

2 Efforts for Spreading Awareness of Development Cooperation

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

In order to deepen the public understanding and support for the sustainable implementation of development cooperation based on the Development Cooperation Charter, the Government of Japan is proactively engaged in encouraging discussion and dialogue on development cooperation, promoting development education, and disclosing and disseminating information regarding the current status of development cooperation. In addition, MOFA has further strengthened its efforts based on one of the recommendations of the Advisory Board for ODA, “Improve Japanese citizens’ understanding and recognition of ODA.” In recent years, MOFA also provides opportunities for many ranges of Japanese nationals to directly participate in development assistance in developing countries and to experience ODA field work, through disseminating information to various regions and a wide range of people. At the same time, Japan recognizes the importance of strengthening human resources development and foundations of knowledge, in order to respond appropriately to the increasing diversity and complexity of development issues. Japanese diplomatic missions and JICA overseas offices are making coordinated efforts on public relations activities in developing countries, aiming to enhance understanding in the international community toward the concept of Japan’s development cooperation.

A. Strengthening Public Relations, Information Disclosure, and Information Dissemination

MOFA and JICA are striving to release and disseminate accurate information by linking to each other’s ODA-related websites.⁷ MOFA also publishes an ODA email newsletter, which introduces actual onsite experiences and episodes on development cooperation, provided by the staff of Japan’s overseas diplomatic missions, members of JICA, employees of NGOs, staff of international organizations, employees of private companies and more stationed in the field. MOFA also conducts public relations using social networking media such as Twitter.

In addition, MOFA is engaged in PR efforts using various media, to promote public interest and understanding toward international cooperation. In 2019, MOFA continued to produce animated video contents, including the series of “Go! ODA-Man” and a simulation game “You can also be ‘ODA-Man’!” using the ODA PR character “ODA-Man”

featured in the popular anime “Eagle Talon.” In these video contents, MOFA introduces the role and purpose of ODA and development cooperation projects that are currently carried out around the world in an easy-to-understand manner. These contents were published on the MOFA website, and broadcast on the Tokyo Metro’s Train Channel and advertisements, as part of the public relations activities in order to receive wide support from Japanese people (see also page 138, “ODA Topics”).

Furthermore, one of Japan’s largest international cooperation events called “Global Festa JAPAN” is held every year around the time of International Cooperation Day (October 6), jointly hosted by MOFA, JICA and the Japan NGO Center for International Cooperation (JANIC). In 2019, the event was held at Symbol Promenade park in Odaiba, Tokyo, on Saturday September 28 and Sunday September 29. Over 250 entities, including NGOs, NPOs, international organizations, embassies in Tokyo, and enterprises took part in the event, which welcomed 183,743 visitors throughout the two days.



A visitor giving a high five to ODA-Man at “Global Festa JAPAN 2019” (September 2019)

Moreover, Japanese diplomatic missions conduct public relations activities abroad to promote a deeper understanding of Japan’s proactive international contribution through ODA. Specifically, they disseminate information through local news media by issuing press releases on the occasion of signings and handover ceremonies related to development cooperation. The diplomatic missions also organize site-visit tours of Japan’s development cooperation projects for the local media to provide opportunities for them to report on

⁷ Please refer to the following websites (in Japanese only):
MOFA’s ODA Website: <https://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/oda/index.html>
JICA: <https://www.jica.go.jp/english/index.html>
ODA Mieru-ka Site (a website for visualization of ODA): <https://www.jica.go.jp/oda/>

Japan's cooperation initiatives. In addition, the diplomatic missions distribute the English version of the White Paper on Development Cooperation to leading figures in their stationed countries to introduce Japan's development cooperation, host various lectures by officials of the embassies, as well as publish and distribute information in both English and local languages via websites, PR pamphlets, and other sources of information.

B. Information Disclosure on Implementation and Evaluation of ODA

In 2010, the “ODA Mieru-ka Site” (a website for visualization of ODA) was launched in the JICA website to provide a concise explanation of the overview and outcome of ODA projects, and to further enhance public understanding and support for ODA. JICA publishes photographs, ex-ante/ex-post evaluations, and other related information on the website about ODA loan, grant aid, and technical cooperation projects out of all the ODA projects in the world, and continues its efforts to increase dissemination of ODA-related information.

Likewise, the MOFA website publishes a list of summaries of the specific achievements and lessons from the past projects funded by Grant Assistance for Grass-Roots Human Security Projects and Cultural Grant Assistance projects, including projects which proved to be effective or deficient, in order to promote more effective implementation of ODA.

C. Promotion of Development Education

MOFA organizes the “ODA Delivery Lecture,” which provides information and explanations about Japan's international cooperation and ODA by sending Ministry officials as lecturers to junior high and high schools, universities, NGOs, and other places. Similarly, in order to support development education, JICA also provides the “International Cooperation Delivery Lecture,” which sends former Japan Overseas Cooperation volunteers and others as lecturers, and promotes cross-cultural and international understanding by giving a talk on their experience and life in developing countries, upon requests from schools and other organizations. JICA also organizes “Visit JICA,” which welcomes visits by schools to domestic offices and the showcase facilities “JICA Global Plazas” located in Tokyo, Nagoya, and Sapporo. In addition, JICA conducts the “JICA Essay Contest on International Cooperation for Junior and Senior High School Students.” For teachers,

JICA also provides training programs, such as the “Training Program for Development Education Leaders” and the “Study Tour Program for Teachers” in which teachers are dispatched to developing countries with the aim of utilizing their overseas experiences for teaching.



A MOFA official giving an ODA lecture at Nantan Municipal Yagi Junior High School in Kyoto (November 2019)

D. On-site ODA Experience

Providing opportunities to experience development cooperation sites and the actual situation of ODA for as many people as possible, is one of the most effective ways to foster public understanding of ODA. In this respect, JICA is striving to support the dispatch of teachers and local government officials to ODA project sites.

E. Promotion of Discussion and Dialogue

The Government of Japan is holding information sessions across Japan regarding ODA-related initiatives including assistance for small and medium-sized enterprises through ODA projects. Likewise, lectures and symposiums are held to introduce trends in international cooperation and Japan's efforts, offering opportunities to engage in dialogue with members of the public who have an interest in how Japan's foreign policy and ODA should be implemented.

Furthermore, JICA organizes roundtables and lectures with representatives from local industries, government officials, experts, and local university and school staff, by utilizing its domestic regional offices. Through these efforts, JICA aims to encourage the sharing of the experience of international cooperation from different regions of Japan, as well as to promote regional revitalization.

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

The Government of Japan has set a target of 1,000 Japanese staff working in UN-related organizations by the year 2025. In order to achieve this target, Japan is cooperating with universities, Japanese offices of international organizations, and relevant government ministries and agencies, while proactively seeking out, training, and supporting human resources with the capacity to be active and to contribute on the world stage. Furthermore, based on one of the recommendations made by the Advisory Board for ODA “Develop human resources for development cooperation,” MOFA is engaged in PR to assist in finding human resources, with efforts such as providing guidance to explain the employment systems of international organizations, both in Japan and abroad, as well as holding career information sessions where explanations are given by executives and HR managers from international organizations visiting Japan.

Moreover, MOFA conducts the Junior Professional Officer (JPO) Programme, which sends young Japanese nationals who aspire to work in international organizations as regular staff for two years in principle to gain necessary knowledge and experience in international organizations and attain a regular staff position after their tenure. As such, MOFA strives to nurture human resources to be active in international organizations, including in the area of development cooperation. This programme has been implemented since 1974, and a cumulative total of approximately 1,700 people have been sent, 55 of whom were sent in FY2018. In addition, in FY2015, MOFA expanded its existing program as the “Program for Global Human Resource Development for Peacebuilding and Development,” with the purpose of finding and fostering human resources in the field of peacebuilding and development, and developing their careers in a comprehensive manner (see page 36, “Human Resources Development for Peacebuilding” for details).

In addition, JICA provides recruitment information related to international cooperation, human resources registration services, information on various trainings and seminars, career counseling, and other services on the PARTNER (Participatory Network for Expert Recruitment)⁸ website, aiming to provide more opportunities to people who have specialized knowledge and diverse experiences



Ms. KIMURA Makiha working at the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) Kinshasa office in the Democratic Republic of the Congo after participating in the Program for Global Human Resource Development for Peacebuilding and Development and the JPO Programme (see page 37, “Stories from the Field” for details) (Photo: UNICEF)

at ministries and agencies, JICA, NGOs and international organizations. Moreover, since 1997, JICA has offered internships to graduate students and other individuals who conduct research closely related to development cooperation and are willing to play an active role in this field in the future. In FY2018, 101 interns were accepted at various workplaces, including the worksites of development consultants. Based on the recommendations of the Second Consultative Committee on ODA Reform in 2002, JICA secures human resources with a high degree of professional abilities and abundant work experience in developing countries through the Senior Advisor System, as well as offers the Associate Experts Program and the Capacity Enhancement Training to foster international cooperation professionals.

Furthermore, the JICA Research Institute conducts policy research based on actual experience in development cooperation using internationally recognized methodologies, while providing its research outcomes and recommendations to the governments of developing countries and the donor communities in international development.

The Government of Japan will work with universities and research institutions, and strive to reinforce the intellectual foundations to plan and disseminate development cooperation activities by promoting joint policy research and intellectual networking among researchers from Japan and developing countries, while utilizing Japan’s strengths.

⁸ Please refer to the following link for more information.
International Cooperation Career Information Website “PARTNER”: <https://partner.jica.go.jp/>