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Leading International Efforts to Addressing Increasingly Complex and Serious Global Issues

(1) Climate Change and the Environment

Global environmental issues, including climate change are addressed in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and in the wake of extreme weather events and devastating natural disasters in recent years, they are critical and time-sensitive issues that the international community must work together on. The Leaders' Communiqué of the G7 Hiroshima Summit, held under Japan's Presidency in 2023, also noted climate change, biodiversity loss, and pollution as the triple global crisis facing our planet. Japan has vigorously worked on addressing these issues and provided assistance to developing countries, as one of the top donors, through the Global Environment Facility (GEF),* a financing mechanism for major multilateral environmental agreements such as the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).

Japan's Efforts**■ Climate Change**

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

In October 2020, Japan declared that it would achieve net-zero GHG emissions by 2050. In April 2021, Japan also declared its aim to reduce its GHG emissions by 46% in FY2030 from its FY2013 levels, and to continue strenuous efforts in its challenge to meet the lofty goal of cutting its emissions by 50%. In October 2021, Japan submitted its "Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC)" ⁵³ reflecting these goals, together with "The Long-term Strategy under the Paris Agreement" to the UN.

At the G7 Cornwall Summit in June 2021, Japan announced a total of ¥6.5 trillion in assistance from both

public and private sources over five years from 2021 to 2025. Furthermore, at COP26 held in the same year, Japan announced that it would provide up to an additional \$10 billion from both public and private sources, including by doubling the finance for adaptation to ¥1.6 trillion over the five years.

(COP28)

COP28 was held in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, from November 30 to December 13, 2023. At COP28, decisions were adopted including on the first Global Stocktake, which assesses the world's collective progress toward achieving the purpose of the Paris Agreement, including the 1.5°C goal, ⁵⁴ and the operationalization of the new funding arrangements, including a fund for responding to loss and damage associated with the adverse effects of climate change. Additionally, Prime Minister Kishida participated in the "World Climate Action Summit," held from December 1 to 2 during COP28, where he called for all countries to work together to achieve the common goal of net zero emissions through various pathways.



Japanese UNDP officer attending the commemoration ceremony of a locally assembled flatpack modular tank installed through the Addressing Climate Vulnerability in the Water Sector Project funded by the Green Climate Fund (GCF) in Majuro Atoll (Rongrong Island) in the Marshall Islands (Photo: UNDP)

(Just Energy Transition Partnership (JETP))

The "Just Energy Transition Partnership (JETP)," which was launched at COP26 by France, Germany, the United Kingdom, the United States, and the EU to support South Africa, expanded its target countries to India, Indonesia, Viet Nam, and Senegal at the G7 Elmau Summit in June 2022. Japan, together with the United States, has proceeded discussions as a co-lead country

⁵³ 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.

⁵⁴ A goal set to limit the global average temperature rise to 1.5°C above the pre-industrial level.

of the Indonesia JETP. On November 15, 2022, partner countries, including Japan and the United States, and Indonesia concurred and issued the “Joint Statement on the Indonesia JETP,” which supports Indonesia’s efforts in the transition from coal to renewable energy. In addition, on December 14, 2022, the International Partners Group including Japan, and Viet Nam agreed on the “Political Declaration on establishing the JETP with Viet Nam.”

(Green Climate Fund (GCF))

Regarding multilateral support, 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 up to 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 243 projects have been approved and implemented by December 2023, which in total are expected to reduce GHG emissions by 3 billion tons and increase the resilience of 1 billion people through support for adaptation. Additionally, from Japan, JICA, MUFG Bank, Ltd., and Sumitomo Mitsui Banking Corporation are approved as “Accredited Entities” that are entitled to propose GCF projects. To date, three projects by MUFG Bank, Ltd. have been approved; a sustainable forestry project in seven countries in Sub-Saharan Africa and Latin America and the Caribbean (March 2020), an assistance on climate bond issuance project in developing countries (October 2022), and a blended finance project to support mitigation and adaptation in 19 countries in Asia, Africa, and Latin America and the Caribbean (October 2023), along with two projects by JICA; Community-based Landscape Management for Enhanced Climate Resilience and Reduction of Deforestation in Critical Watersheds in Timor-Leste (March 2021) and Building Climate Resilient and Safer Islands in the Maldives (July 2021).

(Bilateral Assistance)

As a specific example of bilateral assistance, Japan dispatches experts on actions on climate change to the Pacific Climate Change Centre in Samoa, which Japan supported the construction of through grant aid. 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 properly predict weather disasters, which will widely benefit more than 10 million people in 14 Pacific Island countries. In addition, in cooperation with UNDP, Japan supports green transformation (GX) in Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Timor-Leste, and Vanuatu.



The Pacific Climate Change Centre, which Japan supported the construction of through grant aid in Samoa (Photo: JICA)

In relation to the African region, at TICAD 8 held in August 2022, Japan launched the “Green Growth Initiative with Africa (GGA)” with the goal of addressing climate change and transforming the energy structure toward decarbonization. Under this initiative, Japan aims to maximize its cooperation through three concepts; (i) ownership and co-creation, (ii) flexible finance mobilization, and (iii) collaboration with diverse partners, and promotes various efforts to contribute to the sustainable growth in Africa.

(“Asia Zero Emission Community (AZEC)” Initiative)

In his Policy Speech in 2022, Prime Minister Kishida announced the “Asia Zero Emission Community (AZEC)” concept as a platform to aim for decarbonization in Asia. In March 2023, Japan held the AZEC Ministerial Meeting with the invitation of ASEAN countries and Australia, and AZEC was launched as a cooperation framework. Prime Minister Kishida held the first AZEC Leaders Meeting in December, where the leaders shared the major goal of carbon neutrality while confirming that they would respect various pathways to achieving the goal and would simultaneously achieve decarbonization, economic growth, and energy security. He also emphasized that Japan would continue to contribute to achieving decarbonization in Asia and global sustainable growth together with partner countries⁵⁵ through activities under the AZEC platform.

(Joint Crediting Mechanism (JCM))

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

⁵⁵ AZEC partner countries are Australia, Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Japan, Laos, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Viet Nam.

efforts. In 2013, Japan signed the first Memorandum of Cooperation (MOC) on the implementation of the JCM with Mongolia. Since then, by 2022, Japan has established the JCM with 25 countries, and in 2023, it signed new MOCs with three countries. As of the end of 2023, the JCM credits have been issued from 68 energy-saving and renewable energy projects in Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Mongolia, Thailand, Viet Nam, Bangladesh, Maldives, Palau, Saudi Arabia, and Kenya. These JCM projects contribute to GHG emission reductions worldwide.

Japan will continue to lead the international community toward the realization of a decarbonized society, which is the goal of the Paris Agreement.

■ Mainstreaming Biodiversity

In recent years, expansion of human activities in scope, scale, and types has given rise to serious concerns about further degradation of habitats and the destruction of the ecosystem. Japan values biodiversity efforts, as seen in its initiative to hold the 10th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)* (COP10) in Nagoya City, Aichi Prefecture in 2010. In addition, Japan makes contributions to the Japan Biodiversity Fund⁵⁶ to support the capacity building of developing countries. In December 2022, the second part of the 15th Meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP15) was held in Montreal, Canada, and the “Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework” was adopted as the new global goals and targets. Japan will continue to contribute in this field, aiming to realize the 2030 mission that is “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,” described in the framework. In light of the results of COP15, the Parties are requested revise or update their National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs). Japan is one of the first countries to begin considering updating its NBSAP, and in March 2023, the Cabinet decided on the “National Biodiversity Strategy 2023-2030.”

Illegal trade of wildlife has also become an increasingly serious issue. The international community pays attention to this issue, as it has been one of the funding sources of 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 the contribution to projects implemented by the CITES Secretariat. As a specific initiative, Japan supports the construction of facilities

and other measures to combat elephant poaching, mainly in Africa.

■ Conservation of the Marine Environment

The importance of addressing the problem of marine plastic litter has grown in recent years as an urgent challenge, with concerns of an adverse impact on the marine ecosystem, tourism, fisheries, and human health. As of December 2023, 87 countries and regions have shared the “Osaka Blue Ocean Vision,” an initiative led by Japan at the G20 Osaka Summit in 2019 that aims to reduce additional pollution by marine plastic litter to zero by 2050. In order to realize the Vision, Japan launched the “MARINE Initiative” that focuses on (i) Management of wastes, (ii) Recovery of marine litter, (iii) Innovation, and (iv) Empowerment. Under the 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.

In September 2023, Foreign Minister Kamikawa attended the Fifth Meeting of the High-Level Panel for a Sustainable Ocean Economy and stated that Japan would promote its excellent efforts, such as those related to blue carbon,⁵⁷ as the “Japanese Model” and that Japan hoped to share with many other countries the ambition to reduce additional plastic pollution to zero by 2040, which was committed at the G7 Hiroshima Summit in May (see page 8 of Part I, Section 2 for details). She also stated that Japan would continue to be actively involved in the negotiations in the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee process to develop a legally binding international instrument (a treaty) on plastic pollution in order to realize an effective and progressive treaty in which many countries would participate.



Inspecting the coastline of the Gulf of Thailand under the technical cooperation, the “Project for Formation of a Center of Excellence for Marine Plastic Pollution Studies in the Southeast Asian Seas” in Thailand (Photo: JICA)

⁵⁶ Established in the Secretariat of the CBD by Japan during its COP10 Presidency with the aim of building capacities in developing countries.

⁵⁷ Carbon that is captured by living organisms in coastal and ocean ecosystems, accumulates in the soil, and sinks to the seafloor.

Japan supports countermeasures against marine plastic litter in the field of marine environmental conservation. As part of technical cooperation, such as dispatching experts to developing countries and accepting trainees from developing countries through JICA, in 2023 Japan implemented a Knowledge Co-Creation Program for Group and Region Focus “Waste Management towards Control of Marine Litter.”

As part of expanded assistance for ASEAN to address marine plastic litter issues, which was announced at the ASEAN-Japan Summit in 2018, Japan provides capacity building support and conducts awareness-raising and PR activities for environmental conservation, primarily on reducing marine plastic litter in ASEAN countries since 2019. In 2023, through the Japan-ASEAN Integration Fund (JAIF),⁵⁸ Japan provided assistance to strengthen capacity for marine debris reduction through the formulation of national action plans in ASEAN countries and to promote a plastic circular society in the ASEAN region. In addition, Japan also provided support to strengthen capacity development of local governments in ASEAN countries to tackle microplastics and water pollution, and to build capacity for monitoring and reducing marine debris from fisheries.

Japan supports marine plastic litter countermeasures through the UN Environment Programme (UNEP) especially in Southeast Asia, South Asia, and Pacific Island countries. In response to the worsening marine pollution caused by plastic waste, starting in 2018, UNEP developed a method for monitoring the flow of plastic waste into the ocean. In addition, to enable science-based policymaking, UNEP conducts sampling surveys of plastic litter and scientific analysis on its pathways and formulates policy recommendations and guidelines based on the results. Furthermore, in collaboration with a Japanese IT company, a plastic leakage hotspot map was created, identifying over 3,000 leakage points (hotspots), and released on a dedicated website⁵⁹ available to the general public.

■ Protection of Forests and Water 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 supported sustainable management of tropical forests as well as legal and sustainable tropical timber trade through the organization for more than 30 years. Through voluntary contributions to ITTO, the Government of Japan provides support for tropical timber-producing countries, such as conducting on-site testing in Panama in 2023 for the



Soil surveys in areas affected by forest fires in Peru under the “Project for Establishment of Integrated Forest Management System Model for Conservation of Mountain Forest Ecosystems in the Andean-Amazon” (Photo: MIYAMOTO Kazuki)

introduction of technology owned by the Forestry and Forest Products Research Institute of Japan to identify the geographic origin of timber.

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 through JICA in cooperation with the Southeast Asian Fisheries Development Center (SEAFDEC). Curbing the impact on fish ecosystems affected by IUU fishing that exceeds regulatory thresholds leads to supporting the sustainability of the fishing industry, one of the core industries for ASEAN countries, and the sustainable development of fishing communities.

■ Environmental Pollution Control Measures

In developing countries, regulatory controls on hazardous chemical materials are often not in place, which sometimes lead to environmental pollution and health damage. Japan possesses accumulated knowledge, experience, and technology related to environmental pollution control measures and utilizes them to solve environmental pollution problems in developing countries. Japan also conducts technical cooperation, such as dispatching experts to and accepting trainees from developing countries, in the areas of environmental management techniques in the chemical industry, analysis techniques and risk evaluation for environmentally hazardous substances, and chemical trace analysis techniques.

The “Minamata Convention on Mercury” was adopted at the Conference of Plenipotentiaries on the Minamata Convention on Mercury (2013) and entered into force in August 2017. Japan exercises continuous leadership in promoting the management of global mercury pollution

⁵⁸ See 4 on page 91.

⁵⁹ “Mobile Application for Macro Plastic Survey” <https://arcg.is/1DOOWW>

by proactively transferring to the world its technology and know-how on preventing adverse effects caused by mercury, accumulated through its experience with the Minamata disease. In addition to conducting training to support Nepal and other countries in ratifying the convention, Japan conducted surveys in Indonesia and other countries to promote the international expansion of Japan's excellent mercury management technology. Furthermore, from 2019, the UNEP Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific (UNEP/ROAP) as an implementing agency has been conducting the "Project for Promoting Minamata Convention on Mercury by making the most of Japan's knowledge and experiences," with Japan's contribution. Through this project, Japan supports member states in improving the quantity and quality of domestic mercury-related information and developing a platform to implement mercury management in line with the Convention. The project utilizes the resources in and around Minamata City and technology possessed by Japanese institutions to design a comprehensive program to strengthen implementation capacity.

In the field of waste management, based on the "MARINE Initiative," Japan announced to develop 10,000 officials engaging in waste management around the world by 2025 and trained approximately 20,000 officials by FY2022 through various means such as training programs.

Moreover, as a model project for waste management support in Africa under the "African Clean Cities



Inspection of the operation status of waste collection vehicles under the technical cooperation "Clean Cities Project in Sudan" (Photo: Yachiyo Engineering Co., Ltd.)

Platform (ACCP),"* Japan provides support for the Hulene final landfill site in Mozambique. At TICAD 8 held in August 2022, Japan announced that, under the ACCP, it would promote decarbonization and recycling in the waste sector, and improve public health including through waste management that benefits 30 million people in Africa, as well as to implement human resources development for 1,000 people. In Antananarivo, the capital city of Madagascar, a project is underway to improve equipment related to the collection, transportation, and final disposal of waste, with the aim of enhancing the city's waste management capacity (see "Master Techniques from Japan to the World" on page 66 for waste management support utilizing the Fukuoka Method in Ethiopia).

Waste Management in Ethiopia Improved with Landfill Technology from Fukuoka – Working with Local People –



In Ethiopia, the amount of garbage has increased in recent years due to the rapid urban population growth and changing lifestyles, but the development of solid waste disposal facilities has not kept pace, making waste management a major issue. Notably, the Koshe dump site, Ethiopia's largest dump site for garbage in Addis Ababa, the capital city of the country, was in urgent need of finding a solution after an accident in 2017 when the garbage that had been piled up to a height of 50 meters collapsed and more than 200 people lost their lives.

In response to this accident, in 2018, through the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat), Japan provided emergency technical support to improve the Koshe dump site, by implementing the "Fukuoka Method," a Japanese landfill technology with a proven track record in solid waste management.

The "semi-aerobic landfill type" is a landfill technology known as the "Fukuoka Method," which is an environmentally conscious landfill technology originally designed in Japan. It was jointly developed by Fukuoka City and Fukuoka University in Japan in the 1970s, and was devised and put into practice by Professors Emeritus Dr. HANASHIMA Masataka and Dr. MATSUFUJI Yasushi at Fukuoka University. This technology facilitates the inflow of outside air via leachate collection pipes installed at the bottom of the landfill so that the decomposition of landfilled waste is accelerated by activating microorganisms in the waste layer. This technology also purifies leachate and inhibits the emission of methane gas, one of the greenhouse gases. Another feature is that it can be introduced at a low cost by using local materials such as bamboo and oil drums.

Dr. Matsufuji speaks from his own experience that to introduce the Fukuoka Method in landfills where there is neither heavy machinery nor tools available, and where there are people who make their living by picking up waste (waste pickers), just passing on the technology will not work.



The Koshe dump site in Addis Ababa improved using the Fukuoka Method (Photo: UN-Habitat)



Three Japanese experts who gave on-site technical assistance and the waste pickers who worked together with them (Third from the left (back row): Professor Emeritus Matsufuji) (Photo: UN-Habitat)

Therefore, Dr. Matsufuji himself visits the dump site facilities and provides technical assistance to introduce the method while gaining the cooperation of waste pickers. "Waste pickers, who are frowned upon by the public, are our partners who contribute to the separation and reduction of waste, if you look at them from another perspective. Through the cooperation of waste pickers, the introduction of the Fukuoka Method will be accelerated. At the same time, it makes the dump site safer and their work easier. As we work together and improve the dump site, they become gentler and more cooperative," he says.

Following its success in Addis Ababa, calls for the introduction of waste management through the Fukuoka Method increased, not only from within Ethiopia but also from 21 other countries. In Ethiopia, a project was started in Bahir Dar City in 2019 and also in Hawassa City since 2021 as part of the "African Clean Cities Platform (ACCP)"^{*1} initiative.

Dr. Matsufuji receives requests for cooperation in improving landfill facilities from many countries. Regarding the future expansion of the method to other countries, he says, "There are dozens of landfill facilities in a single country, and the budget is limited. Since it is difficult for me to visit every facility myself, I would like to focus more on developing human resources who can convey the correct techniques and knowledge, hoping to widely spread the Fukuoka Method." Currently, plans are underway under Dr. Matsufuji's leadership to establish regional training centers that will utilize both onsite and online training in areas such as Southeast Asia, South America, and Africa. It is hoped that Japanese technology will lead to improvements in sanitary landfill facilities in these regions.

^{*1} See the glossary on page 67.



Glossary

Global Environment Facility (GEF)

A multilateral funding mechanism providing primarily grant-based financing for projects that contribute to global environmental conservation in developing countries. Having been established in 1991, 186 countries including Japan participate (as of December 2023). The World Bank manages the contributions from member countries. Through 18 implementing agencies including MDBs (World Bank, ADB, etc.) and UN organizations (UNDP, UNEP, etc.), it assists developing countries under five focal areas, namely biodiversity loss, climate change, international waters, land degradation, and chemicals and waste. It is designated as the financing mechanism to the UNFCCC, CBD, UN 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).

Green Climate Fund (GCF)

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

Joint Crediting Mechanism (JCM)

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

Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)

A convention adopted in 1992 to advance global efforts to address biodiversity issues. The objectives of CBD are the following: (i) conservation of biological diversity, (ii) 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 (iii) 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)

Established in 2017 by the Ministry of the Environment, Japan, together with JICA, the City of Yokohama, UNEP, and the UN Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) aiming to share knowledge on waste management and promote the achievement of the SDGs in Africa. 173 cities in 46 countries in Africa have joined the Platform, holding plenary sessions, creating various guidelines and educational materials, planning study tours, and more.

(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) ⁶⁰ 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 5 million ⁶¹ children under the age of five die annually due to preventable diseases. Approximately 287,000 women ⁶² die during and following pregnancy and childbirth per year, primarily due to the lack of emergency obstetric care provided by obstetricians, gynecologists, and/or midwives. Moreover, COVID-19 has had a wide range of effects on everyone on earth. It has also exposed various vulnerabilities, including those related to vaccine distribution, in the current global health architecture (GHA), which comprises the governance and finance for addressing global health and medical issues.

In light of various changes in the global situation, such as the spread of COVID-19, the Government of Japan formulated the “Global Health Strategy” in May 2022.

The goal of the Strategy is (i) to contribute to developing GHA for international health security and strengthening Prevention, Preparedness, and Response (PPR) for public health emergencies including pandemics, and (ii) to achieve more resilient, equitable, and sustainable UHC required for the post-COVID-19 era in order to embody human security. Japan promotes initiatives based on this Strategy.



A birth attendant who took part in capacity building training conducted by the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) with funding from Japan providing postnatal checkup (Photo: UNFPA)

⁶⁰ The concept that all people have access to effective and quality-assured health services at affordable costs without financial hardship.

⁶¹ According to the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) survey (as of 2021).

⁶² According to the World Health Organization (WHO) survey (as of 2020).

Japan's Efforts

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

Based on the experience and lessons learned from the COVID-19 response, the international community's interest in strengthening PPR for future health crises is higher than ever.

Japan has provided financial contributions to the World Health Organization (WHO)'s Health Emergencies Programme,* the Contingency Fund for Emergencies (CFE),* and other relevant programmes to support WHO's response to health crises. These contributions were also used to respond to the acute phase of COVID-19. In addition, Japan announced a cumulative contribution of \$70 million as a founding financial member to the Pandemic Fund, which was established in 2022 and is hosted by the World Bank. Japan also provides assistance for strengthening capacities in preparedness and responses against infectious diseases in developing countries, through an additional contribution to the Health Emergency Preparedness and Response Multi-Donor Trust Fund (HEPRTF), which Japan launched in cooperation with the World Bank Group.

In 2023, Japan, as the G7 Presidency, made a significant contribution to strengthening PPR. As an outcome of the discussions at the G7 Joint Finance and Health Ministers' Meeting held in May, the Meeting compiled the "G7 Shared Understanding on Enhanced Finance-Health Coordination and PPR Financing," and in light of the experience with the COVID-19 pandemic, reaffirmed the need to further enhance coordination between finance and health authorities. In addition, the G7 agreed to work with the G20 and others to consider a framework for "surge financing" that would quickly and efficiently provide funds necessary for responding to pandemic outbreaks.

At the G7 Hiroshima Summit that followed in the same month, the G7 leaders committed to enhancing political momentum toward leadership-level governance and strengthening international norms and regulations. In addition, in order to improve equitable access to medical countermeasures (MCMs) including vaccines worldwide, the G7 leaders announced the "G7 Hiroshima Vision for Equitable Access to Medical Countermeasures," and launched the "MCM Delivery Partnership for Equitable Access (MCDP)," to promote related initiatives. They also endorsed the "Impact Investment Initiative (Triple I) for Global Health," which aims to mobilize private financial resources through impact investment to solve health issues.

In September, Prime Minister Kishida attended the

"G7 Health Follow-up Side Event" held on the occasion of the UN General Assembly. At the event, Prime Minister Kishida mentioned that to ensure smooth financing it is necessary to expand the mobilization of domestic financial resources in each country and accelerate international cooperation and mobilization of private financial resources. He also announced the launch of Japan's new yen loan program, which, in tandem with technical cooperation, would provide increased support for borrower countries aligned with their efforts to strengthen prevention and preparedness, and will promptly supply financial resources necessary to respond to a pandemic. Furthermore, to facilitate private financing, Prime Minister Kishida announced the launch of the Triple I, which was endorsed at the G7 Hiroshima Summit, and called for further participation in the Triple I initiative by companies and organizations in each country.

Japan also actively contributes to rulemaking in the international arena. In February 2022, under WHO, the first meeting of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Body (INB) on a "WHO convention, agreement or other international instrument on pandemic prevention, preparedness and response (PPR) (WHO CA+)" (the so-called "Pandemic Agreement") was held, and negotiations are ongoing as of the end of 2023. One Japanese delegate was elected as a vice-chair of the INB, and Japan contributes to the progress of the negotiations as a member state. Japan also actively contributes to the discussions on the amendments to the International Health Regulations (2005) (IHR),⁶³ which are taking place concurrently.

■ 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 heretofore provided support for the health and medical care systems in countries in Southeast Asia and Africa based on the view that building a sustainable and resilient health system will serve as the foundation for controlling infectious diseases. In addition, based on various lessons learned from pandemics such as COVID-19, Japan works to strengthen health systems including the development and networking of core medical facilities and support for human resources development in the medical field. For example, in August 2023, Japan and Madagascar exchanged notes regarding Japan's support for the improvement of medical equipment in regional referral hospitals in Madagascar through grant aid, with

⁶³ International Health Regulations (2005) (IHR): Health regulations established by the World Health Organization (WHO) with the aim of preventing the international spread of diseases to the greatest extent possible.

ODA Topics



Human Security

Human security is a concept that focuses on each and every human being, and advances nation and community building through the empowerment and protection of individuals to live happily, in dignity, and free from fear and want. Japan has long promoted the concept of human security in the international community. Japan's Development Cooperation Charter has also positioned it as the guiding principle that lies at the foundation of Japan's development cooperation. Human security, which puts the spotlight on individuals, is also aligned with the principles of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs),*1 which aim to realize a society that "leaves no one behind."

The revised Development Cooperation Charter, effective from June 2023, continues to position human security as its guiding principle and sets the realization of "human security" in the new era with compound crises as one of Japan's basic policies. This means that, in addition to continuing "investment in people," such as protection and empowerment of individuals, Japan will set the solidarity of various actors as the pillars of human security, and will conduct development cooperation, making human agency a central focus. This idea is based on the 2022 Special Report on human security published by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), which advocates the need for human security in the new era that incorporates the concept of "solidarity," into the two conventional pillars of human security, "protection" and "empowerment."

The Government of Japan has made various efforts to promote human security so far, both in terms of the dissemination of the concept and its practical application on the ground. Under Japan's leadership, the UN General Assembly unanimously adopted a resolution on a shared understanding on human security in 2012. Japan also proactively promotes the concept of human security in the international community, such as by holding symposiums on human security. At the G7 Hiroshima Summit in May 2023, as the holder of the G7 Presidency, Japan demonstrated to developing countries facing compound crises its stance of focusing on its efforts to support people who tend to be in vulnerable situations based on the concept of human security in the new era.

Furthermore, through Japan's leadership, the UN Trust Fund for Human Security was established in 1999 to promote the implementation of human security in the field. By FY2022, Japan contributed a total of approximately ¥50 billion to this fund. The trust fund has supported 293 projects implemented by UN agencies to ensure human security in over 100 countries and regions by the end of 2022.

In January 2024, a UN report entitled the "Human Security: Report of Secretary-General" was released. It is expected that this report will further encourage discussions on human security at the UN. Japan, which has advocated human security, intends to actively lead these discussions.

*1 See the glossary on page 32.



March 2023, Japan announcing its contribution to UNDP and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) through the UN Trust Fund for Human Security to support displaced Ukrainians and their host communities in Moldova (Photo: UNDP Moldova)



As part of the “Achihi Aadat (good habits) Campaign” run by the JICA India Office, the sponsoring company Sanrio and one of its characters, Hello Kitty, visiting India for the first time to teach children the appropriate handwashing and nail cleaning techniques (Photo: JICA)

the aim of strengthening diagnostic and treatment systems and improving access to medical services. 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 contributes to the prevention of infectious diseases in over 15 countries by providing water purification chemicals, fuel for water trucks, personal protective equipment (PPE) for water utility personnel, and plumbing materials, as well as encouraging handwashing and conducting awareness-raising activities. JICA takes the lead in providing support for environmental improvements through supplying safe and secure water, handwashing facilities, and soaps, as well as in implementing initiatives such as the “Handwashing for Health and Life Campaign” to promote proper handwashing in developing countries (see Part III, 3 (3) on page 74 on Efforts in the area of water and sanitation).

Primary healthcare services under UHC include all services ranging from 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) from page 29 onwards regarding nutritional improvement).

Especially with regard to maternal and child health in developing countries, there are major issues still unsolved. In response to this situation, in 2023, Japan provided support in many countries including Bangladesh, Burundi, Cambodia, Côte d’Ivoire, Ghana, Laos, Pakistan, and Senegal to improve maternal and child health.

Japan carries out activities utilizing the Maternal and

Child Health (MCH) Handbook as a means of improving maternal and child health, drawing on its experience and expertise. The MCH Handbook can contribute to the Continuum of Care (CoC) from pregnancy, childbirth, the post-partum period,⁶⁴ the neonatal period, infancy, to 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 cooperation. Moreover, in cooperation with JICA, Indonesia’s relevant ministries and agencies hold events to share their experiences and knowledge with other countries that are promoting the use of the MCH Handbook. In 2023, participants from eight countries, Cambodia, Kenya, Laos, Madagascar, Tajikistan, Thailand, Timor-Leste, and Viet Nam, together with Indonesia, learned from each other’s experiences across the nine countries.

In the African region, the “Tunis Declaration,” which was adopted at TICAD 8 in August 2022 as its outcome document, confirms the importance of realizing the concept of human security, building a resilient and sustainable society to achieve the SDGs, and intensifying efforts in the health sector to achieve UHC.

Japanese NGOs work in the area of health and medical care using the Grant Assistance for Japanese NGO Projects scheme. For example, in 2023, Chikyū-no-Stage (English name: Frontline), a Japanese NGO, is conducting the “Improving Reproductive, Maternal, Newborn, and Child Health (RMNCH) in Ermera Municipality” project in Timor-Leste. The project involves introducing compact ultrasound diagnostic equipment and providing training on how to operate it, holding mothers’ classes for pregnant women and nursing mothers, and conducting awareness campaigns using educational materials on maternal and child health.

Japan works in cooperation with international organizations, such as the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF), and the World Bank, 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 (see also “Japanese Personnel at International Organizations Playing Active Roles on the Front Lines across the World” on page 50 for the active role played by Japanese UNFPA personnel).

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) positions health as one of the key priority sectors in its “Strategy 2030” and sets the following three pillars to achieve UHC in the Asia-Pacific region in cooperation with Japan: (i) building

⁶⁴ The period after childbirth in which women recover to a similar condition before pregnancy, usually around one to two months after birth.



A JICA expert providing guidance at a hospital where trainees receive training under the "Quality of Care for Maternal and Newborn Health with focus on 5S-KAIZEN-TQM" in Ghana (Photo: JICA)

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 accelerate supports based on these three pillars. As of the end of October 2023, Japan has contributed a total of approximately \$11.5 million through the Fund.

In May 2023, the G7 Health Ministers' Meeting in Nagasaki, chaired by then Minister of Health, Labour and Welfare Kato, adopted the "G7 Global Plan for UHC Action Agenda," which outlines further actions that the G7 countries should take to achieve UHC worldwide under the theme of "Working together for a healthier future." At the G7 Hiroshima Summit, the G7 leaders announced their financial contributions totaling more than \$48 billion from the public and private sectors, with a view to supporting the achievement of UHC in the post-COVID-19 era. As a part of the G7's contributions, Prime Minister Kishida expressed Japan's intention to make contributions totaling more than \$7.5 billion from the public and private sectors, including a \$200 million pledge for the Global Health Innovative Technology (GHIT) Fund. In September, Prime Minister Kishida attended the UN General Assembly High-Level Meeting on UHC, where he stated that before the lessons learned from the COVID-19 pandemic are forgotten, the international community needs to, once again, remember and act on the goal of achieving UHC. He also stated that, at the G7 Hiroshima Summit as well, the leaders committed to achieving more resilient, equitable, and sustainable UHC through strengthening

health systems. On this basis, Prime Minister Kishida expressed further determination to achieve UHC by 2030.

Japan has supported building health and medical systems in developing countries for many years from various perspectives such as supporting the capacity building of healthcare workers, networking regional hospitals, and strengthening regional health systems. During the COVID-19 crisis, the medical facilities that Japan has supported evidently played central roles for infection control measures. In 2023, Prime Minister Kishida received the Global Goalkeeper Award in recognition of Japan's leadership focused on health at the G7 Hiroshima Summit and years of immense contribution to global health, demonstrating high recognition from the international community.

■ Efforts on Individual Global Health Issues (Support in Response to COVID-19)

In response to COVID-19, since its outbreak, Japan has provided a total of approximately \$5 billion in assistance to developing countries through bilateral channels and through international organizations to date. In addition, in order to underpin economic and social activities in developing countries, as well as to address their financial needs, including in the health and medical sectors, Japan has established the COVID-19 Crisis Response Emergency Support Loan and has provided loans totaling ¥684.8 billion to 23 countries from July 2020 to the end of September 2023.

In order to contain COVID-19, it is important to ensure equitable access to safe, effective, and quality-assured vaccines, as well as to therapeutics and diagnostics. Based on this idea, Japan has provided vaccine-related assistance to various countries and regions, in line with international frameworks such as the COVAX Facility (COVID-19 Vaccine Global Access Facility).⁶⁵ As part of the "Last One Mile ⁶⁵ Support" to realize the delivery of vaccines to vaccination sites, Japan contributed to improving the cold chain ⁶⁶ system and strengthening healthcare providers' vaccine administration capacity.

(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 makes strong efforts to support measures against them and strengthen health systems through the Global Fund.⁶⁷ From its establishment to February 2023, Japan has contributed approximately \$4.3 billion to the Global

⁶⁵ In fields such as logistics and communication services, this means the last segment of delivery of goods or services between the final provision site and the users or consumers.

⁶⁶ A mechanism to deliver products to their destination while maintaining low temperatures. This allows the quality of medical goods such as vaccines to be preserved.

⁶⁷ Public-Private Partnership established in 2002, led by the discussion held at the G8 Kyushu-Okinawa Summit in 2000 when infectious diseases control was set as a major discussion topic for the first time. It contributes to efforts to achieve the SDGs by providing financial cooperation for measures against the three major infectious diseases (HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, and malaria) and strengthening health systems in developing countries.

Fund. Furthermore, at TICAD 8 held in August 2022 and the Global Fund's Seventh Replenishment Conference in the following month, Prime Minister Kishida announced that Japan would additionally contribute up to \$1.08 billion over the next three years. 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 countermeasures, Japan provides assistance to raise awareness for preventing new infections as well as to promote testing and counseling. Primarily in Africa, in 2023, Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers (JOCVs) continued to engage vigorously in deepening people's knowledge and understanding of HIV/AIDS prevention and providing care and support to people living with HIV/AIDS.

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

In respect of malaria, one of the major causes of infant mortality, Japan supports the effort to strengthen local communities in Myanmar and Solomon Islands as antimalaria countermeasures. Through contributions to the Global Fund, Japan also takes measures against malaria on a worldwide level.

(Responding to Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR))

Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR)⁶⁸ is a serious threat to public health, and in recent years, countermeasures against AMR have gained momentum. In order to advance measures against AMR, Japan promotes the "One Health Approach," which aims to link, across sectors, those engaged in the field of sanitation concerning humans, animals, and the environment. Based on the agreement at the G20 Osaka Summit in 2019 on promoting the One Health Approach, Japan announced that it would contribute approximately ¥1 billion to GARDP,⁶⁹ which promotes research and development for new antibiotics and diagnosis development. Japan takes the lead in tackling AMR, including through participation in the Global Leaders



A JOCV providing medical care at the "Hospital Universitario Japonés (Japanese University Hospital)" in Santa Cruz, Bolivia (Photo: JICA)

Group on Antimicrobial Resistance. In 2023, Japan contributed approximately ¥250 million to GARDP.

(Neglected Tropical Diseases (NTDs))

Parasitic and bacterial infections, such as Chagas disease, Filariasis, and Schistosomiasis, are known as "neglected tropical diseases (NTDs)." More than 1 billion people worldwide are infected with NTDs, causing major socio-economic losses to developing countries. Japan contributed a total of ¥18.6 billion to the Global Health Innovative Technology (GHIT) Fund by 2023 and provided support for countermeasures against NTDs through GHIT. In addition, Japan signed "the Kigali Declaration on neglected tropical diseases (NTDs)" in June 2022, and cooperates closely with the relevant countries and international organizations on countermeasures against NTDs. At the G7 Hiroshima Summit, Prime Minister Kishida announced a \$200 million pledge for the GHIT Fund.

Japan has provided support against Lymphatic Filariasis for Pacific Island countries through technical cooperation since the 1970s. The "Project for Elimination of Lymphatic Filariasis in the Pacific Region" supports mass drug administration of anthelmintics to stop transmissions in infected areas via public-private partnership, dispatching Japanese experts to provide technical instructions, and utilizing drugs provided to WHO free of charge by the Japanese pharmaceutical company Eisai Co., Ltd. This long-term support from Japan has been proved to be successful, with 9 of 14 Pacific Island countries (Cook Islands, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Nauru, Niue, Palau, Solomon Islands, Tonga, and Vanuatu) having eliminated Lymphatic Filariasis. Through the dispatch of experts and other means, Japan will continue to support the elimination of Lymphatic Filariasis in Pacific Island countries.

⁶⁸ Pathogenic microorganisms, including bacteria and viruses, gaining resistance to antimicrobials such as antibiotics and antiviral drugs, which causes the drugs to lose sufficient efficacy.

⁶⁹ GARDP is an abbreviation for Global Antibiotic Research & Development Partnership.



State health officials at the completion of a training session (Papua New Guinea) under the “Project for Elimination of Lymphatic Filariasis in the Pacific Region,” technical cooperation currently being implemented in six Pacific Island countries (Photo: JICA)

(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 cases of infection are still being identified (polio-endemic countries: Afghanistan and Pakistan). During 2023, in Afghanistan, Japan provided support for routine immunization activities and the procurement of vaccines necessary for polio vaccination campaigns in cooperation with UNICEF. Similar supports are also ongoing in Pakistan.



Glossary

WHO Health Emergencies Programme

A part of 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 based on its reflection concerning 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 provide funding within 24 hours of the decision being made.

Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance

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

COVAX Facility (COVID-19 Vaccine Global Access Facility)

A comprehensive mechanism for resource mobilization and supply coordination led by Gavi to secure equitable access to vaccines. COVAX enables the supply of COVID-19 vaccines swiftly at an affordable price, leveraging economies of scale through guaranteeing purchase and market demand for vaccines. The COVAX Facility has provided 2 billion doses of vaccines to 146 countries and regions as of October 2023.

Featured Project



Toward Establishing a Safe and Efficient Immunization System

—Strengthening Prevention, Preparedness, and Response (PPR) for Pandemics—

Project for Strengthening Immunization Programs in Pacific Island Countries
(Partnership with UNICEF and WHO)

Grant Aid (April 2021 – March 2025)

Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, and Palau



Pacific Island countries are geographically dispersed and thus face unique challenges and vulnerabilities. Taking the Marshall Islands as an example, the country consists of atolls scattered over an area of approximately 2 million square kilometers of sea, and accessibility within the country and to the outside of the country is poor. In addition, given the vulnerability of the health and medical systems, there is a need to strengthen the immunization services in preparation for the possible influx of various infectious diseases.

Concerning such a situation, Japan, in collaboration with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the World Health Organization (WHO), provided assistance to the Marshall Islands and four other countries in the Pacific Island countries region (Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Kiribati, and Palau) that face similar challenges. It included the provision of equipment to strengthen the cold chain,^{*1} such as Solar Direct Drive (SDD) Refrigerators that can be used even in rural atolls without electricity, as well as boats for transportation among atolls. Japan also provides technical assistance for the maintenance of equipment in collaboration with UNICEF, as well as technical



Health screening at a temporary health facility in the Majuro Atoll, Marshall Islands, during the outbreak of community transmission of COVID-19

assistance for formulating immunization schedules and strengthening surveillance systems for various infectious diseases in collaboration with WHO.

In the Marshall Islands, community transmission of COVID-19 was first detected in August 2022, and approximately 40% of the population was infected. However, with the equipment provided through the cooperation, timely vaccinations made it possible to contain the situation within approximately one month. Many people in the Marshall Islands expressed their gratitude for Japan's assistance. The number of people vaccinated against other infectious diseases in rural atolls since August 2022 accounts for as high as 3,000 people in 35 local communities.

Japan will continue to support the strengthening of health systems, including prevention of infectious diseases, in the Pacific Island countries region, to achieve even more resilient, equitable, and sustainable universal health coverage (UHC).



Handover ceremony of Solar Direct Drive (SDD) Refrigerators that can be used even in rural atolls without electricity (Photo: UNICEF)

*1 See 66 on page 71.

(3) Water and Sanitation

Water and sanitation are vital issues linked to human life. Throughout the world, approximately 2.2 billion people do not receive a supply of safely-managed drinking water, and approximately 3.5 billion people cannot use safely-managed sanitary facilities such as toilets.⁷⁰ In particular, in developing countries where piped water is not widely available, women and children are often compelled to spend hours fetching water, which deprives them of opportunities for participation in society and for education. Water and sanitation issues are therefore also important for promoting gender equality and an inclusive society. Furthermore, an unstable supply of water 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).⁷¹ SDG 6 sets forth the objective to “Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all.”

Japan's Efforts

Japan has the best track record in the world for cumulative total assistance since the 1990s in the fields of water and sanitation. In 2023, Japan provided assistance for the development and expansion of water supply and sewerage systems in countries such as Cambodia and Indonesia. In Cambodia, for instance, Japan supports Phnom Penh Capital Administration and the Ministry of Public Works and Transport in their efforts to build a

⁷⁰ 70 According to the data of UNICEF (2022). <https://data.unicef.org/resources/jmp-report-2023/>

⁷¹ See 60 on page 67.



A JICA expert confirming the demand for water transmission and distribution equipment with a counterpart from Nicaraguan Company of Aqueducts and Sanitary Sewerage (Photo: JICA)



Children at a school in the State of Koror, Palau, who are now able to wash their hands at any time at hand-washing stations newly installed with Japan's assistance

sewerage management system through the development of legal and institutional systems concerning sewerage management. As for Tajikistan, Japan implemented a technical cooperation project to strengthen the water service management capacities of Pyanj and Khamadoni Vodokanals in order to improve water supply services. Currently, Japan has dispatched water service policy advisory experts to Tajikistan to follow up on the project. Furthermore, in Pakistan, Japan implements the "Project for Upgrading Sewerage and Drainage Services in Multan" and the "Project for the Improvement of Water Treatment Plant and Water Distribution System in Faisalabad," both in Punjab province (see "Stories from the Field" on page 138 for assistance to Cambodia, and "Featured Project" on page 76 for Japan's efforts in South Sudan).

The UN 2023 Water Conference, held in New York in May 2023, was attended by more than 6,700 people, including 20 leaders and 120 ministers from approximately 200 countries, regions, and organizations. Japan was represented by Special Envoy of the Prime Minister Kamikawa and others. Among the Conference's five sessions, Special Envoy Kamikawa, together with Egypt, co-chaired Session 3, which mainly discussed water for climate, resilience, and the environment, and compiled key messages for strengthening the resilience of the water sector in the world, drawing on Japan's experience in water-related disaster risk reduction. Additionally, in November, Foreign Minister Kamikawa participated through a video message in Cairo Water Week 2023, hosted by the Government of Egypt.

Japan also makes efforts to improve the water supply system in developing countries around the world in cooperation with Japanese and local private companies and organizations. For example, in Kenya, the "SDGs Verification Survey for the Measures against Non-

Revenue Water of the Water Supply System by Utilizing Mechanical Joint Connections" is implemented utilizing JICA's SDGs Business Supporting Surveys. Water leakage from water distribution pipes is a common problem in the country. As part of this survey, a pilot project was launched to utilize a Japanese company's water pipe joint connections⁷² to prevent water leakage.

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 countries⁷³ from Asia, WEPA aims to enhance water environment governance in Asia through building human networks, gathering and sharing information, and strengthening capacity. In February 2023, the 18th WEPA Annual Meeting was held in Cambodia. It focused on the current status and challenges of industrial wastewater management. The participants shared information on progress made on water environment governance in each country and lively exchanged views. Moreover, to contribute to achieving "halving the proportion of untreated wastewater" set in Target 6.3 of the SDGs, MOE introduces Japan's advanced decentralized wastewater treatment facility "Johkasou" technology, legislative systems, etc., mainly for Asian regions. The 11th workshop was held online in November. Presentations were made on examples of the use of treated water from "Johkasou" facilities in Japan and overseas, the Japanese legal system for maintaining good quality of treated water from these facilities, and proposed ordinances by local governments overseas regarding decentralized wastewater treatment. Active discussions were then held on these topics. This helped the participants gain a common understanding of the future direction and

⁷² A part used at the joints that connect pipes together. An important component of water infrastructure to use water efficiently.

⁷³ The 13 countries are Cambodia, China, Indonesia, Republic of Korea, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Nepal, the Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Viet Nam, and Japan.

Featured Project



Stable Supply of Safe and Inexpensive Water to More Residents

Project for the Improvement of Water Supply System of Juba in South Sudan

Grant Aid (June 2012 – January 2023)

South Sudan



South Sudan became independent in 2011, but the lives of its citizens are still under the influence of the past long-term conflicts. The basic infrastructure that supports the country's social economy remains devastated. The water supply facilities in the capital city of Juba, built in the 1930s, were deteriorated over time due to inadequate maintenance. In addition, since the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) was concluded in 2005, the country has not been able to cope with the rapid population growth caused by the influx of internally displaced persons and others. As of 2010, only around 8% of the population had access to purified water, and many people were living on raw water from rivers or wells, making infectious diseases and the impact on economic activity an issue.

To address this challenge, Japan began supporting the expansion of water treatment facilities and the construction of new water transmission and distribution pipeline networks and water supply facilities in 2012. After some suspensions due to domestic political instability and the spread of COVID-19, the project was completed



Panoramic view of the completed water treatment facility (Photo: TEC International Co., Ltd.)



Women and children coming to buy water at a public stand. The demand for the water is so huge that people often line up for their turn (Photo: TEC International Co., Ltd.)

in January 2023, and began supplying water to local citizens.

With the cooperation of Japan, water supplies are now available at 8 water tanker filling stations and 120 public stands, making it possible to supply water to approximately 380,000 people a day, an increase of more than 10 times from the 34,000 people served before the facilities started operating. Water tankers and local people gather at the water supply facilities from early in the morning, and by noon all the water is distributed. Positive comments from the local people include, "It has shortened the time to get water," and "We can now get clean water at a cheaper price than before."

Access to safe water is a fundamental right that is essential to people's lives. Japan will continue to protect the people's livelihoods and support South Sudan's state-building efforts by developing these basic socio-economic infrastructures.

improvement measures to resolve the issues. Through the workshop, information on decentralized wastewater treatment systems, including the "Johkasou" facilities, was disseminated, and cooperation with people involved in decentralized wastewater treatment in each country was strengthened.

Moreover, in November, Japan jointly hosted the Seminar on Improving Water Environment in Indonesia with Indonesia's Ministry of Environment and Forestry. At the seminar, to promote the overseas expansion of Japanese "Johkasou" facilities, Japan provided knowledge about the legal framework and maintenance of these facilities in Japan, and held discussions on future issues and initiatives regarding decentralized wastewater management in Indonesia.

(4) Mainstreaming of Disaster Risk Reduction and Creating Sustainable Cities

Amid the concern over the effects of climate change that might increase the frequency, scale, and area of disasters, the impact of disasters on the economy and

the entire society is becoming increasingly serious in developing countries vulnerable to disasters. Disaster risk reduction efforts are essential to eradicating poverty and achieving sustainable development. It is necessary to build a disaster-resilient and flexible society to protect human lives from disasters, while making efforts toward sustainable development. Among them, it is important to promote the mainstreaming of disaster risk reduction that introduces the perspective of disaster risk reduction in all the development policies and plans.

In recent years, various issues related to the management of cities have received increased attention. They include such issues as handling the disposal of the substantial amount of waste produced in urban areas and suburbs, pollution of air, water, etc., development of infrastructure facilities including sewage and waste treatment systems, and rapid population increases and the consequent rapid urbanization. Addressing these issues and engaging in efforts to realize sustainable cities have become priorities for development cooperation.

Thus, among the SDGs, Goal 11 sets forth the following task: "Make cities and human settlements



A field survey by Quito city officials and an expert team from Japan into the landslide disaster that occurred in Quito, the capital of Ecuador, in January 2022. Japan supports the capacity building of government agencies to reduce the risk of landslides. (Photo: JICA)

inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable.” As shown by this fact, there are growing international interests in resolving the issues of human settlements that include realizing sustainable cities.

Japan's Efforts

■ Cooperation in Disaster Risk Reduction

Japan utilizes its enriched knowledge and expertise acquired through its past experiences with disasters, such as earthquakes and typhoons, to provide proactive support for disaster risk reduction and post disaster recovery with emergency assistance (see “Featured Projects” on page 104 for disaster risk reduction efforts in Honduras and on page 113 for efforts in the Kyrgyz Republic). The “Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 (Sendai Framework),” which was adopted at the Third UN World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (2015), incorporated many ideas proposed by Japan. These include the mainstreaming of disaster risk reduction, the importance of investment in disaster risk reduction, the involvement of diverse stakeholders, the concept of “Build Back Better” to build cities that are more resilient to disasters in post-disaster recovery, and the importance of women’s leadership.

As 2023 marks the halfway point of the planning period of the “Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 (Sendai Framework),” the High-Level Meeting on the Mid-term Review of the Sendai Framework Disaster Risk Reduction was held at the United Nations Headquarters in May to assess the progress of efforts in the field of disaster risk reduction. At the same time, the meeting highlighted the need for each stakeholder to accelerate their efforts to achieve the goals by 2030 amid the increasing disaster risks worldwide due to climate change.

In addition, a resolution was adopted to designate November 5 as “World Tsunami Awareness Day” responding to Japan’s call at the UN General Assembly in 2015. Accordingly, the High School Students Summit

on “World Tsunami Awareness Day” has been held in various parts of Japan since 2016. The Summit has been held five times so far, and the sixth meeting is scheduled to be held in Kumamoto City in the fall of 2024. Furthermore, on November 7, 2023, Japan co-organized an event to raise awareness of the necessity to reduce the risk of tsunamis at the UN Headquarters with the UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR).

Moreover, in close cooperation with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Japan implements projects to support the formulation of tsunami evacuation plans and tsunami evacuation drills for countries at high tsunami risk in the Asia-Pacific region. Since the start of the projects in 2017, the institutionalization of disaster risk reduction has been promoted in countries such as Thailand, as seen in the development of guidelines for school evacuation plans and drills, including measures for students with disabilities who have been previously overlooked, and the adaptation of these guidelines by 27,000 schools nationwide. By the end of 2023, the formulation and revision of tsunami disaster management plans, as well as programs for tsunami education, have been implemented at 452 schools across 23 countries, with approximately 190,000 students, teachers, and stakeholders of local governments and communities participating in tsunami evacuation drills (see “Stories from the Field” on page 60 regarding efforts on disaster risk reduction education in Türkiye).

Additionally, every year from 2016, Japan and the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) Hiroshima Office have worked together to provide support for human resources development targeting female government officials in developing countries vulnerable to natural disasters, particularly focusing on women’s roles and leadership in the event of tsunamis. Under this project, 479 people from 39 countries participated by the end of 2023.

Japan also contributes in the field of overseas deployment of ICT systems for disaster risk reduction. Japan’s ICT systems for disaster risk reduction make it possible to collect, analyze, and disseminate disaster related information in an integrated manner, allowing detailed information to be communicated swiftly and infallibly at the community level. This contributes to the improvement of disaster risk reduction capabilities in developing countries.

■ Realizing Sustainable Cities

Japan takes initiatives to resolve global issues directly related to human settlements, including efforts for disaster risk reduction, recovery from natural disasters, and promoting a sound water cycle. Specifically, drawing on its know-how and experience, Japan develops infrastructure, including water and sewage, waste, and energy facilities. In addition, Japan conducts disaster risk reduction programs, human resources development, etc. based on the concept of “Build Back Better.” Japan

also works together with the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) to further promote sustainable urban development. One example can be seen in collaboration with the UN-Habitat Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific (ROAP)-Fukuoka, which supports the introduction of the disaster prevention technology of Fukuoka Prefecture to developing countries.

Following the first meeting in Potsdam, Germany, in 2022, the second G7 Sustainable Urban Development Ministers' Meeting was held in Takamatsu, Kagawa Prefecture, in July 2023 under the Japanese Presidency. Themed "Achieving Sustainable Urban Development Together," the attendees confirmed the need to address issues such as achieving net-zero and resilient cities, the realization of inclusive cities, and digitalization in cities. In addition to summarizing the outcomes of the meeting in a communiqué, the "Kagawa-Takamatsu Principles," named after the host city, were announced as guidelines for collaboration with various actors to realize the communiqué.

(5) Quality Education for All

There are approximately 58 million children who are unable to attend elementary school in the world. Including secondary school, an estimated 244 million children are out of school.⁷⁴ In particular, in Sub-Saharan Africa, the percentage of out-of-school children has been increasing since 2000. Above all, children with disabilities, children of minority ethnic groups and disadvantaged communities, refugee and displaced children, and those living in remote areas are at the greatest risk of being left behind. Russia's aggression against Ukraine has deprived children and students of their right to education and halted international exchange. Meanwhile, the spread of COVID-19 has revealed vulnerabilities in the education system. In addition to the loss of learning opportunities due to school closures, it is pointed out that some children do not return to school even after reopening. These situations raise further concerns about malnutrition, early marriage, and gender inequality of those children.

Education is extremely important as an "investment in people" that is essential 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 works on achieving the goal of "Education 2030 Framework for Action."^{*} The Transforming Education Summit, held at the UN Headquarters in September 2022, also highlighted the need for international cooperation to build education systems that can respond to crises in order to protect education for people in vulnerable

situations. Japan continues to promote educational initiatives based on the perspectives of quality education for all, empowerment of women, children, and youth, and ensuring educational opportunities in conflict and disaster situations.

Japan's Efforts

Japan provides developing countries with a broad range of support, including the enhancement of basic education⁷⁵ and higher education.

In particular, Japan provides support to children prone to be in vulnerable situations, such as girls, children with disabilities, and children in conflict-affected areas, as well as children of refugees, displaced persons, and their host communities, who have been left out of school and learning opportunities. For example, Japan supports projects for children in conflict-affected areas by providing distance learning equipment and mental health care support in Ukraine. Japan also works to promote inclusive education that takes into consideration children with disabilities, as well as education with climate change and disaster risk reduction perspectives. For example, in Mongolia, Japan works to develop primary and secondary education facilities that are barrier-free and equipped with fire doors and storage, which can be used as a base for disaster prevention for the local communities (see "Stories from the Field" on page 80 for higher education support in India. Also see "Featured Project" on page 86 for efforts for children with disabilities in Kenya).

Also, Japan contributed a total of approximately \$51.41 million from 2008 to 2023 to the Global Partnership for Education (GPE).^{*} In 2022 alone, more than 106 million children were supported through GPE's support activities, and more than 670,000 teachers



Third grade primary school children using a math study app as part of a project to improve teaching and learning mathematics in primary education in Laos (Photo: JICA)

⁷⁴ Pages 211 and 214 of the "Global Education Monitoring Report 2023." <https://www.unesco.org/gem-report/en/technology>

⁷⁵ The educational activities designed to enable individuals to acquire knowledge, values, and skills necessary to live. It mainly refers to elementary education, lower secondary education (equivalent to Japanese junior high schools), pre-school education, and adult literacy education.

were trained. At the Global Education Summit held in July 2021, Japan pledged to contribute more than \$1.5 billion over five years from 2021 to 2025 to support the education sector, including continued support for GPE, as well as the support for the education and human resources development of 7.5 million girls in developing countries. More than 1.25 million girls were supported over the two-year period from FY2021 to FY2022, and Japan will continue to provide support going forward. Furthermore, Japan announced that it would make a new contribution to the Education Cannot Wait (ECW)* fund to ensure that Ukrainian children could learn in a safer environment.

At TICAD 8 held in August 2022, as an initiative in the field of education (human resources development including youth and women) for Africa, Japan expressed that it would help improve children's learning by promoting school enrollment, improving inclusiveness, and providing school meals. Japan also announced that, through these efforts, it aims to eventually provide quality education, including STEM⁷⁶ education, to 9 million children and improve access to quality education for 4 million girls. In addition, Japan announced that it would work to develop highly-skilled human resources through human resources development and acceptance of students from Africa under the Japan-Africa university network, and would promote research cooperation in the field of science and technology.

Specifically, Japan has implemented the "School for All"⁷⁷ project since 2004, which aims to build relationships of trust between schools, parents and guardians, and local residents, as well as to improve the education environment for children, particularly in West African countries. In cooperation with the World Bank, GPE, and others, Japan works to expand the project throughout each targeted country, and by October 2022, approximately 70,000 primary and secondary schools in nine countries have introduced the project. Japan also cooperates with more than 20 Japanese universities, establishing a university network based at the Egypt-Japan University of Science and Technology (E-JUST) in Egypt and the Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology (JKUAT)/PAU Institute of Basic Sciences, Technology and Innovation (PAUSTI) in Kenya. By strengthening collaboration in education, research, and industry-academia collaboration, Japan aims to resolve social issues in the entire African region through research cooperation.

In addition, with regard to Africa, Japan has provided specialized education and internship opportunities in Japan for African youth through the "African Business



A JOCV working to improve the quality of primary education in Djibouti City (Photo: JICA)

Education Initiative for Youth (ABE Initiative).” To date, Japan has worked to develop human resources who will be the backbone of Africa's future, with over 6,700 young people involved. (see Part V, Section 1 (6) on page 139 and Part V, Section 2 (2) A on page 143 regarding the ABE Initiative).

In the Asia-Pacific region, Japan provides assistance for initiatives toward the achievement of SDG 4. It includes support for organizing the “Asia-Pacific Meeting on Education 2030 (APMED2030)” through the contribution to a funds-in-trust within the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), as well as support for improvement of education quality, enhancement of early childhood education, spread of non-formal education, and improvement of teachers' teaching skills. Moreover, Japan supports human resources development in developing countries by engaging in a wide range of efforts such as strengthening networking among higher education institutions between Japan and ASEAN, collaborating with the industrial sector, participating in joint research projects with neighboring countries, and accepting international students to Japanese higher education institutions and other institutions.

■ Promoting Education for Sustainable Development (ESD)

“Education for Sustainable Development*: Towards achieving the SDGs (ESD for 2030)” began in January 2020 with UNESCO as the leading organization. ESD can contribute to the realization of all SDGs by fostering the builders of a sustainable society, and Japan, as the country that proposed ESD, continues not only to engage in the promotion of ESD but also to play a significant

⁷⁶ STEM is an acronym for Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics, and refers collectively to these four fields.

⁷⁷ This is 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.

The University of Tokyo Cooperates on the Design of the Indian Institute of Technology Hyderabad (IITH) – Establishing a Base for the Development of Highly Skilled Human Resources in Science –



A panoramic view of IITH. Among the buildings that the University of Tokyo cooperated in designing, from left: International Guest House, Convention Center, Technology Research Park, Technology Incubation Park, and Knowledge Center (library). (Photo: KAWAZOE Yoshiyuki)

In India, while the labor force is increasing with the population growth, the percentage of people who have received skill training remains at around 10% of the population, causing a shortage of highly skilled human resources required by industry. Human resources development is an urgent issue to promote the manufacturing industry, which requires technological innovation, in order to lead to further job creation. The Government of India provides international-level education and research opportunities through the Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs) founded in 1951, regarding higher education in science and engineering, which is important for developing human resources that support Indian industry. As there was a need for further expansion of the institution in order to meet the human resources needs of the industry, the Government of India requested Japan's cooperation in establishing a new institution of IITs in Hyderabad (IITH). Following the Japan-India Summit Meeting in October 2008, the two countries agreed to cooperate with the aim of establishing a world-class educational institution that would become a symbol of Japan-India cooperation by introducing Japanese-style management and engineering education to India and strengthening human and academic exchanges between the two countries.

Dr. FUJINO Yozo, Professor of the University of Tokyo at the time and the team leader for the IITH design, looks back and says, "Multiple Japanese universities collaborated in the establishment of IITH. I served as a leader on urban engineering in the working group, which was established in response to a request for cooperation from then Prime Minister Singh of India in 2007, consisting of industry, government, and academia officials from both countries, and led the discussion on how Japan could contribute to the establishment of IITH. The University of Tokyo was highly recognized for its design skills, and was asked to cooperate on the design." From 2011, Dr. OHNO Hidetoshi, then professor at the University of Tokyo, and Dr. KAWAZOE Yoshiyuki, associate professor at the same university, joined the team, and the University of Tokyo cooperated in designing a total of six buildings*1 that symbolize IITH, including the Technology Incubation Park, Convention Center, and International Guest House.

During the design process, the team held a total of 15 on-site discussions with the Indian side. Dr. Ohno says, "While incorporating Indian culture and design, such as the distinctive roof shape used in traditional architecture in the Bengal region, we also incorporated elements of traditional Japanese patterns and rock gardens. The pond built in front of the International Guest House is inspired by the Indian stepwell remains, and it contributes to the greening of the campus." Dr. Kawazoe explains, "The University of Tokyo is promoting Japan's design skill overseas, with its plan to implement the College of Design concept, among others. India

stands out in the science field but will benefit from improvements in design skills and quality. I believe that through this cooperation, we were able to convey Japan's design skills. Furthermore, in the cooperation process, we did not simply hand over drawings, but continued discussions through video conferences and other means even during the spread of COVID-19 to ensure the completion of high-quality construction. This demonstrated the typical Japanese attitude of cooperation that conveyed a commitment to quality, going beyond the entrusted drawings to complete the construction with excellence."

Dr. Fujino describes future prospects; "The Technology Incubation Park that Japan was involved in designing has led to industry-academia cooperation, with a Japanese company opening a center for joint research with IITH. On the academic side, although IITH does not have a department comparable to the architecture department of Japanese universities, we as architects plan to give lectures locally as a result of our cooperation in the design." Japan also cooperates with IITH's human resources development. By 2020, 116 students from IITH had studied at Japanese universities using a scholarship provided by JICA through the project for future researchers at IITH (FRIENDSHIP Project), and some of them have joined the faculty at IITH after obtaining their doctorate in Japan. JICA and the Japan External Trade Organization (JETRO) co-sponsored with IITH a total of six career fairs by Japanese companies by 2023, and exchanges among industrial personnel are becoming more active. It is expected that exchanges between Japan and India based at the Hyderabad campus will thrive.



Discussion with the IITH side on site (From right in the photo: Dr. Kawazoe, Dr. Ohno, Dr. Fujino, and then Director of IITH Dr. Desai) (Photo: FUJINO Yozo)

*1 Later, IITH additionally requested the construction of a Technology Research Park with the same design as the Technology Incubation Park, bringing the total number of buildings that Japan has helped design to seven.

role in its global advocacy and enhancement through the funds-in-trust to UNESCO. In addition, through the aforementioned funds-in-trust, Japan actively promotes ESD by implementing the “UNESCO-Japan Prize on

Education for Sustainable Development” together with UNESCO, honoring organizations and institutions that conduct excellent initiatives toward putting ESD into practice. 21 organizations have been awarded to date.



Glossary

Education 2030 Framework for Action (FFA)

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

Global Partnership for Education (GPE)

An international partnership established under the leadership of the World Bank in 2002, which supports the education sector in developing countries. Its members include developing countries, donor countries and organizations, civil societies, and private-sector corporations and foundations. It was renamed GPE from Fast Track Initiative (FTI) in 2011.

Education Cannot Wait (ECW)

A fund established at the World Humanitarian Summit held by the UN in Istanbul in May 2016 with the aim of supporting children and young people in emergency situations, such as conflicts and natural disasters, to enable them to access education.

Education for Sustainable Development (ESD)

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

(6) Gender Mainstreaming and Inclusive Society

It is often the case that the social norms and systems in developing countries are generally shaped by men’s perspectives, which leave women in vulnerable positions in many aspects. On the other hand, women are critical actors in each country’s development, and their participation leads not only to the improvement of their own lives but also to increasing the impact of the development. For example, improving the literacy of women who have had few or no educational opportunities so far increases their access to correct information on public health and prevention of infectious diseases such as HIV/AIDS, and leads to appropriate family planning, which will promote women’s social advancement and economic empowerment. Moreover, it contributes to the sustainable and inclusive economic growth of developing countries.

The “2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (2030 Agenda)” strongly and clearly addresses that “Realizing gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls will make a crucial contribution to progress across all the Goals and targets.” In concrete terms, SDG 5 seeks to “Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.” Gender equality and promoting women’s empowerment are essential for realizing “quality growth.” For this purpose, it is

important that men and women participate equally in all phases of development cooperation and reap the benefits equitably.

Challenges such as poverty, conflicts, infectious diseases, terrorism, and natural disasters have varying impacts depending on the situations that individuals are in, including their country and region, or whether they are women and/or children. As a result of infectious diseases, conflicts, large-scale natural disasters, and other factors, the global population living in poverty is increasing, while in some countries disparities have widened and humanitarian situations have been worsening, which created an even further need for support for people who tend to be in vulnerable situations. The concept of human security, which focuses on the protection and empowerment of each individual, is thus indispensable for the realization of a society that fulfills the principle of the SDGs, “no one will be left behind.”

Japan’s Efforts

■ Promotion of Women’s Empowerment and Participation

In the “Development Strategy for Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment,”⁷⁸ Japan set the following three basic principles: (i) promoting women’s rights, (ii) building the capacity of women to reach their full potentials, and (iii) advancing women’s leadership in political, economic, and other public fields. Based on this

⁷⁸ Thematic policies formulated in 2016 to promote the active participation of women in development cooperation.



Women receiving entrepreneurship training from a JICA expert in Department of Sololá, Guatemala (Photo: JICA)

strategy, Japan advances its efforts in the international community to promote gender mainstreaming,⁷⁹ gender equality, and women's and girls' empowerment.

Japan contributed \$50 million to the Women Entrepreneurs Finance Initiative (We-Fi),⁸⁰ and an additional \$5 million in June 2023. As of June 2023, Japan has supported 149,256 women-owned/led small and medium enterprises (WSMEs) in 67 countries. Specifically, 127,428 WSMEs have received financial assistance while 28,404 received training to acquire the skills and knowledge necessary for management. According to the World Bank, 70% of WSMEs in developing countries are unable to receive financing from financial institutions or are faced with poor borrowing terms. In response to such a situation, through We-Fi, Japan promotes the development of legal systems free from gender discrimination and supports women entrepreneurs in having equal access to financing and markets.

As the G7 Presidency in 2023, Japan led the G7's efforts on gender (see Part I, Section 2 on page 6 for details).

In December, the Gender Equality Advisory Council (GEAC), an external advisory body that provides recommendations on gender equality for G7 leaders, submitted the final report, "Gender Mainstreaming for an Inclusive, Peaceful, and Just Society," which compiled its recommendations to Prime Minister Kishida. In the same month, as a follow-up event of the GEAC and World Assembly for Women (WAW!),⁸¹ Japan hosted the Symposium on GEAC Report 2023 and the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) Panel Discussion under the

theme of "How Japan can contribute to promoting women's participation in international peace and security," where participants consisting of practitioners and high-level members engaged in discussions.

Japan also provides support through UN Women and contributed approximately \$14 million in 2022 and \$21 million in 2023 for promoting political participation and economic empowerment of women, eliminating sexual and gender-based violence against women and girls, enhancing women's role in the peace and security fields, and strengthening gender-responsive policies and budgets. In addition, in 2023, Japan provided emergency assistance and support for ensuring the means of livelihood to women who have been economically and socially affected by conflicts and disasters in Africa, the Middle East, Asia, and Eastern Europe, including Afghanistan and Ukraine. For example, in Pakistan, 60 women community centers were established in the six months from February to August to promote women's independence, with 6,609 women and 1,131 girls using the centers, and 7,000 women were assisted in obtaining identity documents. Furthermore, the centers provided 280 men and community leaders with support to combat gender-based violence and improve their knowledge of gender equality.

Japan considers sexual violence in conflict cannot be tolerated. Therefore, Japan places importance on collaboration with the UN Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual



Women participating in training in Cameroon as part of a project aimed at protecting internally displaced persons from threats such as gender-based violence and strengthening their resilience (Photo: UN Women/Melvin Songwe, United Youth Organization)

⁷⁹ Integrating a gender perspective into all policies, measures, and projects in order to achieve gender equality in every field. In the field of development, it refers to the process of clarifying development challenges, needs, and impacts on both men and women, at every stage of planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation, of all development policies, measures, and projects, based on the premise that they have different impacts on men and women.

⁸⁰ The launch of We-Fi was announced at the G20 Hamburg Summit in 2017. By assisting women entrepreneurs and WSMEs in developing countries to overcome various obstacles they face such as access to finance and legal systems and regulations, this initiative aims to promote the prompt economic independence of women in developing countries and their social and economic participation, and to realize regional stability, reconstruction, and peacebuilding.

⁸¹ An international conference that Japan has held since 2014 as part of its efforts to realize gender equality and women's empowerment, which are among the priority issues for the Government of Japan, both domestically and internationally. It is known as "WAW!" and is an abbreviation for World Assembly for Women.



Internally displaced women in Ethiopia receiving dignity kits (Photo: UNFPA Ethiopia)

Violence in Conflict (OSRSG-SVC).⁸² In 2023, Japan contributed approximately \$1.04 million to the OSRSG-SVC to provide medical and psychological support and support for socio-economic reintegration in Mali to women who have been or are at risk of being victims of conflict-related sexual violence by armed forces.

Japan also contributed an additional €2 million in 2023 to the Global Survivors Fund (GSF),^{*} making it a total of €8 million in contributions so far. Japan, as its board member, actively contributes to supporting survivors of conflict-related sexual violence in conflict-affected areas, including Afghanistan, the Democratic Republic of Congo, and Ukraine.

■ Women, Peace and Security (WPS)

Japan has formulated its National Action Plan since 2015 to implement UN Security Council resolution 1325⁸³ on Women, Peace and Security (WPS), adopted in 2000, which was the first Security Council resolution to explicitly link women to the peace and security agenda, and other relevant resolutions. In April 2023, the Government of Japan formulated the Third Edition of the National Action Plan (2023-2028) based on exchanges of opinions with relevant government 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. In September 2023, Foreign Minister Kamikawa attended the “WPS Focal Points Network⁸⁴ High-Level Side Event” and stated that Japan, as a non-permanent member of the Security Council, will continue to

promote the discussion on WPS as an important agenda of the UN.

In December, Foreign Minister Kamikawa participated in the “Second Global Refugee Forum,” in which Japan served as one of the coconveners and stated that the concept of WPS is essential when considering solutions for refugees and displaced persons (see “ODA Topics” on page 49 for the “Second Global Refugee Forum”).

In January 2024, the Taskforce on Women, Peace and Security (WPS) was established to provide coordination across the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA).

In terms of the G7 framework, under the G7 WPS⁸⁵ Partnership Initiative (2018), Japan has assisted its partner country of Sri Lanka since 2019. Japan provides assistance for the formulation of its WPS Action Plan and for women’s financial empowerment, including for the households of widows who are left behind after the 26-year internal conflict, as a project for the implementation of the country’s Action Plan. The livelihood support provided by this partnership is appreciated by the Government of Sri Lanka as a catalyst for economic recovery as well as a contribution to peace building and reconstruction in the region (see “ODA Topics” on page 152 for the documentary videos produced by MOFA that focus on “Japanese Women Delivering Hope in a World of Uncertainty”).

■ Assistance for People who Tend to be in Vulnerable Situations (Disability and Development)

Persons with disabilities are often placed in difficult situations in society. Japan’s ODA pays due attention



Foreign Minister Kamikawa delivering a statement at the “WPS Focal Points Network High-Level Side Event” in September 2023

⁸² See also MOFA’s website (https://www.mofa.go.jp/fp/hr_ha/page23e_000466.html) for Japan’s efforts regarding the prevention of sexual violence in conflict.

⁸³ 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 state that equal participation of women, protection from sexual violence in conflict, and gender equality are necessary for international peace, conflict prevention, and conflict resolution.

⁸⁴ The largest network on WPS among UN member states 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) also participate. As of September 2023, a total of 100 members from 90 countries and 10 regional organizations participate in the network.

⁸⁵ G7 WPS is an abbreviation for G7 Women, Peace and Security.

to the situation of people who are denied equal participation in society, including persons with disabilities. Article 32 of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities⁸⁶ stipulates that States Parties would undertake measures for international cooperation and its promotion.

Policies for persons with disabilities cover a number of different areas, such as welfare, health and medical care, education, and employment. Japan applies its accumulated expertise and experiences in these areas to support developing countries in implementing measures and policies on disability through ODA and NGO activities.

For example, Japan takes a thorough hands-on approach to suit various local needs, such as by incorporating accessible design in the planning of railroad and airport construction, developing vocational training centers and rehabilitation facilities (for people with disabilities), and providing minibuses as transportation for persons with disabilities. Additionally, Japan provides a wide range of technical cooperation through JICA to enhance the capacity of organizations and personnel engaged in the field of assisting persons with disabilities and development. These efforts include the acceptance of trainees from developing countries and the dispatch of JOCVs and experts who aim to promote social participation and employment (see “Featured Project” on page 86 regarding the assistance for children with disabilities in Kenya. In addition, see “Featured Project” on page 57 for efforts on elections in Timor-Leste).

(Assistance for Children)

Generally, children tend to be in vulnerable situations. Today, there are many children around the world placed in harsh environments due to the aftereffects of the COVID-19 pandemic in addition to conflicts, natural disasters, etc. In response to this situation, Japan provides a variety of humanitarian and development cooperation for children bilaterally and through international organizations. In 2023, through the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), Japan provided assistance for children being affected by poverty, conflict, increasing natural disasters due to climate change, persistent COVID-19, and other factors in 40 countries mainly in Asia, Oceania, Eastern Europe, the Middle East, and Africa.

Under the Grant Assistance for Grass-Roots Human Security Projects,⁸⁷ which supports grass-roots level economic and social development initiatives, Japan implements projects that contribute to improving children’s living conditions, such as the construction and refurbishment of schools, provision of medical equipment



A JOCV working with students with intellectual disabilities at a special-needs school in Bolivia (Photo: JICA)

to hospitals, and development of water supply facilities.

For example, in Thailand, Japan supported procuring vehicles at a children’s home in Kanchanaburi Province. This will enable safe and efficient transportation of the children cared for at the children’s home to school, hospitals, and other places, and is expected to improve the children’s living and educational environment.

In Uruguay, Japan provided assistance to improve after-school club facilities for primary, junior and senior high school students in Treinta y Tres Department. It is expected to provide nutritious meals and an appropriate learning environment for the children attending the schools, and also help alleviate the problem of children on waiting lists.

(Support for People in Conflict Situations)

It is also important to note that in times of conflict, those in difficult social positions, including persons with disabilities and children, are the most susceptible to the situation. Socially vulnerable people, such as the rapidly increasing number of child refugees and displaced persons, in addition to persons with disabilities caused by conflict or landmines, orphans, widows, and ex-combatants, including child soldiers, are susceptible to the impact of a conflict. However, the reality remains that assistance for them is delayed in post-conflict recovery and they have difficulty accessing the benefits of peace and reconstruction.

From this perspective, Japan provides support for the social reintegration of child soldiers and the protection and empowerment of children who are the most vulnerable in conflict-affected areas, through UNICEF. For example, Japan supports the social reintegration of former child soldiers in the Democratic Republic of the

⁸⁶ A convention that stipulates measures to realize the rights of persons with disabilities, with the aim of ensuring that persons with disabilities can enjoy human rights and fundamental freedoms and promoting respect for the inherent dignity of persons with disabilities. Japan ratified the Convention in 2014.

⁸⁷ Based on the concept of human security, this is a type of grant aid (with a maximum grant amount of ¥10 million in principle) that provides the necessary funds for relatively small-scale projects with the aim of socio-economic development in developing countries. The grant aid directly contributes to the residents of those countries. The recipients of the funds include local NGOs, local public entities, and other organizations. See MOFA’s website on the details of the program and past achievements (<https://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/gaiko/oda/files/000071826.pdf>).



Students at an elementary school in the village of Harbasa Bani Hares in Palestine taking a class in a spacious environment.



Japanese experts discussing ways to improve services at the only tertiary pediatric hospital with hospital staff members in Sierra Leone (Photo: Asuka World Consultants)

Congo and Iraq, the protection of children separated from their families in Afghanistan and Somalia, explosives risk reduction education in Myanmar, the protection of children and women who are victims of sexual violence in Ethiopia and Mali, and mental health care for children in Ukraine.

Through the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), Japan carries out protection activities for refugees and displaced persons, as well as providing humanitarian assistance tailored to

the needs of those particularly likely to be in vulnerable situations. For example, in Uganda, Japan provides psychosocial support to children in refugee settlements to protect them from violence, abuse, and exploitation. In Ukraine, Japan provides daily necessities, shelter support, legal assistance, etc., to vulnerable people, such as elderly people who have lost their homes due to war and female-headed households (see “Featured Project” on page 133 for support for refugee children through NGOs in refugee camps).



Glossary

Global Survivors Fund (GSF)

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

(7) Culture and Sports

Cultural heritage that is symbolic of a country can be effectively utilized to improve the livelihoods of the residents in the surrounding areas, including employment creation in the region, if it is developed as a tourism resource. Cultural heritage that attracts tourists from abroad could also be an important source of foreign currency for a country's economy. On the other hand, a large number of cultural heritage sites are in danger due to the lack of funds, equipment, and technology among others, and hence assistance to protect such cultural heritage sites is required. The World Heritage Convention,⁸⁸ an international framework for protecting buildings and other structures of universal value in the world as the “common heritage

of mankind,” states that the protection of such heritage and international cooperation for that is the duty of the international community as a whole. The preservation and promotion of culture, including the invaluable cultural heritage in developing countries, should be addressed not only by the countries with cultural heritage in danger, but also by the entire international community.

Sports can not only help maintain and improve health but are also viewed as a means of education, which is important for “investment in people” to promote “human security.” Sports also contribute to cultivating a sense of respect for others, a spirit of mutual understanding, and normative consciousness, and the influence and positive power of sports play a role as a “catalyst” for the development and growth of developing countries.

⁸⁸ The official name of the convention is the “Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage.” The objective of the Convention is to establish a system of international cooperation and assistance in order to preserve and protect cultural and natural heritage from threat of damage or destruction as World Heritage of humankind as a whole. It was adopted by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) General Conference in 1972 and became effective in 1975. Japan became a State Party to the Convention in 1992.

Featured Project



Aiming for an Inclusive Society

Project for the Construction of a Comprehensive Care Centre for Children with Special Needs

Grant Assistance for Grass-Roots Human Security Project (August 2021 – October 2022)

Kenya



In Kenya, only a limited number of facilities provide medical care, rehabilitation, education, and social support for children with special needs. Many of them and their families tend to be isolated from society without a place to belong. Families whose children have disabilities and who do not receive support services are often unable to participate in society as they tend to be preoccupied with childcare. It is not uncommon for overwork and prejudice from those around them to lead the family to break up. Against this backdrop, Dr. KUMON Kazuko, a Japanese doctor, established a non-governmental organization named the Garden of Siloam in 2015, and started providing medical and rehabilitation day-care services at low cost, primarily for children with special needs associated with autism and cerebral palsy. However, the number of users increased to the point of exceeding its capacity. The facility tended to get overcrowded, and the organization began facing challenges such as a deterioration in the quality of medical services and the sanitary environment. At the same time, there were still many children waiting for admission. Thus, expanding the facility became an urgent issue.

Through a Grant Assistance for Grass-Roots Human Security Project,^{*1} Japan supported the construction of a comprehensive care center equipped with sufficient sanitary facilities to provide appropriate medical and rehabilitation services to children with



A child user and staff members at the facility that was expanded through assistance from the Government of Japan (Photo: The Garden of Siloam (CHIBA Yasuyoshi))

special needs. The facility is equipped with a consultation room, a rehabilitation room, a social worker's office, and a toilet for children with disabilities.

With the facility expanded through this project, the Garden of Siloam is now able to accommodate more children with special needs who live in the community. It can fully provide medical and rehabilitation services in an appropriate environment that ensures accessibility and safety. The improved facility and equipment have made it possible for the organization to provide an increased number of activity options. As a result, social and economic self-reliance are promoted for the families who were previously unable to participate in society due to caring for children with special needs.

Japan will continue to support sustainable development with various partners, promoting the self-reliance and social participation of local residents, with the aim of realizing diverse and inclusive societies in which all people can participate in and benefit from development.



Dr. Kumon communicating with a child user of the facility (Photo: The Garden of Siloam (CHIBA Yasuyoshi))

^{*1} See 87 on page 84.

Japan's Efforts

Japan has provided assistance for the promotion of culture, including sports, higher education, and preservation of cultural heritage in developing countries through the Cultural Grant Assistance* since 1975. Facilities constructed with such assistance also serve as hubs for spreading information about Japan and for cultural exchanges with Japan, contributing to a deeper understanding of Japan and fostering a sense of affinity toward Japan. In 2023, Japan implemented 20 projects that support education, including Japanese language education, cultural heritage preservation, and sports under the Cultural Grant Assistance.

Moreover, Japan provides support for the restoration and preservation of cultural heritage, including equipment provision and preliminary studies and

surveys, through the "Japanese Funds-in-Trust" established in the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). Japan contributed approximately ¥600 million in FY2023 and has implemented multiple projects in the field of cultural heritage through the fund. In Japan's assistance, a particular emphasis is put on human resources development in developing countries so that they themselves can preserve their own cultural heritage in the future. To this end, Japan endeavors to dispatch international experts, mainly Japanese experts, as well as hold workshops in order to transfer the techniques and expertise to developing countries. In addition to the support for tangible cultural heritage, Japan also supports the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage such as traditional dances, music,

handcraft techniques, and oral lore (oral traditions) through successor training, records conservation, and creation of safeguard mechanisms under the Japanese Funds-in-Trust.

Japan also conducts training programs with the aim of improving the capacities to protect cultural heritage by inviting young experts engaged in cultural heritage protection from the Asia-Pacific region to Japan 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.” In addition, Japan conducts biennial training on maintenance and repair methods for wooden buildings and on survey records of archeological remains. In 2023, Japan conducted online training on recording, preserving, and exhibiting archaeological remains using digital technology for experts in the Central Asian region (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan).

In the field of sports, Japan has been continuously promoting “Sport for Tomorrow,”⁸⁹ an international contribution program that was launched in 2014 to raise momentum for the Tokyo 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games, even after the Games ended. This program aims to extensively implement initiatives that demonstrate Japan’s presence by engaging in international exchange and cooperation through sports, and contribute to the SDGs through international cooperation projects in the field of sports that leverage Japan’s strengths. In



A Japanese teacher giving a class that introduces Japanese culture at Xokkham Elementary School in Laos, as part of the Study Tour Program for Teachers, in which teachers working on development education are dispatched to development cooperation sites with the aim of utilizing what they have learned in the program in their classes after returning home (Photo: JICA)

2023, Japan dispatched a total of 105 Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers (JOCVs) in the field of sports to developing countries. Moreover, Japan provides sports-related facilities and equipment, dispatches and invites coaches and athletes, and conducts projects in the field of sports that involve the provision of technical cooperation, introductions to Japanese culture, and human resources development.⁹⁰



Glossary

Cultural Grant Assistance

Cultural Grant Assistance is a grant aid to procure equipment and supplies and to construct and rehabilitate facilities for the promotion of culture (including sports) and higher education as well as for the preservation of cultural heritage in developing countries. It aims to promote friendly relationships and mutual understanding by encouraging cultural and educational advancements in developing countries as well as cultural exchanges between Japan and the recipient countries through such assistance. There are two modalities; “Cultural Grant Assistance,” which provides assistance to governmental organizations of developing countries, and “Grant Assistance for Cultural Grassroots Projects,” which provides assistance to NGOs and local public entities for small-scale projects.

⁸⁹ Sport for Tomorrow website: <https://www.sport4tomorrow.jpnsport.go.jp/>

⁹⁰ MOFA’s sports diplomacy initiatives: <https://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/culture/people/sports/index.html>

Promotion of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) – Japan’s Efforts at the Midpoint Year toward Achieving the SDGs –

The international community is at history’s turning point and facing compound crises. These include poverty and disparity, war and conflict, terrorism, refugees and displaced persons, infectious diseases, natural disasters, climate change, and environmental issues.

The spread of COVID-19, Russia’s aggression against Ukraine, and the escalating tension in the situation between Israel and Palestine, among others, reiterate that these global issues closely link to interrelated and compound risks of food and energy security and hit vulnerable people harder, threatening their human security.

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs),*¹ adopted by the UN in September 2015, are the agenda for the entire international community to tackle global issues in an integrated manner, including peace, the rule of law, and human rights, leaving no one behind. Japan, as a peace-loving nation and a responsible major power, is in a position to lead international cooperation, including for the SDGs, based on the concept of “human security.” In line with these views, Japan will continue to work to address and prevent interrelated and compound risks and contribute to the achievement of the SDGs by the international community.



Achieving the SDGs requires cooperation within the international community beyond the conventional concept of developed and developing countries. It also requires action not only by governments and development agencies, but by all stakeholders, including private companies, local public entities, research institutions, civil society, and individuals. The Government of Japan provides multifaceted support by linking various initiatives using ODA as a catalyst and taking a deep approach so that the entire international community, including developing countries, can achieve the SDGs.

The Government of Japan actively works on achieving the SDGs both in Japan and abroad. It established the SDGs Promotion Headquarters, with the Prime Minister as its head and all the Cabinet Ministers as its members, and formulated the “SDGs Implementation Guiding Principles,” which sets the direction for the promotion of the SDGs.



Prime Minister Kishida delivering a statement at the SDG Summit 2023
(Photo: Cabinet Public Relations Office)

While 2023 marked the “midpoint” toward achieving the SDGs by 2030, their achievement is in jeopardy as the international community faces compound crises. Amid such a difficult situation, at the “Summit for a New Global Financing Pact” held in June 2023, then Foreign Minister Hayashi emphasized the importance of three forms of solidarity: “solidarity with the private sector,” “solidarity in financing,” and “solidarity for ownership.” At the SDG Summit*² in September, Prime Minister Kishida reiterated that, with the international community facing various challenges, now is the time to return to the starting point of the SDGs: the promise to “Leave No One Behind.” He then emphasized that “human security,” which Japan has consistently advocated, is a key to achieving the SDGs based on “human dignity,” expressing Japan’s determination to strongly lead the international community’s efforts to achieve the SDGs and thereby open the way to the future. Additionally, in December, Japan revised the “SDGs Implementation Guiding Principles” to better align them with the challenges of the new era. Based on the revised new Implementation Guiding Principles, Japan will continue to work toward achieving the SDGs with the international community as a whole, while strengthening collaboration with various domestic and international actors.

*1 See the glossary on page 32.

*2 The SDG Summit is held every four years under the auspices of the UN General Assembly with the aim of accelerating the implementation of the SDGs. In 2023, it was convened on September 18 and 19, and Prime Minister Kishida participated in the Leader’s Dialogue “Unity and Solidarity” on September 19.