

Efforts to Ensure Appropriate Development Cooperation

Japan's development cooperation centered on ODA has contributed greatly not only to the development and growth of developing countries but also to building firm bonds of friendship and trust between Japan and developing countries, while also helping to enhance Japan's standing in the international community and ensure Japan's peace and prosperity. On the other hand, there have been cases of fraud committed in connection with ODA projects, as well as failures in delivering the expected aid outcomes and delays due to unforeseen circumstances.

The Government of Japan has made various efforts to draw lessons from these experiences for the future, including improving evaluation systems, enhancing transparency, strengthening project management processes, and conducting dialogues with a wide range of stakeholders, including recipient countries and civil society. The Government will continue to strive to implement more effective and appropriate development cooperation.

Furthermore, in order to implement projects with due consideration for environmental and social aspects, JICA has established the JICA Guidelines for Environmental and Social Considerations as part of its efforts to ensure the appropriateness of its development cooperation.

(1) Prevention of Fraudulent Practices

Fraudulent practices related to ODA projects not only hinder their appropriate and effective implementation but also undermine trust in ODA that is funded by the taxes of the people of Japan. Therefore, fraudulent practices are absolutely unacceptable.

Based on lessons learned from past fraudulent practices, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) and JICA have strengthened their efforts to prevent such practices. These include enhancing monitoring systems (such as strengthening the consultation desk for information related to fraud and corruption and expanding third-party inspections), increasing penalties (such as extending the maximum period of suspension of eligibility for participation, increasing contract penalty fees, and introducing a deduction system for evaluation scores applicable to corporations that repeatedly commit serious fraudulent practices), expanding the scope of

suspension of eligibility for participation (such as including the corporate groups of suspended corporations and entities that have received business transfers from suspended corporations during the suspension period), as well as conducting training on the prevention of fraud and corruption.

Japan will remain firmly committed to the zero-tolerance approach toward fraudulent practices in ODA projects and will continue to work diligently toward the prevention of fraud and corruption and the thorough enforcement of compliance, in cooperation with the governments of recipient countries and company representatives, among others.

(2) Safety Measures for People Involved in International Cooperation Projects

Ensuring the safety of not only JICA-associated personnel but also all parties involved in international cooperation projects, such as company employees and NGO members, is a prerequisite for the implementation of development cooperation centered on ODA projects, and MOFA and JICA maintain sufficient security measures and safety frameworks on a regular basis.

Following the terrorist attack in Dhaka, Bangladesh, in July 2016, the Council on Safety Measures for International Cooperation Projects, in which the relevant ministries, agencies, government-related organizations, and experts participated, carried out its review and released the "Final Report."²⁴ MOFA and JICA continue to implement the safety measures²⁵ recommended in the report as well as to enhance actions to ensure the effectiveness of safety measures for people involved in international cooperation projects. At the 2025 session of the Council, which was made permanent after publication of the report, MOFA shared information on recent terrorist attacks and kidnapping cases requiring special attention, while JICA provided information on incidents affecting the safety of people involved in ODA projects that occurred during the year, and on related safety measures. Representatives of companies and NGOs involved in international cooperation projects also shared information and discussed safety measures

²⁴ Safety Measures for International Cooperation Projects https://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/oda/page22_000141.html

²⁵ The following five points are proposed as new safety measures: (i) Strengthening the collection, analysis, and sharing of threat information, (ii) A code of conduct of project partners and NGOs, (iii) Physical and non-physical protective measures, and strengthening training and drills, (iv) Post-crisis response, and (v) Heightening crisis management awareness and improving organizational structures of MOFA and JICA.

and challenges.

Furthermore, in the wake of the Dhaka terrorist attack, the Small and Medium Enterprise Overseas Safety Measures Network ²⁶ was established in 2016 to strengthen overseas safety measures for staff associated with small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). With participants from ministries and agencies involved in the overseas expansion of Japanese companies, the Network holds a director-general-level plenary meeting approximately once a year. In January 2025, the 9th plenary meeting was held, attended by then State Minister for Foreign Affairs Miyaji. At the meeting, participating organizations confirmed that they were actively engaged in awareness-raising activities, including the rapid dissemination of overseas safety information from MOFA to their member companies, thereby promoting close public-private cooperation. They also agreed to further strengthen cooperation with relevant organizations and ministries and agencies to advance safety measures for SMEs.

In 2025, when armed conflict broke out in Juba, the capital of South Sudan, in late March, and when the situation in the Middle East rapidly deteriorated following exchanges of attacks between Israel and Iran beginning on June 13, Japan, building on the aforementioned regular security measures and initiatives and while accurately assessing the situation, swiftly facilitated the evacuation of Japanese nationals, including those involved in international cooperation projects.

In addition, MOFA has created the “Golgo 13 × MOFA Overseas Safety Manual,” which provides overseas safety information for overseas travelers, including those involved in international cooperation projects, in an easy-to-understand manga format.



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Golgo 13 × MOFA Overseas Safety Manual Page

(3) Efforts to Address Sexual Exploitation, Abuse, and Harassment in Development Cooperation

In recent years, there has been a growing international concern about sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment (SEAH) in humanitarian and development assistance. In July 2019, the OECD/DAC adopted the “DAC Recommendation on Ending Sexual Exploitation, Abuse, and Harassment in Development Cooperation and Humanitarian Assistance.” In 2023, at the G7 Hiroshima Summit under Japan’s Presidency, the Leaders’ Communiqué confirmed their commitment to the elimination of SEAH.

In light of these developments, MOFA conducts awareness-raising activities such as staff training. It also makes available the summaries of Japan’s basic position and the DAC Recommendation on the MOFA website ²⁷ to promote public understanding.

JICA raises awareness of the importance of SEAH prevention among a wide range of relevant parties involved in JICA projects through its employment regulations and ethical guidelines for JICA personnel that take into account SEAH prevention measures. In addition, it works to develop a consultation service as well as a response and monitoring system in case of an incident.

In addition, MOFA is taking measures such as incorporating SEAH prevention into the implementation guidelines for the Grant Assistance for Japanese NGO Projects from FY2022 onward.

²⁶ Small and Medium Enterprise Overseas Safety Measures Network https://www.anzen.mofa.go.jp/anzen_info/network.html (in Japanese only)

²⁷ International Efforts to Address Sexual Exploitation, Abuse, and Harassment (SEAH) in Development Cooperation https://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/gaiko/oda/about/doukou/page24_000019.html (in Japanese only)