

In Kyoto, Japanese comedians tackle UN Global Goals

13 October 2017 – Japanese comedians on Friday competed to make people laugh by weaving the Sustainable Development Goals ([SDGs](#)) into their performance at a United Nations-supported special event in Kyoto, the country's cultural centre.

“It is fascinating to see so many people take interest in [SDGs](#) with today's comedy show as an entry point, thanks to the influence of entertainment,” said Kaoru Nemoto, Director of UN Information Centre (UNIC) in Tokyo. “Laughter can open up people's minds, and comedy and entertainment can break barriers.”

This creative experiment was made possible by UNIC Tokyo's special collaboration launched earlier this year with Yoshimoto Kogyo, an entertainment troupe with some 6,000 comedians under its management.

Jeff Brez, Chief, NGO Relations, Advocacy and Special Events of UN Department of Public Information, said that the UN needs the help of the creative community to spread the word about this master plan to guide the planet to a sustainable future through 2030.

“The challenge of SDGs is that it is complex and that we need time to address. We would like to help bring everybody on board and engage in this important agenda, through simple and down-to-earth messages,” said Yoshimoto Kogyo President and Chief Executive Officer Hiroshi Osaki.



UN staff join Kagamiwari ritual to celebrate the opening of the Kyoto International Film Festival. Photo: UNIC Tokyo/Takashi Okano

According to a news release from the festival's organizer, five groups took to the stage wearing a rainbow of colored t-shirts emblazoned with a SDG's logo. Each group had to choose at least three of the 17 Goals in to their routine.

Last up were Non-Style, who managed to incorporate 11 Goals as they portrayed a baseball player and his girlfriend as the player plans to give her a birthday present. Ms. Nemoto, who served as the judge, decided to award Non-Style the prize of United Nations goods.

The event was part of the 4th Kyoto International Film and Art Festival.

The festival opened on Thursday and runs through Sunday, at the Nishi Hongwanji Temple, a World Heritage site designated by the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization ([UNESCO](#)).

SDGs-themed events during the festival also include a screening of a short promotional movie on SDGs produced by top Japanese creators, and a game for children to collect 17 SDGs stamps featuring the comedians' messages.