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Leading International Efforts to Addressing Increasingly Complex and Serious Global Issues

(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. At the G7 Kananaskis Summit in 2025, during the session on “Making Communities Safe,” then Prime Minister Ishiba stated that Japan has been experiencing more frequent wildfires on a large scale due to dry conditions and strong winds. On top of that, he explained that the Government is considering strengthening its measures, including enhancing firefighting systems and equipment to enhance firefighting capabilities. He also mentioned the efforts on the use of meteorological satellites in view of early detection and extinguishment of wildfires, and expressed his intention to work closely with other countries.

Japan has vigorously worked on addressing these environmental and climate change 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). In addition, Japan is advancing cooperation, particularly with ASEAN countries, under the Strategic Program for ASEAN Climate and Environment (SPACE) in order to cooperatively address the triple global crises of climate change, pollution, and biodiversity loss. At the Third ASEAN-Japan Ministerial Dialogue for Environment and Climate Change in 2025, an agreement was reached on further expanding this cooperation.

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. The situation calls for strengthened and concerted efforts by the international community,

including not only developed countries but also developing countries. Against this backdrop, 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.

Toward achieving the goals of the Paris Agreement, 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 of the same year, Japan submitted its “Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC)”⁵⁷ reflecting these goals, together with “The Long-term Strategy under the Paris Agreement” to the UN. Furthermore, in February 2025, Japan submitted a new NDC to the UNFCCC secretariat, which set reducing its greenhouse gas emissions by 60% in FY2035 and by 73% in FY2040, respectively, from its FY2013 levels as ambitious targets aligned with the global 1.5°C goal and on a straight pathway towards the achievement of net zero by 2050.

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.

(The 30th Session of the Conference of the Parties to the UNFCCC (COP30))

From November 10 to 22, 2025, COP30 was held in Belém, Brazil. Minister of the Environment Ishihara attended the ministerial-level session during the conference and delivered a statement. Brazil, the COP30 Presidency, presented the Portuguese “Mutirão” (joint effort, collaboration, working together) as a theme, and the participants discussed accelerating the implementation of the Paris Agreement and advancing international cooperation. As an outcome of COP30, the “Global Mutirão Decision” was adopted, which

⁵⁷ 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.

incorporates a wide range of contents spanning multiple areas such as mitigation and finance, based on three pillars: (1) the 10th anniversary of the Paris Agreement, (2) transition from negotiation to implementation, and (3) accelerating implementation, solidarity, and international cooperation. Separately, under the various negotiating agenda items, decisions were adopted, including one on the global goal on adaptation, and together with the “Global Mutirão Decision,” these outcomes were collectively referred to as the “Belém Political Package.”



Minister of the Environment Ishihara delivering a speech at the ministerial-level session of COP30 (Photo: Ministry of the Environment)

(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 principles of AZEC consist of the simultaneous achievement of decarbonization, economic growth, and energy security, as well as cooperation toward achieving 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. In October 2025, the 3rd AZEC Leaders Meeting was held. At the meeting, the Leaders’ Joint Statement, which reaffirmed with partner countries the importance of the AZEC principles, was adopted, together with an annex entitled “The Progress Made in 2024-2025 Following the Action Plan for Next Decade,” which confirmed the progress made over the preceding year under the Action Plan adopted in the previous year.

(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 314 projects have been approved and implemented by September 2025, which are expected to reduce GHG emissions by 3.2 billion tons and increase the resilience of 1.4 billion people through support for adaptation. Additionally, from Japan, JICA, MUFG Bank, Ltd., and Sumitomo Mitsui Banking Corporation were approved as “Accredited Entities” that are entitled to propose GCF projects. To date, three projects by MUFG Bank, Ltd. have been approved, along with two projects by JICA.

(Fund for responding to Loss and Damage (FRLD))

At COP27 in 2022, the Fund for responding to Loss and Damage (FRLD) was established as part of new financing arrangements to address the loss and damage suffered by particularly vulnerable developing countries from the adverse effects of climate change. A total of seven board meetings were held by the end of 2025, during which progress was made on matters including the selection of the Philippines as the host country for the board, the appointment of the executive director, and the establishment of the legal framework for setting up the secretariat at the World Bank. In addition, a decision was taken to implement an Early Response Scheme (the “Barbados Implementation Modalities”) for a planned period of two years starting in 2026, with applications for support projects opened in conjunction with COP30. Japan has contributed ¥1.37 billion in 2024 and ¥695 million in 2025 to the fund, and as a board member, has been actively contributing to discussions toward the appropriate operation of the fund.

(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.

Africa is a region particularly vulnerable to the effects of climate change. In recent years, natural disasters such as droughts, floods, and tropical cyclones have been on the rise, threatening human security, including food

and nutrition security and health. Against this backdrop, the “TICAD 9 Yokohama Declaration,” adopted as the leaders’ declaration at TICAD 9 held in August 2025, also noted the important role that climate finance plays in advancing support for African countries in their adaptation, mitigation, and transition to low-carbon, climate-resilient development.

As part of its assistance for climate change actions in developing countries, Japan promotes “The Joint Crediting Mechanism (JCM),”⁵⁸ which facilitates the diffusion of advanced decarbonizing technologies to partner countries around the world, including developing countries, through cooperation with them. 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 first Memorandum of Cooperation (MoC) on the implementation of a JCM with Mongolia, followed by the signing of an MoC with India in August 2025. As of the end of 2025, Japan has established JCMs with 31 countries. Since the start of the JCM in 2013 through the end of 2025, Japan has implemented 290 projects related to energy saving and renewable energy, among others, contributing 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.



Implementation training on nursery establishment conducted under a technical cooperation project for sustainable forest management and agricultural land management in Timor-Leste (Photo: JICA)

■ 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 great importance on its work in the field of biodiversity, and has contributed to the Japan Biodiversity Fund,⁵⁸ launched at the 10th meeting of the Conference of

the Parties (COP10) to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD),⁵⁸ 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 to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD-COP16) was held in Cali, Colombia. 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 part of its commitment to combating the illegal trade in wild fauna and flora, including poaching, Japan has long supported efforts to combat elephant poaching and the illegal ivory trade. Specifically, Japan supports capacity building at the field level against illegal trade through training in elephant range states, preparation of identification manuals, provision of equipment and facilities, and capacity building related to CITES-related laws and regulations. In 2025, Japan supported the holding of the “MIKE Subregional Steering Committee Meeting in West Africa” in Senegal, aimed at generating the results of the Monitoring the Illegal Killing of Elephants (MIKE) Programme activities more efficiently and over the long term, facilitating the exchange of views and sharing of experience among relevant stakeholders in West 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 about adverse impacts on the marine ecosystem, tourism, fisheries, and human health. The “Osaka Blue Ocean Vision,” an initiative led by Japan at the G20 Osaka Summit in 2019, sets a shared goal of reducing additional pollution by marine plastic litter to zero by 2050. In order to realize the Vision, Japan launched the “MARINE Initiative” that focuses

⁵⁸ Established in the Secretariat of the CBD by Japan during its COP10 Presidency with the aim of building capacities in developing countries.

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.”

At the Third United Nations Ocean Conference (UNOC3) held in June 2025, then Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs Matsumoto highlighted three areas in which the international community needs to take further action toward achieving SDG 14: active engagement with important international commitments on the ocean; the initiation and dissemination of advanced initiatives toward a sustainable ocean; and cooperation with other countries to achieve a sustainable ocean.

Japan supports efforts against marine plastic litter in the field of marine environmental protection, and in 2025 implemented the JICA Knowledge Co-Creation Program (Group and Region Focus) “Waste Management Towards Control of Marine Litter.” Furthermore, as support for Southeast Asia, South Asia, and Pacific Island countries through the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), in 2025 Japan implemented monitoring and capacity building projects to promote plastic recycling by small and medium-sized enterprises in Cambodia and Pakistan, and conducted training sessions for relevant stakeholders, including local government officials in Cambodia, Thailand, Viet Nam, Fiji, and Palau, aimed at sharing Japan’s knowledge in the area of strengthened plastic waste management.

Furthermore, in Southeast Asia, as part of its expansion of cooperation with ASEAN on measures against marine plastic litter as announced at the Japan-ASEAN Summit in 2018, Japan has conducted human resources development, awareness-raising, and public relations activities for environmental conservation, primarily on reducing marine plastic litter in ASEAN countries, in addition to its efforts through UNEP. In 2025, Japan is providing capacity building support through the Japan-ASEAN Integration Fund (JAIF)⁵⁹ to monitor and reduce 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.



Field Survey of plastic waste using drones through the Science and Technology Research Partnership (SATREPS) in Thailand “Project for Formation of a Center of Excellence for Marine Plastic Pollution Studies in the Southeast Asian Seas” (Photo: JICA)

■ 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



Providing guidance on wood sample collection under a technical cooperation project aimed at strengthening the resilience of tropical forests in Indonesia (Photo: JICA)

⁵⁹ A fund established in 2006 to support ASEAN’s efforts toward the establishment of the ASEAN Community, with a focus on promoting integration centered on narrowing intra-regional disparities. Japan announced a total contribution of ¥7.5 billion (approximately \$70.1 million) at the ASEAN Japan Summit in 2005, and subsequently contributed a total of \$100 million to “JAIF 2.0” in 2013. In 2023, on the occasion of the 50th Year of ASEAN-Japan Friendship and Cooperation, “JAIF 3.0” was established with a contribution of \$100 million.



Reducing Greenhouse Gas Emissions through Sustainable Forest Management

Technical Cooperation (April 2022 – April 2025)

Capacity Development Project for Reducing Carbon Emissions from Forest Degradation through Commercial Logging in PNG by Improving the Monitoring System of Forest Logging Operations

📍 Papua New Guinea



Papua New Guinea is home to approximately 35 million hectares of forest, making it one of the world's leading tropical forest countries. Timber production and export through commercial logging constitute a vital industry for the country. In recent years, however, increasing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions attributable to forest degradation caused by commercial logging and agricultural land development have raised concern. At the same time, monitoring of logging operators by Papua New Guinea Forest Authority (PNGFA) staff was not functioning adequately, making sustainable forest management a pressing challenge.

In light of these circumstances, Japan commenced technical cooperation in 2022 to improve the monitoring system of forest logging operations. This cooperation aims to strengthen the capacity of stakeholders involved in enforcing rules and procedures on logging operations, ensuring post-operation forest regeneration activities, and promoting low-emission logging practices, thereby

working to curb GHG emissions resulting from forest degradation. To date, training on logging rules and procedures has been provided to 72 logging monitoring officers of the PNGFA and 39 logging operators. As a result, sustainable forest management has been promoted, contributing to reductions in GHG emissions attributable to forest degradation. Training participants have shared feedback such as, "This was the first training on logging regulations for operators, and it deepened our understanding," and "I want to apply the knowledge gained from the training to my future work and protect Papua New Guinea's forests."

Forest management and the reduction of GHG emissions are urgent priorities for Pacific Island countries, which are highly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. Japan will continue to cooperate in various ways with environmental and climate change measures in Papua New Guinea, while also supporting the country's sustainable economic growth.



A PNG Forest Authority staff member and a JICA expert checking the growth of seedlings (Photo: JICA)



Training session on the Logging Code of Practice (Photo: JICA)

as legal and sustainable tropical timber trade through the organization for nearly 40 years. Through the Government of Japan's voluntary contributions to ITTO, in 2025 a Project Steering Committee meeting was held in Panama upon completion of a project to strengthen forest monitoring capacity and expand the traceability system, among other forms of support to tropical timber-producing countries.

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 of IUU fishing on fisheries resources. In doing so, Japan contributes to the sustainability of the fishing industry, one of the core industries for ASEAN 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 (for the case of building a system for sustainable and environmentally sound mining development in Kazakhstan, see “Master Techniques from Japan to the World” on page 44).

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 that have ratified the Convention, to promote the overseas expansion of Japan’s advanced mercury management technology. Japan also implements training to strengthen monitoring capacity for engineers in the Asia-Pacific region and Southern Africa in cooperation with the Asia Pacific Mercury Monitoring Network (APMMN) and the Southern Africa Mercury Network (SAMNet), respectively.

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 38,000 people through

training programs and other means by March 2025, exceeding this target.

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),”⁶⁰ which has expanded to 233 cities in 47 countries (as of October 2025). The 4th General Assembly of the ACCP was also held at TICAD 9 in August 2025. Then Minister of the Environment Asao, who attended the meeting, expressed expectations for the promotion of cooperation with international organizations through the newly established “MOE Japan Fund for Project Development Facilitation for Better Waste Management in Africa.” There was a lively exchange of views on the importance of waste management technologies, governance, information, and resource mobilization, including the Fukuoka Method,⁶⁰ and on appropriate approaches to waste management. African countries expressed their gratitude to Japan for holding the meeting.



A JICA expert providing training to the coast guard as part of the technical cooperation “Project for Enhancement of Institutional Capacity on Oil Spill Response” in Mauritius (Photo: JICA)

⁶⁰ A type of semi-aerobic landfill final disposal site that was put into practical use in the 1970s through the cooperation of Fukuoka City and Fukuoka University, and has been adopted as the standard structure in Japan’s guidelines for landfill final disposal sites. Since air naturally flows into the landfill layer through drainage pipes, aerobic conditions are maintained, contributing to improved leachate quality, reduced greenhouse gas emissions, and the early stabilization of landfill sites.



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 2025). 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).

Joint Crediting Mechanism (JCM)

A mechanism, in line with Article 6 of the Paris Agreement, through which enterprises and governments of Japan and partner countries cooperate on measures in terms of technology and finance, and the resulting reductions and removals of GHG emissions are distributed according to the degree of contribution of each country.

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. 233 cities in 47 countries (as of October 2025) 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) ⁶¹ 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 4.8 million ⁶² children under the age of five die annually due to preventable diseases. Approximately 260,000 ⁶³ women die during and following pregnancy and childbirth per year, primarily due to the lack of emergency obstetric care provided by doctors and midwives.

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 the global health architecture (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

⁶¹ The concept that all people have access to effective and quality-assured health services at affordable costs without financial hardship.

⁶² According to data from the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF). <https://data.unicef.org/topic/child-survival/under-five-mortality/>

⁶³ According to data from the World Health Organization (WHO) (as of April 7, 2024). <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/maternal-mortality>

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 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.

Furthermore, under the philosophy of guiding structural global change through strengthening PPR for the next pandemic, Japan continues to work on raising international awareness and maintaining momentum through various international conferences that Japan hosts or participates in. 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 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 finance and health authorities. At the G20 Johannesburg Summit in November 2025, Prime Minister Takaichi attended and stated that global health is a critical economic, social, and security issue for the entire international community, and that Japan will vigorously promote global health, including by hosting the UHC High-Level Forum in Tokyo in December, as well as human resource development at the UHC Knowledge Hub together with the World Bank and the World Health Organization (WHO).

At the opening ceremony of TICAD 9 held in August 2025, then Prime Minister Ishiba announced Japan's intention to attract investment in Africa's health sector based on the "Investment Promotion Package for Sustainable Health in Africa." In addition, then Minister for Foreign Affairs Iwaya attended the Ministerial Meeting of the UHC Friends Group held on the occasion of the United Nations General Assembly in September, and reaffirmed Japan's resolve to continue promoting

efforts toward the achievement of UHC and to contribute to global health.

Japan also actively participates in rulemaking in the international arena. Since February 2022, Japan had 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 Pandemic Agreement (provisional name)), and the Agreement was adopted by consensus at the 78th World Health Assembly on May 20, 2025. Japan also actively contributed to discussions on the amendments to the International Health Regulations (2005) (IHR).⁶⁴ A set of IHR amendments was adopted by consensus on June 1, 2024, the final day of the 77th World Health Assembly, and entered into force on September 19, 2025.

■ 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 care system 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 health facilities and support for human resources development in the health field. For example, in March 2025, Japan and the Government of Tanzania exchanged notes regarding Japan's support through grants for the improvement of medical equipment related to maternal and child health in regional core hospitals and other facilities in Tanzania under the "Project for the Improvement of Medical Equipment for Enhancing Maternal and Child Health Care Services," advancing efforts toward the improvement of maternal and child health services in Tanzania. 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

⁶⁴ Health regulations established by the WHO with the aim of preventing the international spread of diseases to the greatest extent possible.

MASTER TECHNIQUES 2

from
Japan to
the World

Saving the Lives of Mothers and Newborns through Smartphone-Based Maternal and Child Health Checkups – Digitalization of Antenatal Care in the Democratic Republic of the Congo –



The Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), located in central Africa, is blessed with abundant mineral resources; however, the development of healthcare infrastructure has been delayed due to the impact of armed conflicts that have continued since the late 1990s, leaving many citizens unable to access adequate medical care. Less than approximately 6% of domestic medical facilities meet the healthcare standards stipulated by the government. In the field of maternal and child health, the maternal mortality rate is approximately 100 times that of Japan. The neonatal mortality rate is approximately 50 times that of Japan, with the situation being particularly severe in rural areas with poor access to medical facilities.

Against this backdrop, SOIK Corporation (pronounced “Sowak”), a company based in Okinawa, is tackling healthcare challenges in Africa through business, under the vision of “delivering high-quality healthcare to all mothers and children in Africa.” The company’s Representative Director and CEO, FURUTA Kuniyuki, previously worked as a JICA staff member stationed in the DRC, where he developed a strong conviction that the local healthcare situation needed to be improved through his involvement in international cooperation projects in the country. Mr. Furuta explains, “To drive innovation with new technology, I believed that the startup approach, which allows for repeated trial and error with minimum fear of failure, was the right fit.” He subsequently gained experience working at a startup developing portable ultrasound devices, before founding SOIK in 2019. The company currently works to improve maternal and child health through maternal health checkups using “SPAQ,” a solution developed with SOIK taking the lead.

SPAQ consists of medical devices (hardware) such as a portable ultrasound scanner and a blood pressure monitor, along with a smartphone application (software) with electronic medical record functionality. Even in remote clinics lacking adequate facilities and equipment, checkups can be conducted using the equipment that fits “in a single backpack” and a smartphone. Because it can be operated without advanced medical knowledge, both healthcare professionals and volunteer staff providing support in local communities can use it.

In conducting training sessions using SPAQ, the company placed particular emphasis on making it easy to understand. In the African region, where diverse ethnicities and languages intermingle and educational levels vary widely, the goal was to ensure that as many users as possible could reliably operate the system. Reflecting on the training approach, Mr. Furuta recalls: “We were conscious of checking participants’ level of understanding at each stage, proceeding carefully step by step, minimizing the difference in the ‘steps of understanding’ as small as possible.” The initiative, which began in the DRC, has since expanded to a total of four countries in Africa. SPAQ has been introduced to the health authorities of each country, with over 25,000 digital maternal health checkups already conducted, and more than 100 lives have already been saved.

Building on the track record accumulated in the DRC, in 2023 SOIK partnered with the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), which received support from the Government of Japan, to carry out a pilot introduction and demonstration project for SPAQ at internally displaced persons (IDP) sites in Goma, a major city in the eastern part of the country. Training was conducted for 12



Maternal health checkup being conducted using a portable ultrasound device at the Rusayo IDP site in the DRC (Photo: UNFPA DRC)



Mr. Furuta conducting training for local healthcare workers (Photo: SOIK Corporation)

healthcare workers, who were then dispatched to four IDP sites. The results demonstrated high demand on the ground, with the number of consultations at the IDP sites reaching approximately three times the initial target. The company continues to collaborate with UNFPA to work toward delivering high-quality healthcare in IDP sites.

With an eye towards more widespread adoption of SPAQ, Mr. Furuta emphasizes the need to work more closely with government authorities going forward, including through the integration of SPAQ into local health insurance systems. He also stresses: “The tests and devices we provide are merely one means to an end. Our goal is to reduce maternal and child mortality across the African continent.” He adds, “To that end, I want to build a self-sustaining business model by establishing outcome indicators that can be objectively evaluated, such as reductions in mortality rates.” He further expresses his aspiration to extend support to people in conflict zones around the world outside of Africa who lack access to adequate healthcare services. Currently, SOIK is working, with the support of the Government of Japan, to develop a “smartphone-based AI ultrasound” that can automatically determine gestational age and assess the risk of ectopic pregnancy and placenta previa, even in environments without network coverage, for expectant mothers who cannot access medical facilities.

Going forward, it is expected that by drawing on the technologies and expertise of Japan’s private sector and deepening public-private collaboration, these efforts will develop into a sustainable initiative that integrates technology transfer, human resources development, and institution building. A future is taking shape in which the healthcare system of the DRC is improved through this kind of “master technique,” ultimately contributing to regional stability and growth.

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, Section 3 (3) on page 77 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, in 2025, the UHC Knowledge Hub was established in Tokyo 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.



A JICA expert instructing nursing students on how to use a fetal monitor in the "Project for Strengthening Maternal and Child Health by Telemedicine System Establishment" in Bhutan (Photo: JICA)

Primary healthcare services under UHC include all types of services, including nutritional improvement, 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 34 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 the situation, in 2025, Japan provided support to improve maternal and child health in numerous countries, including Bolivia, Burundi, Gabon, Georgia, Ghana, Guatemala, Mozambique, Pakistan, and Tanzania (for efforts to reduce maternal and infant mortality through the digitalization of prenatal care in the Democratic Republic of Congo, see "Master

Techniques from Japan to the World" on page 73).

Drawing on its experience and expertise, Japan has been engaged in the development and dissemination of the Maternal and Child Health (MCH) Handbook adapted to the circumstances of each country in developing countries since the 1990s, as a means of improving maternal and child health. The MCH Handbook can contribute to the Continuum of Care (CoC) from pregnancy, childbirth, the post-partum period,⁶⁵ 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 21 countries and regions, including Afghanistan, Kenya, Madagascar, Palestine, and Tajikistan, have been invited to 16 training sessions.

Japanese NGOs implement projects aimed at improving health and medical services using the Grant Assistance for Japanese NGO Projects and the Japan Platform (JPF).⁶⁶ For example, in 2025, ChildFund Japan, a Japanese NGO, is implementing a project to improve healthcare access for ethnic minorities living in the mountainous area of Davao del Sur Province in the Philippines, including the construction of medical facilities, the improvement of medical equipment and transport vehicles, and health awareness and education training (for the project to strengthen child protection support in Uganda, see "Featured Projects" on page 150).

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,^{*} and bilateral cooperation. In June 2024, Japan announced a contribution of \$30 million to the African Vaccine Manufacturing Accelerator (AVMA),⁶⁷ a financing mechanism launched by Gavi to strengthen the sustainable vaccine manufacturing base and improve vaccine supply resilience in Africa.

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) positions health as one of the key priority sectors in its "Strategy 2030"

⁶⁵ The period after childbirth in which women recover to a similar condition before pregnancy, usually around one to two months after birth.

⁶⁶ See Glossary on page 151.

⁶⁷ 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.

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 2025, Japan has contributed a total of approximately \$28 million through the Fund.

Japan has supported building health 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.



A pregnant woman receiving her MCH Handbook at a prenatal checkup, with an obstetrician explaining its use, in the "Project for Improving the Quality of Continuum of Care for Mothers and Children through the introduction of Maternal and Child Health Handbook" in Georgia (Photo: JICA)

■ 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 promoting UHC, through the Global Fund. ⁶⁸ From its establishment to September 2025, Japan has contributed a total of approximately \$5.2 billion to the Global Fund. Furthermore, in November of the same year, Japan decided to contribute up to ¥81 billion to the Global Fund over the three-year period from 2026 to 2028. 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 child health, as a complementary support to the efforts made through the Global Fund.

As for bilateral cooperation in HIV/AIDS responses, Japan provides assistance to raise awareness for preventing new infections as well as to promote testing and counseling. Primarily in Africa and across countries worldwide, in 2025, 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.

In respect of malaria, one of the major causes of infant mortality, Japan supports efforts to combat malaria by strengthening local communities in the Solomon Islands. Through contributions to the Global Fund, Japan also takes measures against malaria on a worldwide level. (for efforts to combat malaria using drones and AI in Ghana, see "Master Techniques from Japan to the World" on page 78).



A Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteer providing nutritional guidance to pregnant women in Guatemala (Photo: JICA)

(Responding to Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR))

Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR) ⁶⁹ 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 would contribute approximately ¥1 billion to GARDP, ⁷⁰ 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 2025, Japan contributed approximately ¥150 million to GARDP.

⁶⁸ 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.

⁶⁹ Pathogenic microorganisms, including bacteria and viruses, gaining resistance to antimicrobials such as antibiotics and antiviral drugs, which causes the drugs to lose sufficient efficacy.

⁷⁰ An abbreviation for Global Antibiotic Research & Development Partnership.

(Neglected Tropical Diseases (NTDs))

Some parasitic and bacterial infectious diseases, 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 December 2025, Japan has contributed a total of ¥28.83 billion to the Global Health Innovative Technology (GHIT) Fund and provides support for countermeasures against NTDs through GHIT.

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). In July 2025, Japan signed and exchanged notes with UNICEF regarding a grant of ¥714 million for the “Project for the Eradication of Poliomyelitis (UNICEF Cooperation).”



Overseas Cooperation Volunteer providing health guidance to pregnant women in Nicaragua (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 contributions is entrusted to the WHO Director-General, and it is possible to disburse funding within 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 1.2 billion children and saved more than 20.6 million lives. At the fourth replenishment meeting of Gavi Vaccine Alliance held in June 2025, pledges totaling more than approximately \$9 billion were announced by major donors and private entities such as the Gates Foundation.

(3) Water and Sanitation

Water and sanitation are vital issues linked to human life. Around the world, approximately 2.1 billion people cannot access safely-managed drinking water, and approximately 3.4 billion people live without safely-managed sanitation facilities such as toilets.⁷¹ 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).⁷² 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."⁷³ In addition, then Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs Matsumoto had a meeting in March 2025 with UN Secretary-General's Special Envoy on Water Retno, who was visiting Japan, and stated that ensuring access to water and sanitation, which is fundamental to human life, is of critical importance from the perspective of human security, and that Japan wishes to work closely together in the international arena.

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 Tajikistan, Japan is providing support aimed at establishing safe and stable water supply services in Khatlon Province, one of the underdeveloped areas in the country in terms of basic

infrastructure, through the construction of water supply facilities and the introduction of a metered tariff system via the installation of water meters. In Kenya, where arid and semi-arid lands account for more than 80% of the national territory, Japan is working to strengthen capacities for the improvement and management of water supply facilities by motorizing hand-pumps and developing guidelines for water supply facilities. In Pakistan, which has set as a policy goal the provision of access to safe drinking water for all by 2025, Japan decided in May 2025 to provide grants for the supply of smart water meters and other equipment in Faisalabad, the country's third-largest city. Furthermore, in Viet Nam, Japan is implementing a yen loan project to support sewerage development in Hanoi City, where the water environment has deteriorated significantly due to rapid economic growth and urbanization, and the Yen Xa Wastewater Treatment Plant, the largest in the city, was completed in May 2025.



Ethiopian trainees learning Japanese technology and expertise in the "Project for Strengthening Addis Ababa Water and Sewerage Authority's Management Capacity of Non-Revenue Water Reduction" in Ethiopia (Photo: JICA)



Coliform testing of samples collected by a youth group in Lusaka City under the "Project for Risk-based Participatory WASH Planning and Citizen-data WASH Statistics for African Peri-urban Settlements" (SATREPS) in Zambia (Photo: Hidenori Harada)

⁷¹ According to United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) survey (as of 2025). <https://data.unicef.org/resources/jmp-report-2025/>

⁷² See 61 on page 71.

⁷³ 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.

MASTER TECHNIQUES 3

from
Japan to
the World

Public
nomination

Preventive Malaria Control Using Drones and AI – Japan's Cutting-Edge Technology Transforming Infectious Disease Control on the Ground in Ghana –



Approximately 90% of malaria cases and deaths are concentrated on the African continent. In Ghana, in West Africa, an estimated 5 million or more people contract malaria while over 10,000 die from the disease each year, making it a serious public health situation. The Government of Ghana implements Larval Source Management (LSM), a countermeasure that eliminates the larvae (mosquito wrigglers) of malaria-carrying mosquitoes before they reach adulthood, by spraying a dedicated larvicide in the standing water where mosquito larvae breed. However, there are limits to manually mapping high-risk breeding sites and applying larvicide by hand, and the overuse of larvicide poses cost concerns, creating demand for improvements in efficiency and cost-effectiveness.

SORA Technology Co., Ltd., a Japanese startup company, is tackling this challenge by combining advanced digital technology with LSM. The company developed a proprietary sensing technology called "SORA Malaria Control," which integrates drones and artificial intelligence (AI) to efficiently monitor and analyze mosquito larval breeding sites across large areas. Mr. UMEDA Masaki, Vice Chief Executive Officer of the company, explains the results with confidence: "Using terrain data acquired by drones, we analyzed the data with one AI that identifies characteristics of standing water such as location and size, and another AI that estimates which bodies of water pose a high risk of mosquito larval breeding. We mapped the water bodies requiring larvicide application and shared that information with field spray operators via a mobile app, enabling accurate and efficient spraying that allows us to implement LSM at minimum cost."

Since 2023, the company has been utilizing JICA's SDGs Business Supporting Survey (JICA Biz) to conduct malaria control surveys in Ghana using "SORA Malaria Control." Mr. Umeda notes that "localization" is the key word in operating the system. In addition to adjusting the AI's specifications to align with Ghana's internet speeds and regulations, the company partnered with the University of Ghana to introduce a framework in which university students conduct field surveys as interns to enable the collection of local data that improves the accuracy of AI analysis. Mr. Umeda reflects, "For local youth, malaria is a familiar and immediate concern, and their participation with a genuine sense of ownership helped drive



Field survey conducted using a drone in Sierra Leone (Photo: SORA Technology Co., Ltd.)

the 'localization' forward. Students also explained the drone in local languages to residents who had never seen one before, which contributed to building understanding and trust within the local communities." Some participants went on to work as employees of SORA Technology after their internships, and Mr. Umeda looks to the next generation with high expectations: "I hope the younger generation operating LSM will also apply this technology locally, so that Ghana's malaria control efforts can advance even a little faster."

Measurements conducted at the Noguchi Memorial Institute for Medical Research (NMIMR), built in Ghana through Japanese ODA, and the University of Ghana have demonstrated that through the company's initiative, more than 3.6 times as many standing water sites were detected compared with conventional survey methods, and both larvicide usage and human resource costs were reduced by half. SORA Technology has held results-reporting sessions not only with the Ghanaian government, but also with local private companies engaged in CSR activities, and is working to expand the scope of larval control using its technology. Furthermore, building on its success in Ghana, the company has begun exploring the possibility of applying "SORA Malaria Control," not only in neighboring African countries, but also to other mosquito-borne infectious diseases such as dengue fever, as well as to pest control in the agricultural sector.

As the risk of infectious diseases spreading across borders increases due to globalization and climate change, this initiative benefits not only Ghana but the entire international community, including Japan. On this point, Mr. Umeda expresses his ambition: "Infectious diseases are now a pressing and familiar challenge for Japan as well, and we have plans to reverse-import technology developed in developing countries back to developed countries in the future. I want us to take the lead in promoting the expansion of Japanese companies into global markets and the creation of innovation domestically." The technology of this company that flies through the skies (SORA) to support Ghana's fight against infectious disease is expected to contribute not only to Sub-Saharan African countries, but also broadly to the advancement of global health as a new public health solution leveraging the cutting-edge knowledge and expertise of Japanese startup companies.



Spraying larvicide on standing water, which has a high risk of mosquito larval breeding (Photo: SORA Technology Co., Ltd.)

Japan also cooperates with Japanese and local private companies and research institutions. For example, in Indonesia, the “Business Validation Survey for Sewerage and Drainage Maintenance with High Power Suction Truck and Related Sewerage Cleaning Trucks” is implemented utilizing JICA’s SDGs Business Supporting Surveys.⁷⁴ Demonstration projects and surveys are being conducted to leverage the technology of Japanese companies’ cleaning vehicles, parts, and maintenance services in the country, where a shortage of cleaning equipment has been a challenge. In Bangladesh, in order to reduce health risks from antimicrobial resistance (AMR) in the Dhaka metropolitan area, faculty from Ehime University and Dhaka University are working on developing a water environment monitoring system to monitor water quality in rivers, drainage, wastewater treatment plants, and other facilities, under the Science and Technology Research Partnership for Sustainable Development (SATREPS).⁷⁵

The Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism and the Ministry of the Environment are implementing the Asia Wastewater Management Partnership (AWaP) together with seven countries⁷⁶ toward the achievement of SDG target 6.3, “halve the proportion of untreated wastewater.” At the 4th General Meeting held in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, in November 2025, information was shared on wastewater management activities in participating countries, and discussions were held on “Mainstreaming Wastewater Management and Finance” and “Optimum Wastewater Treatment Systems.”

Additionally, in order 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 cooperation among 13 participating countries from Asia,⁷⁷ WEPA aims to enhance water environment governance in Asia through building human networks, gathering and sharing information, and strengthening capacity. At the 20th WEPA Annual Meeting and International Workshop held in Vientiane, Lao PDR, in February 2025, discussions were focused on comprehensive water environment management in river basins and on the need for integrated measures to address pollution from multiple sources. Furthermore, at the 21st WEPA Annual Meeting and International Workshop held in Putrajaya, Malaysia, in September 2025, information was shared on each country’s industrial wastewater management, including related policies, their implementation, and compliance status. It was confirmed that maintaining water quality is of critical

importance for water environment management, and that improving compliance with wastewater regulations is essential.

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 a perspective across 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.

The SDGs include Goal 11: “Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable.” There is growing 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. The “Sendai Framework for

⁷⁴ See the glossary on page 144.

⁷⁵ See the glossary on page 43.

⁷⁶ The seven countries are Bangladesh, Cambodia, Indonesia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Thailand, and Viet Nam.

⁷⁷ The 13 countries are Cambodia, China, Indonesia, Republic of Korea, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Nepal, the Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Viet Nam, and Japan.

Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 (Sendai Framework),” adopted at the Third UN World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction, reflects many of Japan’s proposals. These include the mainstreaming of disaster risk reduction, the development of appropriate disaster risk 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.



A JICA expert providing guidance after the first-ever evacuation drill in the Gasca district of Quito City, Ecuador, which was affected by a landslide (Photo: JICA)

In June 2025, the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction was held in Geneva, Switzerland. Japan highlighted key priorities, including national resilience building and the promotion of private sector investment in disaster risk reduction, and introduced case studies on measures in light of large-scale disasters. In November of the same year, the G20 Ministerial Meeting on Disaster Risk Reduction was held in South Africa, where the G20 Disaster Risk Reduction Ministerial Declaration was adopted. Following on from the previous year’s ministerial declaration, the declaration again emphasized the importance of addressing the inequalities exacerbated by disasters, and reaffirmed the importance of working together on challenges such as promoting investment in disaster risk reduction in line with the Sendai Framework and securing funding for disaster risk reduction measures. In 2027, the Asia-Pacific Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (APMCDRR) will be held in Sendai City, where the progress and challenges related to advancing the “Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030,” the global framework for disaster risk reduction, are scheduled to be discussed.

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.” On the same day in 2025, the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR), the Permanent Mission of Japan to the United Nations, and other countries’ permanent missions co-hosted a “World

Tsunami Awareness Day” awareness-raising event, at which three high school students from Sendai City delivered speeches on their activities related to tsunami disaster risk reduction. Furthermore, since 2016, the High School Students Summit on “World Tsunami Awareness Day” has been held seven times across various locations in Japan. The seventh summit took place in Sendai City in November 2025, bringing together a total of approximately 90 high school students—approximately 60 from Japan and 30 from 10 other countries. The participants deepened their mutual understanding and friendship while learning about disaster risk reduction and mitigation, including tsunami countermeasures.

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 2025, tsunami preparedness plans have been developed or updated and tsunami education programs have been implemented at approximately 800 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. From September 2025 to March 2026, the “UNITAR Women’s Leadership in Tsunami-based Disaster Risk Reduction Training Programme” was implemented. This training aims to develop women’s leadership in disaster response, and in particular, in recognition of the reality that women are more susceptible to the impacts of disasters, incorporates the principles of the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda, and positions women as key actors in climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction in the Pacific region. In 2024, a total of 714 participants from 39 countries took part in the initiative. In addition, UNITAR invited 29 participants from 14 Pacific Small Island Developing States to Japan in November 2024 to conduct training on early warning systems. In February 2025, UNITAR also invited 50 practitioners from 18 countries

in the Asia-Pacific region to Japan to hold a workshop as the final phase of the “Leaders for a Free and Open Indo Pacific: Sea and Human Security Programme.”

■ 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 to developing countries. In March 2025, in coordination with partner organizations, the ROAP established the Fukuoka and Tokyo Platforms for Sustainable Cities in Asia-Pacific (Fukuoka-SUSCAP and Tokyo-SUSCAP), with the aim of sharing the current situation and challenges related to sustainable urban development

in the Asia-Pacific region and exchanging views and holding discussions on how Japan’s industry, academia, government, and civil society sectors can contribute.

In July 2023, Japan hosted the second G7 Sustainable Urban Development Ministers’ Meeting in Takamatsu City, Kagawa Prefecture. 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 “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 OECD and UN-Habitat. In September 2025, a G7 Senior Urban Development Officials meeting was held in Ottawa, Canada, where G7 countries and others deepened discussions by presenting their initiatives on urban policies.



Japan's Development Cooperation Initiatives Toward a Disaster-Resilient World: Disaster Risk Reduction



(Photo: Center for Emergency Situations and Disaster Risk Reduction)

Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan

Project for Enhancing Urban Resilience to Disaster Risk and Climate Change

Targeting cities in Central Asia, this initiative strengthens urban planning, human resource development, and inter-agency coordination, including disaster risk reduction, and supports the strengthening of urban infrastructure resilience.

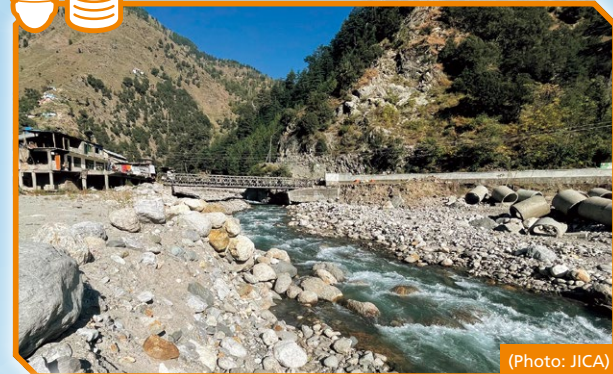


(Photo: JICA)

Türkiye

Project for Improving the Capacity of Local Municipalities on Disaster Risk Reduction and Waste Management

Targeting local municipalities, this project supports the strengthening of systems for both waste management and disaster risk management. It aims to build a foundation for safe and secure community life through the promotion of both environmental sanitation and disaster risk reduction.



(Photo: JICA)

Pakistan

Project for Strengthening Flood Management in the Indus River Basin

In addition to establishing a meteorological observation network and data monitoring system, the project involves the improvement of river structures such as embankments. Through the reduction of flood and inundation risks, the project aims to strengthen regional disaster resilience and water management.

Syria

Integrated Support Project for Post-earthquake Early Recovery and Resilience Building

Aimed at the early recovery of housing and public infrastructure in areas affected by the 2023 earthquake, this initiative is being implemented in partnership with the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat), covering damage assessments and the formulation of recovery plans.



(Photo: UN-Habitat)

World Tsunami Awareness Day, November 5

"World Tsunami Awareness Day" is an international day designated by the United Nations at Japan's proposal to promote understanding of the threat of tsunamis and disaster preparedness measures around the world. In November 2025, an awareness-raising event was held at the United Nations Headquarters, at which three high school students from Miyagi Prefecture introduced their community disaster risk reduction activities. In Pacific Island countries, the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) holds annual workshops to train women to be disaster risk reduction leaders.



(Photo: UNITAR)

Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030

Adopted at the Third UN World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction held in Sendai City in 2015, the Framework's ultimate goal is to reduce disaster damage and losses and strengthen the resilience of society as a whole. It stipulates that society as a whole, including national and local governments, the private sector, and civil society, shall work on disaster risk reduction (mainstreaming of disaster risk reduction), centered on the "Four Priority Areas."



Understanding Disaster Risk

Investing in Disaster Risk Reduction for Resilience



Strengthening Disaster Risk Governance

Enhancing Disaster Preparedness and "Build Back Better" in Recovery, Rehabilitation, and Reconstruction



(Photo: Yachiyo Engineering Co., Ltd.)

Indonesia

Volcanic Disaster Risk Reduction Sector Loan

This project aims to reduce damage caused by volcanic ash and debris flows and strengthen early warning systems in active volcanic areas through the rehabilitation and construction of erosion control facilities, the development of crater lake drainage tunnels, and the installation of rainfall radars.



Fiji

Disaster Recovery and Mainstreaming of Disaster Risk Reduction Policy

Targeting the entire country (approximately 930,000 people), this initiative secures funding for rapid recovery and reconstruction in preparation for natural disasters such as cyclones, while promoting pre-disaster investment and the mainstreaming of disaster risk reduction policy.



(Photo: JICA)

Ecuador

Project on Enhancing Capacity to Reduce Risk of Slope Disasters

Using drone photography, this project strengthens capacity for terrain analysis, risk assessment, and hazard map formulation. It supports improvements in early warning and evacuation systems, contributing to effective countermeasures in areas at risk from sediment disasters.



(Photo: UNDP)

Tonga

Partnership for Strengthening School Preparedness for Tsunamis in Asia-Pacific

This initiative, which targets schools and communities in countries at high risk of tsunamis, draws on Japan's experience and works through the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) to support the formulation of evacuation plans and the implementation of regular tsunami disaster drills.



Bangladesh

Project for Strengthening Capacity for Meteorological Analysis

Through the introduction of weather radar and analytical technology and the development of forecasting systems, this project supports the improvement of capacity for early warning and information provision for natural disasters such as floods and cyclones.



(Photo: Japan Meteorological Business Support Center)



Myanmar

Response to Earthquake Damage in Central Region of Myanmar

Seamless support has been provided from initial response to recovery, through the dispatch of the Japan Disaster Relief (JDR) Medical Team and Japan Self-Defense Force aircraft, the provision of Emergency Grant, and support in collaboration with international organizations.

(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.⁷⁸ In particular, in Sub-Saharan Africa, the number of children who are out of school has shown little improvement compared to 10 years ago.⁷⁹ Children in vulnerable situations, such as those with disabilities, refugee and internally displaced children, and children from ethnic minorities or those living in remote areas, are at the highest risk of being left behind. 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 has been deteriorating, 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.”^{*} 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 education⁸⁰ and higher education.

With regard to Africa, at TICAD 9 held in August 2025, Japan expressed its commitment to cooperate to support improving learning outcomes for 10 million children, while noting the importance of ensuring access to quality learning at various levels. For example, the “School for All”⁸¹ project, which was launched in Niger in 2004, has been introduced in approximately 75,000 primary schools across 10 countries as of August 2025. The “TICAD 9 Yokohama Declaration,” adopted at TICAD 9, emphasized the need to strengthen capacity through collaboration with key partners, including UN agencies and other leading organizations, in order to broaden

access to inclusive and equitable quality education, training, and skills development in Africa.

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, and others. Through this network, Japan aims to address social challenges across the African region through research cooperation by strengthening collaboration among educational, research, and industry-academia institutions. As of March 2025, this initiative has contributed to the development of 5,391 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) in Egypt 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, 64 Egypt-Japan Schools (EJS), delivering Japanese-style education have been opened. At EJS, students engage in “Tokkatsu,”⁸² (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 August 2025, a Letter of Intent on educational cooperation and human resources development was signed between Japan's Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) and Egypt's Ministry of Education and Technical Education, and both sides agreed to further promote the development of Japanese-style education in Egypt, building on the achievements of the EJS (see “Featured Projects” on page 125 for efforts in Iraq).

Moreover, Japan supports human resources development in developing countries through diverse initiatives, including strengthening networks 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 higher education institutions. For example, the Vietnam-Japan University (VJU), through JICA's technical cooperation and other support, works to strengthen VJU's educational, research, and

⁷⁸ See pages 211 and 214 of the “Global Education Monitoring Report 2023.” <https://www.unesco.org/gem-report/en/technology>

⁷⁹ See pages 152 and 154 of the “Global Education Monitoring Report 2024.” https://www.unesco.at/fileadmin/Redaktion/Bildung/FULL_GEM_Leadership_in_education_lead_for_learning.pdf

⁸⁰ 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.

⁸¹ 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.

⁸² 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.

management capacities, aiming to establish a foundation for consistently high-quality education, research, and management from undergraduate to graduate levels, and contributing to the development of human resources who will drive the social and industrial advancement of Viet Nam and the Southeast Asian region.

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 basic literacy, reading comprehension, and numeracy skills. Since 2024, Japan has also been providing support to equip the National Institute for Teacher Training (INFOD) and two teacher training centers nationwide with equipment for producing teaching materials that promote digitalization (see "Featured Projects" on page 86 for efforts in Timor-Leste). 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,⁸³ and their use is also encouraged within Japan to help children who face learning difficulties due to insufficient Japanese language skills.

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 the aggression, 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 evacuation. 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 the Mekong Delta in southern Viet Nam, Japan is supporting the strengthening of research and educational capacity at Can Tho University (CTU), the region's central university, in order to improve both the quality and quantity of human resources required to respond to the growth of agriculture and fisheries industries and environmental challenges including climate change.

In the Asia-Pacific region, as part of its collaboration with international organizations, Japan has supported 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 regular 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, 24 organizations have received this award, leading to the active promotion of ESD.

Japan has contributed a total of approximately \$61.34 million to the Global Partnership for Education (GPE)* from 2008 to 2024. 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 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 5 million girls have received support, and this commitment will continue going forward. Furthermore, in March 2025, an additional \$3.05 million was provided to the global fund for education in crises, Education Cannot Wait (ECW),* to help ensure that children in Ethiopia, Nigeria, and Burkina Faso can continue their learning opportunities and get access to quality education.



A JOCV teaching mathematics to primary school children in Guatemala (Photo: JICA)

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



Improving the Learning Environment to Provide Education for All Children

Grant Assistance for Grass-Roots Human Security Projects (March 2023 – July 2024)

The Project for Construction of School Building for EBCC Nossa Senhora Aitará in Manlala Village, Soibada Administrative Post, Manatuto Municipality

📍 Timor-Leste



Since restoring its independence in 2002, Timor-Leste has been steadily advancing efforts in economic and social development toward nation-building. However, the critical infrastructure that underpins these efforts, such as roads and ports, as well as the environment for delivering social services to the public, remain insufficiently developed.

The education sector faces similar challenges, including delays in the development of school facilities and the deterioration of school buildings and equipment. Providing quality education to all children is key to developing the human resources that will support the country's future nation-building. Yet, particularly in rural areas, access to adequate education remains far from assured.

In response to these circumstances, Japan supported the reconstruction of the Nossa Senhora Aitará Junior High School, located in a mountainous area approximately 160 km from the capital Dili, and provided blackboards and bulletin boards for each classroom and the teacher's room. Although the school

serves as an important educational institution in the community, with students attending from five surrounding villages, the aging building had suffered extensive damage: doors and windows were broken, concrete floors were cracked, and partial collapse of walls and ceilings was visible. Through Japan's cooperation, some 100 students in grades 7 and 8 are now able to study in a safe and hygienic learning environment.

The handover ceremony for the new school building was attended by President Ramos-Horta, an alumnus of the school, who joined students and a large number of local residents in celebrating the completion of the new building. President Ramos-Horta stated, "Seeing the support extended to vulnerable communities in remote areas, I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to Japan once again." Japan will continue to support human resource development and nation-building in Timor-Leste through the development of basic social infrastructure that is closely tied to people's daily lives.



The handover ceremony for the new school building



Local children holding ODA public relations notebooks with President Ramos-Horta and then Ambassador of Japan to Timor-Leste KIMURA (back row, two persons)



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,⁸⁴ 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 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,”⁸⁵ Japan established three basic principles: (i) promotion of women’s rights, (ii) building the capacity of women to reach their full potential, and (iii) advancement of women’s leadership in politics, economy, and other public fields. 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.

⁸⁴ 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.

⁸⁵ A thematic policy formulated in 2016 to promote women’s active participation in development cooperation.

Japan contributed \$50 million to the Women Entrepreneurs Finance Initiative (We-Fi) ⁸⁶ in 2018, \$5 million in June 2023, followed by an additional \$5 million in September 2025. As of June 2024, We-Fi has provided a total of approximately \$5.3 billion in support to around 400,000 women-owned and -led small and medium-sized enterprises (WSMEs) in 83 countries. Specifically, approximately 370,000 WSMEs have received financial assistance, while approximately 45,000 have participated in training programs to acquire the skills and knowledge necessary for business management. Furthermore, 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 legal frameworks free from gender discrimination and supports female entrepreneurs in gaining equal access to financing and markets.

Japan also provides support through UN Women, contributing approximately \$13 million in 2025 to support initiatives such as promoting women's political participation and economic empowerment, eliminating sexual and gender-based violence against women and girls, strengthening women's roles in peace and security, and advancing gender-responsive policies and budgets. In 2025, 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, Eastern Europe, and Central America. For example, in Afghanistan, Japan provided support to strengthen the resilience of women and girls to humanitarian, socioeconomic, and climate change risks. In Palestine and southern Lebanon, Japan provided support to improve access to basic needs and life-saving services for women affected by the crisis.

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). ⁸⁷ In 2025, Japan contributed approximately \$370,000 to the OSRSG-SVC to support technical assistance to police and the military for the investigation and prosecution of conflict-related sexual violence, and strengthening victims' access to

legal support, in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

In addition, Japan has provided an additional €2 million to the Global Survivors Fund (GSF)* in 2025, bringing its total contributions to €12 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.



A kick-off meeting for the Project for Supporting Women's Economic Empowerment in Sri Lanka (Photo: INTEM Consulting, Inc.)

■ 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), ⁸⁸ 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) ⁸⁹ 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.

Japan assumed the co-chair of the WPS Focal Points Network in 2025, together with Norway, and in February 2025, hosted the WPS Focal Points Network ⁹⁰ Seventh

⁸⁶ 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.

⁸⁷ 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/fp/hr_ha/page23e_000466.html

⁸⁸ 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.

⁸⁹ 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.

⁹⁰ 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 November 2025, the network brings together 106 members from 96 countries and 10 regional organizations.

Capital-Level Meeting in Tokyo. Discussions centered on the further elaboration of the WPS agenda, including advancing its application to disaster risk reduction; the roles of women in peace mediation and peacebuilding and as human rights defenders; and the significance of the development and implementation of national and regional action plans. In September, then Foreign Minister Iwaya attended the WPS Focal Points Network High-Level Side Event and stated that Japan would leverage its experience as co-chair of the WPS Focal Points Network to continue to vigorously promote WPS as one of the main pillars of Japan's foreign policy and contribute even more to the international promotion of WPS.



Then Foreign Minister Iwaya speaking at the WPS Focal Points Network High-Level Side Event

In January 2024, the Taskforce on WPS was established to promote cross-divisional coordination within the Ministry and serve as a platform for sharing WPS-related information internally.

At TICAD 9 held in August 2025, under the theme of "Co-create Innovative Solutions with Africa," discussions were held on youth and women as one of the key cross-sectoral priority areas. The "TICAD 9 Yokohama Declaration," adopted to summarize the outcomes of the discussions, committed to implementing the WPS agenda and emphasized the critical role played by women in the pursuit and maintenance of peace across Africa and in responding to humanitarian emergencies. In addition, then Prime Minister Ishiba announced that Japan will accelerate its efforts in human resources development and exchange, with a focus on youth and women.

■ 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 Disabilities⁹¹ 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.

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. For example, in five cities in Paraguay, Japan is working to establish and strengthen platforms for conducting disability-related dialogues at the local government level, and to build the capacity of project stakeholders to promote the participation of persons with disabilities in these dialogues.

(Assistance for Children)

Generally, children tend to be placed in vulnerable positions, 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 2025, through the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), Japan assisted children affected by poverty, conflict, and climate change-related natural disasters in approximately 40 countries across Asia, Eastern Europe, the Middle East, and Africa.

Under the Grant Assistance for Grass-Roots Human Security Projects,⁹² 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 October 2025, a signing ceremony for a Grant Assistance for Grass-Roots Human Security Projects was held in Benin, under which school kitchen

⁹¹ 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.

⁹² See Part V, Section 2 (2) on page 161.



Weaving Dignity and Hope: Empowerment of Ethiopian Women and Girls through Tripartite Collaboration

Grant (February 2025 – February 2026)

Uplifting Voices: Advancing the Dignity and Empowerment of Women and Girls in Ethiopia

📍 Ethiopia



With the second-largest population on the African continent, Ethiopia is a major country that serves as a cornerstone of stability in the “Horn of Africa” region. However, the compounding effects of the conflict in its northern region, which lasted until 2022, and severe drought have led to a serious humanitarian situation. As of 2025, more than 19 million people remain in need of humanitarian assistance. In these dire circumstances, there is a pressing need for support to ensure that women and girls, who are particularly vulnerable to threats such as gender-based violence, can live in an environment where their dignity is protected and where they can earn a stable income.

The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) Ethiopia Office is supporting the social and economic empowerment of women and girls in parts of northern Ethiopia that have been most severely affected by conflict and natural disasters by implementing menstrual hygiene initiatives. This project is one of tripartite collaborations, with UNFPA receiving funding from the Government of Japan and implementing the initiative in technical partnership with ITOCHU Corporation. Under this project, a vocational

training facility constructed in Addis Ababa through Japan’s Grant Assistance for Grass-Roots Human Security Projects serves as the base for training producers of reusable absorbent sanitary shorts who will operate across northern regions. The project also provides livelihood improvement training, including the provision of business start-up kits, and awareness-raising activities on sexual and reproductive health.

As of August 2025, 175 Ethiopians have completed the training program for producing reusable absorbent sanitary shorts. Graduates have shared positive feedback, such as: “I didn’t know reusable sanitary products like this existed. Now, I can make them myself and teach others.” Furthermore, the project disseminates production techniques for high-quality absorbent shorts attained from a Japanese company to other regions, promoting the empowerment of women and girls in vulnerable situations while also contributing to local job creation. Japan will continue to support Ethiopian women in shaping their own futures, through collaboration among the public and private sectors as well as international organizations.



An Ethiopian instructor, trained at ITOCHU Corporation, providing technical guidance (Photo: UNFPA)



A training participant and the absorbent shorts she produced (Photo: UNFPA)

facilities will be constructed at a total of six primary schools. This is expected to promote safe and hygienic meal preparation, thereby contributing to improvements in child malnutrition.

In Nepal, where it is estimated that about one in every 6.5 children aged 5 to 17 is engaged in child labor,⁹³ 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.



A JOCV reading an environmental textbook aloud to children in Timor-Leste (Photo: JICA)

⁹³ “Nepal Child Labour Report 2021.” <https://www.ilo.org/publications/nepal-child-labour-report-2021>



Children in Ethiopia eagerly awaiting the handover of a primary school building provided through grants

(Support for People in Conflict Situations)

In conflict situations, it is important to recognize that not only women and girls but also people in vulnerable social positions, including persons with disabilities and children, are most susceptible to impact. 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. For example, in the Gaza Strip of Palestine, Japan is providing psychosocial care and learning support for children, including those with disabilities, as well as providing protection for children separated from their families, and supporting the

establishment of neonatal intensive care unit (NICU) facilities. Japan is also implementing explosive hazard awareness education and support for children with disabilities, including those caused by landmines, in Myanmar; prevention of sexual violence and protection of children and women who are victims of sexual violence in Afghanistan and Lebanon; and education support and vocational training in Syria.

In addition, Japan, through the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), 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 refugees to protect them from violence, abuse, and exploitation, and providing healthcare services. In Ukraine, assistance, including shelter support and legal assistance, is provided to vulnerable groups, such as elderly people who have lost their homes due to conflict and female-headed households (for the efforts of Japanese NGOs in Ukraine, see “Stories from the Field” on page 116).



Trained youth mentoring children under the project to support youth's social participation and expand support for youth and children in Palestine (Photo: Children without Borders)



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 reparations to which they are entitled. GSF conducts awareness-raising activities regarding the development of the judicial system to support and give relief to survivors.

(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,⁹⁴ 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

Japan implements cooperation for culture (including sports) and cultural heritage preservation in developing countries (see “Featured Projects” on page 93 for a specific example of cooperation in Zambia). Such cooperation also contributes to disseminating information about Japan and promoting cultural exchange, thereby deepening understanding of Japan and fostering a sense of affinity toward Japan.

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 2025, it contributed approximately ¥300 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 2025, Japan dispatched experts to Uzbekistan to conduct training for experts engaged in cultural heritage protection in the country, focusing on the cataloguing and utilization of archaeological artifacts and museum collections.

In the field of sports, Japan continues to promote “Sport for Tomorrow,”⁹⁵ an international exchange and cooperation program on sports launched on the occasion of the Tokyo 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games. In 2025, based on the new priority areas for cooperation set out in the “Chiang Mai Declaration” adopted at the 4th ASEAN Plus Japan Ministerial Meeting on Sports, Japan implemented initiatives aimed at addressing social challenges, including holding workshops for the development and advancement of sports coaching systems. In addition, in 2025, 112 Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers (JOCVs) were dispatched to developing countries in the field of sports. Other 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.⁹⁶

⁹⁴ 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.

⁹⁵ Sport for Tomorrow official website: <https://www.sport4tomorrow.jpnsport.go.jp/>

⁹⁶ MOFA sports diplomacy initiatives: <https://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/culture/people/sports/index.html>



A JOCV coaching baseball to children in Costa Rica (Photo: JICA)

Featured
Project

8

Preserving Zambia's Diverse Folk Culture and Fostering National Identity through a Museum

Grant (April 2023 – September 2025)

The Project for the Improvement of Equipment for Research, Conservation, Exhibition and Education at the Livingstone Museum

📍 Zambia



Located in the heart of southern Africa, Zambia has maintained peaceful transfers of power since gaining independence from the United Kingdom in 1964, establishing itself as one of sub-Saharan Africa's most stable democracies. At the same time, as a multi-ethnic nation where 72 local languages are spoken alongside the official language of English, the country faces challenges such as the erosion of societal cohesion driven by rapid urbanization and other factors.

Since August 2021, the Government of Zambia has invoked the country's founding motto, "One Zambia, One Nation," championing "unity in diversity" as essential to national economic growth. In parallel, the government has called on traditional chiefs to take a more active role in local development, while intensifying efforts to promote culture and tourism and to improve the country's museums.

The Livingstone Museum was founded in 1934 during the era of the British Protectorate of Northern Rhodesia. Following independence in 1964, it grew into the country's largest national museum, playing a central role in promoting research and education on Zambia's folk culture and natural heritage. To remain relevant to the public—particularly younger generations—and to advance the vision of "unity in diversity," the museum recognized the need to modernize its exhibitions and develop more innovative approaches to content and presentation.

In light of these circumstances, Japan decided to provide the Livingstone Museum with a range of equipment ahead of the museum's 90th anniversary, including photographic equipment and microscopes for researchers across departments, humidity control systems for the preservation of cultural artifacts, computers for digital content editing, and touch-screen systems for the exhibition halls.

At the handover ceremony in September 2025, Zambia's



A workspace at the Livingstone Museum equipped with newly installed equipment (Photo: Ministry of Tourism of Zambia)

Minister of Tourism, Sikumba, expressed his gratitude, calling the equipment upgrade "a testament to the long-standing partnership between Zambia and Japan." The Minister went on to highlight the real-world impact of the contribution, stating: "The state-of-the-art technology now in place enables us to digitize collections, create immersive exhibitions, and reach global audiences, while ensuring that our most precious and delicate materials are passed on to future generations."

Going forward, the Livingstone Museum will expand its activities, including content acquisition, exhibition renewals, and the hosting of symposiums. It is hoped that visitors will come away with a deeper understanding and appreciation of Zambia's rich and diverse cultural and natural heritage—and in doing so, develop a stronger sense of shared national identity.



ODA Topics

Japan's SDGs Progress Report: Voluntary National Review (VNR) 2025

In 2025, Japan conducted its Voluntary National Review (VNR)^{*1} on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).^{*2} The VNR is a mechanism under the “2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,” adopted at the UN Summit in 2015, through which UN Member States periodically report on their progress toward achieving the SDGs. Japan previously conducted VNRs in 2017 and 2021, making this its third review.

(1) Key Features of the VNR Report

The current VNR report has four major distinguishing features. First, with future discussions on sustainable development by 2030 and beyond in mind, the report focuses on Japan's challenges and initiatives that can serve as models for the international community, such as addressing the declining birthrate and population aging, promoting SDGs in local areas, and disaster risk reduction. Second, the report uses columns to introduce cross-sectoral initiatives in an easy-to-understand manner in areas such as Expo 2025 Osaka-Kansai Japan, GREEN×EXPO 2027, declining birthrates and population aging, public-private partnerships, youth, regional development, disaster risk reduction, and national resilience. Third, the report endeavored to evaluate Japan's efforts and progress toward achieving the SDGs objectively as much as possible, using statistical and other evidence. Finally, the report benefited from the active involvement of diverse stakeholders, including experts, civil society, and youth, centered on the SDGs Promotion Roundtable.^{*3} In addition to the government's evaluation, a dedicated chapter for an independent evaluation by stakeholders was included, and a “Stakeholder Meeting” bringing together a wide range of participants for discussion was also held in March 2025. Furthermore, a public comment process was conducted, incorporating views from a broad spectrum of society into the report.^{*4}

(2) Overall Evaluation of SDGs Progress

Japan's strength lies in the widespread awareness of the SDGs through society, with diverse stakeholders actively engaging in efforts to achieve these goals from their respective positions, and the country promoting initiatives to achieve the SDGs with an “all-Japan” approach. A goal-by-goal evaluation confirmed progress in areas such as Goal 3 (Health and Well-being), Goal 8 (Economic



Then State Minister for Foreign Affairs Miyaji presenting Japan's VNR at the HLPF Ministerial Segment



The Japanese delegation at the HLPF Ministerial Segment

Growth and Employment), Goal 9 (Infrastructure, Industry and Innovation), and Goal 13 (Climate Change), while also identifying remaining challenges in areas such as Goal 5 (Gender) and Goal 10 (Inequality).

(3) Presentation at the United Nations

In July 2025, then State Minister for Foreign Affairs Miyaji attended the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF) Ministerial Segment, held in New York, the United States, on behalf of the Government of Japan, and presented Japan's VNR. Then State Minister Miyaji stated that even amid a challenging international environment surrounding the SDGs, Japan would remain steadfast in advancing its efforts toward achieving them, and that these efforts are strongly supported by diverse stakeholders. Then a video was played introducing Japan's initiatives, including “WheelLog!,” a barrier-free map developed by Ms. ODA Yuriko (Founder and CEO of the NGO “WheelLog”) that enables wheelchair users to navigate unfamiliar places with confidence by allowing them to share accessibility information with one another. Following the video, Ms. Oda stated, “This journey has taught me that, even though we have disabilities, we can contribute to people and society.” Next, Mr. CHIBA Soichiro (Chair of Y7/Y20 Youth Japan, Founder of Thousandleaf), a private sector member of the SDGs Promotion Roundtable, delivered a presentation on the vision for a sustainable society from the perspective of youth. Finally, Professor KANIE Norichika (Keio University Graduate School) reflected on the VNR process and emphasized the importance of continuing and strengthening the multi-stakeholder collaboration that had been fostered, and of jointly addressing the future discussions on sustainable development beyond 2030.

^{*1} The Ministry of Foreign Affairs website on VNR report: <https://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/oda/sdgs/vnr/vnr2025en.html>

^{*2} See the glossary on page 37.

^{*3} A forum established under the SDGs Promotion Headquarters at the Prime Minister's Office, bringing together a wide range of stakeholders from government, NGOs, NPOs, experts, the private sector, international organizations, and various other entities to exchange views and cooperatively promote Japan's efforts toward achieving the SDGs.

^{*4} Summary of public comments on the Voluntary National Review (VNR) on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): https://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/gaiko/oda/sdgs/pdf/20250610_vnr_publiccomment.pdf (in Japanese only)