Learning changes the world

Japan’s Education Cooperation
Realizing a world where all people can receive quality education
Ensuring education for all people around the world

What is education cooperation?

Approximately 260 million children of primary and secondary school age around the world are unable to go to school. Further, the World Bank seriously warns of a learning crisis, as a large number of children learn very little, even though they go to school. Many young people in developing countries have not had the opportunity to attend school or receive job training, and therefore are unable to land a job. Providing education and job opportunities to young people is therefore currently an urgent issue. As society continues to change dramatically due to globalization, it is also necessary to assist higher education institutions in training personnel capable of solving future challenges.

The Sustainable Development Goal 4 (Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all) is designed to improve this situation. In order to achieve SDG4, the international community decided on the Education 2030 Framework for action in 2015. Japan is also under pressure to boost assistance on education to developing nations.

Address by Prime Minister Abe at the 74th Session of the UN General Assembly (UNGA 74)

In an address at the United Nations General Assembly made in September 2019, Prime Minister Abe stated Japan’s contribution in the area of education as follows:

"—It [Japan] values education, for the country’s primary objective is to foster the power of individuals, one by one. To continue to do so has been and still is the very essence of what Japan can contribute to the rest of the world. [↩]

Now, it was this past March that Malala Yousafzai was in Tokyo. She looked me right in the eye and said, ‘As many as 160 million girls lack the skills they need to have a good command of modern technology, for they don’t undergo a minimum education of 12 years.’ She says that if all girls completed secondary school, they could add up to 30 trillion US dollars to the global economy. I invited Malala to Japan before the G20 Osaka Summit. I would chair in June, hoping to highlight policies that empower women and girls. If women were able to demonstrate the potential they hold, the world would sparkle that much more. But that is an obvious truth, isn’t it? In Japan, where the labour participation rate for women has seen a marked rise, we are witnessing that self-evident fact on a daily basis. I am delighted that we were able to capture what Malala advocates for in both the G20 Leaders’ Declaration and another outcome document in the same. We pledged to promote inclusive quality education for all girls and women. Japan wishes to run at all times at the very front of the pack with respect to these efforts. [↩]"

Photo credit: Cabinet Public Relations Office

Japan’s efforts

Human security

Japan attaches great importance to both nation-building and human resource development and has been prioritizing education cooperation as one of the essential sectors for achieving human security.*

*Human security: A concept that focuses on each and every individual through protection of individuals from serious and wide ranging threats to their survival, daily lives, and dignity and empowerment of people for sustainable self-reliance and community building, so that all people can reach their full potential.

Learning strategies for peace and growth

In 2015, the Japanese government announced a policy entitled “Learning strategies for peace and growth,” which emphasizes the following points.

1) Educational cooperation to achieve inclusive, equitable and quality learning
2) Educational cooperation for industrial, science and technology human resource development and sustainable socio-economic development
3) Establishment and expansion of global and regional networks for educational cooperation

G20 Initiative on Human Capital Investment for Sustainable Development

In 2019, Japan, as G20 Presidency, consolidated “the G20 Initiative on Human Capital Investment for Sustainable Development.” The G20 Osaka Leaders’ Declaration reaffirmed their commitment to invest in human capital and promote inclusive and equitable quality education for all.

1 Quality education for achieving sustainable growth (Emphasis on the importance of Early Childhood Development (ECD), achieving the learning rate, Education for Sustainable Development (ESD), etc.)
2 Education for creating innovation (Education in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM), technical and vocational education and training (TVET), etc.)
3 Education for resilient and inclusive future (Inclusive education for girls, women and people with disabilities, and education in emergencies such as conflict or disasters)

—Japan announced “Education x Innovation” Initiative for a Sustainable Future.
Japan will provide at least 9 million children and young people with education for innovation and education by innovation over the years from 2019 to 2021.

In 2018, at the Seventh Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD7), Japan announced its contribution in the area of education, such as expanding science and mathematics education, importing learning environments, training highly skilled people in science, technology and innovation, providing capacity building on combating gender-based Violence, and promoting exchange among youth and students.
Japan’s Education Cooperation

01 Quality education for achieving sustainable growth
Improving the learning process

School for All Project
- Implemented in Niger, Senegal, Burkina Faso, Mali, Madagascar, Côte d’Ivoire, and other countries since 2004
- Collaboration and information-sharing among communities, governments, and schools results in higher school attendance, improvement in children’s reading and math skills, as well as nutrition, health, and hygiene status
- National level scale-up in partnership with the World Bank and the Global Partnership for Education (GPE)

02 Human resource development for Science and Technology Innovation (STI)
Education for creating innovation

Egypt-Japan Education Partnership (EJEP)
- Assistance in the area of education including early childhood, basic, technical, and higher education, as well as scientific research, technology, and innovation
- Encouraging the number of Egyptian students to study in Japanese universities
- Promoting the return of Egyptian students to Japan
- Developing science and technology education in Egypt (Takamori or special activities, etc.)
- Moving ahead with the Egypt-Japan University of Science and Technology (E-JUST)

03 Education for resilient and inclusive future
Education that leaves no one behind

The Project for Strengthening Teacher’s Ability and Reasonable Treatments for Children with Disabilities (Mongolia)
- Providing developmental support and educational services in accordance with each child’s needs
- Conducting re-service teacher trainings to update
- The knowledge of special schools
- Cultivation of the Material and Child Health Handbook and introduction of 18-month health check-up

Advancing Quality Alternative Learning in Pakistan
- Providing quality educational opportunities for children and young people who missed out on schooling
- In addition to imparting literacy skills, facilitates acquisition of life skills such as health education, nutrition improvement, family budgeting, and more, with a view to promoting women’s and girls’ active roles in the community.

Industrial Human Resources Development Project (Thailand)
- During Japan-ASEAN summit meeting in November 2018, Japan launched the “Industrial Human Resources Development Cooperative Project,” aiming to promote human resource development of approximately 80,000 people in the ASEAN region over a period of five years.
- To introduce and deliver Japan’s unique ROSEN education, Japan assists the establishment and operation of Thai ROSEN schools for promoting industrial human resource development in Thailand.

Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology (Kenya)
- Japan has provided support since its establishment in 1941, since then becoming a top Kenyan agricultural university
- In the framework of the Pan African University, the institution has partnered with Japan, becoming a major university in East Africa and a center for science and technological innovation.

Bilateral Official Development Assistance in the education sector

Commitment basis: Million U.S. dollars
Data based on DAC/CBO statistical evaluation.
Japan’s Education Cooperation
( assistance through cooperation with various partners)

In order to achieve the SDGs, it is increasingly important that a variety of development partners collaborate to provide aid in an efficient manner. In addition to assistance implemented by JICA, Japan also works with international and regional organizations that play a key role in education, including UNICEF, UNESCO, and GPE, to produce more effective results.

Assistance through UNICEF
Example: Child-Friendly Schools in Liberia

In 2016, primary school buildings in Liberia were in poor condition, lacking basic learning equipment such as chairs and desks as well as teachers and classrooms. Even the number of children in school was small. The Japanese government provided 772 million JPY to give access to education to some 23,000 children. The construction of 55 new schools and renovation/capacitation of 50 existing schools increased access to education.

Assistance through UNESCO
Example: Promoting Gender-Responsive STEAM Education through Teacher Training in Sub-Saharan Africa

Nation-building and human resource-building through assistance in the area of education

Assistance through GPE
Example: Educational Assistance for Refugee Children in Bangladesh

A girl smiles holding a UNICEF bag distributed as part of education and child protection response to the Malian refugee crisis in Burkina Faso, funded by the Japanese government.

Japanese NGO projects

Education assistance to developing countries is also provided through Japanese NGOs.

For example, JICA’s project titled “Promoting girls’ education through Improved Learning Environment in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province”, which assists with schools and female teachers in the area, has completed. The project constructed new and junior high school buildings and secured access to education for girls who had only attended primary school. The government has also established a system of collaboration between education authorities and schools. All of these initiatives have improved girls’ education.

Aid provided by JICA

Case study example: El Salvador project [Improvement of Mathematics Teaching in Primary and Secondary Education]

“The Project for the Improvement of Mathematics Teaching in Primary and Secondary Education” entailed the development of mathematics textbooks (primary through secondary school), teacher’s guidebooks, and practice books. The second-year primary school children using these textbooks showed approximately one year improvement 11% in comparison to those who did not.

At present, the materials are used in primary and secondary schools around the nation. Observations from teachers on site include: “The kids are more passionate about learning,” and “This is an all-inclusive initiative providing educational opportunities to children across the country, regardless of their social and economic background.”

Elementary and junior high school math improvement project

El Salvador

Math textbooks that are easy for teachers to teach and for students to study

The Project for Expansion of Lower Secondary Schools in Phnom Penh (Cambodia)

Helping to boost the percentage of girls attending secondary school by creating a safe, inclusive educational environment

JICA