

Initiative for Disaster Reduction through ODA

Government of Japan

I Japan's basic position on disaster reduction

The disaster caused by the major earthquake off the coast of Sumatra and the tsunami in the Indian Ocean that occurred in December 2004 led to unprecedented human and physical damage to the countries in the area. Natural disasters such as earthquakes, tsunamis, torrential rains, heavy snowfalls, storms (typhoons and tornados), floods, landslide disasters (avalanche of rock and earth, mudslides, and soil erosions), volcanic eruptions, forest fires and droughts have threatened human life by bringing about socio-economic disorders as well as loss of lives and damage of property.

Natural disaster is a global issue that causes serious damage in many respects in countries around the world each year. Putting an end to the vicious circle, in which human livelihoods and socio-economic development are hampered by repeated damage from natural disasters, is one of the most important preconditions for achieving poverty reduction and sustainable development. In particular, many developing countries are vulnerable to natural disasters and suffer extremely serious damage from natural disasters.

According to the statistics in the White Paper on Disaster Reduction published by the Government of Japan, more than ninety percent of the total death toll from natural disasters during the past twenty-five years between 1978 and 2002 was concentrated in the developing countries. Generally speaking, the poor in developing countries, who are vulnerable to natural disasters, tend to suffer heavily and become displaced by natural disasters. Therefore, the secondary effect of disasters such as deterioration of sanitary conditions and food shortage that is sustained over a long period, poses a major challenge for developing countries.

While each country has the primary responsibility for taking actions for disaster reduction, it is essential to support self-help with mutual help and partnership. Japan attaches importance to promoting actions by developing countries based on ownership, and assisting their efforts based on partnership.

As natural disaster is a direct threat to humankind, actions to address this threat must incorporate the perspective of human security, which places the focus on individual people, and the gender perspective in addition to perspectives at the global, regional and country level. Furthermore, in order to cooperate effectively in actions against natural disasters, it is necessary to respond to the particular stages of disaster taking full account of the standpoint of beneficiaries.

In the area of disaster reduction, Japan has provided financial assistance of about ¥33 billion in fiscal 2003, that is among the highest level of international cooperation. Japan has been playing an active role in the international cooperation on disaster reduction by utilizing its own experiences, human resources and technology in which it has international comparative advantage. With a view to provide the maximum possible assistance in terms of financial resources, knowledge and expertise, and human resources in respect of the major earthquake off the coast of Sumatra and the tsunami in the Indian Ocean, Japan will:

1. extend grant aid of up to \$500 million for the time being as emergency assistance;
2. promote cooperation with countries and international organizations concerned for the rapid establishment of an early-warning mechanism on tsunamis in the Indian Ocean; and
3. provide the maximum possible assistance for rehabilitation and reconstruction.

On the occasion of the World Conference on Disaster Reduction, Japan announces the basic policies and concrete actions concerning international cooperation on disaster reduction through Official Development Assistance (ODA) in order to cope with natural disasters such as earthquakes and tsunamis in a comprehensive and coherent manner.

II Basic policies

Japan will support the self-help efforts of developing countries in the field of disaster reduction through its ODA based on the following basic policies.

1. Raising the priority attached to disaster reduction

Giving a higher priority to disaster reduction in developing countries by raising awareness on disaster reduction among policy-makers and governmental officials concerned is crucial because this will make it possible to mitigate damage caused by natural disasters. Japan will assist developing countries in raising awareness on the importance of disaster reduction and seek to strengthen and establish disaster reduction in developing countries through policy dialogues, seminars, advocacy activities, and assessment of disaster risks.

2. Perspective of human security

In promoting cooperation on disaster reduction, it is crucial to protect individuals from disaster and to empower individuals and local communities based on the perspective of human security that puts people at the centre of concerns. For this purpose, it is essential to accurately identify the needs of the residents of target areas. Japan will assist the empowerment of local communities and give due consideration to those who are particularly vulnerable to disasters such as children and the poor.

3. Gender perspective

Due to the existence of gender disparities in various aspects such as participation in political decision-making and socio-economic activities and access to information, women are particularly susceptible to damage from disaster. Therefore, Japan will provide assistance based on a gender perspective in respect of all aspects of cooperation on disaster reduction.

4. Importance of assistance regarding software

It is essential to take appropriate actions in the phase of disaster prevention and that of emergency response in order to mitigate damage and to reduce vulnerability to disaster. In this respect, Japan will provide assistance regarding software such as human resources development, institutional development, and planning in addition to assistance in hardware such as development of economic and social infrastructure. In doing so, Japan will make efforts to provide effective assistance by accurately identifying local socio-economic situations.

5. Mobilization of Japan's experience, expertise and technology

Having repeatedly experienced various natural disasters such as earthquakes, tsunamis, typhoons, floods, and volcanic eruptions, Japan has acquired high capacity for disaster management. Therefore, Japan will effectively mobilize its own experience, advanced expertise and technology to enhance capacity for disaster management of developing countries.

6. Mobilization and dissemination of locally available and suitable technology

Japan will provide cooperation by applying technology and expertise in disaster reduction that are tailored to the actual conditions of developing countries. For this purpose, Japan will seek to utilize and disseminate cost-effective and locally available materials, technologies and means in a locally suitable and sustainable manner. Japan will carry out model projects requiring small amount of input which are expected to be widely replicated.

7. Promoting partnerships with various stakeholders

In order to broadly promote disaster prevention, it is essential to seek collaboration with those involved in activities in various fields, such as international organizations, regional organizations, other donors, local governments, Japanese and foreign non-governmental organizations (NGOs), the private sector and academia. In particular, Japan will promote collaboration with NGOs actively engaged in disaster prevention in developing countries in order to enhance cooperation at the grass-roots level which will directly benefit local communities and individuals.

III Cooperation corresponding to each phase of disaster

Based on the basic policies mentioned above, Japan will make efforts to implement cooperation on disaster reduction that correspond to specific phases of disaster in a coherent manner as follows:

- 1. Integration of disaster prevention into development policies**
- 2. Rapid and appropriate assistance in the immediate aftermath of disaster**
- 3. Cooperation that extend from reconstruction to sustainable development**

1. Integration of disaster prevention into development policies

In order to minimize the escalation of damage caused by natural disasters in developing countries, it is essential to take into account the preparedness for possible disasters. In order to introduce the 'culture of prevention' into long-term national policy, city planning, regional planning, regulations and standards, Japan will provide assistance relating to policy recommendations, institution-building and human resources development.

(1) Institution building that incorporate the perspectives of disaster prevention

Japan will promote cooperation to national and local governments on strengthening governance including policy-making and planning for disaster prevention, institutional capacity development, and improvement of legal systems. In particular, actions need to be promoted to reduce vulnerability against disaster in urban areas such as the problem of poor districts situated on lands which are at the risk of flooding and landslides. For this purpose, Japan will provide assistance for the development of disaster-resilient cities through the formulation of urban master plans and land use plans based on a medium to long term perspective. In addition, in order to facilitate regulation and guidance, Japan will provide assistance on establishment of building code and regulatory system for its application, collection and provision of information on disaster reduction, and methodology for land re-demarcation. To seek effective operation of such regulatory and guidance systems, Japan will give consideration to the social acceptability of such systems, by having dialogues with stakeholders including local residents and conducting social development studies as necessary.

(2) Training of experts and developing capacity for disaster prevention

In order for developing countries to take ownership in promoting actions for disaster prevention, it is essential to raise the awareness of officials at the policy level on disaster prevention as well as to train experts on disaster reduction administration. Therefore, Japan will promote the transfer of

practical technology and know-how on the ground through technical cooperation such as human resources development, dispatching experts and training, along with development of disaster-resilient economic and social infrastructure through grant aid and yen loan assistance.

(3) Raising awareness and building capacity of local communities on disaster reduction

Japan will consider providing cooperation to strengthen the capacity of local community to take its own initiative in disaster reduction, and raising awareness of men and women, on disaster reduction in coordination with actions in other sectors such as education, environment, and health.

2. Rapid and appropriate assistance in the immediate aftermath of a disaster

In the immediate aftermath of a disaster, Japan will provide rapid assistance such as dispatching the Japan Disaster Relief Team for lifesaving, providing basic necessities and food aid, and restoration of basic human economic and social infrastructure. In addition, Japan will dispatch experts specializing in such field as training, risk assessment of buildings and flood control to assist in the human capacity development of which will enable an emergency response.

(1) Prompt and appropriate emergency assistance

Japan will provide timely and rapid emergency assistance by combining dispatch of the Japan Disaster Relief Team and provision of emergency goods along with appropriate response to emergency needs in the immediate aftermath of a disaster.

(2) Training of experts and transfer of expertise for emergency response

To strengthen capacity for crisis management at the level of national and local government in developing countries, Japan will train experts and transfer expertise through training and dispatching experts in the field of disaster reduction.

(3) Food aid in response to food shortage caused by disasters

Japan will provide food aid for developing countries suffer from food shortage due to disasters such as drought and flood.

(4) Coherent cooperation corresponding to each phase of disaster

Japan will make efforts to provide the necessary assistance in a seamless and coherent manner that correspond to specific phases such as disaster prevention, emergency response immediately after the disaster, and reconstruction and development. For this purpose, Japan will make efforts to identify the needs for assistance from the immediate aftermath of disaster to

medium- and long-term.

3. Cooperation that extend from reconstruction to sustainable development

Japan will support actions by developing countries to end the vicious circle of disaster in the reconstruction phase towards developing a disaster-resilient community and sustainable development, targeting areas where severe damage from earthquakes, tsunamis, storms, and floods is widely spread and frequent occurrence of natural disaster is hindering economic growth. For this purpose, Japan will provide cooperation with an emphasis on economic and social infrastructure, building, and systems that are disaster-resilient.

(1) Assistance for developing disaster-resilient economic and social infrastructure and architecture

Japan seek to mitigate damage from future disasters by cooperating in the development of disaster-resilient economic and social infrastructure and architecture as well as by incorporating the perspective of disaster risk management from the reconstruction phase.

(2) Dissemination of disaster-resilient systems and technology

Japan will provide assistance for enhancing evacuation system that will mitigate damage caused by disasters, for the collection and communication of information for early warning in responding to sudden natural disasters such as earthquakes and tsunamis, and for the establishment, utilization and dissemination of technology and systems for management of economic and social infrastructure, etc.

(3) Provision of financial assistance necessary for reconstruction and development

Japan will provide financial assistance for urgently needed goods and other needs during the reconstruction phase and to contribute to the economic stabilization and reconstruction in the disaster-affected developing countries.

IV Concrete measures

Japan will contribute in realizing disaster reduction strategies in developing countries through the following actions. In this connection, efforts will be made for effective aid by taking into account as much as possible the policy objective and evaluation of its achievement.

1. Institution building

Japan will promote cooperation for disaster-resilient nation-building by providing know-how on establishment and improvement of institutions on disaster reduction as mentioned below in developing countries through dispatch of experts and other means.

- (1) Basic law on disaster reduction, national plan for disaster reduction**
- (2) Development plans, land-use plans/institution (including urban planning and land demarcation)**
- (3) Building code law (strengthening resistance to earthquakes, fire, and wind)**
- (4) Law on disaster risk areas (laws on river, land slide prevention, steep slope and coastal area)**
- (5) Law and institution concerning fire and disaster management (including those on emergency rescue)**

2. Human resources development

In order to train administrative staff and experts on disaster reduction, Japan will undertake transfer of technology and intellectual cooperation in the fields of earthquake, tsunami, control of flood and soil erosion, volcanic eruption and meteorology as mentioned below through actions such as training, dispatch of experts, and joint survey/research with governments of developing countries. In addition, Japan will consider cooperation based on the gender perspective and cooperation to integrate disaster reduction into school curriculum in developing countries.

- (1) Technology for observation, forecast and warning of earthquakes, tsunamis and meteorological disasters**
- (2) Technology for risk assessment including hazard mapping**
- (3) Technology for performance reinforcement of facilities and buildings including earthquake resilient technology and technology relating to actions against tsunamis**
- (4) Utilization of information and communication technology such as remote sensing technology and geographical information systems**

- (5) **Education for disaster reduction including production of education materials, hazard mapping, simulation on disasters, site tour of economic and social infrastructure relevant to disaster reduction, and provision of equipment as training materials**

3. Development of economic and social infrastructure

In order to mitigate economic and social impacts caused by disasters, Japan will provide assistance for the development of economic and social infrastructure such as transportation facility that are disaster-resilient through schemes such as Special Term for Economic Partnership (STEP) in addition to the development of infrastructure whose purpose is disaster reduction such as anti-flooding and of forestation as follows. In this connection, Japan will appropriately combine cooperation on the software aspect which includes human resources development and institution-building with cooperation on hardware.

- (1) **Facility for protecting coastal areas, controlling river and soil erosion**
- (2) **Afforestation for prevention of desertification and soil erosion**
- (3) **Transportation facility including road, railway, port and airport**
- (4) **Information and communication facility including those relating to collection and provision of information on natural disasters**
- (5) **Lifeline facility (water supply and sewerage, power generation, substation and transmission facility)**
- (6) **Fire and disaster management facility including provision of vehicles, materials and equipment**

4. Assistance for the reconstruction of livelihoods

In the immediate aftermath of natural disasters such as earthquakes and tsunamis, Japan will provide rapid and effective assistance based on the needs of disaster victims and evacuees such as shelter, clothing, food, water, sanitation and health in order to protect their lives and livelihoods and to secure supply of minimum requirements for subsistence.