

2 Efforts for Spreading Awareness of Development Cooperation

(1) Efforts for Information Disclosure and Promoting Public Understanding and Support

The Government of Japan makes the following enhancements and efforts for public relations and information dissemination regarding ODA.

A. Strengthening public relations and information dissemination

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) redesigned the ODA website ¹⁴ and then relaunched it in March 2021. MOFA also publishes an ODA email newsletter, ¹⁵ and conducts public relations activities using social media such as Twitter (see “ODA Topics” on page 139 for details).

Furthermore, MOFA introduces ODA in an easy-to-understand manner, including by distributing the animated video series “Go! ODA-Man” ¹⁶ using the ODA PR character “ODA-Man” featured in the popular anime “Eagle Talon,” and by releasing documentary videos featuring a famous Japanese TV personality and author Mr. MATAYOSHI Naoki.

In addition, MOFA holds one of Japan’s largest international cooperation events called “Global Festa JAPAN” every year around the time of International Cooperation Day (October 6), jointly with JICA and the Japan NGO Center for International Cooperation (JANIC) (in 2021, it was held in a hybrid format both in-person at the Tokyo International Forum and online on Saturday, October 9 and Sunday, October 10).

In overseas countries, Japanese diplomatic missions



“ODA-Man” ©DLE
Global Festa JAPAN (October 2021)

also disseminate information, for example by issuing press releases on the occasion of signing and handover ceremonies of ODA projects. The diplomatic missions also organize site-visit tours (press tours) of Japan’s development cooperation projects for the local media. In addition, Japan creates PR pamphlets, distributes the English version of the White Paper on Development Cooperation, and disseminates information in local languages via social media and websites, among other efforts.

B. Information disclosure on implementation and evaluation of ODA

The Government of Japan launched the “ODA Mieru-ka Site” ¹⁷ (a website for visualization of ODA), and posts project summaries, results and ex-ante/ex-post evaluations, and other related information on the JICA website (there were 4,840 project posts as of October 2021).

Likewise, the MOFA website publishes the results of ODA evaluations ¹⁸ and other such information, in addition to new ODA projects, and statistical materials, in order to promote more effective implementation of ODA.

C. Promotion of development education

MOFA holds the “ODA Delivery Lecture” to explain ODA and other international cooperation at educational institutions, NGOs, and other organizations in Japan. 17 ODA Delivery Lectures were provided in 2021. In addition, JICA implements the “International Cooperation Delivery Lecture,” in which ex-Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers (JOCVs) and others talk as lecturers about their experience and life in developing countries, “Visit JICA,” in which students visit JICA offices in Japan, and



The ODA Delivery Lecture given online by MOFA officials

¹⁴ MOFA’s ODA Website: <https://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/oda/index.html>

¹⁵ The ODA email newsletter: <https://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/gaiko/oda/mail/bn.html> (in Japanese only)

¹⁶ Animated video series “Go! ODA-Man”: https://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/gaiko/oda/press/event/page22_001008.html (in Japanese only)

¹⁷ ODA Mieru-ka Site: <https://www.jica.go.jp/oda/> (in Japanese only)

¹⁸ ODA evaluations: <https://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/oda/evaluation/index.html>

ODA Topics

7

ODA Public Relations

Learn more about Japan's ODA Activities that Bring Benefits to the World, and the Contributions of the Japanese People!

● Information dissemination about development cooperation

According to a Cabinet Office public opinion survey^{*1} conducted in 2020, in response to the growing awareness of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), 85.7% of respondents answered that in development cooperation in the future “Japan should more actively promote development cooperation” or “The current level of development cooperation is appropriate,” indicating a positive evaluation for development cooperation. ODA, public funds for promoting such development cooperation, is a vital diplomatic tool to address global issues such as infectious diseases and climate change in collaboration with the international community, as well as to improve Japan's standing in the international community.

In order to further promote understanding of the need for ODA and what it actually is, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) is actively engaged in public relations efforts through various types of media, including the MOFA website, email newsletters, social media, and YouTube, and works to disseminate information broadly to the public.

● Documentary series

The “ODA Challengers” series^{*2} is a series of documentary-style videos that introduces the actual frontlines of ODA projects. The series covers subjects such as a female engineer making strenuous efforts on a subway construction site in India; technicians striving to resolve issues in the Olkaria Geothermal Power Development Project in Kenya; and a human resource development project in Laos conducted by a construction company from Wakasa Town, Fukui Prefecture. A video about a geological survey company from Sapporo, Hokkaido, taking on the challenge of repairing and maintaining wells in Bolivia depicts a story where the company and employees were able to grow together through their first overseas expansion.

MOFA also released a video series named “Japanese People Shaping the Future of the World,”^{*3} which explores the enthusiasm of frontrunners who are actively involved in disaster risk reduction, peacebuilding, health and medical care, and other fields, through dialogue with them based on the theme of “Human Security.” MOFA appointed author and TV personality Mr. MATAYOSHI Naoki as the host of this series.



Documentary series



Go! ODA-Man

● Go! ODA-Man

In addition, ODA-Man, who enters the fourth year as MOFA's ODA PR character (see also “Strengthening public relations and information dissemination” on page 138), has also released a variety of videos^{*4} to inform people about Japan's ODA that contributes the world. In 2021, three videos focused on assistance in the infrastructure sector, including roads, ports, and railroads, were released: “ODA on the Road to Development,” “A Partnership' in Port Development!,” and “Envisioning the Future through Urban Railroads.” Please take advantage of those videos in school and university classes as a beginners' guide to ODA.

● Global Festa JAPAN 2021

In October 2021, the international cooperation event Global Festa JAPAN^{*5} was held for the first time in two years. The theme of this year, the 30th year, was “Toward a Society with Rich Diversity—Let's Talk about the Future We Want.” There was an on-stage program with appearances from a wide array of guests, as well as experience-based events, including exhibitions and activity reports from NGOs, international organizations, private companies, universities and other entities working in international cooperation. The event was held in a hybrid format combining on-site participation and online streaming, and a total of over 10,000 people attended on-site or participated online over the two days.

MOFA held panel discussions and talk sessions focused on diversity, regional revitalization and the overseas expansion of small and medium-sized enterprises, and the participation of the younger generation. Moreover, there was a record high of 234 entries in MOFA's customary photo contest, in which professional photographer Mr. AOKI Hiroshi and Mr. YONEYAMA Kazuhisa of Leica Camera Japan Co., Ltd. served as judges and selected the winning works. The results are available in the event report⁵ on the ODA website.

*1 The FY2020 Public Opinion Survey on Diplomacy took place from October to December 2020. The Cabinet Office entrusted it to a survey organization, which implemented a mail survey of 3,000 Japanese nationals aged 18 and over across Japan (<https://survey.gov-online.go.jp/r02/r02-gaiko/index.html>) (in Japanese only).

*2 https://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/gaiko/oda/sanka/page24_000070.html (in Japanese only)

*3 https://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/gaiko/oda/sanka/page23_001312.html (in Japanese only)

*4 https://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/gaiko/oda/press/event/page22_001008.html (in Japanese only)

*5 https://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/gaiko/oda/press/event/page23_001313.html (in Japanese only)

the “JICA Essay Contest on International Cooperation for Junior and Senior High School Students.” JICA also provides the exhibition facility “JICA Global Plaza.”

D. On-site ODA experience

In order to foster understanding of ODA projects among the Japanese people, JICA works to provide on-site ODA experiences to teachers, local public entities’ officials, and others.

E. Promotion of discussion and dialogue

The Government of Japan holds information sessions regarding ODA including assistance for small and medium-sized enterprises through ODA projects. Likewise, the Japanese government also holds lectures and symposiums to introduce trends in international cooperation and Japan’s efforts, offering opportunities for dialogue with the public interested in diplomacy and ODA.

(2) Enhancement of Human Resources and Intellectual Foundations for Development Cooperation

The Government of Japan has set a target of 1,000 Japanese working for UN-related agencies by 2025. Japan proactively provides support to seek out, train, and help develop the careers of human resources with the capacity to be active on the world stage while collaborating with higher educational institutions and Japan offices of international organizations.¹⁹ Based on the recommendation made by the Advisory Board for ODA to “develop human resources for development cooperation,” Japan organizes seminars in and outside of Japan to explain the recruitment system of international organizations for students at secondary and higher educational institutions and company employees. Recently, seminars are mainly conducted online, which enables Japanese UN staff working on the ground remotely participate and share their experiences with specific examples. Japan also produces YouTube videos, and organizes seminars by high-ranking officials and HR managers from international organizations, among other efforts.

Moreover, the Government of Japan strives to nurture human resources to be active in international organizations, including in the area of international

development cooperation, through Junior Professional Officer (JPO) Programme (see pages 12 and 13 in Part I for the activities of a Japanese staff member at international organizations, and “Stories from the Field” on page 141 for a career interview with a staff member of an international organization after working as JPO). MOFA has dispatched a cumulative total of over 1,800 JPOs since MOFA started this programme in 1974, 54 of whom were sent in FY2020. In addition, MOFA implements the “Program for Global Human Resource Development for Peacebuilding and Development”²⁰ (see “Human Resources Development for Peacebuilding” on page 46 for details).

Through the PARTNER (Participatory Network for Expert Recruitment)²¹ website, JICA centrally distributes information on international cooperation (such as recruitment and various trainings and seminars opportunities) lead by a wide range of actors such as ministries, agencies, JICA, NGOs, international organizations, companies and universities. It also provides activities such as human resources registration services and career counseling. Furthermore, JICA offers internships to graduate students and other individuals who conduct research closely related to development cooperation and are willing to play an active role in this field in the future. JICA secures human resources with competencies and abundant work experience in developing countries through the Senior Advisor System, as well as offers the Associate Experts Program and the Capacity Enhancement Training for human resources development.

Furthermore, the JICA Ogata Sadako Research Institute



Ms. NAMIKI Ai, Programme Policy Officer at WFP Rwanda office (JPO since 2018), distributing specialized nutritious foods for children to mothers at the Mahama refugee camp in Rwanda (Photo: WFP)

¹⁹ The Ministry of Foreign Affairs’ Recruitment Center for International Organizations website (<https://www.mofa-irc.go.jp/>) (in Japanese only) provides information on vacancies in international organizations and a variety of information on working in international organizations.

²⁰ Program for Global Human Resource Development for Peacebuilding and Development: https://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/gaiko/peace_bj_ikusei_shokai.html (in Japanese only)

²¹ International Cooperation Career Information Website “PARTNER”: <https://partner.jica.go.jp/> (in Japanese only)

Stories from the Field

Voices of Japanese Personnel Working in International Organizations

—Realizing the dream by doing my best each day (Introducing the careers of Japanese personnel)—

8

Longing for a job that is international and helpful to the people in junior and senior high school days

From my junior and senior high school days, I had always had a vague longing to work for an international organization to help people by traveling all around the world, and I wanted to be like that in the future. This was in the 1990s, a time when the work of Japanese staff members of international organizations was being covered in the media, including former UN High Commissioner for Refugees OGATA Sadako.

However, I had rarely left my hometown of Hokkaido, let alone traveled outside Japan, and for someone like me “the world” seemed a tremendously long way away. Although there was only so much a local Japanese junior and senior high school student could do, I studied hard including English in order to enter university and engaged in social contribution activities through the Girl Scout troop I belonged to. Participating in an English speech contest and Girl Scout exchange camp in Alaska were highly valuable experiences.

The fascination of multilingual and multicultural environments: Encounters with Africa and the world

I went to International Christian University and conducted research into the use of multiple languages, focusing on young people in Kenya, as my graduation thesis. I stayed in Kenya during my summer vacation, interacting with students of the same age and traveling to the surrounding countries. Through this experience, I was completely fascinated by the rich culture and the positive-thinking people I met, and returned to Japan with a strong determination to work in a multilingual and multicultural environment and to obtain a job opportunity in the African continent.

A long and winding path: From working in a company, via overseas graduate study, and becoming a JICA project formulation advisor in Senegal

After graduating from university, I studied French, which is essential for working in Africa, while gaining work experience in a company, believing “Perseverance prevails” in Tokyo. Afterwards, I resigned from my company and went to France, to continue studying French, and then went to graduate school. I took development studies so as to continue research into “multilingualism and multiculturalism” and “migration and migrants,” at graduate school and also served as an intern and carried out my graduation research in Mali in West Africa. After that, I worked as a trading company employee and then as a JICA project formulation advisor, over a total of six and a half years in Dakar, the capital of Senegal in West Africa, during which time I also experienced childbirth.



The author during her internship in Mali

Working as a JPO and then becoming an IOM staff member

I applied for the position of a Junior Professional Officer (JPO),*1 just before reaching the age limit. (I had just had my second child, and the



The author giving a speech at a workshop

term of my position as a JICA project formulation advisor in Senegal was coming to an end.) I was hired and, in the following year, I took up a new post at the Morocco office of the International Organization for Migration (IOM), the only UN organization that specializes in handling issues connected with the global migration. After completing the JPO mission, I was hired as a staff member affiliated to the same office. As of this writing, I have worked in this office for five years in total.

At the IOM, I am in charge of implementing projects for “migration and development” and “governance,” as well as monitoring and evaluating projects overall in Rabat, the capital of Morocco. Specifically, we have various projects, including for supporting the national policy formulation and promoting multicultural coexistence, to ensure that migration contributes to the development of both host and outflow countries. Although there are a lot of on-site work and a series of processes for managing projects within deadlines and limited budget, I am able to fully utilize my past working experience.

Messages to readers: It is fine to take the long way around, sending an encouraging message for women

It may seem like a detour as I became a staff member of an international organization approximately 10 years later after leaving Japan, yet I do not have any regret at all. I had learned both efficiency-oriented ways of work and process-oriented ones at the Japanese company and JICA respectively, and have therefore been able to be of immediate help and contributed to the organization. I can say that doing my best each day, in a given environment, helped me to find the next stage in my journey and brought me to my current destination. And this is not the goal.

I have a message for women. There are many women playing an active role in international organizations. I would be lying if I said having and raising children never made it harder for me to further my career. However, international organizations are most certainly working environments where these issues are widely understood, and there are numerous women in managerial positions. (In fact, all of my previous superiors have been women!) I was able to have and raise two children while working. Indeed, having a family is actually what helps me to stay positive each day, even when I face difficulties in my job.

FUNAKAWA Natsuko

International Organization for Migration (IOM) Morocco

*1 See page 140 for details on JPO Programme.

for Peace and Development ²² analyzes and synthesizes knowledge gained in the field of development cooperation and provides feedback to JICA projects,

thereby contributing to the realization of human security and the achievement of the SDGs, as well as helping to develop human resources.

²² On April 1, 2020, the JICA Research Institute changed its name to the JICA Ogata Sadako Research Institute for Peace and Development in order to carry on and enhance the philosophy of the late OGATA Sadako, who spearheaded the establishment of the JICA Research Institute, and to strengthen its intellectual contributions to world peace and development.