

# Global Compact for Migration Review: Youth Consultations

## JAPAN Report

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## Introduction

Since its commitment to the GCM in 2018, Japan has experienced turbulent change in the context of migration. A rapidly aging population and dwindling workforce have prompted an increase in the number of short-term labor migrants accepted into Japan to bolster certain industrial sectors. The Japanese government, however, has remained reluctant to commit to an immigration policy or to embrace adequate measures to protect young migrants from exploitation, discrimination, and structural and social barriers. Migrant youth are among the most vulnerable groups. We call upon the Japanese government to strengthen its commitment to the GCM and to:

- **Revise and enhance its policies to safeguard the human rights of migrants;**
- **Provide awareness and access to basic services to suit their needs;**
- **Eliminate discrimination and foster evidence-based positive discourse on migrants; and**
- **Better invest in migrants' acquisition of skills and promote the recognition of their skills among educators, employers, and the general public in Japan.**

According to the Immigration Service Agency and the Ministry of Justice (MOJ), there are currently 2.93 million foreign residents in Japan, about 2% of Japan's population. Data released from the Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare (MHLW) in January 2020 indicated that Japan is home to over 1.65 million migrant workers.<sup>1</sup> Approximately 35% of Japan's foreign residents are between the ages of 15 and 34<sup>2</sup>, and the most significant increases in this age category have been in the number of Technical Intern Trainees (TIT) and international students.

TITs and international students are not officially classified as "workers" by their visa status, but they fulfill some of the most crucial labor gaps in Japan. Combined, they occupy more than 40% of the total number of foreign workers. Technical intern trainees are sitting at 383,978 or 23.1% of the total number of foreign workers. International students, who are in work, sit at 372,894 or 19.2%. TIT workers mainly work in sectors such as manufacturing, construction or agriculture; industries that involve physical strength and carry some risk. The TIT visa enforces strict limitations for migrants, who have been known to be exploited by employers and have little access to information on how to find help for their human rights violations (*See Special Section on page 10 for more information*).

International students also play crucial roles in the Japanese workforce, especially in filling the labor shortages in the retail and service industries<sup>3</sup>. The MOJ permits international students to engage in part-time jobs of up to 28 hours a week during academic terms and 40 hours a week during vacation periods. Through the youth-dominated visa categories of TITs and international students in the workforce, the Japanese government has been increasing migrant labor through channels that do not carry the label of "migrant workers"<sup>4</sup> while outwardly maintaining an anti-immigration stance. **We call upon the Japanese government to maintain transparency in the regulation of its foreign workers, officially accept young migrants as essential contributors to the Japanese economy and society, and commit to supporting them as vulnerable persons, especially those with TIT and international student status.**

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.mhlw.go.jp/content/11655000/000590311.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.statista.com/statistics/693035/immigrant-stock-of-japan-by-age/>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.mhlw.go.jp/content/11655000/000590310.pdf> (accessed on 11 September 2020)

<sup>4</sup> [https://www.spf.org/en/global-image/units/upfiles/106175-1-20210127173553\\_b601125e95deb8.pdf](https://www.spf.org/en/global-image/units/upfiles/106175-1-20210127173553_b601125e95deb8.pdf)

In 2018, Prime Minister Shinzo Abe announced an increase in Japan's acceptance of displaced migrants to 40 per year out of more than 10,000 applications (in 2017, only 20 out of 19,629 were accepted)<sup>5</sup>. His strategy was to select youth, issue them international student visas, and allow them to enroll at Japanese universities on scholarships. While this approach presents opportunities, it also places a huge burden on them to succeed academically, learn the Japanese language, and secure a visa-sponsoring job after graduation. In essence, Japan's protection of displaced youth is only guaranteed for the duration of their studies. While limited support is available to assist with integration and job placements, if they are unable to maintain employment, they may face deportation or detention. The lack of awareness around the situation of displaced and regular migrants, and their association with poverty, crime and social problems, makes increasing their number politically unpopular. **We call upon the Ministry of Justice to raise awareness of displaced migrants and the positive contributions of migrants in Japan, to promote evidence-based public discourse, to safeguard their welfare in Japan and provide better support for them in finding a job and incentives for employers to hire and retain them.**

Building upon the priorities established through the 2020 GFMD Bali Process, the United Nations Major Group for Children and Youth (UN MGCY) Japan Working Group on the GCM conducted 30 consultations. These comprised locally-based youth-led and youth-focused organizations and individuals with a national or international focus, together representing approximately 200,000 youth, including foreign residents, Japanese returnees, and intercultural youth with mixed heritage from Japan and other countries. The consultations focused on youth perspectives and recommendations for the implementation of four objectives of the GCM:

- **Objective 2:** Minimize the adverse drivers and structural factors that compel people to leave their country of origin.
- **Objective 15:** Provide access to basic services for migrants.
- **Objective 17:** Eliminate all forms of discrimination and promote evidence-based public discourse to shape perceptions of migration.
- **Objective 18:** Invest in skills development and facilitate mutual recognition of skills, qualifications and competences.

The results of the consultations are summarized in the following policy briefs. Overall, youth are seeking greater awareness and action on the GCM at the national level. The challenges of social inclusion in Japan transcend language barriers and ethnicity, as many of the barriers for foreign migrant youth also limit the potential of Japanese returnees and intercultural youth. We found that young people are motivated to boldly take action through creating social enterprise, volunteering, or otherwise filling gaps, despite being often limited to smaller-scale operations and unsupported by wider society. We encountered fear of retribution for criticizing the Japanese government's approach to regular and irregular migrants, which has become viewed as a controversial issue, and some migrant youth and organizational representatives requested anonymity. We reiterate that ensuring mobile youth are socially and economically integrated and that their human rights are respected is a prerequisite for young people on the move to (1.) not be left behind in the gains towards the 2030 Agenda, and (2.) to significantly contribute to the achievement of the SDGs through their own skills and work. **Without integration, we are missing out on the potential of youth to achieve their potential and contribute to the social fabric and prosperity of Japan. We urgently call on the Japanese government to take greater action to implement the GCM to the benefit of all.**

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<sup>5</sup> <https://www.refugee.or.jp/>

## Overall Themes and Key Recommendations

### 1. **Renewed commitment to structured language education to foster an inclusive society.**

The language barrier in Japan is a significant and persistent limitation for foreign residents. Currently, there is no national support for Japanese language education for migrants, though some municipalities offer some public Japanese language training and/or information and services in other languages. The expectation is that the cost in time and money will be paid by the migrants, regardless of their ability to bear such costs. Migrants remain marginalized in Japanese society and limited in their ability to access basic needs and services, as well as economic mobility. We spoke with a youth-led organization doing work in this space, though they requested anonymity; their organisation sends staff into migrant communities to provide free, culturally-sensitive and gender-inclusive Japanese language education to migrants, while offering complimentary childcare.

- a. In parallel, English language education has been compulsory in all Japanese primary and secondary schools since 2011. According to several of the organizations we consulted, some migrants coming to Japan have English competency as well. The ability to understand and communicate is critical not only for fostering an inclusive society, but also for ensuring compliance with legal and procedural norms, as well as providing access to essential information and services. We spoke with organizations like WELgee and Kuriya that bring together young migrants and Japanese youth to communicate and collaborate toward mutual understanding and community projects.
  - b. **Youth call upon the Ministry of Justice to provide free Japanese language education and/or language education subsidies for migrants equivalent to 600 hours** (in line with integration standards in other developed countries), to **promote education that is sensitive to the different linguistic needs** of various migrant groups, and to **obligate employers to allocate time for such employees to take classes without penalty.**
  - c. **Youth call on the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) to promote mother-tongue education for migrant youth**, and to **capitalize on the commonality of English language communication** between Japanese and migrant youth to support **more diversity initiatives** inside Japan to foster a more inclusive society.
  - d. **Youth strongly recommend that Japan enforces the provision of essential information in languages other than Japanese at the national, prefectural, and municipal levels.**
- ### 2. **Enforce anti-discrimination and anti-exploitation laws to safeguard migrants**
- a. Japan does have laws to prohibit discrimination and exploitation, as well as accountability mechanisms. However there are limitations in labor unionization, in measures in place to conduct audits of working conditions of migrants, and in actions taken to hold accountable employers that are in violation. There is not enough awareness or access to assistance for foreign residents who experience discrimination, especially in accessing basic needs and services such as housing and healthcare services. Some organizations we consulted described efforts to connect migrants with Japanese legal professionals for reduced fees.

- b. **Youth call upon the Ministry of Justice to increase the number of audits of employers of TIT workers and to act upon any alleged exploitation or violation of human rights.**
  - c. **Youth strongly recommend that the Ministry of Justice enforce anti-discrimination laws consistently at the national level,** assigning penalties for violations to protect young migrants and other minorities and vulnerable groups as full members of society.
- 3. Embrace diversity as a beneficial aspect of Japanese society**
- a. According to IOM Japan, there is much work to be done to raise awareness of the reality of migrants among the Japanese public, and hope for a more interconnected future rests with youth. The richness of Japanese culture shows best when all members of society are included in the celebration of its traditions. The Families in Global Transition (FIGT) Japan Affiliate offer counseling and community to help the thousands of young Japanese return migrants and intercultural youth to navigate the narrow definition of 'Japanese-ness' and try to find a sense of 'home' and acceptance in Japanese society. Cultivating more awareness of the positive contributions of migrants and embracing diversity as a beneficial aspect of Japanese society, in alignment with the SDGs, will help both Japanese citizens and migrants alike.
  - b. **Youth call upon MEXT to include the narrative of migrants in Japan in compulsory courses for students and educators** with the goal of raising awareness of the positive role of migrants in Japanese society and eliminating discrimination and marginalization.
  - c. **Youth strongly encourage MEXT to allocate funding to support educational initiatives at the primary, secondary and tertiary levels** that seek to promote diversity and cultural exchange within Japan, not only abroad.
  - d. **Youth call upon Japanese government leaders to publicly recognize and support migrant-owned businesses as a gesture of inclusivity.**
  - e. **Youth call upon Japanese mainstream media to promote positive narratives of diversity in Japan.**

## Objective 2: Minimize the adverse drivers and structural factors that compel people to leave their country of origin.

Japan remains an attractive destination country for economic and lifestyle migrants, as well as international students and Japanese returnees. However, due to its geographical isolation and extremely low acceptance rate for displaced migrants, Japan is not a common destination for irregular migrants.

Of rising concern, are gender-based drivers of both internal migration in Japan and emigration abroad; namely limited prospects and/or frustrations with gender bias against Japanese women, especially those from the countryside. Japan maintains the greatest gender pay gap among OECD countries. Since 1993, more female than male Japanese youth have left rural areas for urban cities and have chosen not to return home. Often, young female internal migrants face a lack of educational and employment opportunities in their hometowns, compared to cities. They may also choose to move in search of better child care. In some cases, they wish to avoid familial obligations such as marriage and/or life as a primary

caregiver. There are also more young females than males migrating outside of Japan, often becoming permanent residents since 2000. Though these mobilities offer some opportunity, they do not guarantee that young Japanese women will experience better outcomes in gender equality.

### Recommendations

1. Youth call upon Japanese government leadership to **commit to gender equality, representation, and diversity in all environments**, all levels and all sectors, including the **adoption of a more progressive and open view of gender roles and the promotion of paternity leave** and the normalization of its utilization.
2. Youth encourage the Japanese government at the national and local levels to **provide more child care facilities and staff to lessen the potential burdens of care that have traditionally fallen to women**, in both the countryside and urban environments.
3. Youth call upon the Japanese government to **foster greater awareness of the drivers and narratives of female minorities and to provide culturally-sensitive support** to break down the barriers of social and economic mobility, first and foremost through data collection at the national level.

## Objective 15: Provide access to basic services for migrants.

Japan's rotational migration policy and reluctance to commit to an immigration policy contribute to the barriers to providing access to basic services for migrant youth. Insufficient support exists for migrants, and Japanese returnees, and language barriers limit the awareness of the services that do exist. Youth are among the most vulnerable groups to suffer from social and economic marginalization, but they are also among those actively creating social change.

Vietnamese nationals are among the fastest growing migrant groups in Japan, and youth-led and youth-focused organizations have arisen to help provide for their basic needs and services. In consultation, Vietnamese Professionals in Japan (VPJ) pointed out the need for support for migrant dependent family members. Those working in Japan may receive some Japanese language training through their company, but accompanying family members are often left unaware of where to find Japanese language education, guidance on legal procedures, and information to help establish a household in Japan. VPJ conducts a workshop on integration for dependent family members, offers a service to link the Japanese public employment office with Vietnamese migrant workers, and provides a hotline in Vietnamese. Vietnamese Youth and Students' Association (VYSA) provides a community of support for Vietnamese youth and conducts Japanese language classes online, but it lacks funding and qualified teachers. **Non-Japanese NGOs providing support for migrants should be given financial support by the Ministry of Justice, and they should be treated as partners in the integration approach through the creation of a digital platform for knowledge-sharing and capacity-building.** A positive example is the Vietnamese Association in Japan (VAIJ) which co-led a digital job fair with the Immigration Bureau in 2020 where, out of 500 participants, 50 could find jobs.



Additionally, we learned of examples of youth-led online groups that focus on supporting foreign youth with their career path challenges by sharing stories of other foreign youth who have already had the experience of growing up in Japan as role models. When parents are not fully integrated into Japanese society, the barriers of access to basic services and economic mobility can be passed on to their children.

90% of Japanese-nationals of high school age are enrolled in high school, but the number drops to 70% for migrant youth. YSC Global School provides support for high school drop-outs with foreign heritage. In consultation, YSC highlights the difficulty in reaching these dropouts due to the failure of support organizations to capture an accurate understanding of these struggling youth. **The right to education must be protected for all youth, and given additional support for the vulnerable.** YSC Global School also conducted an orientation on how to support migrant youth for Japanese public employment support centers, implemented as ‘additional’ support in a scheme already in place for Japanese nationals.

According to J-Fun Youth, the 6-month intensive course in Japanese language education provided as part of the displaced migrant integration program is insufficient to empower them for daily working life in Japan, and many NGOs and NPOs are trying their best to cover for this gap. Furthermore, representatives from J-Fun Youth recommend that the Japanese government provide similar 6-month intensive Japanese language programs for international students that come to Japan for study to ease their difficulties in their daily lives.

In consultation with Freeushiki, access to basic services such as healthcare, education and communication are extremely limited for displaced detainees at detention centers of regional immigration bureaus, an area further exacerbated by COVID-19. The pandemic has hindered the exchange of information on the health and safety conditions within the centers, which has been, in the past, collected independently by individual NGOs, NPOs and displaced migrants who had direct connections with detainees. COVID-19 has led to a rapid increase in the number of displaced migrants temporarily released from detention centers, who often later suffer from poverty because their visa status prevents them from finding employment. **Vulnerable youth, especially displaced migrants and detainees in centers and on temporary release must be given fair and just treatment to protect their human rights. It is necessary to provide basic healthcare services to all migrants, especially during COVID-19, such as testing and care in case of illness.**

### Recommendations

1. Youth call upon the Ministry of Justice to **provide free Japanese language education and/or language education subsidies for migrants equivalent to 600 hours** (in line with integration standards in other developed countries) and **sensitive to the different linguistic needs** of various migrant groups, and to obligate employers to allocate time for such employees to take classes without penalty.
2. Youth encourage the **active collaboration and support of the Japanese government and municipal stakeholders for job-hunting and recruitment opportunities and events** for migrants.

3. Youth strongly encourage Japanese government leadership to **implement national-level monitoring of basic service provision for detainees at detention centers as well as displaced migrants on temporary release.**

## Objective 17: Eliminate all forms of discrimination and promote evidence-based public discourse to shape perceptions of migration.

The challenges of social inclusion in Japan transcend language barriers and ethnicity, as many of the barriers for foreign migrant youth also limit the potential of Japanese returnees and intercultural youth. Japanese society traditionally prizes collective conformity, which proves a challenge to understanding and accepting diverse cultures and peoples. There is also not enough awareness or access to assistance for those who experience discrimination, especially in accessing basic needs and services such as housing and healthcare services. We found that young people are motivated to boldly take action through creating social enterprise, volunteering, or otherwise filling gaps, despite being often limited to smaller-scale operations and unsupported by wider society.

To increase awareness and acceptance of cultural diversity, VYSA organizes exchange events between Japanese and Vietnamese students, including the Vietnamese festival and Japanese cooking classes. The youth leader of Moving Beyond Hate encourages the Japanese media to present youth as change-makers in Japanese society and to further engage youth in taking action to combat discrimination.

In consultation, VPJ emphasized the importance of providing capacity-building sessions for Japanese employers regarding how to work with foreign employees, as the levels of discrimination experienced in the workplace can be severe. VPJ also criticized Japanese media for linking a high rate of criminality with Vietnamese migrants, an image that has strongly shaped public perceptions and increased discrimination.

Both IOM Japan and Solidarity Network with Migrants Japan recommend that **the GCM be translated into Japanese** as the first step towards systemically tackling migration issues in Japan, followed by creating a discursive space to effectively address these problems.

1. Youth call upon the Ministry of Justice and Immigration Bureau to **provide capacity-building sessions for employers on how to embrace diversity in the workplace, to promote more diversity in hiring quotas, and to show discursive leadership in fostering a positive view of migrants** as contributors to Japanese society.
2. Youth strongly recommend that the Ministry of Justice **enforce anti-discrimination laws consistently across sectors at the national level**, assigning **penalties for violations** to protect young migrants and other minorities and vulnerable groups as full members of society.
3. Youth urgently recommend that **official translations of the GCM be made available in the languages of all government stakeholders** to support its implementation.
4. Youth encourage Japanese mainstream media to **commit to a fact-based and non-biased portrayal of migrant communities in Japan**, with the full recognition that media outlets have real and tangible outcomes in terms of discrimination against vulnerable groups.



## Objective 18: Invest in skills development and facilitate the mutual recognition of skills, qualifications, and competences.

Japanese language ability is often considered the first and most important skill for migrants, and a lesser Japanese language ability remains one of the greatest barriers to the recognition of other skills, as well as economic and social mobility.

In consultation, Kosta Miladinović, a migrant youth and recent university graduate, said that his company pushed him to develop new skills to improve his work, but did not provide enough free time or time off from work to do so. Also, classes offered in Kosta's community were available in Japanese only. To increase accessibility, courses should be offered in multiple other languages, or, at least, in English. Many migrant youth are limited in their skills development in Japan due to language barriers and a lack of commitment to migrant development in Japan.

YSC Global School said that an accredited foreign lawyer in their network has been prevented from practicing his profession simply because he is not thought to have sufficient Japanese language, even though he took pains to obtain the recognized skills and credentials in Japan. Even if migrants manage to develop skills and qualifications in Japanese, they can remain excluded from job opportunities because of perceived language and cultural differences in highly-skilled industries or professional services jobs.

Migrant youth such as international students, TIT workers and irregular migrants who cannot speak any Japanese upon arrival, require basic Japanese language education focused on daily life and empowerment. The goal, however, should be to *thrive*, not only *survive*. Students from J-Fun Youth who offer classes to second-generation migrants from Myanmar believe that such youth need educational support despite their proficiency in Japanese, especially in academic guidance, cultural and career-related education. Japanese returnees, intercultural youth, and resident ethnic minorities in Japan, who already have Japanese proficiency, require Japanese language education aimed at enabling their full participation and integration into Japanese society. **Integration efforts should seek to overcome divisions and barriers for all diverse members of society, and the lack of acceptance and support to youth who do not conform to a narrow view of Japanese identity cannot continue.** Without integration, we are **missing out on the potential of youth to contribute to the social fabric and prosperity of Japan.** We **urgently call** on the Japanese government to take greater action to implement the GCM to the benefit of all.

1. We strongly encourage MEXT to **allocate funding to support educational initiatives at the primary, secondary and tertiary levels** that seek to **promote diversity and cultural exchange** within Japan, not only abroad.
2. We call upon Japanese government leadership to **provide funding for NGOs and civil society groups to offer mother tongue classes for migrants and ethnic minorities** in Japan.
3. We encourage private sector stakeholders and Japanese government leaders to **invest in youth as global talent by offering time and resources for multilingual skills development courses.**

## Special Section: Technical Intern Trainees

The Technical Intern Training Program (TITP) was established in April 1993, when the Japanese government consolidated various small and scattered internship and training visa programs which dated back to the 1950s. Officially, though the TITP operates inside Japan, it is classified as part of Japan's overseas development assistance program because its aim is to transfer Japanese technology and expertise to 'less-developed' neighboring countries through equipping Technical Intern Trainees (TITs) with the relevant skills.<sup>6</sup> TIT workers are usually young, in their 20s and early 30s, and are not allowed to be accompanied by family while they stay in Japan. They work full-time for low wages, which is justified through the TITP's status as a skills-building program. Although housing may be provided by the employer, TIT workers are expected to pay rental fees and other cost-of-living related expenses. There has been increasing criticism of the TITP as a supposed 'charitable system' and allegations that the real motive for admitting TIT workers is to exploit their cheap labor.<sup>7</sup>

We spoke with several academics, student leaders, and human rights activists, all of whom requested to remain anonymous, who described their shock and anger at the treatment of TIT workers in Japan. None of the TIT workers they have worked with felt that their skills improved and most suffered negative experiences. TIT visas stipulate that workers cannot change their employer, essentially trapping the TIT worker between remaining employed under dubious or dangerous circumstances, or being forced to leave Japan. The scale of this issue is huge.

In 2017, 70% of the organizations receiving TITs were found to be violating labor laws. However, there are only 13 regional offices and 346 staff to oversee over 2,000 supervising organizations and 40,000 employers that receive TIT workers. These employers are often SMEs or family-run businesses that lack awareness of what they should provide for TIT workers. Often, without an awareness of their rights, limited ability to access legal counsel or other basic services, and a lack of a hygienic living environment or freedom of movement, TIT workers may suffer for years. **Youth call for the government to ensure that employers who apply for TIT workers be provided with strict guidelines for their fair treatment, capacity-building sessions on how to work with them fairly, and continued audits to ensure compliance.**

Female TIT workers face added discrimination and sometime sexual exploitation. According to our anonymous consultee, female TIT workers who may become pregnant (even as a result of sexual assault) may be forbidden from giving birth in Japan by their employers. Legally, migrant women have the right to go to the hospital for healthcare and to give birth in safety, covered by the Japanese National Health Insurance scheme. Employers often fire female TIT workers who become pregnant, leading to their deportation. **Youth call on the Japanese authorities to hold accountable employers who spread fear and misinformation to female TIT workers place their health and wellbeing at great risk.**

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<sup>6</sup> N. Ogawa. 2011. Population Aging and Immigration in Japan. *Asian and Pacific Migration Journal*, 20(2), pp.133-167.

<sup>7</sup> <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1aXgHtP1DiGOdjRfvT2MDP1f5TKMARIY4/view> (accessed on 27 August 2020)

Out of desperation, TIT workers may run away if they cannot afford to return to their home countries. The number of TIT runaways has been rising since 2010, reaching 5,803 in 2015. These ‘disappearing’ migrants become untracked and unacknowledged once they leave the TITP system, as their visa status prevents them from entering regular employment. **Youth call on the Japanese government to develop a better system to monitor TIT workers and offer effective protection of their rights on a national level.**

According to one anonymous consultee, local ‘brokers’ coerce and recruit young people for the TITP from poor families in rural areas, often forcing families into up to USD\$10,000 in debt to cover ‘sending fees’. We were told that ‘broker agents’ in Japan harass and abuse TIT workers about their debts, which take years to pay off. This exploitative ‘broker system’ is not officially part of the TITP, but it exists because of the TITP. **Youth urgently call upon Japanese government leadership to actively discourage the ‘broker’ system in the countries of origin for the TIT workers, and invest in promoting fact-based ethical pathways for the recruitment of young TIT workers.** Youth also strongly encourage key stakeholders in the TITP system to **circulate accurate information about the TITP before the TITP work arrives in Japan**, including: information on their right to unemployment insurance, legal protections, fair pay for overtime work, and healthcare services, as well as information on the existence of support organizations like JITCO. **Youth also call on hotlines to be provided in multiple languages for TIT workers** to access information on their rights, find basic services and counsel (including healthcare during Covid-19), and to report abuses.

In 2018, the Japanese government reformed the Immigration Control and Refugee Recognition Act with the aim of bringing around 345,000 migrant workers into Japan under the new Specified Skilled Workers (SSW) visa and filling severe labor shortages in 14 designated sectors over the next five years. The SSW visa became effective in April 2019. Supposedly, TIT workers who can qualify for the SSW visa will be able to transition into longer-term employment, change employers, earn higher wages, and be joined by their family. There is no transparency on how this transition is conducted or what kind of living and/or employment support SSW workers can receive. This SSW visa has the potential to benefit the Japanese labor market, as well as provide more economic mobility for TIT workers. It does not, however, solve the problems of systemic exploitation in the TITP. **Youth call on the government to ensure that all technical intern trainees are provided with clean and suitable residences, and educated on their rights and freedoms**, as many are working in very restricted conditions. Some do not have freedom of movement, face verbal and sexual harassment, and have no access to organizations that can help them. When young people suffer abuse during crucial stages of development, it can leave scars that continue to cause pain throughout their lives. **Young TIT workers should be given the opportunity to live and work in Japan with full respect for their human rights, access to basic needs and services, and a real commitment to empower them as the next generation of technical leaders in their countries of origin.**

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