Festival is the Summer festival, celebrating the opening of Mount Hakusan, since the time when 1300 years ago first monk climbed and reached the top of the Mountain. Two days’ festival gather many tourists from the outside prefectures to visit Shiramine, and local people are making many preparations to accept many visitors. Also, the traditional folklore music and dances are conducted till late night, and all villagers are dancing and singing in traditional clothing. The culmination of the festival, is pulling the huge wooden jar, filled with water, together with all villagers. The jar is filled with the water brought from the Mount Hakusan, and it symbolically represents the begging of the new season and new year in Shiramine. Students, actively took part in all activities provided by the locals, and helped them to conduct all activities until the end (Annex 4). Traditional songs and dances are taught to the youth, and this Festival provided a platform for the students to deeply learn about the traditional lifestyle, and realize that without the followers, this kind of festival which keeps the identity of the villagers, will disappear.



The final activity conducted in our project, was presentation to the local villagers the values and treasures found by the students. Students made the group presentation about their experiences, and compared it with their own home country. At the end, the dinner, with international cuisine prepared by the students, was the expression of the gratefulness to the villagers for sharing their lifestyle together with foreigners (Annex 5).



## Fourth Trip (Annex 4)

### ❖ Participating in Hakusan festival and performing community-services



*Learnig the traditional Dance*



*Refreshing in small river during hot day*



*Dancing during the Hakusan Festival*



*Students wearing Yukata during the festival*



*Caring the Altar around Shiramine village*



*Lifting up the Omikoshi*



*Pulling water from Mt. Hakusan in wooden jar*



*International Studenst pulling the jar with locals*



*Encouraging to pull the heavy jar*



*End of the Festival*

❖ Presentation of the Shiramine “Values” to the local villagers and Final party made by the Students (Annex 5)



*Final Group Presentation*



*Wrapping-Up the course*



*Students making food for the locals*



*International Food prepared by students*



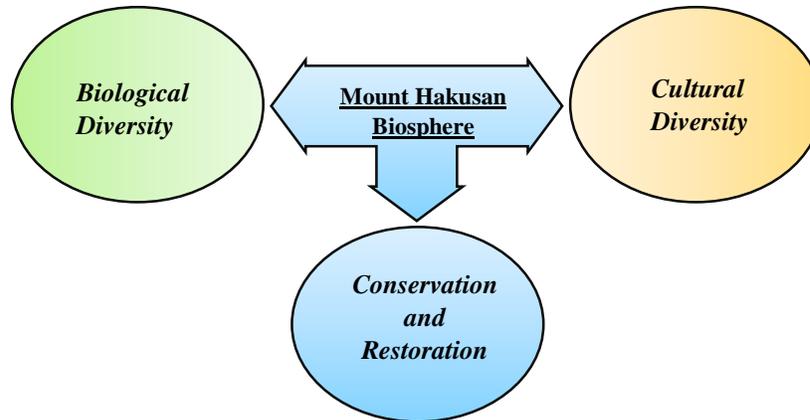
*Thanksgiving Party for the locals*



*Final Dance with locals*

## II. WINTER EXPERIENCE

Winter is considered as the hardest time to spend in Hakusan, due to the heavy snow falls which sometimes can reach more than 3-4 meters. For our course we decided to develop the integrated conservation and sustainable development oriented model, through the fieldtrips during winter seasons in the transition zone of MHBR. For our model we suggested the three dimensional framework, with activities mainly divided into the 1. Biological diversity; 2. Cultural Diversity; and 3. Conservation and Restoration.



### Objectives:

- ❖ Apply the bio-cultural model to increase the skills and awareness towards the environmental preservation
- ❖ Use SDGs as the tools for the re-evaluation of the regional “values” and find the key goal which will link all related SDGs for Bio-Cultural Diversity
- ❖ Communicate with local through the participatory and volunteering practices conducted inside the village



### Organizers of the Project:

- Kanazawa University
- Hakusan Nature Conservation Center
- NPO Hakusan Shiramine Nature School

### Supporters:

- Mount Hakusan Biosphere Reserve Council
- Hakusan Folk Museum
- Private Industries and Individual Entrepreneurs
- Local Villagers

### Participants:

21 International Students from Kanazawa University, coming from Finland, Spain, Germany, Korea, Australia, Vietnam, Indonesia, USA, Thailand, Taiwan, China and Japan

### Period of the Activities:

October, November, December, February 2016 with five fieldtrips in total

### Subjects covered:

- Bio-cultural Diversity of Mount Hakusan in Shiramine village (transition zone of MHBR)
- Biodiversity course with forest and winter mountain experience
- Cultural course with town scenes walk with local villagers, traditional food making, livelihoods and spiritual practice
- Evaluating the “Main Treasure” which will link all Bio-cultural Diversity and all SDGs in MHBR

# BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY FIELDTRIPS

## Forest, Wildlife and Snow Mountain Experience

**Period: November and February**

**Context: Introduction of the Biological Diversity of the Transition Zone on MHBR**

- Lectures on about Nature, Climate, Geography and Wildlife
- Fieldtrips in to the Forest under the guidance of Hakusan Nature Conservation Center and Snow Mountain experience with NPO Hakusan Shiramine Nature School

- ◆ (Photos from left to right): Learning about forest mushrooms, Walking in the forest together with the Director of Hakusan Nature Conservation Center, Search for the wild plants, mushrooms and animal trails



- ◆ (Photos from left to right): Lecture about the specific hilly landscapes of the town, Experience the traditional Shiramine mountain walking with the traditional snow shoes *kanjiki*, Enjoying the snow, Hiking in snow mountain



# CULTURAL DIVERSITY FIELDTRIPS

## Traditional, Socio-Cultural and Spiritual Practices

Period: October and December

Context: Introduction of the Cultural Diversity of the Transition Zone on MHBR

- Lectures about the Socio-Cultural and Spiritual Practices, History and Traditions, Silk and Hemp Production
- Fieldtrips in to the Seto, Onahara and Shiramine under the guidance of local guides, learn about the local architecture, forest management, townscapes, traditional cooking, spiritual experience and communicate with local villagers

### Traditional practice in Shiramine Folk Museum

- ◆ (Photos from left to right) Experience winter houses, Trying medical herbs, Lecture by the director of the Hakusan Shiramine Folk Museum



### Socio-Cultural and Spiritual Practice

- ◆ (Photos from left to right) Learn about Forest Management, Traditional Cooking, Learn about local architecture and townscapes, Visiting Hakusan Shrine



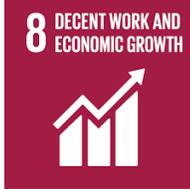


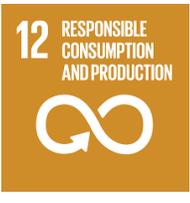
After the completion of the courses, all students indicated that the most inspiring “value” that they found in Shiramine was the strong bound of local people with each other. Each sector that they visited was linked to another one and every person or the owner of the company knew the activities of their neighbors. Also, it was very inspiring for the students to see, how local people are easily dealing with the daily troubles and any kind of difficulties. They are ready to easily act on any changings. Shiramine is situated in hilly area with lots of snow precipitation with very hard living conditions in winter, and has faced extreme flooding in summer seasons as well. However, nature taught local people how to become united to confront any obstacles in daily life. Only by unity they were able overcome any difficulties and survive in this region for the centuries. Because, local people are always living in the unpredictable rhythm with nature, they are always ready to face any changings and act towards the solutions. Those kind of living conditions taught them to share the capital and natural resources with each other. For example, students were very surprised to know, that local people never lock the doors at night or in the daytime. Neighbors can come and open the fridge of another person’s house and take anything he wants like borrowing it, or put some vegetables grown in their garden to his fridge, without asking. The concept of privacy doesn’t exist, and each person knows well what is happening with his neighbor, and in case if something happens they are always ready to help. Another example, was that they trust each other a lot, and even can leave the child in the house of the neighbor. This kind of strong bound started to attract the youth, who are recently started to come back to the village and choose to live slow-life by creating the small business in the village. Some student indicates the following in his report: “One key notion which was brought up constantly throughout this trip was the unique social structure within Hakusan village where it very much reflected a communal neighborhood. In this sense, the all villagers shared a sentiment of being a neighbor with each other to the extent where they could eagerly discuss their daily lives and in some cases, enter each other’s homes without notice. Another interesting notion which was prevalent in the residents of Shiramine village was the level of depth to the way in which they live their lives; to quote: “There’s a *coolness* to the people here”. In essence, I believe that the attachment to nature, the deep bonds with each other and the stubbornness to live out their days and improve the village has led to a sense of admiration and curiosity into studying and interacting with the locals in Shiramine village. From the points thus far, I feel that the residents of Shiramine village have gradually formed a collective determination to reform and create awareness for the present and future of the village and in turn has led to improving the participation and unity of the people living within, ultimately strengthening their bonds.”

The idea of the strong bound for the sustainable development is very similar with SDGs, as 17 goals are strongly interconnected and depend on each other’s. In order to achieve environmentally sustainable conditions, we need to achieve the stable social, economic and political conditions, with fair distribution of capital and resources, where each individual will be able to meet their own basic human needs. Shiramine is very good example of that. Everything capital is shared equally. Even if there are big possibilities to create big business sectors by using the natural resources, locals are very carefully considering the business conditions of the neighbors, and are trying not to exceed the income of each other’s, so that everything is equally shared. Compare to other rural villages around Mount Hakusan, recently Shiramine has increased flow of the youth. This is related with the Mountain Tourism activities, as annually more tourist started to visit the Shiramine before hiking, this is how creating many job opportunities. However, those young people are not in the search to gain the profits and creating the business to become rich in the village, but rather prefer to live inside the strong community with nature around. One of the students was told that “it is impossible to become a rich man here and no one is running for that”. Equal rights and equal opportunities for all this is what can be learned from Shiramine and applied in reaching the SDGs.

We found that it was very hard to apply all SDGs inside the Shiramine, but below we decided to summarize the targets and the activities conducted thought the fieldworks. We found that all visited fieldtrips were very much related and interconnected with SDGs.

Goals	Students Evaluation of the goals observed in Shiramine
	<p><b>Goal 1: End poverty in all its forms everywhere</b></p> <p>Shiramine showed the availability of the products and services for all. Poverty is not a case of Shiramine, as well as it is impossible to become financially rich, as the village has equal earning, wages, benefits and non-discrimination. Equal rights can serve as the clue to combat poverty. Shiramine also provides, the improved access for the local products, for the reasonable pricing.</p>
	<p><b>Goal 2: End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture</b></p> <p>Affordable and healthy food from the surrounding environment, with the sustainable sourcing. Food labeling made in Shiramine like “Horse-chestnut or Yomogi rice cake” and “Hard Tofu”, “Horse-chestnut honey” etc, have gained very big trust in local and outside consumers. This kind of small scaling farming encourages the local farmers to produce healthy products inside the Shiramine village.</p>
	<p><b>Goal 3: Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages</b></p> <p>It was surprising to hear that Shiramine villagers has only two clinics and one elderly nursing facility. This is related to their relatively healthy population due to the continuously active lifestyle in the village. Working at the age of 80 in the forest is not surprising here. Also access to the clean water and air, and consumption of local medical plants together with tea, contributes for their health. One student shares her experience from the Elderly Nursing house: “Most of employers lives near the facility. They all are really nice with the elderly, they treat them like they were a part of their family, and older people treat them as their kids. Sometime elderly even helped the employees with their work. I saw some grand-mother doing the laundry, some sorting newspaper. They find what they can to make them busy and help the others. It amazed me how elderly were energetic and welcoming”. The facility tries not isolate the elderly from the community, but are constantly involve the elderly inside the different activities conducted inside the village.</p>
	<p><b>Goal 4: Ensure inclusive and quality education for all and promote lifelong learning</b></p> <p>Middle and high schools were moved into the Hakusan city during the last 20 years due to the decreased population, and in Shiramine only primary school is remained. This remains the main problem, as there is not so many children, and in the kindergarten there is in total 20 kids. Student commented that “a place which was called “village” (means Shiramine village here) can afford such a beautiful and well-equipped nursery. Thought, this also shows the investment that Shiramine is putting into the education of the younger generation.”</p>
	<p><b>Goal 5: Achieve gender equality and empower al women and girls</b></p> <p>Empowering women and girls and achieving gender equality is the recently applied concept in Shiramine. Due to the depopulation, there were an urgent need to increase the number of the workers in all sectors, and now in Shiramine women are actively taking jobs in forest management, charcoal production, damn reconstruction and even hunting, as well as they have the same equal rights as the males. Students comment: “in jobs like reconstructing dams and repairing landslides, I noticed across all construction projects was the lack of manpower available for such projects which prolonged the scope and costs. In a landscape where civil engineering and construction jobs are in abundance, there would be value in attracting female engineers”.</p>

 <p><b>6</b> CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION</p>	<p><b>Goal 6: Ensure access to water and sanitation for all</b></p> <p>Water was considered as the <b>Natural Treasure in Shiramine</b> since the ancient times, and those who had the access to the drinking water possessed the strongest power in the village. Due to the abundance of the snows in winter, the water supply from the Dam is covering huge areas of all Ishikawa Prefecture. Water supply in Shiramine is regulated by the Hakusan city. <b>Water was the main source that created all bio-cultural diversity of the village.</b></p>
 <p><b>7</b> AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY</p>	<p><b>Goal 7: Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable, and modern energy for all</b></p> <p>Shiramine area has Hydro power generation which belongs to the Hokuriku Electric Power. Electricity access and energy sufficiency is equally distributed inside the village. In terms of energy, due to the abundant and wide forest, charcoal and fireworks were the main fuels in Shiramine until the introduction of the fossil fuels in 1960th. Now charcoals are produced in limited amount and are mainly sold outside. In all the village there is only one petroleum station which plays vital role in supplying the energy for the heaters during the winter seasons, and also provide the gas stoves. Student comment: “I was surprised by the diverse works that this petroleum shop is offering: besides providing the petroleum and gas for the villages, they provide the workers for construction company, they are also able to make electricity set-ups at the locals’ houses. The life in the village would be difficult without this company managing a lot of vital utilities.”</p>
 <p><b>8</b> DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH</p>	<p><b>Goal 8: Promote inclusive and sustainable economic growth, employment and decent work for all</b></p> <p>Due to the tourist influx, in Shiramine there is lots of job opportunities for the youth compared to other villages around Mt. Hakusan. Even though that there is still lack of human resources to work in diverse sectors, decent work opportunities that are productive and deliver a faire income are gradually increasing in Shiramine. From the local youth interviews we heard that some of them had a stable work in urban regions but were not happy with their lifestyle, because they had a little time to enjoy the nature or time spend with family. After coming to Shiramine, they have found small jobs in different sectors, which help them to combine the leisure time together with the job. The perceptions of the values have changed after living in Shiramine, and the feeling of the “self-sufficiency income” budget for the happiness was felt for the first time here. Becoming reach is not the purpose anymore, and Shiramine has no competitions which leads and therefore there is no-discrimination among the locals.</p>
 <p><b>9</b> INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE</p>	<p><b>Goal 9: Build resilient infrastructure, promote sustainable industrialization and foster innovation</b></p> <p>Shiramine is situated in the hilly mountains and there is a constant need in renewing the dams, roads, and landslide preventions. Even though many investments are spend for the civic constructions, winter seasons can impede the development of the fast infrastructure due to the heavy snowfalls. Student comment: “While a large aspect of daily life in Shiramine village is the abundance of nature, it can also serve as inhibitor to the continued progress of the village. Recalling the comment of the local worker, he mentioned that his engineering job and office was limited throughout the year solely due to winter, instead he would be forced to plow roads instead of working on projects. Similarly, it feels that the influence winter has on the lives of the people in Shiramine is fairly significant and just as much as it provides in the summer, it also takes away opportunities in the winter.” However, in comparison with the forest management, winter were providing more opportunities. In the past forest management were performed during the winter seasons, by using the traditional tools to slide the trees over the snow. Nowadays, due to the less human power there is a preference to use modernized equipment, however not all machines can access the forest.</p>

 <p><b>10</b> REDUCED INEQUALITIES</p>	<p><b>Goal 10: Reduce inequality within and among countries</b></p> <p>Inequality in income and wealth have been widening globally, but in Shiramine as it is mentioned above, everyone has small business which in the profits do not exceed the gains of the others. Everyone shares the same rights and equal gains. Sometimes the gains are even shared within the community during the festivals. Sharing the goods is normal in Shiramine. Local goods are sold on the reasonable prices for everyone. Some student comment: “My friends said there was someone offering us shower in her house and I was totally surprised for that. Not only just a shower but she also gave us refreshing drink, prepared towels for us, and even allowed us to use her shampoo and soap. This kind of attitude surprised us a lot, as we were complete foreigners in the town, but they were ready to share their living with us.”</p>
 <p><b>11</b> SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES</p>	<p><b>Goal 11: Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable</b></p> <p>Perhaps this goal is the hardest part to achieve in Shiramine, as the village cannot be called the sustainable human settlement without people. As everywhere in rural areas of Japan, Shiramine is also facing the aging and declining population, which results in house abandonment. Village has very limited public transportation and this was the main concerns of the mothers who says that they needed to drive one hour every day to pick their kids from the high schools, as Shiramine has only primary schools. Moreover, after becoming university students, their kids just have to move to another city, because it is impossible to commute every day. In terms of housing, the buildings in Shiramine are constructed in very sustainable way that can resist the heavy snowfalls, and were used to grow the silk-worms on the second and third floors. In winter it is important to clean the ceiling from the heavy snows, otherwise it will just break the ceiling. Unfortunately, due to the depopulation and aging less people are able to clean the snow now, and management of the abandoned houses area causing big problems for the local government. Some innovations are performed to melt the snow by using the solar-energy panels, or electrical wires, but it requires a big cost.</p>
 <p><b>12</b> RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION</p>	<p><b>Goal 12: Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns</b></p> <p>Shiramine is blessed with natural resources and local people for the years learned how to utilize those natural gifts in the sustainable way, without over utilization of the resources. The idea of “sufficiency” is very strong among the villagers, and no one will take more than it is needed. Students comment: “When we went to search for the wild-edible plants, there were so much of them in the forest, but the locals who were guiding us, were picking only a few of them. On our question why they would not take all, they were replying “we need to leave them for others”. This was very moving to hear, as in our westernized world we are taught to take everything what is given, and only can think about the other, but in Shiramine almost every person think about others.”</p>
 <p><b>13</b> CLIMATE ACTION</p>	<p><b>Goal 13: Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts</b></p> <p>It is obvious that climate change is caused by anthropogenic emissions of CO2 and other greenhouse gasses, and it impacts natural and human systems, however in Shiramine still the effect is not so strongly felt. Locals says that the amount of the snow are decreasing annually, but there is no scientific dates which will relate it with the climate change, as the waves in the less snow amount was recorded in the past as well. The one things that we were told that, during heavy snowfalls, locals are used to clean the snow every morning to go to work and this kind of activity helped them to stay physically healthy and fit during the winter. However, in the year with less snow they started to feel physically week, without exercising.</p>

	<p><b>Goal 14: Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources</b></p> <p>Tedori-river that flows from Mt. Hakusan across Shiramine, and flows to the Sea of Japan, is the main water resources in Ishikawa Prefecture. In 1979, Tedori-River Dam was constructed not far from Shiramine, with the main purposes such as agricultural irrigation, flood control, water supply for industry, non-specified, river flow maintenance, hydropower, recreation, snow melting &amp; removing, and as water supply for Kanazawa City, Komatsu City, Kaga City, Hakusan City and many other cities in Ishikawa Prefecture. Shiramine is also famous for the river fishing activities conducted by locals. Fishing are strongly regulated, and fishing gears and fishing methods other than pole fishing are prohibited, and it is prohibited to fish the Rockfish with the length less than 15cm.</p>
	<p><b>Goal 15: Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, halt and reverse land degradation, halt biodiversity loss</b></p> <p>Ecosystem management are strongly related with the business opportunities in Shiramine. Hotel, Spa, local shops and others are very strongly related with the forest management. All the business sectors strongly rely on ecosystem services such as the provisioning services (e.g. food, fresh water, fiber) and regulating services (e.g. flood control, water purification and waste decomposition). Local authorities try to attract younger generation and provide job opportunities in landscape forest management and preservation of the mountain ecosystem. Besides, cultural services with spiritual and aesthetic values are very strongly felt in Shiramine. Mt. Hakusan is one of the Sacred Mountain in Japan, and for locals believe that it is protected by the gods. The trekking to the mountain is considered as the pilgrimage, and locals pay big respect while climbing it.</p>
	<p><b>Goal 16: Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels</b></p> <p>Shiramine provide the public access to all kind of information occurred around the village, and any kind of information is spread very fast among the locals. For example, to create a new business sector in the village or to accept younger residents, it will be discussed with all locals who can be related, and only after getting their approval the activities can be started. Local community has its own governance regulation, which is accepted as the benefit sharing and equal right for all. Decision-making is conducted within the community with the collaborative support and help.</p>
	<p><b>Goal 17: Revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development</b></p> <p>Recently due to the depopulation and ageing, the village is becoming very positive for accepting the international residents. Besides Mount Hakusan is registered in the global network programs such as UNESCO Man and Biosphere Reserve and National Geopark Network. Shiramine is located in the transition zone of MHBR, and enhancing international support for implementing effective and targeted capacity-building are one of the main targets of the local authorities. Besides, many works are performed to encourage and promote effective public, public-private and civil society partnerships with other MHBR regions.</p>

## Students' comments on life in Shiramine

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I have found main "Treasures" of Shiramine

1. People's kindness, thinking about sustainable life and knowledge of coexisting with nature
  2. Natural resources, such as: water, forest gifts, wild animals,
  3. Traditional knowledge: cuisine, utilization natural resources for house holdings, etc.
- 

It was a really special experience for me. I felt like the time there was just enough to make me feel like I didn't get to spend long enough there, so I definitely want to return and experience it more, especially the people. I also feel close to the group of students who did the program this time. I think Shiramine is a beautiful place and I hope more people come to appreciate it, whether they live there or not. I think I agree with something local people expressed: "that it's OK if there are few people living there, so long as there's always some people at all". I think it would be very sad if Shiramine disappeared, because it seems like a lovely place. Though, of course, a lot of its loveliness is because of the people that live there. Being in Shiramine has helped me think a lot about the value of rural locations and the value of community. I really want to tell and show lots of people.

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I really liked this class, it allowed me to experience the life in a small village and to enjoy it. I discovered a lifestyle very different from mine but I could communicate with local people and understand the good points of living in Shiramine. I think it's a valuable and great experience for international students. Although we have language problem to communicate with local people, we can use body language and heart to talk with them. Thank you very much!

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From the bottom of my heart, I can't express how grateful I am for being offered the opportunity to take this course. From our first sightseeing trip to the moments of our final dinner, there's never been a single moment where I've liked the course and the people involved in running it less. Initially I had my reservations about Shiramine and its future but as I learnt about it, I grew a sense of admiration for the people and the humility and determination they show to maintain the lifestyles and traditions that come from Shiramine.

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I really feel lucky and happy for participating in this program. The optimistic and positive state of mind of people there and cooperation for making Shiramine better that really makes me impressive. Compared with the village and its life in China, I was really shocked. And besides, through the water pulling, I found some stereotype of western people which were proved to be wrong. However, on the other hand, I have to say its good chance for us to stay someday there to experiences but it must be hard for young people to live for a long time.

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It was a precious experience in my life, and learned how Shiramine people live with tradition, nature, and close relationship with local people. I think there is still a traditional life of old Japan which was lost in last decades we should left these things to younger generations.

It's a very good experience to enjoy the beautiful nature and to communicate with local people. We all enjoyed ourselves in the HAKUSAN Festival and learned a lot from the Community-Service. I hope to visit Shiramine again someday.

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I learned a lot in this class, but in a way I never did before. My knowledge has been acquired through practical experience and it is deeply engraved in my memory. I think it was very efficient and pleasant way to learn. This course will have been a great experience.

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The course really deepens international students' understanding about Japanese people, local lifestyle and way of thinking. It's a precious chance for us to take part in such traditional amazing activities – which we could hardly experience even in our home country. Staying there, experiencing how they live, eating local cuisine, communicating with villagers, listening to their ideas, taking part in local festival ...are not only about experiencing local lifestyle, but about the chance to develop

proficiency towards sustainable development, to enhance teamwork, to make more friends, to understand more about how local people think, and to try what we have never done before. It has become one of my unforgettable memories in my life.

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I think I understand the purpose of the course but personally think it is quite utopia. I'm not saying *Sustainability* is impossible but it is very hard to achieve in reality. As I could see, the village cannot live by itself: there is not enough work for the villagers to do and they need to drive out to work which is quite troublesome. Plus, the transportation is limited, makes people, not only the villagers, but also the travelers find it hard to access as well. Furthermore, except for Summer, there is no special reason for travelers to reach here (I believe there are many more snow mountains in Japan with more convenient access and are widely-known). With these 3 main reasons, I think it is not surprising at all if someone will move out for more convenient life. However, I was very impressed with the generosity of the villagers. And I also like the international food activity: it was extremely fun, interesting, and divine. I personally think it was the best moment of the course, having various kinds of food with many foreigner friends and Japanese, exchanging recipes and expressing feelings towards dishes.

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I am glad I took this course because it did change my perceptions on small communities. My father also came from a village very similar to Shiramine in Québec, but his opinion about this kind of lifestyle is negative, so it was really enlightening to have access to an opposite way of thinking. My experience at the wasabi farm, is also one of the best experiences of my exchange student experience. Being able to communicate freely with a member of the community and have a bond beyond only explaining lifestyle problems in a presentation was really instructive and enjoyable. It was really instructive! Thank you very much.

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Hakusan Matsuri was my highlight. It showed the amazing effort the people of Shiramine poured into making their village welcome to people on a huge scale. The inclusivity that they showed to not just the students but also the visitors attending was a phenomenal gathering.

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The connection to Hakusan, the land that feeds them and provides them tourism and work in the summer takes away jobs (such as construction) in the winter, yet the people continue living and working around it as a part of life.

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The amazing lives that the residents continue to live. The residents are well aware of the issues such as an aging population. But with young people that grow and live there, they share an endless amount of experience and wisdom to those that come after them. Working at the charcoal production taught me that passion and mutual understanding can create amazing things.

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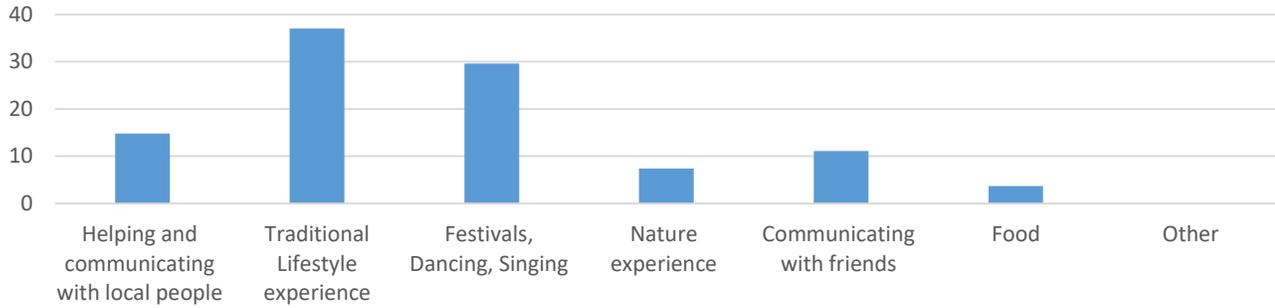
The real gold was that Shiramine's reality defied all expectations. Prior to coming to Shiramine, my impression of it was pessimistic, I was expecting to live in a hut in the forest with no electricity. However, after spending time in it I gradually found a place that was far much better off than most other places and had a plethora of avenues to explore through the dedication of the community and the support of its neighboring towns.

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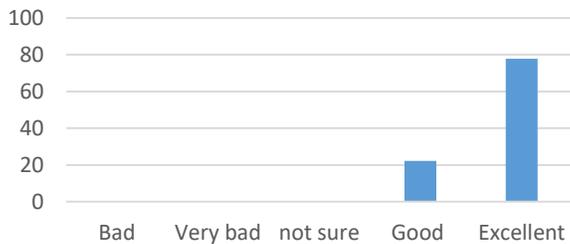
The bonds of the community. Everybody shares a connection with the village and each other and in turn, on an everyday basis they make an effort to enrich each other's lives and make the most of what they have. There's a sense of unconditional care for each other that the villagers share.

# Questionnaire

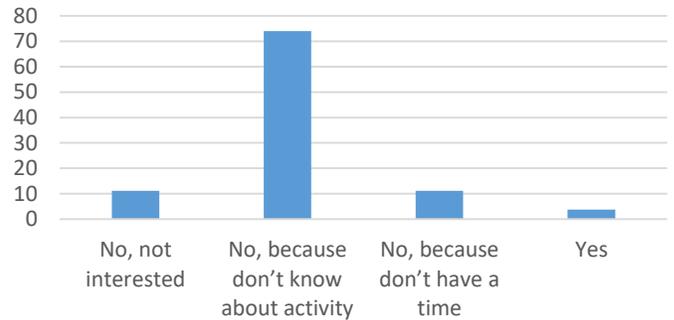
## 1. What was the main motivation, that you choose this course?



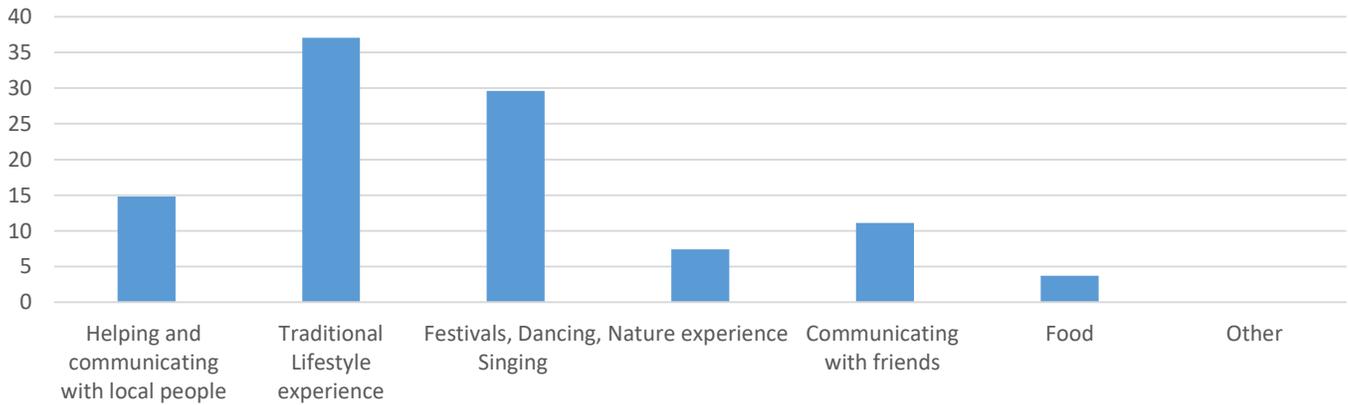
## 2. How did you find the Course?



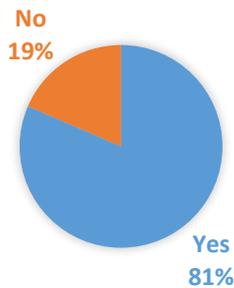
## 3. Have you ever participate in community lifestyle before?



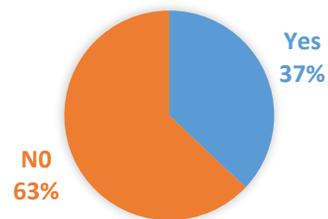
## 4. What was the most thing that you enjoyed during the course?



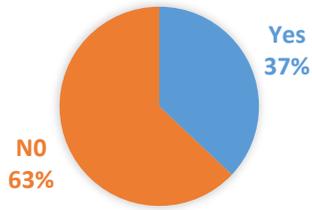
## 6. Would you like to Homestay in Shiramine for one week or more, at home of the local villagers?



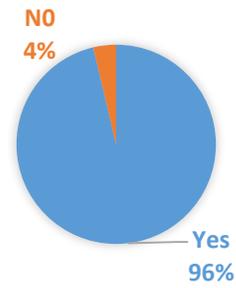
## 7. Would you like to work in Shiramine someday?



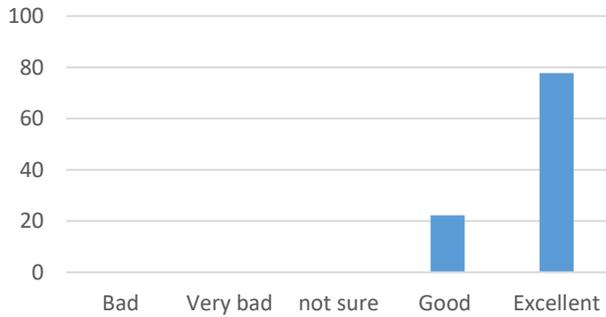
**8. Would you like to live in Shiramine?**



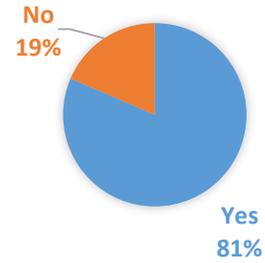
**9. Would you like to continue to collaborate with local people?**



**10. How did you liked the Community-Service activities?**



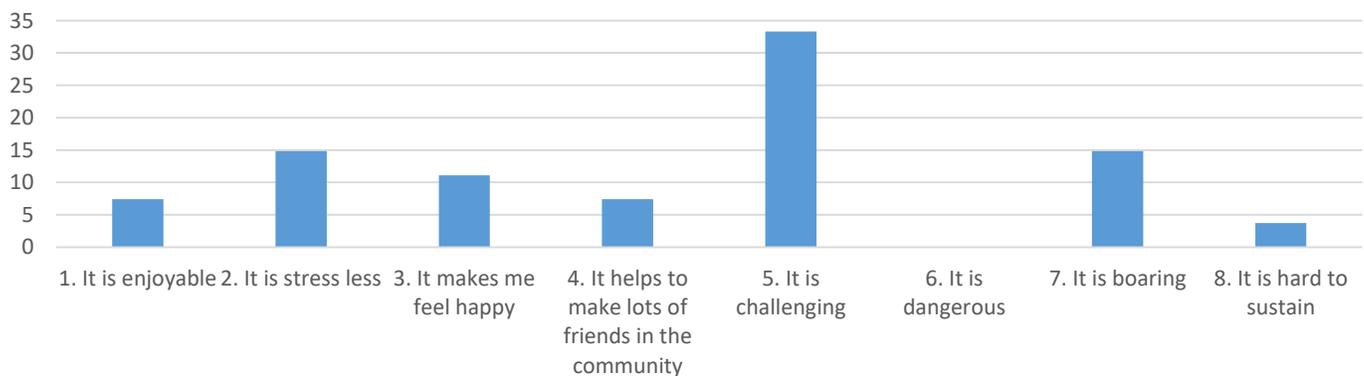
**11. Do you think that Community-Service activities helped you to understand local people's lifestyle?**



**12. Please choose the activity that you would like to do in Shiramine again**



**13. Indicate how do you think about lifestyle in the village community for the young generations?**



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