

## (1) Climate Change and the Environment

Global environmental challenges, including climate change, are pressing issues that the international community is working on together, as is addressed in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and in the wake of extreme weather events and devastating natural disasters in recent years. Following the G7 Hiroshima Summit held under Japan's Presidency in 2023, the Apulia G7 Leaders' Communiqué in 2024 reaffirmed the need to take steps to address the triple crisis of climate change, pollution, and biodiversity loss, faced by the planet.

Japan has vigorously worked on addressing these issues and provided assistance to developing countries, as one of the top donors, through the Global Environment Facility (GEF),\* a financing mechanism for major multilateral environmental agreements such as the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).

### Japan's Efforts

#### ■ Climate Change

The issue of climate change is a threat to the sustainable development of all countries in the world as well as a security issue that concerns the very existence of humankind. All countries must work together to address this issue, which requires increased concerted efforts by the international community, including not only developed countries but also developing countries. The Paris Agreement was adopted at the 21st Session of the Conference of the Parties to the UNFCCC (COP21) held in 2015, as a framework under which all countries would work toward greenhouse gas (GHG) emission reductions. The Paris Agreement entered into force in 2016.

In October 2020, Japan declared that it would achieve net-zero GHG emissions by 2050. In April 2021, Japan also declared its aim to reduce its GHG emissions by 46% in FY2030 from its FY2013 levels, and to continue

strenuous efforts in its challenge to meet the lofty goal of cutting its emissions by 50%. In October 2021, Japan submitted its "Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC)" <sup>57</sup> reflecting these goals, together with "The Long-term Strategy under the Paris Agreement" to the UN.

At the G7 Cornwall Summit in June 2021, Japan announced a total of ¥6.5 trillion in assistance from both public and private sources over five years from 2021 to 2025. Furthermore, at COP26 held in the same year, Japan announced its intention to provide up to an additional \$10 billion from both public and private sources over the following five years, including by doubling finance for adaptation to approximately ¥1.6 trillion over the same period.

#### (COP29)

From November 11 to 24, 2024, COP29 was held in Baku, Azerbaijan. Attending the ministerial-level session, then Minister of the Environment Asao emphasized the importance of steady implementation of NDCs toward achieving the 1.5°C goal. <sup>58</sup> At the conference, a decision on the New Collective Quantified Goal (NCQG) on climate finance was adopted, setting the support goal of "at least \$300 billion per year by 2035 for developing country Parties." It was also decided to call on all actors to work together to enable the scaling up of financing to developing country Parties for climate action from all public and private sources to at least \$1.3 trillion per year



Then Minister of the Environment Asao delivering a speech at the ministerial-level session of the 29th Conference of the Parties (COP29) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) (Photo: Ministry of the Environment)

<sup>57</sup> Parties set their GHG emission reduction targets and formulate measures to achieve them as National Determined Contribution (NDC). It will then be submitted to the UNFCCC secretariat.

<sup>58</sup> A goal set to limit the global average temperature rise to 1.5°C above the pre-industrial level.

by 2035. In addition, decisions on the Mitigation Work Programme (MWP) and the Global Goal on Adaptation (GGA) were adopted, and detailed operational rules for Article 6 of the Paris Agreement, which enables the international transfer of GHG emission reductions and removals, were finalized and became fully operational.

### **(“Asia Zero Emission Community (AZEC)”)**

In his Policy Speech in 2022, then Prime Minister Kishida announced the “Asia Zero Emission Community (AZEC)” concept as a platform to aim for decarbonization in Asia. In March 2023, the first AZEC Ministerial Meeting was held with the participation of nine Southeast Asian countries and Australia, marking the official launch of AZEC. The first AZEC Leaders Meeting was held in December 2023, followed by the 2nd AZEC Ministerial Meeting in August 2024. The principles of AZEC consist of simultaneously achieving decarbonization, economic growth, and energy security, as well as pursuing net-zero emissions through various pathways. At the 2nd AZEC Leaders Meeting held in October 2024, an agreement was reached on an “Action Plan for the Next Decade” with three pillars: (i) promoting “AZEC solutions” such as developing rules to promote activities that contribute to decarbonization in Asia; (ii) launching initiatives for decarbonization in the sectors with high GHG emissions, such as electricity, transportation, and industry; and (iii) promoting tangible projects, while reaffirming the AZEC principles.

### **(Green Climate Fund (GCF))**

Japan supports developing countries through its contribution to the Green Climate Fund (GCF),\* the world’s largest multilateral climate fund. Japan has contributed a total of approximately ¥319 billion to the fund to date. In addition, for the second replenishment period from 2024 to 2027, Japan has announced its intention to contribute up to ¥165 billion, the same amount as the first replenishment. At the GCF, a total of 285 projects have been approved and implemented by October 2024, which are expected to reduce GHG emissions by three billion tons and increase the resilience of one billion people through support for adaptation. Additionally, from Japan, JICA, MUFG Bank, Ltd., and Sumitomo Mitsui Banking Corporation are approved as “Accredited Entities” that are entitled to propose GCF projects. To date, three projects by MUFG Bank, Ltd. have been approved, namely a private sustainable forestry project in seven countries in Sub-Saharan Africa and Latin America and the Caribbean (March 2020), assistance on a green bond issuance project in eight countries in Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, and Africa (October 2022), and a blended finance project to support mitigation and adaptation in 19 countries in Asia, Africa, and Latin America and the Caribbean (October 2023), along with two projects by JICA, “Community-based Landscape Management for Enhanced Climate

Resilience and Reduction of Deforestation in Critical Watersheds in Timor-Leste” (March 2021) and “Building Climate Resilient and Safer Islands in the Maldives” (July 2021).

### **(Bilateral Assistance)**

As a specific example of bilateral assistance, Japan dispatches experts on climate actions to the Pacific Climate Change Centre in Samoa, which Japan supported the construction of through grants. Through this Centre, Japan strives to develop human resources in the Pacific Island countries vulnerable to climate change. This support is expected to improve the capacity to implement climate change solutions, which will widely benefit more than 10 million people in 14 Pacific Island countries. In addition, in cooperation with UNDP, Japan supports the shift to renewable energy in Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Timor-Leste, and Vanuatu.

In relation to the African region, at TICAD 8 held in August 2022, Japan launched the “Green Growth Initiative with Africa (GGA)” with the goal of addressing climate change and transforming the energy structure toward decarbonization. Under this initiative, Japan aims to maximize its cooperation through three approaches, (i) ownership and co-creation, (ii) flexible finance mobilization, and (iii) collaboration with diverse partners, and is promoting various efforts by both the public and private sectors to contribute to sustainable growth in Africa (see Part IV, Section 8 on page 118 for efforts related to green growth).

As part of its assistance for climate change actions in developing countries, Japan promotes the “Joint Crediting Mechanism (JCM),”\* which facilitates the diffusion of advanced decarbonizing technologies to partner countries around the world, including developing countries. This contributes to GHG emission reductions in partner countries, and helps Japan to achieve its reduction targets, as part of the achieved emission reductions in developing countries can be credited as those of Japan. In 2013, Japan signed the



A Forest Authority staff member and a JICA expert discussing seedling cultivation in a technical cooperation project aimed at sustainable forest management in Papua New Guinea (Photo: JICA)

first Memorandum of Cooperation (MoC) on the implementation of the JCM with Mongolia, followed by the signing of an MoC with Ukraine in February 2024. As of 2024, Japan has established the JCMs with 29 countries. Since the start of the JCM in 2013, JCM credits have been issued from 46 energy-saving and renewable energy projects in Bangladesh, Cambodia, Indonesia, Kenya, Laos, Maldives, Mongolia, Palau, Saudi Arabia, Thailand, and Viet Nam. These JCM projects contribute to GHG emission reductions worldwide.

Japan will continue to lead the international community toward the realization of a decarbonized society as envisaged in the Paris Agreement.

### ■ Biodiversity Loss

In recent years, the expansion of human activities in scope, scale, and types has given rise to serious concerns about biodiversity loss, such as the degradation of habitats and the destruction of ecosystems. Japan places importance on biodiversity efforts, as seen in its initiative to hold the 10th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)\* (COP10) in Nagoya City, Aichi Prefecture, in 2010. In addition, Japan makes contributions to the Japan Biodiversity Fund <sup>59</sup> launched at COP10 as well as the GBF Fund to implement the “Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF),” which was adopted as new global goals and targets at the 15th Meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP15) in December 2022, to support the capacity building of developing countries.

In October 2024, the 16th Meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP16) to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) was held in Cali, Colombia, where parties agreed to establish a framework for a multilateral benefit-sharing mechanism for the use of Digital Sequence Information (DSI) <sup>60</sup> on genetic resources and to set up a subsidiary body on the participation of indigenous peoples and local communities. Japan will continue to contribute toward the 2030 mission “to take urgent action to halt and reverse biodiversity loss to put nature on a path to recovery” and the 2050 Vision of “living in harmony with nature,” as described in the GBF, based on the “National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan of Japan 2023-2030.”

Illegal trade of wildlife has also become an increasingly serious issue and is causing concerns among the international community, as it has become one of the funding sources for international terrorist organizations. Japan has been actively contributing to the discussions

at the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), and has been working on resolving the issue in cooperation with the international community through contributions to projects implemented by the CITES Secretariat. As a specific initiative, Japan supports the construction of facilities and other measures to combat elephant poaching, mainly in Africa.

### ■ Conservation of the Marine Environment

The importance of addressing the problem of marine plastic litter has grown in recent years as an urgent challenge, with concerns of adverse impacts on the marine ecosystem, tourism, fisheries, and human health. As of December 2024, 87 countries and regions have shared the “Osaka Blue Ocean Vision,” an initiative led by Japan at the G20 Osaka Summit in 2019 that aims to reduce additional pollution by marine plastic litter to zero by 2050. In order to realize the Vision, Japan launched the “MARINE Initiative” that focuses on (i) Management of wastes, (ii) Recovery of marine litter, (iii) Innovation, and (iv) Empowerment. Under this Initiative, Japan supports capacity building and infrastructure development for waste management in developing countries in order to promote effective measures against marine plastic litter worldwide.

At the Sixth Meeting of the High-Level Panel for a Sustainable Ocean Economy held in September 2024, Japan highlighted its concrete actions to end plastic pollution as the proponent of the “Osaka Blue Ocean Vision.” Japan also emphasized that one of the expected outcomes of the Third United Nations Ocean Conference (UNOC3) to be held in June 2025 is to increase momentum for negotiation and implementation of various international agreements on the marine environment. Furthermore, Japan reiterated its continued active engagement in the negotiations on an international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution currently under negotiation, in order to realize an effective and progressive treaty in which many countries would participate. Noting that blue carbon <sup>61</sup> is one of the areas where the Panel could contribute beyond 2025, Japan shared how it calculates the amount of carbon absorbed by blue carbon ecosystems <sup>62</sup> and reflects it in its greenhouse gas inventory <sup>63</sup> submissions. In April 2024, Japan became the first country in the world to make a report that includes the amount absorbed by seaweed beds.

Japan supports efforts against marine plastic litter

<sup>59</sup> Established in the Secretariat of the CBD by Japan during its COP10 Presidency with the aim of building capacities in developing countries.

<sup>60</sup> Although there is currently no internationally agreed, clear definition, the term generally refers to data related to the DNA of plants, animals, microorganisms, and other organisms. In recent years, such data has increasingly been used in research and development across various fields, prompting discussions on mechanisms for the fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from their use.

<sup>61</sup> Carbon that is captured by living organisms in coastal and ocean ecosystems, accumulates in the soil, and sinks to the seafloor.

<sup>62</sup> Major carbon sinks of blue carbon consisting of seaweed beds (seagrass and algae), salt marshes and tidal flats, and mangrove forests.

<sup>63</sup> Data that compiles the amount of greenhouse gases emitted and absorbed domestically in a year. Under the UNFCCC, each country is required to prepare and submit this data annually to the Convention secretariat.



in the field of marine environmental protection, and in 2024, implemented the JICA Knowledge Co-Creation Program (Group and Region Focus) “Waste Management towards Control of Marine Litter.”

As part of expanded assistance for ASEAN to address marine plastic litter issues, which was announced at the ASEAN-Japan Summit in 2018, Japan has conducted human resource development, awareness-raising, and public relations activities for environmental conservation, primarily on reducing marine plastic litter in ASEAN countries since 2019. In 2024, through the Japan-ASEAN Integration Fund (JAIF),<sup>64</sup> Japan provided assistance to strengthen the capacity of local governments in ASEAN member states to address microplastics and water pollution, and to promote a plastic circular society in the ASEAN region. In addition, Japan provides capacity building support for monitoring and reducing marine debris from fisheries. Furthermore, based on the commitments made at the G20 Osaka Summit, Japan has been working on harmonizing monitoring methods for ocean surface microplastics to ensure data comparability and data aggregation in cooperation with experts from various countries. In 2024, Japan launched a database called the “Atlas of Ocean Microplastics (AOMI)” that collects monitoring data from around the world and provides it along with visualizations on maps.

Japan supports marine plastic litter countermeasures through the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) especially in Southeast Asia, South Asia, and Pacific Island countries. In response to the worsening marine pollution caused by plastic waste, UNEP



Measuring plastic waste using drones through technical cooperation in Thailand “Project for Formation of a Center of Excellence for Marine Plastic Pollution Studies in the Southeast Asian Seas” (Photo: JICA)

developed a method for monitoring the leakage of plastic waste into the ocean, starting from 2018. In addition, to enable science-based policymaking, UNEP conducts sampling surveys of plastic litter and scientific analysis on its pathways. UNEP formulates policy recommendations and guidelines based on the results, and in collaboration with a Japanese IT company, a plastic leakage hotspot map was created, identifying over 3,000 leakage points (hotspots), and released it on a dedicated website<sup>65</sup> available to the general public.

## ■ Protection of Forests and Marine Living Resources

Among forest resources, tropical forests account for approximately half of the world’s forests and play an important role in tackling climate change and conserving biodiversity. Japan invited the International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO) to establish its headquarters in Yokohama, and has been supporting the sustainable management of tropical forests as well as legal and sustainable tropical timber trade through the organization for nearly 40 years. Through voluntary contributions to ITTO, the Government of Japan provides support for tropical timber-producing countries, including holding workshops in Brazil in 2024 for companies involved in forestry, utilizing tools for sustainable forest management (such as tropical forest monitoring software).

Regarding the conservation of marine living resources, Japan conducts training and workshops on countermeasures against illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing in the ASEAN region in cooperation with the Southeast Asian Fisheries Development Center (SEAFDEC). These cooperative efforts help reduce the impact on fish ecosystems of IUU fishing that exceeds regulatory thresholds. In doing so, Japan contributes to the sustainability of the fishing industry, one of the core industries for ASEAN



Forest biomass survey exercise conducted jointly with German experts in Phou Khao Khouay National Park in Vientiane Province, Laos (Photo: JICA)

<sup>64</sup> See 5 on page 91.

<sup>65</sup> “Mobile Application for Macro Plastic Survey” <https://arcg.is/1DOOWW>

countries, and to the sustainable development of fishing communities.

### ■ Environmental Pollution Control Measures

In developing countries, regulatory measures on hazardous chemicals are often inadequate, which in some cases leads to environmental pollution and health damage. Japan has accumulated knowledge, experience, and technology related to environmental pollution control measures and utilizes them to solve the problems in developing countries. Japan also conducts technical cooperation, such as dispatching experts to and accepting trainees from developing countries, in the areas of environmental management techniques in the chemical industry, analysis techniques and risk evaluation for environmentally hazardous chemicals, as well as trace analysis techniques for hazardous chemicals.

The “Minamata Convention on Mercury” was adopted at the Conference of Plenipotentiaries on the Minamata Convention on Mercury in 2013 and entered into force in August 2017. Through its experience with the Minamata disease, Japan has accumulated technology and expertise in preventing environmental pollution and health damage caused by mercury, and is actively sharing the technology and expertise with the world, thereby demonstrating leadership in global mercury control efforts. In addition to conducting training programs on mercury management to support Nepal, Malaysia, and other countries in ratifying the Convention, Japan conducted technology needs surveys in Indonesia, Viet Nam, and other countries, which has ratified the Convention, to promote the overseas expansion of Japan’s advanced mercury management technology. Furthermore, since 2019, the UNEP Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific (UNEP/ROAP) as an implementing agency has been conducting the “Project for Promoting Minamata Convention on Mercury by making the most of Japan’s knowledge and experiences” with Japan’s contribution. Through this project, Japan supports the Parties to the Convention in improving the quantity

and quality of domestic mercury-related information and developing a platform to implement mercury management in line with the Convention.

In the field of waste management, based on the “MARINE Initiative,” Japan announced its commitment to develop 10,000 officials engaging in waste management around the world by 2025 and has already trained approximately 30,000 officials by FY2023 through various means, such as training programs.

Moreover, as a model project for waste management support in Africa, Japan promotes resource circulation through efficient resource recovery in Kenya. The outcomes and experiences gained from this project are shared with member countries and cities through the “African Clean Cities Platform (ACCP).”<sup>★</sup> At TICAD 8 held in August 2022, Japan announced that, under the ACCP, it would promote decarbonization and recycling in the waste sector, improve public health including through waste management that benefits 30 million people in Africa, as well as implement human resources development for 1,000 people. Through the ACCP, which has expanded to 47 countries and 188 cities, including 5 countries and 80 cities that joined after TICAD 8, Japan has been promoting efforts in these fields.



Wastewater treatment plant constructed with yen loans in the northern part of Florianópolis City, Santa Catarina State, Brazil (Photo: State Water Supply and Sanitation Company of Santa Catarina)



## Glossary

### Global Environment Facility (GEF)

A multilateral financial mechanism for six multilateral conventions, namely the UNFCCC, Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants, Minamata Convention on Mercury, and the Agreement under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Marine Biological Diversity of Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ Agreement), that provides primarily grants for projects that would contribute to global environmental benefits in developing countries. Established in 1991, 186 member countries including Japan are participating (as of December 2024). The World Bank administers the contributions by donors. The GEF supports developing countries under five focal areas, namely biodiversity loss, climate change, international waters, land degradation, and chemicals and waste through 18 implementing agencies including Multilateral Development Banks (MDBs) such as the World Bank, Asian Development Bank (ADB) and UN organizations such as the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).

### Green Climate Fund (GCF)

A multilateral climate fund established by the decision of COP16 (Cancun Agreement) in 2010, in order to support developing countries in reducing their GHGs (mitigation) and in their responses to the effects of climate change (adaptation).

### Joint Crediting Mechanism (JCM)

A mechanism to quantitatively evaluate contributions from Japan to GHG emission reductions or removals realized through the diffusion or implementation of leading decarbonizing technologies, products, systems, services, and infrastructure, etc., mainly in developing countries, to acquire part of the credit, and to use the contributions to achieve Japan's NDC.

### Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)

A convention adopted in 1992 to advance global efforts to address biodiversity issues. The objectives of CBD are the following: (1) conservation of biological diversity, (2) sustainable use of the components of biological diversity (utilizing living resources for the future while maintaining diversity at each level of ecosystems, species, and genes), and (3) fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising out of the utilization of genetic resources. Through the provision of economic and technical assistance to developing countries from developed countries, the international community as a whole facilitates the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity worldwide.

### African Clean Cities Platform (ACCP)

ACCP was established in 2017 by the Ministry of the Environment, Japan, together with JICA, the City of Yokohama, UNEP, and the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) aiming to share knowledge on waste management and promote the achievement of the SDGs in Africa. 188 cities in 47 countries in Africa have joined the Platform, holding plenary sessions, developing various guidelines and educational materials, and planning study tours, among others.

## (2) Health and Medical Care

SDG 3 aims to “Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages.” In addition, achieving universal health coverage (UHC) <sup>66</sup> is positioned as an important global target in order to respond to various health issues, diversified across countries and regions. On the other hand, at present, it is estimated that at least half of the world's population has no access to basic medical care, and that over 4.9 million <sup>67</sup> children under the age of five die annually due to preventable diseases. Approximately 287,000 women <sup>68</sup> die during and following pregnancy and childbirth per year, primarily due to the lack of emergency obstetric care provided by doctors and midwives. Moreover, COVID-19 has had a wide range of effects on people around the world. It has also exposed various vulnerabilities, including those related to vaccine distribution, in the current global health architecture (GHA), which comprises the governance and finance for addressing global health and medical issues.

In light of various changes in the global situation, such as the spread of COVID-19, the Government of Japan formulated the “Global Health Strategy” in May 2022. The goal of the Strategy is (i) to contribute to developing GHA for international health security and strengthening Prevention, Preparedness, and Response (PPR) for public health emergencies including pandemics, and (ii) to achieve more resilient, equitable, and sustainable UHC

required for the post-COVID-19 era in order to embody human security, and Japan promotes initiatives in line with this Strategy.

## Japan's Efforts

### ■ Building Global Health Architecture (GHA) that Contributes to Prevention, Preparedness and Response (PPR) to Future Health Crises

Building on the experience and lessons learned from the COVID-19 response, and amid an unprecedented level of interest from the international community in strengthening PPR for future health emergencies, Japan is actively cooperating with international organizations to address these challenges. Japan has provided financial contributions to the World Health Organization (WHO)'s Health Emergencies Programme,\* the Contingency Fund for Emergencies (CFE),\* and other relevant programs to support WHO's response to health crises. These contributions were also used to respond to the acute phase of COVID-19. Through cooperation with the World Bank, Japan also provides support for capacity building and strengthening the health system to prepare for and respond to health emergencies in developing countries. Additionally, Japan has supported the Pandemic Fund, launched in 2022 and hosted by the World Bank, as one of its founding donors, assisting its efforts in enhancing the PPR capabilities of low- and middle-income countries. In October 2024, at the Joint Ministerial Committee of the Boards of Governors of the

<sup>66</sup> The concept that all people have access to effective and quality-assured health services at affordable costs without financial hardship.

<sup>67</sup> According to data from the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). <https://data.unicef.org/topic/child-survival/under-five-mortality/>

<sup>68</sup> According to data from the World Health Organization (WHO) (as of April 26, 2024). <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/maternal-mortality>



Bank and the Fund, then Finance Minister Kato announced Japan's intention to contribute \$50 million in addition to the \$70 million already pledged. Japan also contributes to the Health Emergency Preparedness and Response Multi-Donor Trust Fund (HEPRTF), established in cooperation with the World Bank Group. Furthermore, Japan serves as a co-chair, together with the World Bank, of the Health Systems Transformation and Resilience Multi-Donor Trust Fund (HSTRF), which has been active since 2024.

Based on the achievements that Japan made as the G7 Presidency in 2023, Japan continues in 2024 to work on raising international awareness and maintaining momentum through various international conferences that Japan hosts or participates in, under the philosophy of breaking the cycle of “panic” and “forgetfulness” and guiding structural global change in preparation for the next pandemic. For example, the outcome document of the G7 Apulia Summit, held in June 2024, reflected key priorities that Japan has consistently placed importance on and has been emphasized during the G7 Hiroshima Summit and other forums, such as achieving UHC, equitable access to medical countermeasures (MCMs) for infectious disease emergencies, strengthening GHA, and enhancing coordination between financial and health authorities. At the G20, discussions on strengthening pandemic response financing have continued, building on the outcomes of the G7 in 2023, and Japan has been actively contributing to these discussions.

During the Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD) Ministerial Meeting held in August, two thematic events focused on health were organized. During these events, titled “Global Health Financing to Achieve Universal Health Coverage” and “Accelerating Universal Health Coverage (UHC) with Innovations toward 2030,” active discussions were held with participation from representatives of African countries and the Global Health Initiatives, etc. Then Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs Hosaka, who delivered opening remarks at the latter event, emphasized the importance of mobilizing private funds from the perspective of sustainable financing, while referring to the “Impact Investment Initiative for Global Health (Triple I),” which was endorsed at the G7 Hiroshima Summit in 2023.

Japan also actively participates in rulemaking in the international arena. Since February 2022, Japan has been taking part in the meetings of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Body (INB) on a “WHO convention, agreement or other international instrument on pandemic prevention, preparedness and response (PPR) (WHO CA+)” held under the WHO. Japan also actively contributed to discussions on the amendments to the International Health Regulations (2005) (IHR),<sup>69</sup> and a set of IHR amendments was adopted by consensus on June 1, 2024, the final day of the Seventy-seventh World Health Assembly.

### ■ Promotion of Universal Health Coverage (UHC)

Japan has promoted international cooperation based on the recognition that it is necessary to address existing health issues that suffered a setback since the spread of COVID-19 and to achieve more resilient, equitable, and sustainable UHC.

Japan has long provided support for the health and medical care systems in countries in Southeast Asia and Africa based on the view that building a sustainable and resilient health system will serve as the foundation for controlling infectious diseases. In addition, based on various lessons learned from pandemics such as COVID-19, Japan is working to strengthen health systems, including the establishment and networking of core medical facilities and support for human resources development in the medical field. For example, in March 2024, Japan and Uganda exchanged notes regarding Japan's support through grants for the improvement of medical equipment in two of the three regional referral hospitals in the eastern part of the country, with the aim of strengthening the medical systems in hospitals in eastern Uganda, where the poverty rate is high. These efforts contribute to the promotion of UHC, as well as to the PPR for public health emergencies. Japan also provides assistance in a wider range of areas to create a more resilient environment against infectious diseases, including the development of water and sanitation infrastructure such as water supply and sewage systems, and the enhancement of food security. Japan also contributes to the prevention of infectious diseases by collaborating with NGOs to build handwashing facilities and toilets in health facilities and schools, and to conduct hygiene awareness activities. In partnership with Sanrio Company, Ltd., Japan has also implemented awareness-raising activities using handwashing videos featuring Hello Kitty, one of the company's characters (see Part III, 3 (3) on page 73 on efforts in the area of water and sanitation).

Japan has consistently emphasized the importance of UHC as the foundation for human capital development and sustainable growth. In close collaboration with relevant organizations, including the World Bank and WHO, Japan has been supporting developing countries in achieving UHC. From this perspective, it was announced in 2024 that the “UHC Knowledge Hub” will be established in Japan the following year, in partnership with the World Bank and WHO, with the aim of collecting and sharing knowledge on health financing and other relevant areas, as well as developing human resources among finance and health authorities in developing countries.

Primary healthcare services under UHC include all types of services, including nutritional improvement,

<sup>69</sup> Health regulations established by the WHO with the aim of preventing the international spread of diseases to the greatest extent possible.



Remote treatment being provided by the Indonesia University Hospital under technical cooperation “Project for Capacity Development of ICU Using Telemedicine under COVID-19 Pandemic” in Indonesia (Photo: Otto Ferdinando)

vaccination, maternal and child health, sexual and reproductive health, infectious disease control, noncommunicable disease (NCD) control, and comprehensive community care and long-term care for older persons (see Part III, Section 1 (1) on page 33 regarding nutritional improvement).

Especially with regard to maternal and child health in developing countries, there are major issues that are yet to be solved. In response to this situation, in 2024, Japan provided support to improve maternal and child health in numerous countries, including Angola, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Bolivia, Burundi, Côte d’Ivoire, Gabon, Georgia, Ghana, Indonesia, Pakistan, Rwanda, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Tajikistan, and Zambia.

Japan carries out activities utilizing the Maternal and Child Health (MCH) Handbook as a means of improving maternal and child health, drawing on its own experience and expertise. The MCH Handbook can contribute to the Continuum of Care (CoC) from pregnancy, childbirth, the post-partum period,<sup>70</sup> to the neonatal period, infancy, and early childhood. It also enables mothers to acquire knowledge about health, raising their awareness and helping them modify their behavior. As a concrete example of this assistance, in Indonesia, the MCH Handbook is widely used throughout the country as a result of Japan’s technical cooperation on its operation. Furthermore, the Government of Indonesia, together with JICA, hosts international training sessions that invite third countries promoting the use of the MCH Handbook to share and learn from each other’s experiences and knowledge. Since 2007, a total of 18 countries and regions, including Afghanistan, Cameroon, Palestine, Tajikistan, and Uganda, have been invited to 16 training sessions.

In the African region, the “Tunis Declaration,” which

was adopted at TICAD 8 in August 2022 as its outcome document, confirms the importance of realizing the concept of human security, building a resilient and sustainable society to achieve the SDGs, and intensifying efforts in the health sector to achieve UHC. The Joint Communiqué of the TICAD Ministerial Meeting held in August 2024 also expressed the importance of promoting prevention of diseases, strengthening health systems including local manufacturing and value chains of medicines and vaccines to achieve UHC and advance primary healthcare.

Japanese NGOs implement projects in the area of health and medical care using the Grant Assistance for Japanese NGO Projects and the Japan Platform (JPF).<sup>71</sup> For example, in 2024, AMDA Multisectoral and Integrated Development Services, a Japanese NGO, constructs public health facilities equipped for childbirth and provides medical equipment and supplies, in addition to conducting technical training for skilled birth attendants in the Chure Rural Municipality of Kailali District in far western Nepal.

Japan works in cooperation with international organizations such as the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF), the World Bank, as well as NGOs to promote maternal and child health that includes sexual and reproductive health services, aiming to thereby improve the health of a greater number of women and children. Japan also contributes to raising vaccination rates in developing countries through Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance,<sup>\*</sup> and bilateral cooperation. In June 2024, Japan announced a contribution of \$30 million to the African Vaccine Manufacturing Accelerator (AVMA),<sup>72</sup> a financing mechanism launched by Gavi to accelerate the expansion of commercially viable vaccine manufacturing in Africa.



A doctor conducts a mid-upper arm circumference (MUAC) screening for an infant at a makeshift clinic in Gaza City, Palestine (Photo: CCP Japan)

<sup>70</sup> The period after childbirth in which women recover to a similar condition before pregnancy, usually around one to two months after birth.

<sup>71</sup> See glossary on page 137.

<sup>72</sup> A support program by Gavi aimed at establishing a sustainable vaccine manufacturing foundation in Africa and improving the resilience of vaccine supply. It provides funding to vaccine manufacturers that meet certain criteria to promote the strengthening of vaccine manufacturing capacity. The program will provide up to \$1 billion in support over ten years starting in 2024.



The Asian Development Bank (ADB) positions health as one of the key priority sectors in its “Strategy 2030” and sets the following three pillars to achieve UHC in the Asia-Pacific region in cooperation with Japan: (i) building institutional framework, (ii) accelerating human resources development, and (iii) investing in infrastructures. In April 2021, Japan began contributing to the ADB’s Japan Trust Fund for the purpose of providing technical assistance and small grants to support initiatives based on these three pillars. As of October 2024, Japan has contributed a total of approximately \$15 million through the Fund.

Additionally, at the Japan-Australia-India-U.S. (Quad) Leaders’ Meeting in September 2024, the four countries, which have experience in cooperation on COVID-19 vaccines, confirmed that they would initially focus on cervical cancer prevention while laying the groundwork to address other types of cancer, as part of their cooperation on health and safety in the Indo-Pacific region. In this context, Japan confirmed that it will continue to (i) provide medical equipment and facilities and technical assistance, (ii) collaborate with cancer-related institutions in each country, and (iii) contribute to international organizations (such as Gavi). In the same month, Japan signed a memorandum of cooperation with the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) to achieve goals such as promoting UHC and strengthening international health security. Japan has supported building health and medical systems in developing countries for many years from various perspectives such as supporting the capacity building of healthcare workers, networking regional hospitals, and strengthening regional health systems. During the COVID-19 crisis, the medical facilities that Japan has supported evidently played central roles for infection control measures.

### ■ Efforts on Individual Global Health Issues

#### (The Three Major Infectious Diseases (HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria))

SDG target 3.3 sets out to end epidemics of the three major infectious diseases by 2030. Japan has been actively supporting measures against these diseases and strengthening health systems, which also contributes to building GHA and promoting UHC, through the Global Fund.<sup>73</sup> From its establishment to September 2024, Japan has contributed a total of approximately \$4.9 billion to the Global Fund. In order to ensure that measures against the three major infectious diseases are carried out more effectively, Japan also implements bilateral cooperation such as enhancing health systems, community empowerment, and improving maternal and



A JOCV providing exercise therapy guidance at Belau National Hospital in Palau (Photo: JICA)

child health, as a complementary support to the efforts made through the Global Fund.

As for bilateral cooperation in HIV/AIDS countermeasures, Japan provides assistance to raise awareness for preventing new infections as well as to promote testing and counseling. Primarily in Africa, in 2024, Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers (JOCVs) continue to engage vigorously in deepening people’s knowledge and understanding of HIV/AIDS prevention and providing care and support to people living with HIV/AIDS.

With regard to tuberculosis, Japan engages in reducing the annual number of deaths from tuberculosis in developing countries, particularly in Asia and Africa, in accordance with the “Stop TB Japan Action Plan,” revised in 2021. As an interim goal by 2025, Japan aims to achieve a 75% reduction in deaths from tuberculosis (compared to 2015) and a 50% reduction in tuberculosis incidence (compared to 2015; less than 55 cases per 100,000 people) through a public-private partnership, drawing on Japan’s own experience and technology cultivated through its struggle against tuberculosis.

In respect of malaria, one of the major causes of infant mortality, Japan supports efforts to combat malaria by strengthening local communities in Myanmar and Solomon Islands. Through contributions to the Global Fund, Japan also takes measures against malaria on a worldwide level.

#### (Responding to Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR))

Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR)<sup>74</sup> is a serious threat to public health, and in recent years, the momentum for countermeasures has been growing. In order to advance measures against AMR, Japan promotes the “One Health Approach,” in which actors engaged in the areas of human, animal, and environmental health work together. Based on the consensus at the G20 Osaka Summit in 2019 on promoting the One Health Approach, Japan announced in the same year that it

<sup>73</sup> Public-Private Partnership established in 2002, following the G8 Kyushu-Okinawa Summit in 2000, where infectious disease control was raised as a major agenda for the first time. It contributes to efforts in achieving the SDGs by providing financial cooperation for measures against the three major infectious diseases (HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, and malaria) and strengthening health systems in developing countries.

<sup>74</sup> Pathogenic microorganisms, including bacteria and viruses, gaining resistance to antimicrobials such as antibiotics and antiviral drugs, which causes the drugs to lose sufficient efficacy.

would contribute approximately ¥1 billion to GARDP,<sup>75</sup> which promotes research and development for new antibiotics and diagnostics. Japan takes the lead in tackling AMR, including through its participation in the Global Leaders Group on Antimicrobial Resistance. In 2024, Japan contributed approximately ¥250 million to GARDP.

### (Neglected Tropical Diseases (NTDs))

Parasitic and bacterial infections, such as Chagas disease, Filariasis, and Schistosomiasis, are known as “neglected tropical diseases (NTDs).” 1.6 billion people worldwide are infected with NTDs, causing major socio-economic losses to developing countries. In June 2022, Japan signed “the Kigali Declaration on neglected tropical diseases (NTDs)” and cooperates closely with the relevant countries and international organizations on countermeasures. As of November 2024, Japan has contributed a total of ¥24.72 billion to the Global Health Innovative Technology (GHIT) Fund and provides support for countermeasures against NTDs through GHIT. In May 2024, a pediatric formulation for Schistosomiasis developed through support from GHIT was included in the WHO List of Prequalified Medicinal Products.

In addition, Japan has provided support in combating Lymphatic Filariasis for Pacific Island countries through technical cooperation since the 1970s. The “Project for Elimination of Lymphatic Filariasis in the Pacific Region” provided support through a public-private partnership, with JICA dispatching experts for technical guidance and a Japanese pharmaceutical company offering anthelmintics to WHO free of charge, enabling mass drug administration to stop transmission in infected areas. This long-term support from Japan has proved

successful, with nine of the Pacific Island countries (Cook Islands, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Nauru, Niue, Palau, Solomon Islands, Tonga, and Vanuatu) having eliminated Lymphatic Filariasis. Currently, Japan implements the “Project for Elimination of Lymphatic Filariasis Phase 2” aimed at eliminating Lymphatic Filariasis in Papua New Guinea through the dispatch of experts and other means.

### (Polio)

Polio is on the brink of eradication. Japan, in cooperation mainly with UNICEF and Gavi, provides support toward its eradication with a focus on countries where the disease remains endemic (countries with endemic wild poliovirus: Afghanistan and Pakistan). During 2024, in Afghanistan, Japan provided support for routine immunization activities and the procurement of vaccines necessary for polio vaccination campaigns in cooperation with UNICEF. Similar supports are also ongoing in Pakistan.



A JOCV working with hospital staff on nursing activities at Kampong Cham Hospital in Kampong Cham Province, Cambodia, constructed through Japanese grants (Photo: JICA)



## Glossary

### WHO Health Emergencies Programme

A program within WHO that responds to health emergencies. It evaluates the health emergency response capacity of countries, supports drafting of plans, and monitors new and ongoing health emergency situations. It also provides health services to save lives in countries where health emergencies are occurring.

### Contingency Fund for Emergencies (CFE)

An emergency fund for responding to outbreaks and states of emergency, established by WHO in 2015, reflecting on the Ebola virus outbreak in West Africa in 2014. Decision-making regarding 24 hours of that decision.

### Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance

A public-private partnership established in 2000 with the aim of saving children's lives and protecting people's health by improving immunization coverage in developing countries. Governments of both donor countries and developing countries, relevant international organizations, the pharmaceutical industry, private foundations, and civil society participate in this partnership. Since its establishment, it is said to have vaccinated more than 1 billion children and saved over 16.2 million lives.

<sup>75</sup> An abbreviation for Global Antibiotic Research & Development Partnership.

### (3) Water and Sanitation

Water and sanitation are vital issues linked to human life. Around the world, approximately 2.2 billion people cannot access safely-managed drinking water, and approximately 3.5 billion people live without safely-managed sanitation facilities such as toilets.<sup>76</sup> In particular, in developing countries where piped water is not widely available, women and children are often forced to spend hours fetching water, which limits women's participation in society and children's access to education. Water and sanitation issues are therefore also important for promoting gender equality and an inclusive society. Furthermore, an unreliable water supply has a negative impact on healthcare and agriculture. The development of water and sanitation infrastructure will also help create an environment that is resistant to infectious diseases, and is necessary for achieving more resilient, equitable, and sustainable universal health coverage (UHC).<sup>77</sup> In recognition of these needs, SDG 6 sets forth the objective to "Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all."

#### Japan's Efforts

As a follow-up to the UN 2023 Water Conference held in May 2023, the Third High-Level International Conference on the International Decade for Action "Water for Sustainable Development" was held in Dushanbe, Tajikistan, in June 2024. Then Foreign Minister Kamikawa participated through a video message, stating that Japan is engaged in various activities in cooperation with a number of international organizations through water-related action plans of the international community, including the "Kumamoto Initiative for Water."<sup>78</sup>

Japan continues to support the expansion of access to safe water in developing countries by leveraging its extensive domestic experience, knowledge, and technology, and has been the top donor in the water and sanitation sector since the 1990s in terms of cumulative total assistance. For example, in South Sudan, where the development of basic infrastructure has been delayed since its independence, Japan provides grants for the development of water supply facilities, as well as technical cooperation to strengthen capacities for the operation and maintenance of such facilities, in addition to water fee collection. In Cambodia, Japan supports

the improvement of living environments and tourism development in the tourist city of Siem Reap through the expansion of water supply facilities (water intake facilities, water treatment plants, distribution pipes, etc.) and human resource development for service expansion. In Madagascar, Japan decided in October 2024 to provide grants for the expansion and renewal of existing water treatment plants and water transmission and distribution facilities in Toamasina, the country's second-largest city where its largest port is located.

Japan also cooperates with Japanese and local private companies and research institutions. For example, in Kenya, the "SDGs Business Verification Survey with the Private Sector for the Measures against Non-Revenue Water of the Water Supply System by Utilizing Mechanical Joint Connections" is implemented utilizing JICA's SDGs Business Supporting Surveys.<sup>79</sup> To address the issue of water leakage from distribution pipes in the country, a pilot project is being implemented, utilizing a Japanese company's technology on water pipe joint connections.<sup>80</sup> In Viet Nam, in response to the rising demand for water supply due to the country's rapid economic growth, faculty from Nagasaki University and Hanoi University of Civil Engineering are working on developing an advanced water purification system using nanofiltration membrane technology that is more cost-effective than conventional systems, under the Science and Technology Research Partnership for Sustainable Development (SATREPS).<sup>81</sup>

To address the lack of local information and knowledge with regard to the problem of serious water contamination in many Asian countries, the Ministry of the Environment (MOE) of Japan implements the Water Environment Partnership in Asia (WEPA). Through



A JICA expert and their counterparts visiting a site as part of the "Project for Enhancement of Capacities for Integrated Water Resources Management" in Cuba (Photo: JICA)

<sup>76</sup> According to United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) survey (as of 2022). <https://data.unicef.org/resources/jmp-report-2023/>

<sup>77</sup> See 66 on page 68.

<sup>78</sup> An initiative announced by then Prime Minister Kishida at the 4th Asia-Pacific Water Summit held in Kumamoto in April 2022. It actively addresses water-related social issues through quality infrastructure development and other means, in cooperation with various countries and international organizations.

<sup>79</sup> See the glossary on page 130.

<sup>80</sup> A part used at the joints that connect pipes together. An important component of water infrastructure to use water efficiently.

<sup>81</sup> See the glossary on page 43.





A JOCV teaching children how to effectively wash hands in the provincial city of Ouidah, Benin (Photo: JICA)

cooperation among 13 participating countries<sup>82</sup> from Asia, WEPA aims to enhance water environment governance in Asia through building human networks, gathering and sharing information, and strengthening capacity. At the 19th WEPA Annual Meeting and International Workshop held in Kanagawa Prefecture from January 30 to February 1, 2024, based on previous discussions on domestic and industrial wastewater management, participants exchanged information about current challenges in each country with a focus on the water environment itself. During the meeting, in regard to legal frameworks and compliance, Japan, the Republic of Korea, and Sri Lanka presented examples of water environment-related policies that have recently been enacted or amended. Furthermore, at the 10th World Water Forum held in Bali, Indonesia in May of the same year, initiatives to improve water quality through the exchange of knowledge and experience were shared.

As a leading donor in the water and sanitation sector, Japan continues to contribute to ensuring access to safe water and sustainable water resources for people in developing countries, drawing on its accumulated expertise.

#### (4) Mainstreaming Disaster Risk Reduction and Building Sustainable Cities

With concerns over climate change expected to increase, the frequency, and scale of disasters, as well as their economic and social impacts are becoming more severe, especially in developing countries that are vulnerable to such events. Disaster risk reduction efforts are essential to eradicating poverty and achieving sustainable development. There is a need to build disaster-resilient and adaptable societies, protect people's lives

from disasters, and pursue sustainable development. A critical priority is to mainstream disaster risk reduction by integrating such perspective into all policies and plans.

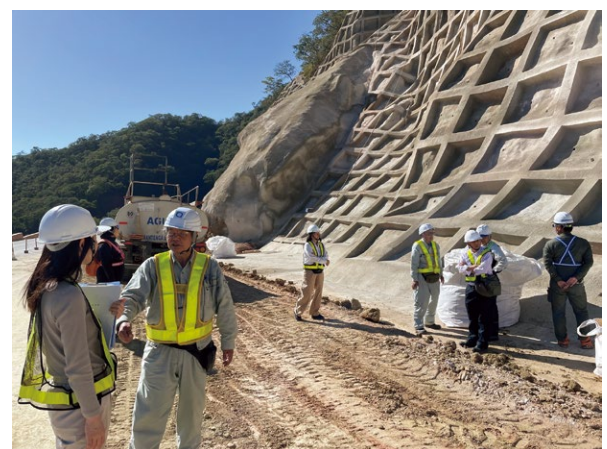
In recent years, growing attention has been paid to a range of challenges related to urban management. These challenges include the disposal of large volumes of waste generated in urban and suburban areas, air and water pollution, the development of infrastructure such as sewage and waste treatment systems, and rapid population growth accompanied by accelerated urbanization. Addressing these challenges and working toward realizing sustainable cities have become key priorities in development cooperation.

Accordingly, the SDGs include Goal 11: "Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable." This reflects increasing international attention to the challenges of human settlements, including the pursuit of sustainable cities.

## Japan's Efforts

### ■ Cooperation in Disaster Risk Reduction

Japan leverages the extensive knowledge and expertise it has developed through its past experiences of addressing natural hazards, such as earthquakes and typhoons, to provide proactive support not only in emergency relief, but also in disaster risk reduction and post-disaster recovery. (See "Master Techniques from Japan to the World" on pages 76 and 139 for disaster risk reduction efforts in Indonesia and Argentina, and "Featured Projects" on page 87 for the initiative in Ecuador). The "Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 (Sendai Framework)," adopted at the Third UN World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (2015), reflects many of Japan's proposals. These include the mainstreaming of disaster risk reduction, the development of appropriate disaster risk



Engineers from Japan and Bolivia working on the Grant Project for "Road Disaster Prevention of National Road No. 7," which incorporates Japan's latest disaster prevention technologies, such as slope stabilization and debris flow control (Photo: JICA)

<sup>82</sup> The 13 countries are Cambodia, China, Indonesia, Republic of Korea, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Nepal, the Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Viet Nam, and Japan.

reduction strategies by national and local governments, the importance of investment in disaster risk reduction, the concept of “Build Back Better,” which aims to create communities more resilient than before the disaster, and the promotion of women’s leadership in disaster risk management.

In October 2024, the Asia-Pacific Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (APMCDRR) was held in Manila. At the conference, Japan highlighted key priorities, including strengthening disaster response, promoting investment in disaster risk reduction, and developing early warning systems. Japan also expressed its commitment to further advancing international cooperation in disaster risk reduction. In November, the first-ever G20 Ministerial Meeting on Disaster Risk Reduction was held in Brazil, where the G20 Disaster Risk Reduction Ministerial Declaration was adopted. The G20 reaffirmed the importance of disaster risk reduction, and in the G20 Rio de Janeiro Leaders’ Declaration also emphasized the need to promote international cooperation in line with the Sendai Framework and the importance of investment in people and infrastructure, while recognizing the inequalities exacerbated by disasters.

In addition, in response to Japan’s initiative, the UN General Assembly adopted a resolution in 2015 designating November 5 as “World Tsunami Awareness Day.” Since 2016, the High School Students Summit on “World Tsunami Awareness Day” has been held five times across various locations in Japan. The sixth summit took place in Kumamoto City in October 2024, bringing together a total of 526 high school students—313 from Japan and 213 from 43 other countries and regions. The participants deepened their mutual understanding and friendship while learning about disaster risk reduction and mitigation, including tsunami countermeasures. As an outcome of the summit, the “Kumamoto ‘Kizuna’ Declaration” was announced, expressing the students’ determination to become future leaders in the field of disaster risk reduction.

Moreover, in close cooperation with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Japan has been implementing projects to support the development of tsunami evacuation plans and the implementation of tsunami evacuation drills in countries with high tsunami risk in the Asia-Pacific region. Since the inception of the projects in 2017, notable progress has been made. For example, in Indonesia, the introduction of a mobile phone application (STEP-A) has improved access to tsunami preparedness information at the school level. The app has also been integrated with InaRISK, a digital tool for disaster monitoring and information provision developed by the National Agency for Disaster Countermeasure, contributing to mainstreaming and institutionalizing disaster risk reduction at both community and national levels. As of the end of 2024, tsunami preparedness plans have been developed or updated and tsunami education

programs have been implemented at 799 schools in 24 countries, with around 220,000 students, teachers, local government and community stakeholders participating in evacuation drills.

Since 2016, Japan has collaborated annually with the Hiroshima Office of the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) to support capacity building for female government officials and other stakeholders from developing countries vulnerable to natural disasters. The program places particular emphasis on women’s roles and leadership in the context of tsunami preparedness and response. By the end of 2024, a total of 714 participants from 39 countries had taken part in the initiative.

Japan also engages in the overseas deployment of ICT systems for disaster risk reduction. These systems enable the integrated collection, analysis, and dissemination of disaster-related information, allowing for timely and accurate communication of detailed information down to the community level, thus contributing to the strengthening of disaster risk reduction capacities in developing countries.

### ■ Realizing Sustainable Cities

Japan is actively working to address global challenges directly related to human settlements, including disaster risk reduction, post-disaster recovery, and the promotion of a sound water cycle. Drawing on its knowledge and experience, Japan supports the development of infrastructure such as water supply and sewage systems, waste management, and energy facilities. It also implements disaster risk reduction projects as well as human resources development initiatives, based on the concept of “Build Back Better.” In addition, Japan promotes sustainable urban development through cooperation with the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat). For example, in collaboration with the UN-Habitat Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific (ROAP) in Fukuoka, Japan supports the introduction of disaster prevention technologies developed in Fukuoka Prefecture to developing countries.

Following the first meeting held in Potsdam, Germany, in 2022, the second G7 Sustainable Urban Development Ministers’ Meeting took place in Takamatsu City, Kagawa Prefecture, in July 2023 under Japan’s Presidency. With the theme “Achieving Sustainable Urban Development Together,” the ministers affirmed the need to address key issues such as achieving net-zero and resilient cities, inclusive cities, and digitalization in cities. The outcome of the meeting was presented as the “Kagawa-Takamatsu Principles.” In November 2024, the third Ministers’ Meeting took place in Rome, Italy, where discussions built on the outcomes of the previous meetings. Participants shared insights on emerging challenges, common principles, and best practices. The outcome document introduced a new commitment for

## Protecting the Lives of People in Indonesia from Volcanic Disasters with Japanese Sediment Disaster Control Technology, Known as Sabo

– Building Sabo Infrastructure for Disaster Preparedness and Use during Normal Times –



Indonesia is one of the world's most volcanic countries with 130 active volcanoes. Among them, Mount Merapi, located in central Java Island, is one of the most active volcanoes in the world, erupting every 5 to 10 years. While residents living at the foot of the volcano benefit from fertile volcanic ash soil and abundant spring water, they are also exposed to the threats of pyroclastic and debris flows.

In the wake of the 1969 eruption of Mount Merapi, the Government of Indonesia began implementing measures to mitigate debris flow disasters using sediment disaster control technology known as sabo and sought cooperation from Japan. Sabo is a technology that controls the movement of debris flows with structures\*1 to protect people's lives and livelihoods from sediment-related disasters. Japanese sabo technology, developed through years of disaster experience, is renowned worldwide, to the extent that the word "SABO" is used even in foreign languages.

Japan began its support in 1970 by dispatching a sabo expert, and in 1977, assisted with the formulation of a master plan for land erosion and volcanic debris control. Based on this master plan, approximately 250 sabo facilities were constructed to date, including projects funded by Japanese ODA Loan. These facilities have repeatedly captured debris flows, protecting the lives and livelihoods of residents. However, the eruption of Mount Merapi in 2010 was the largest in the past 100 years, releasing volcanic debris equivalent to 28 times the amount estimated in the master plan, causing significant damage. Therefore, in 2015, through ODA Loan, Japan supported the construction of sabo facilities to channel and store debris flows and to revise the master plan for land erosion and volcanic debris control, so as to address issues such as debris flows occurring in rivers at the foot of Mount Merapi and unexpected debris flows caused by changes in terrain.

Mr. MIZOGUCHI Masaharu, Deputy Director General of the International Division at Yachiyo Engineering Co., Ltd., who participated in these Japanese ODA Loan projects, reflects on the challenges and how his company overcame them. He explains, "We modified the design of sabo facilities each time the surveyed terrain changed due to heavy rain or floods. Based on the characteristics of riverbed fluctuations in Indonesia's volcanic regions, we made various improvements, such as placing the foundations of sabo dams at deeper positions than those in Japan to enhance durability. Also, since there was a risk of debris flows and flash floods during construction, we ensured workers' safety by strengthening



A sabo dam that is used as a bridge during normal times (Photo: Yachiyo Engineering Co., Ltd.)

evacuation systems specifically for such events in addition to normal safety management."

Reflecting on how Japanese technology was applied locally in response to the evolving needs of the partner government, he recalls, "In the 1980s, when Indonesia was undergoing economic development, employment was the national priority. Therefore, labor-intensive construction methods such as stone masonry utilizing inexpensive labor were widely used. In the late 1990s, when it was hit by the Asian financial crisis, there was a demand for efficient infrastructure development with limited budgets. This led to the active promotion of multi-functional sabo facilities that could also be used as bridges or intake weirs during normal times. In recent projects, as economic development progressed, to maintain higher quality structures, factory-mixed concrete transported to sites began to be used as construction material instead of stone masonry and on-site mixed concrete, which were used before." He adds, "I believe that our ability to respond to the demands of each era led to trust in Japan."

Mr. FUKUSHIMA Junichi, who has a deep understanding of field operations as the General Manager of the company's Jakarta office, says, "We also made efforts to build relationships with local governments and residents, and tried to reflect their voices by designing multi-functional sabo facilities that can be utilized even outside of emergency situations. Local residents use the sabo facilities during normal times and are conscious that these are their own facilities. We often hear from them that they are now able to lead stable lives thanks to sabo," expressing his sense of contribution to the improvement of local lives.



Mr. Fukushima with staff from Indonesian companies involved in the construction of the sabo facility (Photo: Yachiyo Engineering Co., Ltd.)

The knowledge gained through technical cooperation on sabo in Indonesia was also applied to disaster prevention in Japan, such as in the volcanic debris flow control project at Mount Unzen Fugen-dake. Mr. Mizoguchi states, "Japan's technical cooperation overseas is by no means one-sided. It brings mutual benefits. I would like to continue to be involved with a focus on mutual cooperation moving forward."



Mr. Mizoguchi (second from the left) with staff from Indonesian companies involved in the construction of the sabo facility (Photo: Yachiyo Engineering Co., Ltd.)

\*1 Such as a dam or a levee built with stone and/or concrete, etc. to stem the flow of water or sediment from rivers and valleys.



“Joint Action,” reaffirming the intention to establish an ever-closer network for dialogues within and outside the G7, and to continue supporting the exchange between the G7 governments on matters of common interest and practice regarding sustainable urban development, with the involvement of key international partners such as the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and UN-Habitat.

## (5) Quality Education for All

There are an estimated 58 million children worldwide who are unable to attend primary school. When secondary education is included, the number of out-of-school children rises to approximately 244 million.<sup>83</sup> Since 2000, the proportion of out-of-school children has particularly increased in sub-Saharan Africa. Children in vulnerable situations, such as those with disabilities, refugee and internally displaced children, and children from ethnic minorities or remote communities, are at the highest risk of being left behind. The COVID-19 pandemic further exposed the fragility of education systems around the world. Moreover, Russia’s aggression against Ukraine and ongoing conflicts in various parts of the world, including the Middle East where the humanitarian situation in Gaza continues to worsen, have resulted in the destruction of numerous educational facilities. This has deprived children and students of their right to education and disrupted international educational exchange.

Education is a vital “investment in people” and is indispensable for promoting human security. SDG 4 aims to “ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all,” and the international community is working towards achieving the targets set out in the “Education 2030 Framework for Action.”<sup>\*</sup> The Summit of the Future, held in 2024, underscored the importance of education in addressing a wide range of challenges, including poverty reduction (see “Development Cooperation Topics” on page 88 for details on the Summit of the Future). Japan will continue to advance educational initiatives with a focus on quality education for all, the empowerment of women, children, and youth, and the provision of educational opportunities in conflict and disaster situations.

## Japan’s Efforts

Japan supports developing countries in a wide range of fields, including efforts to enhance basic education<sup>84</sup> and higher education.

In El Salvador, Japan has been developing and revising textbooks and teachers’ guides for primary and secondary education, as well as providing teacher training since 2006, to help students acquire essential literacy, reading comprehension, and numeracy skills. These teaching materials are continuously distributed nationwide. Since 2021, Japan has also supported efforts to use findings from learning assessments and academic performance surveys to revise curricula and textbooks, as well as to improve teaching methods. Japan has carried out similar textbook and teachers’ guide development in Laos, Mozambique, Nicaragua, Niger, Papua New Guinea, and other countries. The materials designed for developing countries are made available on the JICA website,<sup>85</sup> and their use is also encouraged within Japan to help children who face learning difficulties due to insufficient Japanese language skills.

In Africa, at the TICAD 8 held in August 2022, Japan announced that it will work on initiatives in education aimed at improving children’s learning by promoting school enrollment, enhancing inclusiveness, and providing school meals. Through these efforts, it has committed to delivering quality education, including STEM<sup>86</sup> education, to 9 million children and enhancing access to quality education for 4 million girls. At the TICAD Ministerial Meeting in August 2024, Japan and its partners affirmed the steady progress of these initiatives. By November 2024, the “School for All”<sup>87</sup> project, launched in Niger in 2004 as an initiative to build trust among schools, parents, and local communities, to support schools through community involvement, and to improve children’s learning environments, had been introduced in approximately 70,000 primary schools across 11 countries. Furthermore, the “Peacebuilding and Community Reconciliation Model,” which is a development model proposed by Japan, is being piloted in regions affected by prolonged conflicts, where children’s education has been disrupted by school closures due to the increase of refugees and displaced populations caused by events such as prolonged conflicts. Additionally, at TICAD 8, Japan has committed to developing highly skilled human resources through various means, including the Japan-Africa university network that accepts and provides training programs to African students as well as to advancing research

<sup>83</sup> See pages 211 and 214 of the “Global Education Monitoring Report 2023,” <https://www.unesco.org/gem-report/en/technology>

<sup>84</sup> Educational activities aimed at enabling individuals to acquire knowledge, values, and skills necessary for life. These mainly include primary education, lower secondary education (equivalent to Japanese junior high school), pre-school education, and adult literacy education.

<sup>85</sup> Education Materials: <https://www.jica.go.jp/activities/issues/education/materials/index.html>

<sup>86</sup> STEM is an acronym for Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics, and refers collectively to these four fields.

<sup>87</sup> A community-wide school management initiative in which “everyone,” including parents, teachers, and local residents, forms a School Management Committee and works with the government to manage the school. It supports children’s learning by sharing the importance of education with the entire community, not only parents and teachers. It began in 23 primary schools in Niger in 2004 and has now expanded to multiple countries in Africa.

cooperation in science and technology.

Japan also collaborates with more than 20 Japanese universities to establish a university network centered at Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology (JKUAT)/the Pan-African University Institute of Basic Sciences, Technology and Innovation (PAUSTI) in Kenya, among others. By strengthening cooperation in education, research, and industry-academia partnerships, Japan aims to address social challenges across the African region through research collaboration. As of March 2024, this initiative has contributed to the development of 3,261 highly skilled professionals.

As an example of cooperation leveraging Japanese-style education, Japan has supported the establishment of the Egypt-Japan University of Science and Technology (E-JUST) since 2008. E-JUST offers practical engineering education at international standards, contributing to the development of researchers in Egypt as well as the broader Middle East and Africa region. Additionally, under the “Egypt-Japan Education Partnership” launched in 2016, 55 Egypt-Japan Schools (EJS) delivering Japanese-style education have been opened. At EJS, students engage in “Tokkatsu”<sup>88</sup> (special activities), such as class meetings, day duties, club activities, and cleaning, that encourage children to take an active role in school management alongside their academic studies. In June 2024, 904 children graduated from 51 EJS schools across Egypt. Moreover, Japan supports human resources development in developing countries through diverse initiatives, including strengthening networking among higher education institutions between Japan and ASEAN, fostering collaboration with the industrial sector, participating in joint research projects with neighboring countries, and accepting international students to Japanese universities.

In addition to these efforts, Japan supports children often in vulnerable situations, including girls excluded from schooling, children with disabilities, and children in conflict-affected areas, as well as refugee and displaced children and those of their host communities. For example, in Ukraine, as a means of supporting regions affected by conflict, Japan assists internally displaced children who can no longer attend their former schools, by providing distance learning equipment and mental healthcare, enabling them to continue learning safely in their places of refuge. In Palestine, where unstable security conditions have restricted school attendance, Japan signed and exchanged notes in February 2024 for the grant “Project for the Improvement of E-learning Equipment,” with the aim of ensuring children’s access to learning opportunities. Through this cooperation, audiovisual production equipment will be provided to a television station in the West Bank, and primary schools in the area will be equipped with audiovisual and ICT



Then State Minister Fujii visiting one of the Egypt-Japan Schools (EJS), accompanied by Minister of Education and Technical Education Dr. Abdel Latif, in December 2024

devices to support remote classes, which is expected to improve the overall learning environment. In Afghanistan, Japan builds temporary classrooms and public libraries, to create safe learning spaces for girls. It also promotes inclusive education that accommodates children with disabilities, as well as education integrating perspectives on climate change and disaster risk reduction. For instance, in Uzbekistan, Japan helps strengthen the capacity of personnel responsible for training teachers, to ensure that pre-school children with disabilities can access quality education.

In the Asia-Pacific region, as part of its collaboration with international organizations, Japan supports initiatives toward achieving SDG 4 through contributions to a funds-in-trust within the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). These efforts include the organization of the Asia-Pacific Meeting on Education 2030 (APMED 2030) and the Asia-Pacific Regional Education Ministers’ Conference (APREMC-II). In addition, the initiative “Education for Sustainable Development: \* Towards achieving the SDGs (ESD for 2030),” led by UNESCO, began in January 2020. It aims to support progress towards achieving all the SDGs by fostering the builders of a sustainable society. As the country that first proposed ESD, Japan continues to promote the initiative and contributes to its global dissemination and advancement through the aforementioned funds-in-trust. Through this mechanism, Japan and UNESCO jointly organize the “UNESCO-Japan Prize on Education for Sustainable Development,” which recognizes organizations and institutions with outstanding practices in ESD implementation. To date, 21 organizations have received this award, leading to the active promotion of ESD.

Japan has contributed a total of approximately \$55.89 million to the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) from 2008 to 2023.\* At the Global Education Summit held in July 2021, Japan pledged to provide over \$1.5 billion in support for the education sector over five

<sup>88</sup> An abbreviation of the Japanese term for “special activities.” This initiative seeks to shift learning from a knowledge-heavy, theory-centered approach to one focused on acquiring life skills—such as problem-solving abilities, independence, social competence, and self-management—by incorporating activities like cleaning, class meetings, and day duty, which foster discipline, ethics, and cooperation.

years (2021 to 2025), including continued assistance to GPE, as well as support for the education and capacity building for 7.5 million girls in developing countries. Over the three-year period beginning in FY2021, more than 4.1 million girls have received support, and this commitment will continue going forward. Furthermore, in March 2024, an additional \$3 million was provided to the global fund for education in crises, Education Cannot Wait (ECW)\* to help ensure that children in Ukraine can learn in safer environments.



Female students learning through the “Advancing Quality Alternative Learning Project Phase 2,” which supports the provision of non-formal education in Pakistan, where many children are out of school (Photo: JICA)



## Glossary

### Education 2030 Framework for Action (FFA)

A framework that succeeds “The Dakar Framework for Action: Education for All,” which aimed to achieve education for all and was adopted at the World Education Forum held in Dakar, Senegal in 2000. The FFA was adopted at the Education 2030 High-Level Meeting, held alongside the UNESCO General Conference in 2015.

### Education for Sustainable Development (ESD)

Education that fosters builders of sustainable societies. ESD was recognized as a key to achieving all the SDGs in the resolutions of the 72nd Session of the UN General Assembly in 2017. This was reaffirmed in “ESD for 2030,” adopted by the resolution of the 74th Session of the UN General Assembly in 2019. “ESD for 2030” succeeds the “United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (UNDESD)” (2005-2014) and the “Global Action Program (GAP) on ESD” (2015-2019), serving as a new international framework for implementation from 2020 to 2030.

### Global Partnership for Education (GPE)

An international partnership established in 2002 under the leadership of the World Bank to support the education sector in developing countries. Its members include developing countries, donor countries and organizations, civil societies, and private-sector corporations and foundations. The partnership was renamed the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) in 2011, succeeding the Fast Track Initiative (FTI).

### Education Cannot Wait (ECW)

A fund established at the World Humanitarian Summit convened by the UN in Istanbul in May 2016, aimed at supporting children and young people in emergency situations—such as conflicts and natural disasters—by enabling their access to education.

## (6) Gender Equality and an Inclusive Society

It is often the case that the social norms and systems in developing countries are generally shaped by men’s perspectives, leaving women in vulnerable positions in many areas. At the same time, women are key actors in development, and their participation benefits not only themselves but also enhances the overall effectiveness of development efforts. For example, when women who have previously had little or no access to education acquire literacy skills, they are better able to obtain accurate information on public health and the prevention of infectious diseases such as HIV/AIDS. This, in turn, supports appropriate family planning, promotes women’s social participation and economic empowerment, and ultimately contributes to sustainable and inclusive

economic growth in developing countries.

The SDGs emphasize that “realizing gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls will make a crucial contribution to progress across all the Goals and targets.” Specifically, Goal 5 sets out to “achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.” Promoting gender equality and women’s empowerment is indispensable for realizing “quality growth.” Through gender mainstreaming,<sup>89</sup> it is essential to ensure that women and men participate equally in all stages of development cooperation and share its benefits equitably.

Challenges such as poverty, conflicts, infectious diseases, terrorism, and disasters affect people differently depending on their circumstances, including their country and region, and whether they are women or children. Due to infectious diseases, armed conflicts, large-scale disasters, and other factors, the number of people living in poverty worldwide has begun to rise. In some countries, widening disparities and deteriorating

<sup>89</sup> Gender mainstreaming means integrating a gender perspective into all policies, programs, and projects in order to achieve gender equality across all fields. In the context of development, it refers to the process of identifying the distinct challenges, needs, and impacts for both women and men at every stage—planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation—of all development policies, programs, and projects, based on the premise that such initiatives affect women and men differently.



humanitarian conditions have also been observed, creating an even further need for support for those in vulnerable situations. The concept of human security, which emphasizes the protection and empowerment of each individual, is therefore indispensable for realizing the SDGs' guiding principle of "leaving no one behind."

## Japan's Efforts

### ■ Promoting Women's Capacity Enhancement and Participation

In the "Development Strategy for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment,"<sup>90</sup> Japan established three basic principles: (i) respecting women's rights, (ii) building the capacity of women to reach their full potential, and (iii) advancing women's participation and leadership in political, economic, and other public spheres. Based on this strategy, Japan advances its efforts within the international community to promote gender mainstreaming, gender equality, and the empowerment of women and girls.

Japan contributed \$50 million to the Women Entrepreneurs Finance Initiative (We-Fi)<sup>91</sup> in 2018, followed by an additional \$5 million in June 2023. As of June 2023, We-Fi has supported 149,256 women-owned/led small and medium enterprises (WSMEs) in 67 countries. Of these, in concrete figures, 127,428 WSMEs have received financial assistance, while 28,404 participated in training programs to acquire the skills and knowledge necessary for business management. According to the World Bank, 70% of WSMEs in developing countries are either unable to secure financing from financial institutions or are subject to unfavorable borrowing terms. To address this challenge, Japan, through We-Fi, promotes the development of gender-equal legal frameworks and supports female entrepreneurs in gaining equal access to financing and markets.

The Leaders' Communiqué of the G7 Apulia Summit, held in June 2024, reiterated the commitment to collectively increase ODA for gender equality. It also emphasized that the G7 leaders will explore ways to increase ODA for climate change measures, particularly in Africa, in a gender-responsive manner, thus contributing to the further advancement of gender equality and women's empowerment.

Japan also provides support through UN Women, contributing approximately \$21 million in 2023 and \$22 million in 2024. These contributions have supported initiatives such as promoting women's political



Women selling handicrafts and processed food products from the Petra region through the "The Project for Formulating Tourism Development Master Plan in Petra Region" currently being implemented in Jordan (Photo: Petra Development and Tourism Region Authority)

participation and economic empowerment, eliminating sexual and gender-based violence against women and girls, strengthening women's role in peace and security, and advancing gender-responsive policies and budgets. In 2024, Japan provided emergency assistance and livelihood support to women who have been economically and socially affected by conflicts and disasters in Africa, the Middle East, Asia, and Eastern Europe, including Afghanistan and Ukraine. For example, in Pakistan, 60 women's community centers were established during the six-month period from February to August to promote women's independence. A total of 6,609 women and 1,131 girls used these centers, while 7,000 women were assisted in obtaining identity documents. In addition, 280 men and community leaders received support to improve their knowledge of gender-based violence prevention and gender equality.

Japan regards sexual violence in conflict as an issue that cannot be overlooked. From this standpoint, Japan prioritizes cooperation with the UN Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict (OSRSG-SVC).<sup>92</sup> In 2024, it contributed approximately \$660,000 to the OSRSG-SVC to support activities in Sudan, including protection and prevention measures against sexual and gender-based violence, as well as health, psychological, and legal support for refugees and internally displaced women.

In 2024, Japan contributed an additional €2 million to the Global Survivors Fund (GSF),\* bringing its total contributions to €10 million so far. Japan, as its board member, actively contributes to supporting survivors of conflict-related sexual violence in conflict-affected areas, including Afghanistan, Ukraine, and the Democratic Republic of Congo.

<sup>90</sup> A thematic policy formulated in 2016 to promote women's active participation in development cooperation.

<sup>91</sup> The Women Entrepreneurs Finance Initiative (We-Fi) was launched at the G20 Hamburg Summit in 2017. By supporting women entrepreneurs and women-owned or women-led small and medium-sized enterprises (WSMEs) in developing countries to overcome obstacles such as limited access to finance and institutional or regulatory barriers, the initiative aims to foster women's rapid economic empowerment and their active participation in economic and social life, thereby contributing to regional stability, reconstruction, and peacebuilding.

<sup>92</sup> For details on Japan's efforts to prevent sexual violence in conflict, see also the Ministry of Foreign Affairs website ([https://www.mofa.go.jp/jp/hr\\_ha/page23e\\_000466.html](https://www.mofa.go.jp/jp/hr_ha/page23e_000466.html))

## ■ Women, Peace and Security (WPS)

Japan has formulated its National Action Plans since 2015 to implement UN Security Council (UNSC) resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security (WPS),<sup>93</sup> adopted in 2000 as the first Security Council resolution to explicitly link women to the peace and security agenda, and the related resolutions. In April 2023, the Government of Japan formulated the Third National Action Plan (2023-2028)<sup>94</sup> based on exchanges of opinions with relevant ministries and agencies, experts, NGOs, civil society, and public comments. Specifically, Japan, with the cooperation of relevant ministries and agencies, supports women in conflict-affected and fragile countries, mainly through international organizations and bilateral assistance (see “Japan’s Development Cooperation Efforts for the Promotion of WPS” on page 84).

In September 2024, then Foreign Minister Kamikawa announced at the “WPS Focal Points Network<sup>95</sup> High-Level Side Event” that Japan would co-chair the Network in 2025 together with Norway and host the Network’s capital-level meeting in Tokyo in February 2025, with a view to further advancing the WPS agenda in cooperation with other countries.

In January 2024, the Taskforce on WPS was established to provide coordination across the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA). In June, the second WPS Taskforce meeting was held to share policies incorporating a WPS perspective in disaster risk reduction, disaster response, and reconstruction across relevant ministries and agencies, and to discuss how these policies can be leveraged in diplomatic efforts.



Then Foreign Minister Kamikawa meeting with women leaders in Côte d'Ivoire, April 2024

At the TICAD Ministerial Meeting held in August, Japan and many African countries reaffirmed the role of WPS and the importance of incorporating women’s and youth perspectives.

## ■ Assistance for People at Risk of Vulnerability

### (Disability and Development)

Persons with disabilities are often placed in disadvantaged positions in society. Japan’s ODA gives due consideration to the circumstances of people whose equal participation in society is hindered, including persons with disabilities. Article 32 of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities<sup>96</sup> also requires States Parties to take measures for international cooperation and its promotion.

Policies for persons with disabilities span a wide range of fields, including welfare, health and medical care, education, and employment. Drawing on its accumulated expertise and experiences in these areas, Japan supports developing countries’ disability-related measures and policies through ODA.

For example, Japan carefully responds to diverse local needs by incorporating barrier-free design in railway and airport construction, developing rehabilitation and vocational training facilities, and providing minibuses to improve mobility for persons with disabilities. In addition, it extends broad technical cooperation to strengthen the capacity of organizations and personnel involved in disability and development. Such efforts include accepting trainees from developing countries, as well as dispatching experts and JOCVs to promote social participation and employment opportunities.

### (Assistance for Children)

Children are generally highly vulnerable, and today many around the world face harsh conditions due to conflicts, natural disasters, and other challenges. In response, Japan provides humanitarian and development assistance for children through various channels, including bilateral cooperation and international organizations. In 2024, through the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), Japan assisted children being affected by poverty, conflict, and climate change-related natural disasters in 40 countries across Asia, Eastern Europe, the Middle East, and Africa.

Under the Grant Assistance for Grass-Roots Human

<sup>93</sup> The concept promotes sustainable peace by protecting women while enabling them to participate in conflict prevention, recovery, and peace-building in leadership roles. In 2000, the United Nations Security Council unanimously adopted resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security (WPS), the first resolution in the Council’s history to explicitly recognize that equal participation of women, protection from sexual violence in conflict, and gender equality are essential for international peace, conflict prevention, and conflict resolution.

<sup>94</sup> The Third WPS Action Plan (FY2023-2028) is structured around five pillars: (1) Promoting women’s participation and integrating a gender perspective in peacebuilding; (2) Preventing and responding to sexual violence and gender-based violence; (3) Disaster risk reduction, disaster response, and climate change initiatives; (4) Implementing WPS within Japan; and (5) Monitoring, evaluation, and review framework.

<sup>95</sup> The largest WPS-related network among UN member states, which serves as a platform to share lessons learned and good practices. In addition to governments, regional organizations such as the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), the African Union (AU), and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) are also members. As of December 2024, the network brings together 103 members from 93 countries and 10 regional organizations.

<sup>96</sup> A convention that sets out measures to realize the rights of persons with disabilities, with the aim of ensuring their enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms, and of promoting respect for their inherent dignity. Japan ratified the Convention in 2014.

Security Projects,<sup>97</sup> which supports initiatives for economic and social development at the community level, Japan carried out projects that help improve children's living environments. These include the construction and renovation of schools, the provision of medical equipment to hospitals, and the development of water supply facilities.

For example, in Samoa, Japan supported the reconstruction of an elementary school that had been demolished due to aging facilities, and handed over a new single-story concrete building in November 2024. Through this cooperation, children attending the school are now provided with a safe and suitable learning environment, which is expected to contribute to enhancing the quality of basic education in the community.

In Nepal, where it is estimated that about one in every 6.5 children aged 5 to 17 is engaged in child labor,<sup>98</sup> Japan supports a project implemented through a Japanese NGO in Makwanpur District—an area known for both sending and receiving child laborers. The project aims to reduce child labor through education and social work. (For initiatives in the Philippines that support the social reintegration of children from impoverished families, see “Featured Project” on page 83).



A JOCV teaching sports to children with disabilities in El Salvador (Photo: JICA)



Children in Costa Rica studying in a school building reconstructed with Japan's assistance after it was damaged by a major earthquake

### (Support for People in Conflict Situations)

It should also be noted that in situations of conflict, not only women and girls but also people in vulnerable social positions, including persons with disabilities and children, are particularly affected. Socially disadvantaged groups such as persons with disabilities caused by conflict or landmines, orphans, widows, and ex-combatants including child soldiers, and the rapidly increasing number of child refugees and internally displaced persons are especially vulnerable to the impacts of conflict. Nevertheless, the reality is that in post-conflict recovery, assistance is often delayed, making it difficult for them to share in the benefits of peace and reconstruction.

From this perspective, Japan provides support for the social reintegration of child soldiers and the protection of the most vulnerable children in conflict-affected areas through UNICEF. In the Gaza Strip of Palestine, this includes mental healthcare and explosives risk reduction education for children, as well as the distribution of identification wristbands to help reunite children with their families if they become separated. Japan also supports newborn care in Sudan, continued learning in Ukraine, assistance for former child soldiers in the Central African Republic, and protection of children and women who are victims of sexual violence in South Sudan and Somalia.

Through the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), Japan carries out protection activities for refugees and displaced persons, while providing humanitarian assistance tailored to the needs of those most likely to be in vulnerable situations. For example, in Uganda, this includes psychosocial support for children in refugee settlements to protect them from violence, abuse, and exploitation. In Ukraine, assistance is provided to vulnerable groups, such as elderly people who have lost their homes due to conflict



Children of Aimeliik Elementary School in Palau taking a school bus provided by Japan

<sup>97</sup> See Part V, Section 2 (2) on page 145.

<sup>98</sup> “Nepal Child Labour Report 2021” <https://www.ilo.org/publications/nepal-child-labour-report-2021>



and female-headed households including the provision of non-food items (NFIs), shelter support, and legal

assistance (see also Part III, Section 3 (5) on page 77 for educational support in conflict-affected areas).



## Glossary

### Global Survivors Fund (GSF)

Fund launched by Dr. Denis Mukwege and Ms. Nadia Murad, Nobel Peace Prize laureates 2018. It aims to facilitate access to reparations and support for survivors of conflict-related sexual violence against the backdrop that many of them do not receive public reparations. GSF conducts awareness-raising activities regarding the development of the judicial system to support and give relief to survivors.

## Featured Project

# 4

### Project to Strengthen the Support Systems for Children in Residential Care Facilities and Communities in 11 Regions in the Philippines

JICA Partnership Program (JPP) (March 2021 – March 2024)

Philippines



## Foster Resilience and Support the Social Reintegration of Children in Vulnerable Situations

The Philippines has achieved high economic growth in recent years, yet the pace of poverty reduction remains slow, leaving many children in vulnerable situations. A considerable number of children fall into delinquency and end up in residential care facilities or juvenile rehabilitation facilities. Unfortunately, these children often fail to acquire adequate life skills to thrive in society during their time spent at these facilities, and some return to delinquency behavior or repeat criminal activities after being released.

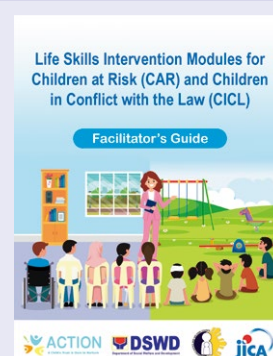
In order to support the stable reintegration of such children into society, ACTION (A Child's Trust Is Ours to Nurture), a Japanese NGO, developed the "Life Skills\*<sup>1</sup> Intervention Program" and the "Capacity Building Training on House-parenting," which aim to teach facility staff (house-parents) how to appropriately interact and care for these children. With the cooperation of the Government of the Philippines, these initiatives were institutionalized, and the "Life Skills Intervention Program" was introduced in 116 juvenile rehabilitation facilities across the country. Approximately 80% of the

children who participated in the program showed improvement in life skills, with feedback indicating that they "started to consider others' feelings when acting" and that they "are now able to control their anger." In addition, through the "Capacity Building Training on House-parenting," 240 trainers were developed, who then provided training sessions to more than 1,000 facility staff nationwide.

The organization, which also supports children within Japan, recognized the limited availability of Japanese-language materials in the field of childcare.

Building on the outcomes of this project, they developed the "Life Skills Intervention Program" materials for Japanese elementary, lower secondary, and upper secondary school students, with plans to introduce them to child welfare facilities across Japan.

While supporting better social lives for children in the Philippines, the organization will also share knowledge and experience gained through these activities for the benefit of Japanese society.



Textbook for "Life Skills intervention Program" in Tagalog (Photo: ACTION)



During a Capacity Building Training session on House-parenting (Photo: ACTION)

\*1 WHO defines life skills as the abilities for adaptive and positive behavior that enables individuals to deal effectively with the demands and challenges of everyday life.

# Japan's Development Cooperation Initiatives to Promote Women, Peace and Security (WPS)

## South Sudan

### Reach Alternatives (REALs) / Japan Platform (JPF)

#### Project for the Distribution of Protection Items to Refugees, Returnees, and Internally Displaced Persons Affected by the Sudan Crisis in Juba

With support from Japan Platform, REALs distributed essential items to residents of an internally displaced persons (IDP) camp to safeguard the health and human rights of women and girls, protect them from gender-based violence, and ensure dignified living conditions in shelters, even amid displacement.



(Photo: ©REALs)

## Ukraine

### United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)

#### Multi-sectoral response to urgent humanitarian needs in Ukraine with a view to laying the foundations for community, development, and peace in Ukraine

Japan, through UNHCR, supports capacity building, training, and awareness-raising efforts to enhance protection for vulnerable displaced and war-affected individuals and communities, including survivors of gender-based violence.



(Photo: UNHCR)

## Kenya

### United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)

#### Building Resilience for Sustained Provision and Uptake of Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH) and Gender Based Violence (GBV) Services in Selected Climate Change and Disaster Prone Counties in Kenya

In areas seriously affected by climate change-induced disasters such as droughts and floods, Japan, through UNFPA, provides comprehensive sexual and reproductive health services, along with gender-based violence prevention and response, to mothers, children, and pregnant women whose lives and health are at risk.



(Photo: UNFPA Kenya)

## Mozambique

### International Organization for Migration (IOM)

#### Strengthening the fishing sector in Northern Mozambique for gender-inclusive programming to counter violent extremism in Northern Mozambique

Japan, through IOM, provides fishing-related livelihood and income-generating opportunities to internally displaced persons who were forced to flee due to attacks by insurgent groups, as well as to returnees and host communities, with a focus on women and gender equality.



(Photo: IOM)

## Sri Lanka

### JICA

#### Project for Women's Economic Empowerment through Entrepreneurship, Leadership and Networking

Japan supports the implementation of pilot activities and the development of models to empower women running small businesses. These activities include business skills training, the development of demand-driven services and products, and collaboration with business partners to expand market access. The initiative also strengthens the institutional capacity of the Ministry of Women and Child Affairs.



(Photo: JICA)



Japan is promoting Women, Peace and Security (WPS) with the aim of further contributing to realizing a peaceful international community. This section introduces some of Japan's initiatives (for details on WPS, see page 81, Part III, 3(6)).

\*This article highlights three of the five pillars of Japan's National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security (Third Edition, FY2023-2028) that are related to international cooperation initiatives:

**I. Promoting Women's Participation and Gender Perspective in Peacebuilding**

**II. Preventing and Addressing Sexual and Gender-Based Violence**

**III. Disaster Risk Reduction, Disaster Response, and Response to Climate Change**

**Iraq**

**Global Survivors Fund (GSF)**

**Interim Relief Measures for Victims of Conflict-Related Violence**

Japan, through GSF, provided assistance for the formulation and implementation of interim relief measures—including livelihood support, medical care, education, and psychological services—for the Yazidi, a religious and ethnic minority in Iraq who suffered conflict-related sexual violence at the hands of the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL).



(Photo: ©Katie van der Werf / GSF)

**Panama, Costa Rica, Honduras**

**United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women)**

**Women's Leadership, Empowerment, Access and Protection in Human Mobility Crisis in Central America**

Japan, through UN Women, supports capacity building for migrant women and women in host communities, and provides assistance for responses to gender-based violence, including protection for survivors and psychological and legal support.



**Guatemala**

**JICA**

**Advisor for Strengthening Intervention Capacities for Women Entrepreneurs**

The advisor aims to improve the livelihoods and incomes of women entrepreneurs by providing basic entrepreneurship knowledge, technical training, and financial management support to women in impoverished areas, women's groups, and technical staff of the Secretariat of Social Works of the Wife of the Presidente of the Republic (SOSEP).



(Photo: JICA)

**Asia, Oceania, Latin America**

**JICA**

**Gender- and Diversity in Disaster Risk Reduction and Climate Change**

Since 2016, JICA has conducted the Knowledge Co-Creation Program on disaster response for government officials and civil society organizations engaged in disaster risk reduction and the promotion of gender equality in developing countries, with a focus on incorporating gender and diversity perspectives and ensuring inclusive participation. (Participating countries in 2023: Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Fiji, Mexico, Papua New Guinea, Sri Lanka, Timor-Leste, Uganda)



(Photo: IC Net Limited)



## (7) Culture and Sports

Cultural heritage that symbolizes a country can help improve the livelihoods of local communities when developed as a tourism resource, for example, by creating employment opportunities. Heritage sites that attract international visitors can also provide an important source of foreign currency for the national economy. At the same time, many cultural assets are in danger of disappearing due to shortages of funding, equipment, and technical expertise, underscoring the need for preservation support. The World Heritage Convention,<sup>99</sup> an international framework for safeguarding sites of universal value as the shared heritage of humanity, affirms that protecting such heritage and fostering international cooperation for this purpose are responsibilities of the entire international community. The preservation and promotion of culture, including the invaluable cultural heritage of developing countries, is therefore a challenge to be addressed collectively, not only by the countries where the heritage is located.

Furthermore, sports not only help maintain and improve health, but are also regarded as an important form of education—an “investment in people” that promotes “human security.” Sports foster respect for others, a spirit of mutual understanding, and an awareness of social norms. In addition, the influence and positive power of sports can serve as a “catalyst” for development and progress in developing countries.

### Japan's Efforts

Since 1975, Japan has provided support through the Cultural Grant Assistance\* to promote culture, including sports, and higher education, as well as preserve cultural heritage in developing countries. Facilities established under this program also serve as hubs for disseminating information about Japan and facilitating cultural exchanges, thereby deepening understanding of Japan and fostering a sense of affinity toward Japan. In 2024, Japan implemented 17 Cultural Grant Assistance projects, covering education, including Japanese language education, cultural heritage preservation, and sports.

Moreover, Japan provides support for the restoration and preservation of cultural heritage through the Japanese Funds-in-Trust established in the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). In FY2024, it contributed approximately ¥500 million, enabling multiple projects in cultural

heritage preservation. Japan places particular emphasis on human resources development and capacity building in developing countries, transferring preservation and restoration techniques and knowledge through the dispatch of experts, mainly Japanese, and the organization of workshops, so that developing countries can safeguard their cultural heritage independently in the future. In addition, it implements comprehensive support to address contemporary challenges facing cultural heritage, such as disaster prevention and climate change. Japan also supports the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage, including traditional dance, music, craft techniques, and oral traditions, through successor training, documentation and conservation, and the establishment of protective frameworks under the Japanese Funds-in-Trust.

Japan also conducts training programs to enhance the capacity for cultural heritage protection by inviting young experts from the Asia-Pacific region as part of the “Project for the Promotion of Cooperation for the Protection of World Heritage and Other Cultural Properties in the Asia-Pacific Region.” The biennial training covers both the preservation and restoration of wooden structures and the documentation of archaeological sites. In 2024, an online program was held for Laotian experts engaged in cultural heritage protection, focusing on the recording, preservation, and utilization of archaeological artifacts using digital technology.

In the field of sports, Japan has continued “Sport for Tomorrow,”<sup>100</sup> an international cooperation program launched in 2014 to build momentum for the Tokyo 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games, even after the Games concluded. The program seeks to advance initiatives that highlight Japan's presence through international exchange and cooperation in sports, while also contributing to the SDGs through international cooperation projects that leverage Japan's strengths.



A JOCV teaching rugby to children in Cameroon (Photo: JICA)

<sup>99</sup> The official title of the Convention is the “Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage.” Its purpose is to establish a framework of international cooperation and assistance to safeguard cultural and natural heritage, recognized as the heritage of all humankind, from threats such as damage or destruction. The Convention was adopted by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) General Conference in 1972 and entered into force in 1975. Japan became a State Party in 1992.

<sup>100</sup> Sport for Tomorrow official website: <https://www.sport4tomorrow.jpnsport.go.jp/>

In 2024, 173 Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers (JOCVs) were dispatched to developing countries in the field of sports. Additional initiatives include providing sports facilities and equipment, dispatching and inviting

coaches and athletes, and carrying out projects for technical cooperation, promotion of Japanese culture, and human resources development. 101



## Glossary

### Cultural Grant Assistance

Cultural Grant Assistance is a form of grant that supports the procurement of equipment and supplies as well as the construction and improvement of facilities for the promotion of culture (including sports), higher education, and the preservation of cultural heritage in developing countries. The program seeks to promote cultural and educational development in these countries and to foster friendly relations and mutual understanding through cultural exchanges with Japan. It consists of two schemes: "Cultural Grant Assistance," which targets governmental organizations in developing countries, and "Grant Assistance for Cultural Grassroots Projects," which supports small-scale projects implemented by NGOs and local public entities.

## Featured Project 5

### Project for the Improvement of Seismic Isolation Equipment for Museums in the Province of Manabi

General Cultural Grant Assistance (April 2022 – March 2024)

Ecuador



## Conservation of Cultural Properties through Japan's Disaster Prevention Technologies

Ecuador possesses a great deal of diverse and invaluable cultural heritage that illustrates the history of the ancient Andes. In recent years, the Government of Ecuador has reaffirmed the importance of preserving these cultural properties, actively reorganizing national museums, and promoting greater public engagement and awareness in the conservation of cultural properties.

On the other hand, Ecuador is an earthquake-prone country, and in 2016, the country was struck by a 7.8-magnitude earthquake. The damage extended to the cultural properties, with those exhibits in the museums near the epicenter falling off from toppled display cases and shelves due to a lack of proper anti-seismic measures.

Immediately after the earthquake, Japan dispatched experts to assess the damage to cultural properties and has continued to provide support towards the prevention of further damage to cultural properties by sharing empirical knowledge from Japan's disaster risk management efforts for cultural properties with Ecuadorian engineers through invitation programs.



Ecuadorian President Noboa (back right) receiving an explanation on the exhibits at the Manta National Museum and Cultural Center (Photo: JICA)



Visitors appreciating cultural heritage items displayed in anti-seismic showcases provided by the Government of Japan at the Manta National Museum and Cultural Center (Photo: Ministry of Culture and Heritage of Ecuador)

In this project, Japan supported the Manta National Museum and Cultural Center, as well as the Hojas-Jaboncillo Archaeological Museum, both of which were damaged in the 2016 earthquake, by providing seismic-isolation display cases and mobile shelves utilizing Japanese disaster prevention technology. The project is expected to significantly reduce the risks of damage to 1,726 cultural properties that previously lacked sufficient anti-seismic measures.

President Noboa of Ecuador, who was present at the handover ceremony for the equipment, expressed his gratitude to Japan, noting that the installation of the country's first anti-seismic exhibition equipment is a significant milestone that would contribute not only to the conservation of cultural properties, but also to the promotion of understanding of history by future generations of Ecuador.

101 MOFA sports diplomacy initiatives: <https://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/culture/people/sports/index.html>



## Summit of the Future

### – “Pact for the Future” for Achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and for Future Generations –

2025 marks the 80th anniversary of the United Nations. Yet, the international community is facing compound crises including poverty, climate change, and infectious diseases. It is necessary to implement efforts to make further progress toward achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Now more than ever, the international community must overcome division and confrontation, and strengthen cooperation to address these pressing global challenges.

In September 2020, in the declaration on the commemoration of the 75th anniversary of the United Nations, UN Member States pledged to strengthen global governance and requested the Secretary-General to report back with recommendations to respond to current and future challenges. In response, in September 2021, the Secretary-General submitted a comprehensive recommendation titled “Our Common Agenda,” which includes a proposal to hold the Summit of the Future. The then Foreign Minister Kamikawa attended the Preparatory Ministerial Meeting for the Summit of the Future convened in September 2023.

On September 22 and 23, 2024, the Summit of the Future was convened on the margins of the 79th session of the UN General Assembly with the aim of restoring trust in UN and addressing the achievement of SDGs and new global challenges through international cooperation. At the summit, an outcome document titled “The Pact for the Future” was adopted, which declared to implement 56 actions across five chapters: “Sustainable development and financing for development,” “International peace and security,” “Science, technology and innovation and digital cooperation,” “Youth and future generations,” and “Transforming global governance” to protect the needs and interests of present and future generations. In particular, in the development

context, the document underscores commitments to take bold, ambitious, accelerated, just, and transformative actions in order to implement the “2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,”<sup>\*1</sup> to achieve the SDGs and to leave no one behind, to invest in people to end poverty and strengthen trust and social cohesion, and to achieve gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls as a crucial contribution to progress across all the SDGs.

At the Summit of the Future, the then Prime Minister Kishida highlighted the importance of the “rule of law,” “human dignity,” “investing in people,” “nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation,” and “UN Security Council reform” to ensure a future defined by peace, freedom, and prosperity, and called on the international community to share responsibility and unite under multilateralism.

To effectively address global challenges, it is imperative to strengthen the functions of the UN, including the Security Council reform, and to advance global governance reforms. Looking ahead to the coming decades, Japan will promote development cooperation toward achieving “human dignity,” which is the foundation of all international cooperation, and the spirit of “leaving no one behind” in the “2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.” This will be done while promoting the rule of law and under the concept of human security, taking into account the Humanitarian-Development-Peace nexus (HDP nexus) as an opportunity to strengthen strong and effective multilateralism centered on the UN. Furthermore, Japan will actively contribute to efforts toward the comprehensive achievement of the SDGs and beyond, in cooperation with the international community.

<sup>\*1</sup> See the glossary on page 36.



Then Prime Minister Kishida delivering a speech at the Summit of the Future (Photo: Cabinet Public Affairs Office)



Then Foreign Minister Kamikawa delivering a speech at the Preparatory Ministerial Meeting for the Summit of the Future