

## Peace Winds Japan: Peace Wanco Project

### Overview

Each year in Japan, tens of thousands dogs and cats are put to sleep in gas chambers.

Peace Winds Japan, a Hiroshima-based nonprofit organization, has initiated a project that not only rescues stray dogs who are destined to be euthanized, but also trains them with the help of professional handlers and finds them new homes.

Since starting the “Peace Wanco” project to protect stray pets over a decade ago, Peace Winds Japan has saved the lives of more than 6,000 animals that otherwise would have been euthanized.

In 2011, more than 8,300 dogs and cats met such a fate in Hiroshima Prefecture alone, the highest number throughout Japan.

Since 2016, however, Peace Winds Japan has managed to ensure this number has been reduced to zero, thanks to the Peace Wanco Project (“wanco” is the affectionate Japanese term for dog that is similar to the English word “doggy”).

Peace Winds Japan’s pursuit of zero deaths by euthanasia throughout Japan continues to this day.

### The Challenge

In Japan, many people keep pets such as cats and dogs without considering the responsibilities entailed and abandon them without a second thought. They sometimes do so for selfish reasons, saying “we don’t get along,” or, “I can’t keep it anymore because I’m moving house.” Once abandoned, dogs in particular are left to their own devices, become wild, and are eventually caught and cruelly euthanized in gas chambers. We are working to bring an end this shocking situation.



In November 2010, PWJ convened the Peace Wanco Project, when we resolved to save the life of a puppy at the Hiroshima Prefectural Animal Welfare Center.

In a dark, cramped holding room, the puppy had been placed in a rusty cage on a cold concrete floor. If we had not intervened, the puppy would have been put to sleep at the age of just three months.



The system that is in place is harsh (WARNING: SOME MAY FIND THE FOLLOWING DESCRIPTION DISTURBING). The gas chamber is known as the “Dream Box,” and dogs are driven into it via a mechanical system of metal walls that open and shut at the push of a button, offering them no way out. When the "disposal" is complete, the floor of the Dream Box opens and the dog is cremated in the incinerator below.

The little puppy we helped to rescue must have shivered as he heard the last yelps of countless friends who passed through this barbaric system.

The walls of the “Dream Box” contain countless claw marks of animals desperately trying to break free. Upon seeing this, we at Peace Winds Japan made a vow to ensure the machine was never put into motion again.

### **The Solution**

In order to achieve this, we set about building a large shelter complete with dog run. To date we have taken in over 6,000 dogs, including the sick and injured. Not one has been abandoned.

In addition, we have established adoption centers in eight locations nationwide and remain committed to finding homes for the dogs we have trained. We have more than 100 staff who are involved in breeding and training dogs and finding them new owners.

However, there is still a long way to go to save the tens of thousands of dogs in Japan who are not so lucky. With your help, we plan to open more adoption centers and hire more staff so that we can train and find new homes for dogs who, through no fault of their own, have become wild and wary of humans. In the process we hope to eradicate the current system that deems it necessary to terminate their lives.

### **Longterm impact**

It is difficult to change longstanding public perceptions. Nevertheless, through the establishment of adoption centers and awareness-raising activities nationwide, we have endeavored to put a stop to the needless killing of countless dogs and cats in Japan, in the same way as the leading animal welfare countries in Europe.

With your help, we vow to keep our pledge to put an end to the needless killing of dogs and cats. Please help us fulfill this goal.

You can do so through one-time or monthly donations via our Global Giving Website (<https://globalgiving.org/projects/putting-an-end-to-pet-euthanasia-in-japan>)

US\$15 would be enough for a bag of dog food

\$43 would be enough for 3 bags of dog food

\$28 would be enough for 1 stray dog's recommended vaccinations

\$67 would cover the cost of neutering 1 stray dog

\$100 would cover the entire cost of rescuing 1 stray dog

\$1000 would cover the cost of rescuing of 10 stray dogs

\$3000 would cover the cost of rescuing and find new home for 3 stray dogs

Photos below show the activities at the adoption centers while the following link gives an introduction to the Peace Wanco Project  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=29F7sMxyux8&t=3s>

THANK YOU!



A shelter in Jinseki, Hiroshima Prefecture

Check-in at the shelter in Jinseki, Hiroshima Prefecture





A new arrival at the shelter in Jinseki, Hiroshima Prefecture





Hiroshima shelter: all-comers welcomed.







<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=29F7sMxyux8&t=3s>



Handlers and rescued dogs stand outside one of the eight adoption centers, this one in Nara.