

Thinking Together—Regional Communities and the YKK Group

Since our foundation, the YKK Group has conducted our business activities in accordance with our philosophy, the "Cycle of Goodness." This section features some of the initiatives of the YKK Group for taking care of community-based stakeholders.

Ninth Stakeholder Dialogue

Using the Facilities of the YKK Group to Pursue Harmony with Nature



Participants (from left to right)

- **Business partner:** Akira Hirano (President & CEO, Hirano Komuten K.K.)
- **Nature conservation group representative:** Atsushi Sano (Manager of Interaction & Cooperation Promotion Department, Toyama Environment Foundation)
- **Participant from local government authority:** Emi Makino (Manager, Living Environment Section, Citizen Affairs Department, Kurobe City)
- **Facilitator:** Professor Noriyasu Kunori, Ph.D.
- **Local resident:** Satoshi Noshima (Vice-Chairman, Muratsubaki Promotion Society)
- **Foreign exchange student:** Xu Xianqiang (Department of Social Infrastructure Engineering, Graduate School of Engineering, Toyama Prefectural University)
- **Consumer representative:** Rika Inagaki (Promoter of global warming prevention efforts in Toyama)
- **Naturalist:** Kikuyo Matsuki (Vice Chairperson, Kurobe Gorge Naturalist Society)

The YKK Group has hosted Stakeholder Dialogues annually since 2010 to provide a forum for the exchange of opinions. The 9th Stakeholder Dialogue took place on April 27, 2018. The first half of the session involved a visit to Passive Town, a redevelopment project being carried out on the former site of company

housing of the YKK Group in Kurobe City, Toyama Prefecture. The second half involved an exchange of opinions between stakeholders and YKK Group employees at the community center within the project. The focus was on ties with the local community and ways it can make use of Passive Town.

Making Use of YKK Group Facilities across Kurobe City, Toyama Prefecture

The YKK Group views Kurobe as a technology headquarters. It is home to a range of YKK Group facilities, many of which are open to the people in the local community. The Furusato no Mori forest within the YKK Center Park is an example. The forest is a habitat for numerous endangered species. It is open to elementary school children across Toyama Prefecture so that it can provide environmental education for future generations. K-HALL was completed outside Kurobe

Station on the Ai-no-kaze-Toyama Line in August 2017, helping generate vitality in the vicinity. The first floor has shops, while the second floor has a multipurpose hall, which provides space for people in the local community. Kurobe is home to a number of other YKK Group facilities, including Maezawa Garden and the sports ground in the Aramata area, which provide places of recreation, and help breathe life and development in the community.



K-HALL (Shared facility of K-TOWN single-person dormitories in front of Kurobe Station, which can be used by local residents)

Finding New Use for Shared Spaces

The participants in the Stakeholder Dialogue visited Passive Town, where the YKK Group is fostering community development on the site of former company housing. We aim to establish about 250 homes here by 2025. The landscaping is designed with the comfort of the residents in mind. The project also makes maximum use of the energy available from Kurobe's rich natural environment. It has a "center common", providing a shared space for local residents to mix with one another. Different events are held here according to the season, and it is also a place to teach children about the environment.

The second half of the dialogue involved an exchange of views in the form of workshops. The stakeholders were divided into three groups, which discussed with YKK Group employees new ways of using the "center common" and fostering ties with the local community. Each group came up with specific ideas about what the YKK can and should do based on the area's distinctive natural surroundings and culture.

The proposals included an event to catch fish in the nearby river (as a means of harnessing Toyama's environment), as

well as events for children, such as a quiz to identify types of trees from leaves collected inside YKK facilities, the building of snow huts in the winter, and the chance to play on small railway trolleys. Other proposals included local public viewings of professional sporting events via large outdoor screens, sake tastings, and an event to sample water from different sources. There was also a proposal for an event to feature curry dishes from around the world relying on YKK employees who have been to different parts of the world. This would draw on the diverse nature of the employees of the YKK Group. And there was also a suggestion to hold an event involving *gyoza* (pan-fried meat dumplings), the molds for which could be created with YKK technology.



The YKK Group listened to the ideas that were presented in the workshops and is considering implementing some of them. The idea is to enable people to find out about and experience Kurobe, foster the utility of Passive Town, and return something to people in the local community.



Participants being briefed about the landscaping



Workshop in progress



Relaxed exchange of views



Overall feedback from Dr. Kunori

Thoughts after Holding the Stakeholder Dialogues

The Stakeholder Dialogue in FY2018 discussed ways of using the Passive Town project in Kurobe City (which gives an idea of what communities might look like in the near future) to foster appealing and attractive community development in harmony with the environment. This kind of activity is a social requirement connected to the company's social responsibilities under ISO 26000, which calls for community involvement. And it is also connected to Goal 11 of the UN Sustainable Development Goals, which calls for action to make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable. It is hoped that the YKK Group will take on the ideas presented

in the dialogue and take the lead in realizing them in collaboration with the community and the local authorities.



Noriyasu Kunori
Ph.D.

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- Lecturer (Environmental Management), Graduate School of Engineering, Toyama Prefectural University
- Toyama City Policy Advisor
- Toyama City Environmental Council Chairman

* Passive Town is a project providing ideas for community and residential development by harnessing the natural sources of energy in the Kurobe area, and by reducing the consumption of electricity and fossil fuels
[WEB https://www.passivetown.jp/](https://www.passivetown.jp/)
 (Information in Japanese)

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(From left to right)
 Fuminori Onoda (Chairman, Kanda-Izumi-cho District Association), Ichiro Goto (Vice-Chairman), Tadahiro Yoshida (Director, YKK/YKK AP)



Talking about the community

Working with the Communities on *Monozukuri*

The YKK 80 Building was completed in Tokyo's Kanda-Izumi-cho district on the 80th anniversary of the company's founding.

Director (then Chairman&CEO) Tadahiro Yoshida met with the head and deputy head of the district association, Fuminori Onoda and Ichiro Goto, in May 2017, shortly before the area hosted its annual Kanda Festival.

Mr. Onoda expressed appreciation to YKK for allowing the portable shrines used in the festival to be placed at the first-floor entrance of the YKK 80 Building on Showadori Avenue over the last few years at festival time where they can be admired by all of the passers-by. He described the spot as one of the prime locations for the Kanda-Izumi-cho district.

Mr. Goto expressed hope that other corporations will come to the area and participate and get pleasure from the different events that take place in it.

Yoshida conveyed the company's enthusiasm. He said while he had long described YKK as being a corporate citizen, he has also maintained the idea that everyone is part of society, irrespective of whether they are citizens or corporations. YKK was initially established in the Nihonbashi Kakigara-cho area in 1934. It subsequently moved to the nearby Nihonbashi Bakurocho and then to the Kaminarimon area of Asakusa, before shifting its headquarters to the Kanda-Izumicho district in 1963. YKK has benefited a great deal from this district, which had been one of Japan's premier haberdashery wholesaling areas, and consequently has affection for and is very keen to contribute to it. YKK will continue to fulfill our obligations as a corporate citizen to make others happy.

The YKK Group values working together with communities.

The "Cycle of Goodness" in Our Operations

Since its foundation, the YKK Group has valued links to our communities, both at home and abroad, where it does business. Our founder, Tadao Yoshida, said the following:

“YKK exists all around the globe, an expanding Cycle of Goodness.

In the course of this expansion, I have always told everyone that YKK is not just a Japanese firm; it exists in its own manifestations in the United States and Germany, for example.

We cannot expect to be loved unless we are constantly contributing to local communities and the economies of their respective countries. ”

(Excerpt from *The Complete Works of Tadao Yoshida, Vol. II, Management Philosophy*)

Yoshida also explained that when people are working abroad, "They should show respect for a place's customs, practices and traditions, and feel as if they were actually born there." At the YKK Group, we believe in being part of the local community.

We constantly bear in mind the need to think locally and work with communities to prosper and grow together in accordance with the YKK philosophy of the "Cycle of Goodness."



Our founder Tadao Yoshida with local children