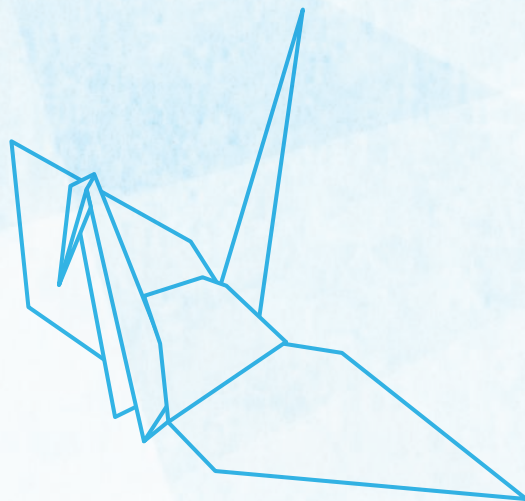


Chapter 4

EVALUATION OF JAPAN'S VISION AND INITIATIVES TOWARDS ACHIEVING SDGS



4. Evaluation of Japan's vision and initiatives towards achieving SDGs

To achieve the SDGs, Japan has been accelerating efforts to build a recycling-oriented and resilient economic and social system as a foundation for simultaneously realizing stable energy supply, economic growth, and decarbonization under the SDGs principle of “Leave No One Behind.” Among them, Japan has made progress on various initiatives that sought to achieve sustainable growth through the resolution of social issues by utilizing innovation.

(1) The general situation surrounding SDGs and Japan's vision for achieving SDGs

Even between 2021, when Japan conducted the previous VNR, to 2025, global issues that commonly threaten humanity, such as climate change, biodiversity loss, environmental pollution, international health challenges that include infectious diseases, and poverty, are continuing to pile up. In particular, the severity of the effects of climate change has become even more dire. This is evident by the extreme weather phenomena and natural disasters such as extreme heats, heavy rains, floods, droughts, and wildfires, which have intensified and have become more frequent in recent years. Furthermore, against the backdrop of Russia's invasion of Ukraine, still more crises such as food and energy shortages, increase in refugees including internally displaced persons, and humanitarian crises are being fomented and increasing in seriousness. 2023 marked the halfway point to the deadline of achieving the SDGs for the international community but as divisions and conflicts in the international community worsen, international cooperation for the achievement of the SDGs is faced with some major difficulties.

While the international community is confronted with such complex crises, the focus is once again on human dignity as a common starting point for all humankind. No one can doubt that rather than division and confrontation, human life and dignity are of utmost importance to lead the world towards cooperation. Moreover, armed conflicts such as those in the Ukraine and the Middle East are causing serious harm particularly to women and girls. While working to protect and provide relief for women and girls, there is focus once again on the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda. This agenda recognizes that when women themselves play a leadership role in conflict prevention, reconstruction, and peace-building, it brings us closer to a sustainable peace.

In Japan too, the impacts of climate change are becoming increasingly evident. On the one hand, there is an increase in record-breaking days of extremely hot weather and a decrease in rainfall days while at the same time, unprecedented torrential rains occur more frequently. The impact of the novel coronavirus pandemic is also fresh in our memories. Russia's invasion of Ukraine and the situation in Gaza are felt through rises in energy prices and have impacted our lives financially in no small amount.

Furthermore, in Japan, which has one of the lowest birthrates and the fastest aging societies in the world, the population aged 75 and over is expected to reach approximately 18% of the total population in 2025. Combined with the start of a super-aging society, the overconcentration in Tokyo has made the situation in regional areas even more difficult.

Under these circumstances, since the adoption of the 2030 Agenda, the state of economic and social activities of the entire international community, including Japan, is rapidly and drastically changing. This change spans from people's awareness and lifestyles to industrial structures and financial flows and is a result of the various initiatives and efforts to form rules by various stakeholders both domestically and internationally.

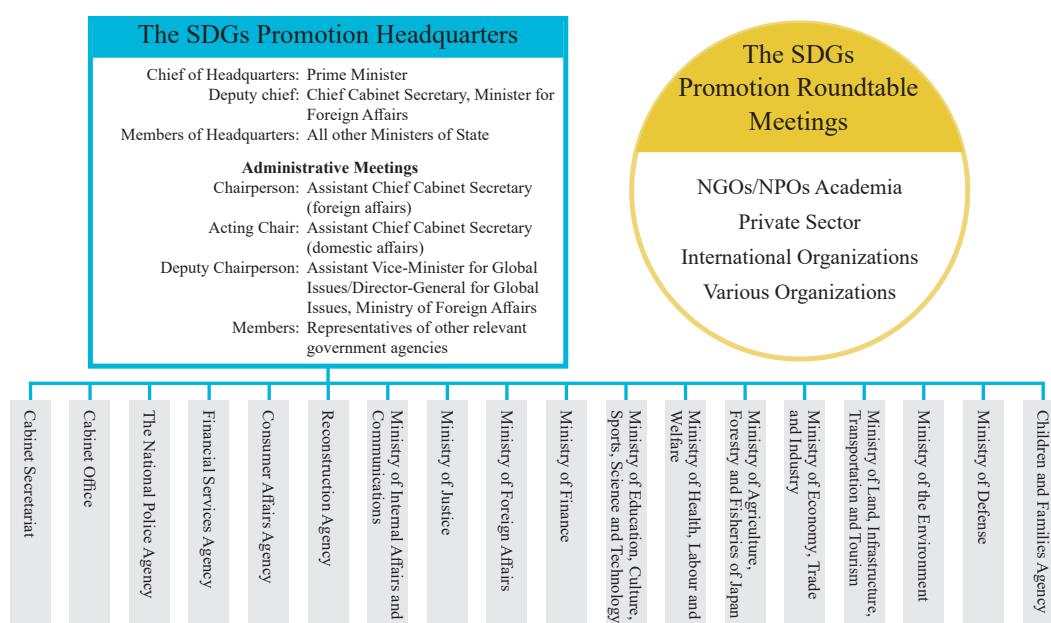
Given this situation, Japan revised the SDGs Implementation Guiding Principles in December 2023 while still keeping the fundamental ideas of the guiding principles to date. Based on these guiding principles, Japan has made efforts to build a diverse and inclusive society, with careful consideration to ensure that respect for human rights and gender equality are realized across all goals.

Also, Japan has reinforced its efforts towards the achievements of the SDGs so as to realize Japan's own sustainable growth and prosperity as well as strengthen its international competitiveness through the resolution of social challenges that leverages innovation.

Additionally, Japan has further contributed towards efforts to achieve the SDGs for the international community in the most effective manner.

(2) SDGs implementation framework and efforts to raise domestic awareness

Japan as a whole has put forth the effort towards the achievement of the SDGs, and its strength is the widespread awareness regarding the SDGs and the active involvement of diverse stakeholders with varying perspectives towards the achievement of the SDGs (see “6. Evaluation and Initiatives of Each Stakeholder” below for the efforts of various stakeholders).



Since the 2030 agenda was adopted in 2015, Japan has made efforts both in the public and private sectors for the promotion of SDGs. In 2016, an SDGs Promotion Headquarters was established, headed

by the Prime Minister with the Chief Cabinet Secretary and Minister of Foreign Affairs as deputy chiefs and all ministers of state serving as members. An SDGs Promotion Roundtable Meeting was also established made up of a wide range of participants from NGOs, NPOs, academia, the private sector, etc.

(Japan SDGs Award)

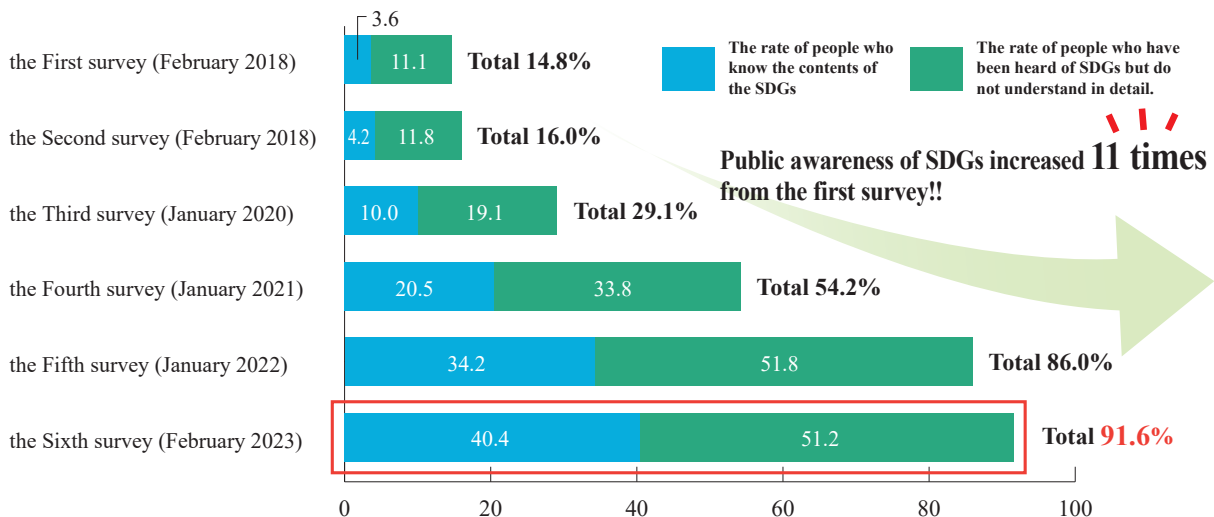
The “Japan SDGs Award” is an award system established in 2017 to promote nationwide efforts towards the achievement of the SDGs by striving to make SDGs mainstream domestically and promoting the efforts of companies and organizations. Since then, in addition to the Japan SDGs Award, SDGs-related sector-specific and issue-specific award programs were also implemented, sponsored by the relevant ministries and agencies. Because of the results of such efforts, public awareness of the SDGs domestically reached approximately 90% in 2023 compared to about 50% in 2021 when the survey was taken for the previous VNR. This shows that Japan’s efforts to achieve the SDGs have also progressed greatly.

Public awareness of SDGs in Japan

Best on record

91.6%

The number of people who answered that they knew the contents of the SDGs increased **about 11 times** from the first survey conducted in February 2018.



Data; The 6th "Survey on SDGs" (Dentsu Team SDGs)

The “Japan SDGs Award” has been held three times since the previous VNR in 2021. In determining the recipients of the awards, the selection process was based on opinions of the selection committee composed of members of the SDGs Promotion Roundtable.

At the 5th “Japan SDGs Award” held in 2021, Euglena Co., Ltd. was awarded the Chief’s Award by the Prime Minister. The company cultivates high-quality mung beans that enables poor famers in developing countries to increase income and also provides food assistance to refugees, thereby simultaneously solving two issues.



Euglena Co. Ltd. being awarded the Chief’s Award by the Prime Minister t the 5th “Japan SDGs Award” (Photo: Cabinet Public Affairs Office)



Agricultural support for refugees from Rakhine State, Myanmar. (Photo: Euglena Co. Ltd)

In 2022, at the 6th “Japan’s SDGs Award” ceremony, the specified nonprofit corporation Action against Child Exploitation (ACE) received the Chief’s Award for its work towards the abolishment and prevention of child labor. ACE, through cooperation with private companies, implements education support and self-reliance support to poor families.



Action Against Child Exploitation (ACE) being awarded the Chief’s Award by the Prime Minister t the 6th “Japan SDGs Award” (Photo: Cabinet Public Affairs Office)

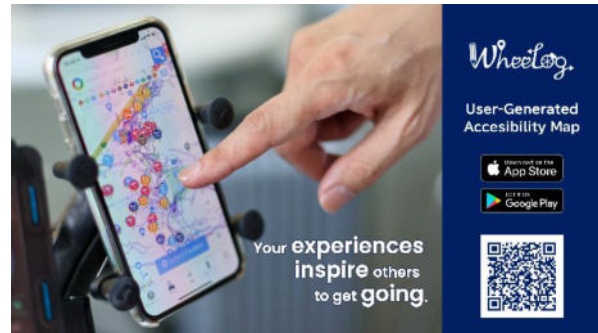


ACE’s original workshop materials (Photo: Child Exploitation (ACE))

The “Japan’s SDGs Award” at the 7th ceremony in 2023 was given to the NPO corporation WheelLog which develops and operates a barrier-free map application based its mission to “promote a society where wheelchair users and people with mobility challenges can fully enjoy their lives”.



the NPO corporation WheelLog being awarded the Chief’s Award
by the Prime Minister at the 6th “Japan SDGs Award”
(Photo: Cabinet Public Affairs Office)



Introduction about application program “WheelLog!”
(Photo: the NPO corporation WheelLog)

Since its establishment seven years ago, the “Japan SDGs Award” has contributed to making SDGs mainstream domestically and have promoted the initiatives of companies and organizations. Having accomplished the significance of the policy defined at the time of establishment, the “Japan SDGs Award” was brought to an end. Japan will continue its nation-wide efforts to achieve the SDGs through various sector-specific and issue-specific SDGs-related award programs implemented by the respective ministries and agencies.

SDGs-Related Award Programs Sponsored by Ministries and Agencies

Japan Medical Research and Development Award	Food Loss and Waste Reduction Promotion Award	Green Infrastructure Award	Discover Muranotakara (Discover Countryside Treasures In Japan) Award	JICA International Cooperation Award
Regional Revitalization SDGs Finance Award	Senryu (satirical poem) Verse Competition toward Zero Food Loss and Waste!	Ministry of the Environment Goodlife Award	Noufuku (agriculture and welfare collaboration) Award	“STI for SDGs” Award
Women's Challenge Award	Commendation by the Minister of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology for Support for Lifelong Learning of Persons with Disabilities	ESG Finance Award Japan	Sustainability Award	NITS Award
Monodzukuri (manufacturing) Nippon Grand Award	Let's Extend Healthy Life Expectancy! Award	Minister of the Environment Awards for Climate Action	Forest x ACT Challenge	Japan Venture Awards (JVA)

(Domestic Public Opinion Survey on Diplomacy)

In February 2025, as part of a domestic public opinion survey on diplomacy, the Japanese government conducted a survey asking the question “Achieving the sustainable development goals (SDGs) adopted by the United Nations in 2015 by 2030 is an international goal. Of the initiatives that address global issues, what do you think are Japan’s strengths?” (multiple answers allowed). The survey was conducted by telephone on 1,000 men and women aged 18 and over, living in the 47 prefectures nationwide. According to the survey, responses showed that Japan’s strengths in achieving the SDGs were in the areas of water and sanitation (58.8%) first, followed by education (40.4%) in second place, and disaster prevention in third place (39.2%).

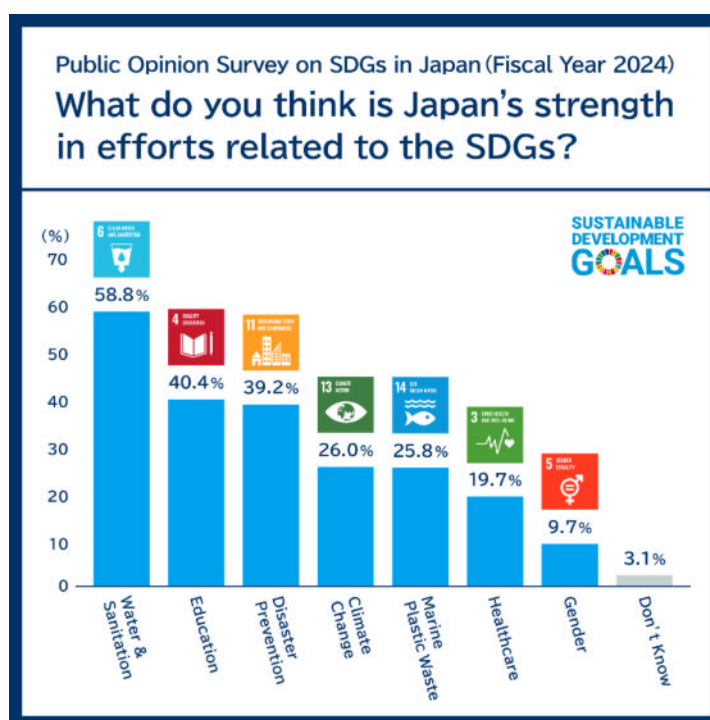


Figure: Ministry of Foreign Affairs

(SDGs Implementation Guiding Principles and SDGs Action Plan)

Japan established the SDGs Implementation Guiding Principles as its mid- to long-term national strategy for achieving the SDGs and formulated an SDGs Action Plan with specific Japanese government policies from 2017.

As for the Action Plan, a meeting of the SDGs Promotion Headquarters was held in December 2021, and the “SDGs Action Plan 2022” was adopted. Amidst doubts regarding the progress of SDGs achievement due to the spread of the novel COVID-19, the meeting indicated the need to accelerate initiatives by building a strategy that was not bound by precedents and work together. Various policies were also decided under the philosophy of “creating a new society where every person can feel their purpose in life”, beginning with the urgent and highest priority issue of responding to the COVID-19 pandemic. In March 2023, the 13th meeting of the SDGs Promotion Headquarters was held during

which the “SDGs Action Plan 2023” was decided. This action plan took into consideration the G7 Hiroshima Summit in May and the SDG Summit in September held in the same year and resolved to accelerate initiatives towards the achievement of SDGs by establishing a sustainable economic and social system that “leaves no one behind” under the “New Form of Capitalism” set forth as economic policy.

The SDGs Implementation Guiding Principles are basically to be reviewed every 4 years or if necessary. To revise the implementation guiding principles in 2023, a “partnership conference of the SDGs Implementation Guiding Principles” was held in 2022 under the leadership of the SDGs Promotion Roundtable members. In this meeting, opinions from a wide range of stakeholders were collected and recommendations were formulated for revisions to the Implementation Guiding Principles and these recommendations were handed over to Prime Minister Kishida in March 2023.

In May 2023, Japan hosted the G7 Hiroshima Summit and led international discussions on the global economy, state of the region, and various global issues. Also at the United Nations General Assembly's SDG summit in September of the same year, Prime Minister Kishida emphasized that while progress towards achieving SDGs has been delayed significantly on a global level, it is necessary to return to the origin of the SDGs, “Leave No One Behind”, and aim to realize a world where “human dignity” is protected, and for the entire international community, including Japan, to accelerate efforts to achieve the SDGs.

Based on Japan's efforts to achieve the SDGs in the international community, the government proceeded with a review of the “SDGs Implementation Guiding Principles” which are mid- to long-term national strategies for achieving the SDGs. During the second half of 2023, frequent discussions and opinions were exchanged with members of the SDGs Promotion Roundtable, and public comments were gathered. The 14th meeting of the SDGs Promotion Headquarters was held in December 2023 and taking into consideration the various opinions submitted in the public comment, a decision was made to revise the SDGs Implementation Guiding Principles.

The main message of the revised Implementation Guiding Principles is to build a diverse and inclusive society amidst accelerating population decline, birthrate decline, and a growing aging population while also ensuring Japan's sustainable development and prosperity by leveraging innovation to resolve social issues, and to further contribute to the international community's efforts to achieve the SDGs in the most effective way.

With the spread of SDGs in Japan, in order to ensure the guiding principles are even more action-oriented, the specific priority areas and initiatives for the implementation of the SDGs described in the action plan were highlighted as areas of focus. For 2024 and beyond, the Japanese government's efforts and budgets towards achieving the SDGs are being compiled.

Japan's SDGs Implementation Guiding Principles (Key points of revision①)

1 Purpose of revision

- **Significant changes in social and economic activities globally, including in Japan**, from awareness and lifestyles to industry and finance.
- Despite **facing complex crises and difficulties**, the overarching goal of achieving the SDGs by 2030 remains unchanged.
- Amid population decline and aging, **from the perspective of our sustainable development and prosperity**, Japan must: ① strengthen and accelerate efforts to achieve the SDGs, and ② further contribute to the international community.
- Participation from **various stakeholders**, especially the **younger generation**, is crucial.

2 Current situation

- | | |
|--|---|
| <p>(1) Japan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The principles of the SDGs are important driving forces for Japan's sustainable development and prosperity. → National level: Integration of the SDGs with 'New Capitalism' → Local level: The SDGs are a banner for regional revitalization. Their penetration at the local level is a major feature of Japan. → Business: The direction of achieving the SDGs through business operations is becoming increasingly clear. → Civil society and private sector: Expansion of efforts among a wide range of stakeholders. ● Various issues related to each goal have also been pointed out (such as poverty, gender, and human rights). | <p>(2) International community</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Progress toward the SDGs faces major difficulties, especially in developing countries, with significant disparities in achievement and priorities, particularly concerning funding and debt. ● Integrating solutions for both developed and developing countries to comprehensively advance the SDGs as an international community as a whole is essential. |
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Japan's SDGs Implementation Guiding Principles (Key points of revision②)

3 Guidelines for Implementation

(1) Key Focus

① Building Sustainable Economic and Social Systems

Under the "New Form of Capitalism", establish an economic and social structure that ensures sustainable growth and a sense of security and happiness (including investing in people, promoting GX/DX, impact investing, regional revitalization through SDGs, and the Vision for a Digital Garden City Nation).

② Realizing an Inclusive Society where "No One is Left Behind"

Create an inclusive society where diversity is respected and everyone can contribute their full potential (Child welfare policies, accelerating women's participation, society of mutual coexistence and support, addressing loneliness and isolation, and "Business and Human Rights").

③ Strengthening Efforts on Global Issues

Address **climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution**, and promote **global health** (net-zero emissions, nature-positive initiatives, regional circular symbiosis, disaster risk reduction, and Universal Health Coverage (UHC)).

④ Collaboration and Cooperation with the International Community

Enhance contributions to achieving the SDGs comprehensively across the international community (new development cooperation framework, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, and action plans related to Women, Peace, and Security (WPCS)).

⑤ Promoting Peace and Sustainable Development Together

A peaceful and stable international environment is a prerequisite for global sustainability. Under the concept of **human security**, promote development cooperation centered on **"human dignity"** while paying attention to the nexus of humanitarian, development and peace efforts.

(2) Implementation Efforts

- Strengthening implementation systems and coordinating stakeholders
- **Voluntary National Review** and leading the initiatives in the international society (**take a leading role in international discussions, including those looking beyond 2030**)

(3) Five priority areas and major initiatives

In the SDGs Implementation Guiding Principles revised in December 2023, the following five priority areas were raised, keeping in mind the interrelationships between the objectives of each SDG.

- (i) Establishment of sustainable economic and social systems
- (ii) Realization of an inclusive society where “no one is left behind”
- (iii) Strengthen efforts to address major global issues
- (iv) Cooperation and collaboration with the international community
- (v) Sustaining peace and promoting sustainable development in an integrated manner

The following reviews the accomplishments of the major initiatives for each of the above five priority areas, based on the 5P (People, Planet, Prosperity, Peace, and Partnership as stated in the 2030 Agenda) and 8 Priority Areas (1. Realization of gender equality and a society where every person can play an active role and gender equality; 2. Achievement of good health and longevity; 3. Creating growth markets, revitalization of rural areas, and promoting science technology and innovation; 4. Sustainable and resilient land use, promoting quality infrastructure; 5. Energy efficiency and renewable energy, disaster risk reduction and climate change countermeasures, sound material-cycle society; 6. Conservation of biodiversity, forests, and oceans, and other environments; 7. Achieving peaceful, safe and secure societies; and 8. Strengthening the means and frameworks for the implementation of the SDGs) described in the Implementation Guiding Principles to date and the efforts set forth in the action plan.

Priority Area (i)

Establishment of
sustainable economic
and social systems



Priority Area (i): Establishment of sustainable economic and social systems

In recent years, as Japan's economy and society as a whole undergo a period of major transformation, the rapid introduction of new disclosure standards and indicators based on global issues in the climate change and environment is causing a major impact on corporate activities. Japan also faces a variety of issues as it leads the world in terms of declining birthrate, aging population, and population decline, and this issue is particularly serious in rural areas.

Under these circumstances, Japan has advocated a New Form of Capitalism and through public and private sector collaboration, it has worked to transform social issue resolution into an engine for growth. Efforts by businesses to create a sustainable economy and society have accelerated and innovation is progressing in various fields such as the development of next-generation solar cells (refer below to “5. Status of achievement of each goal”, SDGs’ goal 9). As shown by the increase in fund balance for sustainable finance, initiatives in the financial sector is also making headway. These efforts have progressed steadily, enabling us to completely overcome the deflation that continued for 30 years, and we have now reached a key turning point to determine whether people are able to realize a growth-oriented economy.


In fact, the driving force behind economic affluence and strength is people, and Japan has promoted an investment in people which led to a realization of wage increases in 2024, the first time in 33 years since 1991 (refer below to “5. Status of Achievement of Each Goal”, SDG’s goal 8).

Even among local governments that are facing difficult issues, the widespread movement to proactively incorporate efforts aimed at achieving the SDGs as set forth in the guiding principles for issue resolution has resulted in 1,190 municipalities out of 1,788 municipalities nationwide promoting efforts to achieve the SDGs.

(Investing in People)

Due to a “New Form of Capitalism” and to realize a virtuous cycle of growth and distribution, Japan has been Investing in People, the driving force that brings about economic affluence and strength. With green and digital as keywords, the economy and society of Japan as well as the world are undergoing major changes and amidst this environment, Japan has promoted various policies to workers including non-regular workers. In order to strengthen the ability to create new added value and increase distribution to people who create the next growth, beginning in 2022, Japan has provided support on the scale of 400 billion yen (approximately 3.5 billion US dollars¹) over 3 years for capacity development, re-employment, and career advancement support by moving to other companies, .

¹ Calculated by the secretariat based on an exchange rate of 1 US dollar to 133.85 yen in FY2022 (for dollar amounts included by the secretariat, the foreign exchange rate of each fiscal year uses the Tokyo Market Interbank Rates (US dollar/yen, spot, central rate/monthly average) from March of each fiscal year, as announced by the Bank of Japan (FY2016: 1 US dollar/113.01 yen, FY2021: 1 US dollar/ 118.51 yen, FY2022: 1 US dollar/ 133.85 yen, FY2023: 1 US dollar/149.63 yen, FY2024: 1 US dollar/151.96 yen. The same rates apply hereafter))



Various measures have subsequently been taken to strengthen Re-skilling support, amounting to 1 trillion yen (approximately 7.5 billion US dollars) over five years.²

(Transition to a new industrial structure through promotion of GX/DX)

The Japanese government has promoted green transformation (GX) to simultaneously realize stable energy supply, economic growth, and decarbonization, and have carried out initiatives to decarbonize with the basic premise of securing stable energy supply through the maximum introduction of renewable energy and thorough energy conservation, etc.

As part of the policy package for GX, Japan is advancing the realization of the "Pro-Growth Carbon Pricing Concept." This involves gradually implementing carbon pricing measures, including the full-scale operation of an emissions trading system starting in fiscal year 2026 and the introduction of surcharge on fossil fuel supply beginning in fiscal year 2028. These efforts are integrated with a government-led upfront investment support totaling 20 trillion yen (approximately 134 billion US dollars³) over the decade starting from 2023. The aim is to enhance predictability for businesses working towards GX and to achieve over 150 trillion yen (approximately 1 trillion US dollars⁴) in public and private investment.

One research and development example in this effort is the perovskite solar cells which are a new type of solar cells. Compared to the conventional solar cells, the perovskite cells are being developed as the next-generation solar cells for being remarkably lightweight, flexible, and can be made transparent. These solar cells are being used at Expo 2025 Osaka, Kansai and various efforts are being made for its practical application. In addition to this example, Japan is making progress in innovation in various fields.

² Calculated by the secretariat as reference, based on the FY2022 exchange rate of 1 US dollar to 133.85 yen

³ Calculated by the secretariat based on the FY2023 exchange rate of 1 US dollar to 149.65 yen

⁴ Calculated by the secretariat based on the FY2023 exchange rate of 1 US dollar to 149.65 yen



Perovskite solar cells installed at EXPO, Osaka-Kansai Transportation Terminal(Photo: Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry)



Smartwear equipped with a probe and solar cells worn at Expo, Osaka-Kansai

Also, as the aging of the population, decline in birthrate, and decline in population of the regional areas continues to progress, Japan has taken measures to improve the productivity of the society as a whole. By promoting digital transformation (DX) and thorough regulatory reform that includes digital regulation, Japan is promoting social implementation of innovation and technology, creating new added value and services that enable the public and private sectors to maximize the use of data accumulated through digitalization, and the proactive use of new technology and services developed and provided by start-ups, etc. When compared against other countries, Japan has an overwhelming advantage in gathering and accumulating data related to the elderly and disasters. Japan maximizes the use of this data and aim to resolve social issues which is a vital component of our growth strategy. Consequently, by maximizing the digital potential, making efforts to resolve social challenges, and raising the digital competitiveness of Japan as a whole, the government has worked towards creating a sustainable society that continues to grow.

(Efforts Toward the Advancement of a Digital Society)

In September 2021, the Japanese government established the Digital Agency. The mission of the Digital Agency is “Human-friendly digitalization: No one left behind” and it aims to serve as the command center for forming a digital society by building public and private infrastructure for the digital age. Based on the "Priority Plan for the Advancement of a Digital Society," efforts are being made to realize a digital society where all citizens can benefit from digitalization through the creation of citizen-focused services, effective use of data resources, and promotion of digital transformation (DX) across society. This includes utilizing new technologies, including AI and Web3. Notably, as of March 2025, approximately 78% of Japanese citizens possess a My Number card, which is used in various public and private services as a reliable means of identification both in-person and online, enhancing its safety, convenience, and efficiency. Simultaneously, the government is promoting the onlineization of administrative procedures, enabling various applications via smartphones. Specifically, regarding passports, user convenience has been significantly improved. In addition to online application for renewal introduced in March 2023, online applications for new passports had also

become available in all prefectures since late March 2025, with the commencement of linkage with family registry information.

Furthermore, toward the realization of the Digital Garden City Nation Concept, efforts continue to improve the usage environment and infrastructure by eliminating areas without fiber optics, expanding 5G population coverage, establishing communication environments suited to usage needs in non-residential areas, and promoting the development of non-terrestrial networks and data centers.

(Promotion of sustainable finance)

As the importance of social and environmental issues such as climate change, etc. increases, financial efforts to encourage the society to transit to new industrial and social structures and realize a sustainable society (sustainable finance) are progressing. Japan's balance of sustainable finance grew from approximately 56 trillion yen (approximately 500 billion US dollars⁵) in 2016 to approximately 626 trillion yen (approximately 4.12 trillion US dollars) in 2024. ⁶ In an effort to further promote sustainable finance and to improve the disclosure of sustainability information by companies, a new section to the securities reports was created in 2023 to include sustainability-related opinions and initiatives.

Furthermore, discussions are underway to consider the application of domestic standards that are functionally aligned with the sustainability disclosure requirements of the International Sustainability Standards Board (ISSB) for all or some of the companies listed on the Tokyo Stock Exchange Prime Market.

Furthermore, impact investments that intend to realize social or environmental impact while securing certain financial return are growing in Japan and were estimated to be about 11.5 trillion yen (about 77 billion US dollars) in FY2023. However, there is potential for further growth in the future. To promote impact investments, the Basic Guideline on Impact Investment (Impact Finance) was announced in March 2024 to outline the basic elements of impact investment. Additionally, in order to establish financing methods and markets to create such impact, the "Impact Consortium" was launched in November 2023 in which a wide range of public and private stakeholders participate and discuss case studies of regional initiatives and investment methodologies.

In terms of financial and economic education, materials related to sustainable finance is published by the Japan Financial Literacy and Education Corporation (J-FLEC), established in April 2024.

(Ethical consumption and consumer-oriented management)

In order to realize a sustainable society, it is essential for consumers to be aware of the influence they have on their own society and to practice consumption behavior that takes into consideration the

⁵ Calculated by the secretariat based on the FY2016 exchange rate of 1 US dollar to 113.01 yen

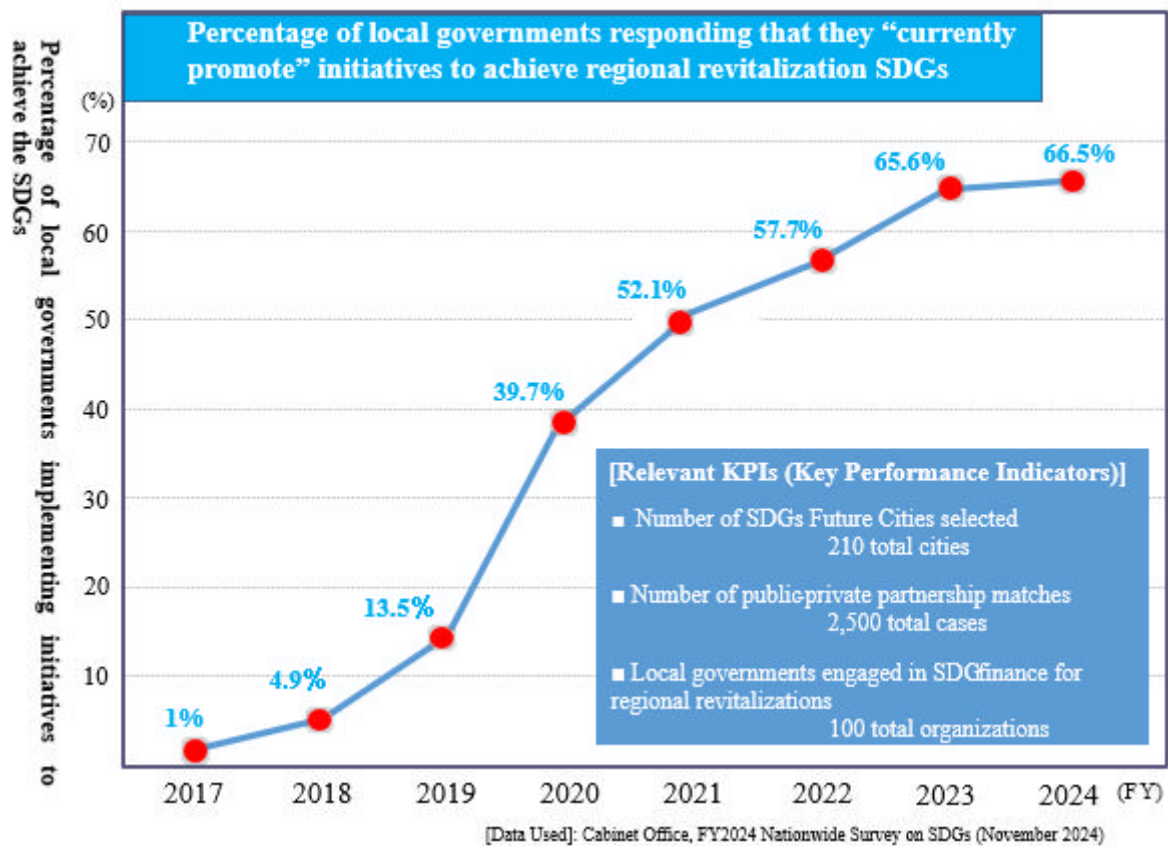
⁶ Calculated by the secretariat based on the FY2024 exchange rate of 1 US dollar to 151.96 yen

people, society, and the environment, including regional revitalization, employment. In other words, “ethical consumption”. Japan has been working on information dissemination using SNS and implementation of experiential workshops to raise awareness of ethical consumption. The Japanese government continue to share information via special websites that introduce leading examples about the huge potential each person has to “change the future of the world” through their consumption behavior.

In order to realize a sustainable society, consumers, businesses, and government must cooperate and collaborate. It is important to have a structure where businesses that are working to solve social issues are being appropriately understood, evaluated, and supported by consumers in the market economy, thereby allowing them to increasing corporate value. The Japanese government is promoting “consumer-oriented management” in which businesses increase social value through management practices that encourages changes in consumer behavior through improved products and services as a result of co-creation and collaboration with consumers. To raise social awareness of initiatives taken by businesses that are based on the idea of consumer-oriented management, the government promotes the voluntary declaration of “consumer orientation and follow up activities,” and has been giving awards to businesses that carry out exceptional efforts related to consumer-oriented management since FY2018.

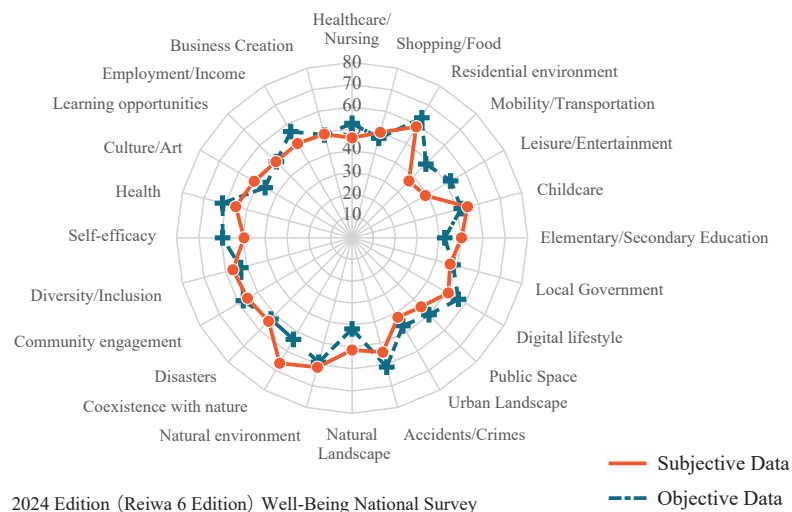
(Regional revitalization SDGs)

Since 2021, Japan has accelerated regional revitalization efforts to date by utilizing the power of digitalization, and has set up the Vision for a “Digital Garden City Nation” which aims to create a “society where everyone can live in convenience and comfort wherever they live in the country”. The comprehensive strategy (2023 revised edition) from this vision outlines the selection of the “SDGs Future Cities” that began in 2018 as an initiative to deepen the regional revitalization nationwide by supporting the efforts of the local governments themselves and sharing success cases. Seven selections have taken place as of FY2024 and a total of 206 cities have been selected as “SDGs Future Cities”. Despite only 1% of local governments implementing SDGs in 2017, a target was set to increase this to 60% by FY2024 and in FY2024, the target of 66.5% was achieved. On the other hand, in smaller local governments, the lack of experience and expertise has become apparent as challenges and barriers to promoting the SDGs. In light of this need, starting in fiscal year 2024, local governments that wish to utilize personnel with experience and knowledge in regional revitalization SDGs will be selected as “Regional Revitalization SDGs Challenge Solving Model Cities.” Measures to promote the dissemination of successful examples are being implemented. Going forward, by publicly sharing the plans and results of local governments that have implemented advanced and experimental solutions to urgent and serious regional issues, efforts will be made to promote regional revitalization and sustainable community development in line with the principles of the SDGs.



To enhance well-being in the community, a "Liveable Well-Being Index" has been introduced to quantify and visualize residents' "livability" and "sense of happiness (well-being)" for use in policy planning and implementation. This indicator is composed of subjective indicators based on surveys of residents and objective indicators using various open data. It is visualized in radar charts for each of the approximately 1,700 municipalities, with a dashboard published on the website. This enables a quick understanding of the characteristics and challenges of each municipality and facilitates the formulation of goals aimed at improving the overall well-being of the region. By establishing a common set of indicators, an environment is created where diverse stakeholders, including industry, government, academia, finance, labor, media, and residents, can collaborate and coordinate to sustainably enhance the well-being of the community.

Categorized



【Source】 2024 Edition (Reiwa 6 Edition) Well-Being National Survey

Additionally, with the aim to promote domestic implementation of the SDGs and further prompt regional revitalization, the SDGs Public-Private Partnership Platform for Regional Development was established in 2018 as a collaborative place for public and private sectors to deepen the partnership between local public bodies and companies, NGOs, NPOs, universities, research institutes, etc. working to resolve regional issues and revitalize the regional economies. As of the end of August 2024, there were 7,732 member organizations, of which 1,176 organizations were local public bodies (67.5% of all local public bodies). The platform provides support to match members with others aiming to achieve SDGs and solve regional issues, and encourages subcommittees to create new value through public-private partnerships and cross-field collaborations on common issues. Our objectives for “public-private matches” were to reach a total of 1,000 matches over the five years from FY2020 to FY2024 and as of the end of January 2025, this has already reached 2,908 matches.

Furthermore, focused support has been provided to regional businesses that proactively work to resolve regional issues and the reinvestment of profits obtained by these regional businesses back into the region creates an “autonomous virtuous cycle”. This cycle is essential and as a first step in forming this “autonomous virtuous cycle”, the government compiled and announced the Regional Revitalization SDGs Registration and Certification System Guidelines for Local Governments in October 2020. Our target for the number of local governments adopting SDGs finance for regional revitalization was 100 organizations for the five years from FY2020 to FY2024, and as of the end of March 2025, there are 102 organizations.

The concept of a “circular and ecological economy” referred to a “self-reliant and decentralized society” where regional issues continued to be resolved by creating enterprises that utilized regional resources to improve the environment, economy, and society (local SDGs enterprises) and where networks were formed that enabled regions to support each other by leveraging their regional characteristics. This concept was further built upon in the Sixth Basic Environmental Plan which sought to practice and implement “new avenues for growth” that bring about well-being and a high quality of life. Through

the “Platform for the Creation of a Circular and Ecological Economy to Revitalize Local Communities from Environmental Aspect” project, the central government has supported a total of 86 regional communities through the creation of an environment that facilitates stakeholder organization, and provided entrepreneurs with the necessary assistance to develop project concepts.

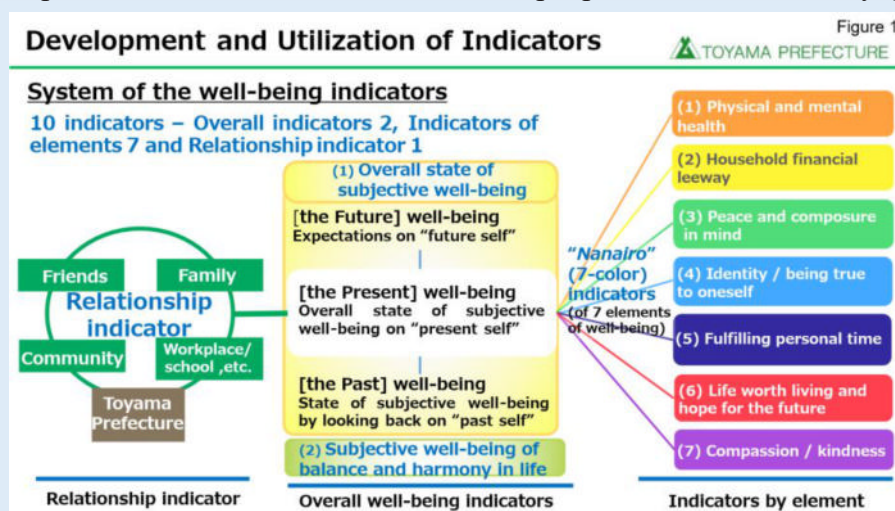
Column 2: Efforts to Create Unique Regional Well-Being Indicators

Cases from Toyama Prefecture

Toyama Prefecture, located in central region along the Sea of Japan, has a population of approximately 990,000 (as of March 2025) and has faced significant challenges due to population decline over the past 25 years. In a happiness survey conducted by a private organization for all 47 prefectures, Toyama ranked highly at third place nationwide based on objective data such as official statistics. However, it ranked low at 39th place based on subjective data from citizen surveys, highlighting a gap between the two evaluations.

Against this backdrop, Toyama Prefecture formulated the "Toyama's Growth Strategies" in February 2022, established with "well-being" as its core, under the awareness that "economic value represented by GDP (Gross domestic product) may not fully capture the 'happiness of the citizens.'" The strategy envisions "A happy greater community of 10 million people -Towards an Advanced Well-being Society in Toyama," aiming for a virtuous cycle where diverse talents gather in Toyama, feel well-being, foster active exchanges, create new industries and values, and further enhance the citizens' well-being alongside economic growth.

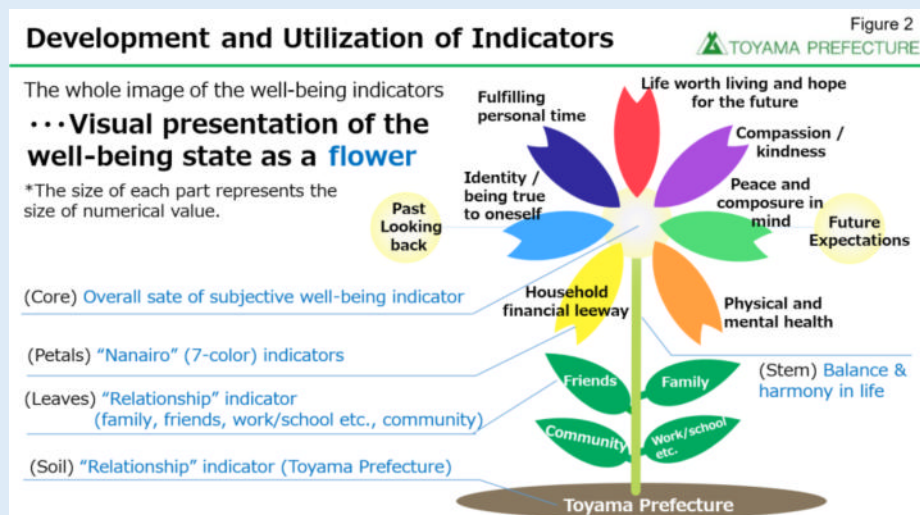
Toyama Prefecture's challenge began with the creation of well-being indicators. To understand the current state of citizens' well-being, the prefectural staff led the efforts to conduct citizen awareness surveys and analyze the results, developing a unique system of indicators. Considering the diversity in well-being that varies such as by age and gender, the indicators were organized into ten categories through correlation and factor analysis, focusing on subjective, multifaceted, and sustainable experiences, as well as connections with people and the community (Figure 1).



Moreover, to make citizens perceive it as relevant to themselves, the overall concept was visually expressed by likening it to flowers growing in the soil of Toyama Prefecture, and efforts were made in public relations and awareness-raising (Figure 2).

As a result of these efforts, the recognition of the term "well-being" among citizens improved from 15.6% in 2021 to 48.3% in 2024. The prefecture also launched a dedicated website on well-being and published a tool that allows individuals to check their well-being in five minutes. Additionally, initiatives such as participatory and experiential activities that inspire citizen awareness, consciousness, and action, as well as public relations and awareness activities through picture books, are being undertaken.


Furthermore, from 2024 onwards, Toyama Prefecture is sharing a "Citizen Awareness Survey Data Dashboard," organized according to this system of indicators, within the prefectural government and utilizing it in policy planning alongside other objective data. The future of Toyama Prefecture's initiative to incorporate subjective data into Evidence-Based Policy Making (EBPM) and aim to form policies that enhance well-being is anticipated. The future of initiatives in Toyama Prefecture looks promising.



(Utilization of science, technology, and innovation, including AI)

Science, technology, and innovation are playing an increasingly important role, particularly in identifying and addressing both issues in Japan and overseas in order to achieve all the goals of the SDGs comprehensively and in an integrated manner, it is necessary to maximize the use of innovative technologies such as digital technology and AI.

In particular, the Japanese government has formulated an AI strategy that outlines comprehensive guidelines and policies for systematically planning and promoting AI-related initiatives, including



research and development, implementation, ethics, education, and human resource development. In the AI section of the “Integrated Innovation Strategy 2024,” the government has set forth an integrated strategy for technologies, measures to strengthen international collaboration from a global perspective, and policies aimed at enhancing competitiveness in the field of AI while ensuring safety and security. In addition, in July 2024, the “AI Institutional Study Group” was established under the “AI Strategic Council.” It examined the state of the AI governance with various stakeholders, including domestic and international businesses, experts, and local governments. Based on this discussion, an “Interim Report” was published in February 2025, outlining for AI policies such as strengthening government’s leadership functions and enhancing national efforts in research and information gathering. Taking into account this interim report, the government approved an AI bill⁷ in the same month to promote the appropriate development and use of AI. The bill was subsequently submitted to the ordinary session of the National Diet and was passed in May.

As for international efforts, the “Hiroshima AI Process” was launched under Japan’s G7 Presidency in 2023, which has led to the development of “Guiding Principles” and “Codes of Conduct”. In addition, the Hiroshima AI Process Friends Group was launched in May 2024 as a voluntary framework of countries and a region that support the spirit of the “Hiroshima AI Process” and seek to strengthen collaboration with many countries including developing countries beyond the G7. In this way, Japan works towards promoting safe, secure and trustworthy AI. Furthermore, the government is working on developing and implementing international rules to promote “Data Free Flow with Trust (DFFT)” which was advocated by Japan at the World Economic Forum Annual Meeting in 2019. Beginning with the adoption of the United Nations Global Digital Compact (GDC), Japan is actively working to promote multilateral digital cooperation to resolve digital disparities including AI. Japan is also supporting human resource development and system construction in the digital field in developing countries, and will continue to collaborate with international organizations in order to support the improvement in AI environment and governance building in developing countries.

⁷ Act on Promotion of Research and Development, and Utilization of AI-related Technology

Column 3: “Happy Economics” and a Sustainable Future (Written by Soichiro Chiba, a member of the SDGs Promotion Roundtable)

Introduction

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) represent a global framework designed to address the challenges facing the international community and to build a sustainable and inclusive future. I have been involved in fostering innovation and its social implementation, both domestically and internationally, as well as in creating an environment for young people and active generations in Japan to participate in international policy discussions through the management of Y7/Y20, the official engagement group for under 40s in the G7 and G20. Based on these experiences, in this column, I will examine Japan's leadership and the role of young people in achieving the SDGs, and the importance of innovation. I will also explore the challenges and possibilities that Japan should address in pursuit of a sustainable future.

1. The vision of “Happy Economics” to realize a sustainable society

Y7/Y20 Japan advocates three core pillars for building a sustainable society and economy, based on the belief that these interconnected elements must work together to achieve lasting impact.

(i) Health: Well-being of mind, body, and planet

In striving for a sustainable society, it is essential to achieve both physical and mental health and the preservation of the global environment. To that end, the following initiatives are crucial:

- Promoting individual well-being through the use of digital technology, while also embracing a perspective that is attuned to each person's emotions and inner thoughts.
- Promoting the development of preventative medicine, health-related industries, and health management.
- Realizing the sustainability of the global environment.

(ii) Growth: Growth of businesses and individuals

Fostering creativity and entrepreneurship forms the driving force for economic growth. The following are particularly important:

- Introducing and disseminating education that fosters creativity and leadership.
- Building an ecosystem that creates disruptive business models.

- Building a social system that embraces failure, encourages repeated attempts, and fosters a collaborative environment where people can learn from one another without holding each other back.

(iii) Connection: Bonds of hearts

Research has shown that human "bonds" based on trust and empathy are more important than economic factors as a determinant of individual happiness. To create a society where diverse individuals feel connected from the local to the global level, the following elements are essential:

- Fostering a culture that promotes mutual understanding and exchange across generations and backgrounds.
- Strengthening local roots and promoting education that fosters understanding of one's own country and an international perspective.
- Establishing systems that respect gender and diversity, enabling everyone to thrive.

These pillars concretely indicate the role Japan should play in achieving the SDGs, and we believe they serve as important guidelines for countries around the world seeking to achieve economic growth while addressing social challenges.

2. Japan's leadership toward a sustainable society

What initiatives are needed to build such a society in Japan—and scale it globally? While countries differ in their approaches to environmental issues, Japan is steadily advancing its position in the international community by committing to carbon neutrality by 2050. Research suggests ironically that this progress stems not only from environmental policy, but also from Japan's ability to turn structural challenges—such as population decline and economic stagnation—into strengths. A shrinking and aging population, typically viewed as a drag on economic growth, can also reduce environmental impact and thus contribute to long-term sustainability. We may be entering an era in which the very values of what is considered “good” and “bad” are undergoing fundamental change.

Given this context, Japan is expected to demonstrate a social model that integrates social, environmental, and economic values and to take a leadership role in the international community, as many countries will face similar challenges to Japan. Not only in the field of green transformation (GX), but also in the context of the rapid development of AI that is dramatically changing the social structure, Japan, which has diverse and advanced social challenges, has the opportunity to show the world a path to a sustainable society and become a role model for the world. Crucially, this requires not simply adopting frameworks established by the West, but

articulating and sharing a distinct Japanese vision—both at home and on the global stage—of what a future society can and should look like.

To achieve this, it is essential to clearly understand the country's strengths and weaknesses, and to develop strategies that actively incorporate the perspectives of students and young people in their 20s, working generations in their 30s to 50s, and the wisdom and rich experience of those over 60 who helped shape the present era.

3. The path to the future: Commercializing innovation as a key driver


For Japan to demonstrate true international leadership in achieving the SDGs, it must go beyond policy and place a strong emphasis on commercializing innovation. While innovation is clearly essential to solving unresolved social challenges, it holds little value if it remains confined to research and development (R&D) or patent counts alone. What truly matters is the ability to generate new economic value by transforming existing business structures through disruptive innovation. In fact, Japan ranks among the world's leaders in R&D—5th in R&D investment, 3rd in patent acquisition, and 1st in intellectual property income⁸. However, turning these achievements into tangible commercial success remains a challenge. For instance, Japan ranks 83rd in ICT service exports, 43rd in unicorn company valuations, and 111th in labor productivity growth—figures that suggest Japan is not fully harnessing its potential for economic growth⁹. Moreover, much of Japan's R&D is still concentrated on incremental improvements in established fields. Looking ahead, a fundamental shift is needed: one that focuses on strategic, market-oriented innovation and begins from the pressing global challenges we face.

Through my involvement with Y7/Y20, I've had numerous conversations with young people. While many express support for the SDGs, one common reason they struggle to see these goals as personally relevant is that they aren't directly tied to economic value. This is especially true in Japan, where a significant portion of the population faces financial hardship—making abstract or vague efforts to address social issues difficult to connect with, regardless of age. To truly advance the SDGs, it is essential to promote innovation that fuels economic growth and ensure it leads to tangible commercialization.

In this process, it is necessary to promote the commercialization of innovative venture companies and innovation within companies, and the power of young people is indispensable. Historically, many disruptive innovations have been born from young entrepreneurs in their 20s and 30s, or at the latest, in their 40s. It is therefore crucial to provide younger generations with the right

⁸ Reference: derived from data presented in the World Intellectual Property Organization's "Global Innovation Index 2023."

⁹ Ibid.



environment and culture, access to high-quality education, and sufficient resources to enable them to become the driving force of innovation.

However, this does not mean that innovation should be limited to young people. In countries where innovation is thriving, individuals across a wide range of generations—not just those in their 20s and 30s—are actively engaged in entrepreneurship and advancing technological innovation. In many places, it is socially accepted—even encouraged—for senior citizens to start businesses as a second career after retirement. By reshaping Japan’s social structure to support this kind of multigenerational participation, the country can foster an environment where people of all ages can contribute to innovation. This, in turn, could significantly enhance Japan’s overall innovation capacity and global competitiveness.

4. Moving beyond self-reliance bias and the importance of international collaboration

One of the key lessons from Japan’s past economic successes is the importance of “breaking free from an excessive reliance” on internal development. For instance, Japan’s automobile industry thrived globally by refining and commercializing core technologies originally developed in the West. Similarly, today, Japan can once again achieve sustainable growth by cultivating an ecosystem that swiftly commercializes innovation—leveraging insights, technologies, and business models from around the world.

In recent years, however, a tendency toward an excessive reliance on internal development in some sectors has, at times, hindered innovation in Japan. This is particularly evident in fields such as AI, green transformation (GX), and other emerging technologies, where accelerating innovation through international collaboration and the adoption of global technologies is essential. Such an approach would not only enable Japan to more effectively address SDG-related challenges both domestically and internationally, but also enhance its economic competitiveness. Furthermore, such efforts could help Japan move away from a technology-driven or reactive approach to new business development. Instead, by adopting a globally informed perspective to identify priority areas, Japan can send a clear message to young people: *“This is where your ideas can make the greatest impact.”* Such strategic direction could serve as a powerful guidepost for the younger generation as they forge the future.

5. Conclusion

For Japan to achieve a sustainable society and assume a leadership role in the global pursuit of the SDGs, it is imperative to develop a social model that harmonizes environmental, economic, and social values. This model must then be effectively communicated to the international community. To accomplish this, Japan must undertake an accurate analysis of its challenges and potential, leading to the construction of a novel effective social model grounded in a shared vision of a sustainable future. Crucially, this effort must embrace a truly intergenerational perspective—

actively incorporating the voices of students and young people in their 20s, the working generations in their 30s to 50s, and the accumulated wisdom of those over 60 who have shaped the foundation of modern Japan. Additionally, empowering active generations as innovation drivers requires fostering an environment that encourages challenges, providing high-quality education, and ensuring adequate resources.

History bears witness to the countless transformative business models that have originated from young entrepreneurs, highlighting the critical need to create a system that supports their potential across all levels of society. Furthermore, by moving beyond a bias toward self-reliance and proactively integrating the world's most advanced technologies and knowledge, Japan can enhance its global competitiveness and offer clear direction to the active generations—highlighting where the greatest opportunities for impact and innovation lie.

Through these efforts, innovation will thrive, paving the way for a society in which all generations can enjoy healthy lives, pursue meaningful growth, and build deep, lasting connections. This is the vision of “Happy Economics” brought to life—a model of sustainable prosperity that positions Japan as a global beacon and a role model for others to follow.

Priority Area (ii)

Realization of an inclusive society where no one is left behind



Priority Area (ii): Realization of an inclusive society where no one is left behind

The phrase “Leave No One Behind” is a fundamental principle that underlies the 2030 Agenda. It requires solidarity that transcends the differences in systems and values of each country. By returning to the origin of the SDGs of Leave No One Behind, Japan has set forth the concept of human dignity as a central principle that supports the solidarity of the international community. In this way, Japan is working to realize an inclusive society where no one is left behind.

In a sustainable economy and society, each and every person must be able to experience abundance and well-being (a state of physical, mental, and social happiness). As Japan's declining birthrate and aging population progresses rapidly, there is a need to build an economy and society where everyone can actively participate regardless of age, where multiple generations can live together in peace, and where is suitable to respond to the mental and physical changes associated with aging among the elderly. In Japan, the healthy life expectancy continues to get extended due to the universal health insurance system, medical system, and the efforts of the local governments, corporations, and private organizations, etc. (refer below to “5. Status of Achievement of Each Goal”, Goal 3). Some local governments are working with companies, etc., on advanced initiatives that utilize data and cutting-edge scientific knowledge (refer to Column 5: Expanding initiatives for mutual assistance Initiatives).

With the Minister in charge of Measures for Loneliness and Isolation, established in 2021, acting as the control tower, the government has been promoting measures to address loneliness and isolation. In April 2024, the Act on the Advancement of Measures to Address Loneliness and Isolation was enforced, and in June of the same year, the " Priority Plan to Facilitate the Promotion of the Policies Regarding Measures to Address Loneliness and Isolation" was formulated based on this Act. These initiatives focus on supporting local governments and NPOs, as well as strengthening the prevention of loneliness and isolation.

Additionally, regarding the improvement of individual and community well-being within local communities, "social education" plays a crucial role in fostering empathetic and cooperative relationships that form the foundation of community ties. It does so by creating "connections" and "engagement" among people through "learning." For example, social education facilities such as community centers across the country host various courses tailored to local needs, including those related to the dissemination and awareness of the SDGs, serving as learning hubs for local residents.

Furthermore, to build a sustainable economy and society, it is essential that children and young people who will bear the responsibility for the future are actively involved. In April 2023, the Children and Families Agency was established to centrally promote policies related to children and to realize a "Children-Centered Society". Efforts are also underway to hear those views of children and young people with regards to individual policies and to reflect these views in policies.

Respect for human rights and the mainstreaming of gender perspectives, which are fundamental principles of the SDGs, are essential as cross-cutting values for achieving all of the SDG goals. Due to efforts to promote women's empowerment and gender equality, women's employment rate has increased. On the other hand, Japan's ranking in the World Economic Forum's annual Gender Gap

Index¹⁰ is 118th out of 146 countries in 2024, indicating that challenges remain to be addressed. Regarding measures against sexual crimes and violence, various initiatives are being advanced through the collaboration of the government, parliament, and civil society (see "5. Progress Toward Each Goal," Goal 5, for more information). Furthermore, the action plan concerning "Business and Human Rights" is being steadily implemented, and efforts to achieve the SDGs will continue, taking into account its future revisions.

Amidst the spread of COVID-19 across the world, the Tokyo Olympics and Paralympic Games (Tokyo 2020 Games) were held in 2021 with the goal of advancing the SDGs through the power of sports. The Barrier Free Law was revised in the wake of the Tokyo 2020 Games and the removal of obstacles was further implemented in many public spaces. Private organizations are developing barrier-free maps utilizing ICT and from the perspective that everyone, including people with disabilities, are users.

(Achieving health and longevity)

As a result of Japan's medical system which for more than 50 years has provided the universal health insurances system, as well as exceptional pharmaceuticals, medical devices, and medical technology and services, Japan has realized and become the world's healthiest and longest-living society. Japan's healthy life expectancy is 72.57 years for men and 75.45 years for women (in 2022), and when compared to 2010 (70.42 years for men, 73.62 years for women), men are living 2.15 more years and women are extending their life by 1.83 years. This exceeds life expectancy increase during the same period (1.50 years (79.55 to 81.05 years) for men and 0.79 years (86.30 to 87.09 years) for women).

As part of a new national health promotion campaign that enables citizens to proactively take action, the Japanese Government is promoting the "21st Century Measures for National Health Promotion (Health Japan 21)". The final evaluation report for "Health Japan 21 (second term)" was compiled in its tenth year since beginning in FY2013. In addition to extending, one's healthy life expectancy as mentioned above, targets were achieved in areas such as the reduction in mortality rates for cancer, cerebrovascular disease, and ischemic heart disease, and controlling the increase in the proportion undernourished elderly. On the other hand, there are some indicators that worsened including the decrease in the number of definite and at-risk people with metabolic syndrome, the decrease in the percentage of individuals who do not take rest through sufficient sleep, and the decrease in percentage of individuals who consume alcohol over the recommended limits thereby increasing the risk of lifestyle diseases.

With regards to "Health Japan 21 (third term)" which was newly launched in FY2024, the Japanese government is working towards "realizing a sustainable society in which all citizens can lead healthy and fulfilling lives". The basic direction is to i) increase healthy life expectancy and reduce health

¹⁰ The Global Gender Gap Index in the Global Gender Gap Report 2024 announced by the World Economic Forum

disparities; ii) improve individual behavior and health status; iii) improve the quality of the social environment; iv) promote health based on a life course approach.

Also, in recent years, it has become an international trend to collectively capture cancer, cardiovascular diseases, diabetes, Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD), etc. under the concept of non-communicable diseases (NCDs) and tackle them as comprehensive social policies. The onset and severity of NCDs are not only dependent on individual awareness and actions, but also on the social environment surrounding the individual. Consequently, it is necessary to comprehensively address health measures as social policy from a wide range of perspectives such as environmental factors and economic factors in regions, workplaces, etc.

It is also important to promote health management in which companies strategically maintain and promote the health of employees. In order to create an environment where companies are recognized for managing health, the government is implementing a health management award system (KENKO Investment for Health Stock and KENKO Investment for Health Outstanding Organization.)

In addition, it is also important to support mental and physical health throughout one's life by practicing eating habits that take nutritional balance into consideration. Japan promotes food and nutrition education based on the Basic Act on Shokuiku (Food and Nutrition Education) and the Fourth Basic Plan for the Promotion of Shokuiku decided by the Council for the Promotion of Shokuiku on March 31, 2021. The Fourth Basic Plan for the Promotion of Shokuiku considers the promotion of food and nutrition education which supports the mental and physical health throughout one's life to be one of its priorities. In order to realize healthy eating habits among citizens and to realize a sustainable society that takes into account the environment and food culture, the Japanese government will focus on promoting initiatives such as popularizing the Japanese-style dietary habits with its excellent nutritional balance, and providing food and nutrition education to adults to switch their daily consumption behavior to one that is healthier. At the same time, a national movement involving various constituents such as schools, companies, food producers, etc. will be developed to promote food and nutrition education.

Lastly, mental health is also important. In “Health Japan 21 (third term)”, the government acknowledges that improving the quality of the social environment, such as connections with society and the maintenance and improvement of mental health, is foundational for the efforts for the health of each and every citizen.

Column 4: Declining birthrate and aging society

(Situation surrounding declining birthrate and aging society)

The population aged 65 and over in Japan is 36.24 million compared to the total population of 123.80 million or 29.3% (as of October 2024). This is estimated to grow to around 35% in 2040. Furthermore, the baby boomer generation will be 75 years old in 2025, making the population aged 75 and over to about 18% of the total population. In other words, approximately 1 in 4 citizen will be 75 years old or older, thereby creating a “super-aging society”. Various issues associated with such changes in the population structure are becoming apparent and as an advanced country, Japan is currently considering its responses.

(Measures against an aging society)

Japan has promoted measures to respond to an aging society in accordance with the three basic ideas identified in the “Guideline of Measures for an Ageing Society” (decided by the Cabinet on February 16, 2018). These are i) review standardization by age and aim at creating an age-free society in which people of all ages can leverage their motivation and abilities based on what they desire; ii) develop a community life base and create a local community where people can imagine their elderly life regardless of their stage in life; iii) aim for new measures for an ageing society by using the innovation of technological achievements. Also, in 2024, a new “Guideline of Measures for an Ageing Society” was formulated (decided by the Cabinet on September, 2024) in which various policies are being promoted in line with the three following basic ideas: i) build an economy and society where people can continue to play an active role according to their wishes regardless of age; ii) respond appropriately to changes in the environment such as the increase of elderly people living alone and build a society where multiple generations can live with peace of mind; iii) develop detailed policy and build a social system that responds to changes in physical and cognitive functions associated with aging.

To create an environment where people are able to work as they wish regardless of age, particularly for the employment of elderly people, the government has stipulated in the “Act on Stabilization of Employment of Elderly Persons” that their employment should be secured until the age of 65. Additionally, Japan has promoted initiatives such as improving skills and re-skilling aimed at realizing a society where the elderly who desire to work, can continue to work for all their life, regardless of age.

(Urban development for an aging society)

To realize a society where multiple generations can live with peace of mind, it is necessary to create an environment where everyone can move freely. To that end, Japan is accelerating efforts to secure means of transportation for local residents, starting with the elderly, and to restructure regional public transportation. Efforts will be made to further improve the accessibility of public transportation, buildings, etc. The government will also enhance mobility support services in

regional communities as well as promote the development and spread of autonomous driving technology and driver assistance systems.

As the number of elderly people living alone is expected to increase in the future, it is necessary to ensure people are able to live safely and securely in the regional communities even in their old age. Furthermore, it is important to enhance regional safety net functions by creating an environment where local community development can be carried out with the participation of a wide range of generations so as to build a society in local communities where people live together and support each other across all ages.

(New measures through technological innovation)

To maintain and improve the quality of life and reduce the burden on caregivers through independence support, etc. to the elderly, the government will promote cooperation between private companies and research institutes on medical devices, technology for long-term care. In addition, in long-term care field, Japan provides comprehensive tech support from R&D to market launch through CARISO (CARE Innovation Support Office). The government will make advancements in research to understand the pathology and the pathogenic mechanisms of illnesses to which people are prone in our elderly years, and also accelerate drug discovery. By utilizing cutting-edge science and technology such as genomics, the Japanese government will advance the research and development, and clinical application of new medical technology while also aiming to establish effective healthcare technology.

(Building a social security system for all generations)

In addition to the above, the Japanese government has built a Universal Health Coverage (UHC) where all people can enjoy basic health care services when necessary, at an affordable cost. Through the national health insurance system, Japan has achieved the world's highest levels of life expectancy at birth and healthcare standards. Going forward, the Japanese government aims to build a “Social Security System Oriented to All Generations” in which all generations support each other according to their abilities so as to build a sustainable social security system.

(Countermeasures against a low fertility)

The Japanese government also formulated the “Children's Future Strategy” in December 2023 to reverse the declining birthrate trend. This strategy aimed to create a society where young people can get married as desired, have children, and raise children with peace of mind, and identified three principles: increase the income of young people, change the structure and awareness of society as a whole, and support all children and child-rearing households without interruption. To achieve this, the “Acceleration Plan” radically enhanced support for children and childrearing on an unprecedented scale by expanding the child allowance, establishing the “Connecting All Children to ECEC System”, and promoting flexible work styles, etc., and Japan has seen solid implementation of the plan.

(Creating an inclusive society of coexistence and mutual assistance)

The government has come together as one to promote measures against loneliness and isolation with the Minister for Loneliness and Isolation at the helm since 2021. The Act on the Advancement of Measures to Address Loneliness and Isolation came into effect in April 2024, and based on this law, the “Priority Plan to Facilitate the Promotion of the Policies Regarding Measures to Address Loneliness and Isolation” was formulated in June of the same year. Based on these, Japan is working on providing support to local governments and NPOs, etc., and strengthening the prevention of loneliness and isolation.

Furthermore, in addition to building a monitoring network for the elderly and people with disabilities, and expanding consultation support and support for people in need in cooperation with NPOs and local governments, the government is also working to strengthen local communities and promote the creation of “ibasho (place where one feels comfortable, safe and accepted)” for children.

The Japanese government has formulated the “Basic Programme for Persons with Disabilities”. To realize a society of coexistence, it supports the participation of people with disabilities in all social activities based on their own decisions so that they are able to exercise their capacity to the fullest extent to achieve self-actualization while also promoting measures to remove social barriers that restrict people with disabilities to participate in society. Furthermore, as hosts of the Tokyo Olympic and Paralympic Games, Japan used this opportunity to plan for an inclusive society by revising the Barrier Free Law and improving the accessibility at many places including public transportation, public facilities, commercial buildings, etc. Additionally, in thinking about a society and environment where all people can participate equally, the government aims to increase awareness of and take necessary action for a “barrier-free mindsets”. In 2024, the provision of reasonable accommodation by private businesses was mandated, and an "Action Plan Toward a Society of Coexistence Without Prejudice or Discrimination Against Persons with Disabilities" was formulated with the involvement of persons with disabilities. This initiative aims to strengthen efforts related to "barrier-free mindsets" across society. Efforts are also being made to make more places barrier-free in preparation for the Osaka, Kansai Expo being held in 2025.

Also, in the 2024 revised “Basic Act on Food, Agriculture and Rural Areas”, “food security” was defined as including each citizen's ability to procure food, and with food security being a basic principle, the Japanese government has decided to take necessary measures “to ensure the smooth procurement of food”. Based on this law, specific measures were included in the "Basic Plan for Food, Agriculture, and Rural Areas," which was formulated in April 2025. There has been an increase in people who are unable to keep healthy eating habits due to the inability to obtain sufficient food for financial reasons, and people for whom purchasing food or eating and drinking is inconvenient or difficult due to the aging population, closure of local retail businesses, and a decline in existing shopping districts, etc. (also known as the shopping disadvantaged). Given this situation, Japan supports the creation of a system where local stakeholders such as local governments, food businesses,

logistics operators, food banks, and children's cafeterias, etc. cooperate to provide various foods to such people. Japan is also promoting initiatives for food banks, children's cafeterias, etc. to provide food that is sufficient in terms of quality and quantity, and support for last-mile deliveries, etc.

The “Local Council for Ensuring the Safety of Consumers” are available in over 540 local municipalities around the country (as of the end of March 2025) to watch over consumers requiring support such as elderly people with dementia and people with disabilities, etc. These councils work in collaboration with the regional consumer affairs centers and welfare departments to advance regional monitoring activities aimed at preventing consumer damage and damage relief.

Based on the "Act on the Utilization of Funds from Dormant Deposits to Promote Privately-Run Public Interest Activities," which was enacted in December 2016, the initiative to utilize dormant deposits began in 2019. As of the end of March 2025, the total amount planned for grants and investments (cumulative) is approximately 36.2 billion yen, with about 1,350 projects (cumulative). This initiative targets the resolution of social issues that are difficult to address through public systems, with around 70% of the projects supporting socially vulnerable groups and promoting social inclusion, such as support for children, youth, and people facing hardship.

Column 5: Expanding initiatives for mutual assistance

[Case 1] Toyota City’s “Zutto Genki! (keep staying healthy and energetic) Project” ~ Public-Private Partnership for Preventive Care ~

Located in central Japan, Toyota City in Aichi Prefecture has a population of approximately 420,000 people, and according to 2020 data, the rate of aging has reached 23.1%, indicating a progressing aging population year by year. The “Zutto Genki! Project” began in July 2021 with a project period of five years or until June 2026 and provides various preventive care programs including sports, hobbies, and communication. Through such programs, this project aims to reduce future long-term care costs.

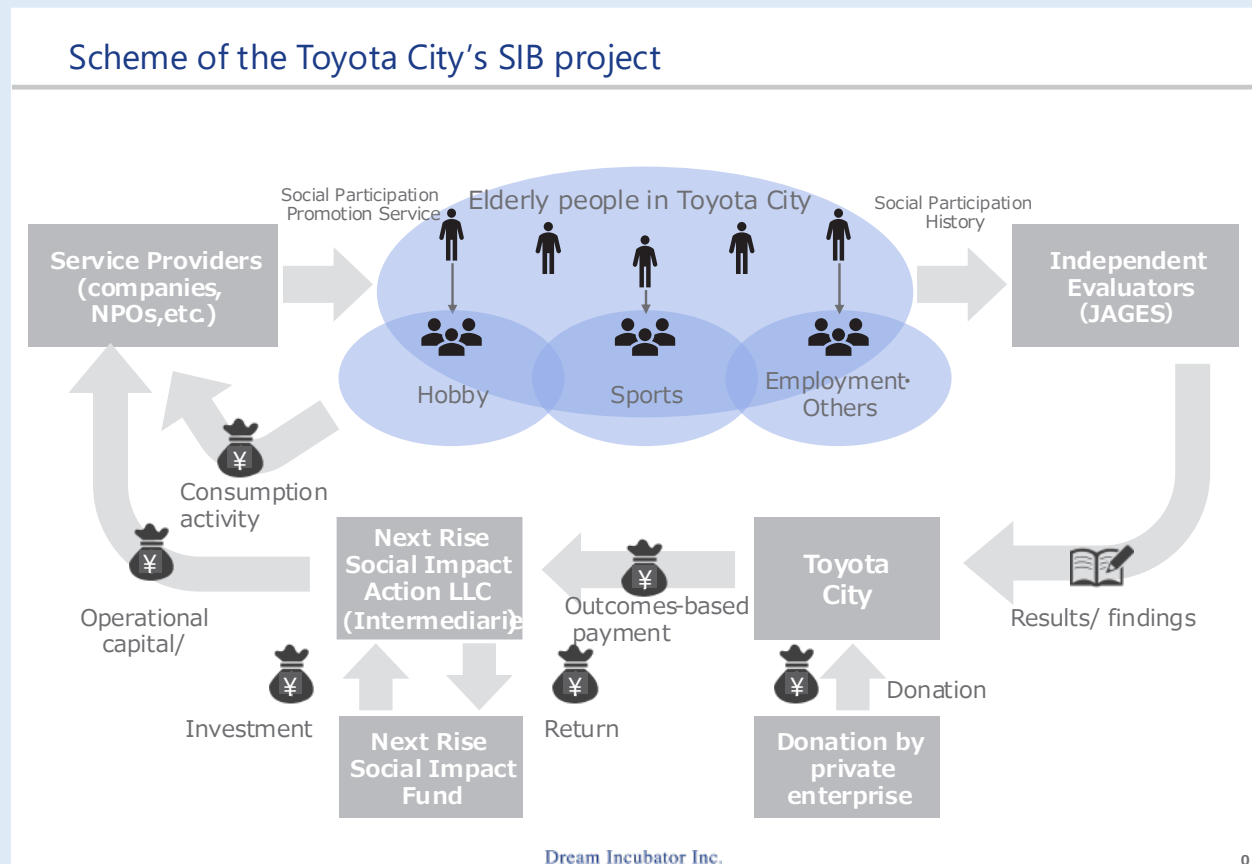
The project came about as a result of concerns for increasing long-term care risks associated with the rapidly progressing aging population. To further exacerbate these concerns were the restrictions on going out that were placed on the elderly during the COVID-19 pandemic, increasing the possibility for an even greater risk. Based on this situation, a project was started, aimed at reducing long-term care risk by increasing the “opportunities for social participation and the amount of social activity” for the elderly through hobbies, exercise, and employment, etc. This project sought to provide people with various human connections as well as a “purpose in life” and “enjoyment” so as to realize a lifestyle where one could feel greater “happiness”.

This project utilizes a mechanism called a social impact bond (SIB), which leverages the knowledge and funds of private companies to solve social issues in return for performance-based compensation. Over a five-year period, Dream Incubator Inc. has invested 500 million yen and in

cooperation with Toyota City, and has worked with various businesses to manage the project as a whole. A characteristic of this project is the evaluation and management based on specific numerical targets (reduce long-term care costs by one billion yen over five years). A third party evaluation conducted by the Japan Gerontological Evaluation Study (JAGES) showed that the actual impact as of the second year was estimated at approximately 370 million yen, and the target of one billion yen in reduction was expected to be ultimately achieved.

Many local businesses are participating in this effort. The local NPO, “Workers' Smile Creation Research Institute”, is responsible for building a network of local companies and participate in the project in conjunction with the Next Rise Social Impact Action Organization, a subsidiary of Dream Incubator Inc. The emphasis is on being able to continuously support the elderly rather than ending with a one-off event.

In this way, efforts are being made towards preventive long-term care in Toyota City with the cooperation between the government, and private businesses and NPOs.



[Case 2] Consumer Cooperative Initiatives to Build Local Communities

A consumer cooperative is one type of cooperative that is established based on the “Consumers' Livelihood Co-operative Society Law” and is an organization where members who are users, contribute to the capital of the cooperative, make decisions, and operates it. Its characteristics are that “everyone contributes to its capital, everyone operates it, and everyone uses it”. In FY2023,

there were 30.63 million consumer cooperative members and the total business turnover of consumer cooperatives was 3,737.9 billion yen (approximately 27.3 billion US dollars).¹¹ In terms of business types, they are engaged in businesses that support daily life, such as supplying consumer goods via home delivery and at retail stores, and providing insurance, and medical and welfare services.

Consumer cooperatives provide “community watch-over activities” by utilizing the home delivery business infrastructure and have signed agreements on such activities with 1,300 municipalities. This is equivalent to 74.7% of all 1,741 municipalities (as of January 2025). Specifically, if the delivery item is left untouched, or no one answers the intercom, or the electricity is left on, the delivery staff will notice these abnormalities and will contact the pre-registered emergency contact number and, if necessary, contact the hospital or police. There have been cases where no one is home due to travel or hospitalization, but there have been emergency situations where a person had collapsed at home. In addition, consumer cooperatives also conduct activities to support the lives of local residents, signing comprehensive cooperation agreements with prefectural governments. As an example, in Fudai village in Iwate prefecture, a dinner delivery service was launched to provide nutritionally balanced meals to people who were unable to cook due to the progressive aging. Through the delivery of meals, the delivery staff are able to watch over these people, thereby contributing to the safe and secure living of elderly households.

Consumer cooperatives also collaborate with organizations that carry out initiatives to resolve local issues. From April 2021, with the approval of the prefectures, consumer cooperatives are able to supply goods to organizations that work to resolve local issues such as difficulties in shopping and provide support to people living in need. Additionally, a free car service to the store is provided for the elderly who have difficulties going shopping. Based on a pre-determined day and time, this share-ride system operates every week. This initiative enables people to maintain a normal lifestyle of “going to the store and choosing goods on their own”. To date, a total of 151,206 people (FY2023) have used this service.

¹¹ Calculated based on a rate of 1 US dollar to 137 yen

As organizations working for the sustainable development of their communities, consumer cooperatives are actively working to realize local communities where people can continue to live with peace of mind. Moreover, the participation of cooperative members in the initiatives of their cooperatives cultivates their independence and provides them with various values such as the joy of growth and a sense of their lives being enriched. These activities can be considered as good practices towards the achievement of the SDGs.



CO-OP servicing pickup and drop-off on shopping
(Photo: the consumer cooperative in Kagawa)

[Case 3] Achieving an Inclusive Society Where “No One is Left Behind” Through the Dormant Deposits Utilization System

Dormant deposits refer to accounts that have had no transactions, such as deposits or withdrawals, for over 10 years, generating around 130 to 160 billion yen annually. Following the enactment of the "Act on the Utilization of Funds from Dormant Deposits to Promote Privately-Run Public Interest Activities" in December 2016 and its enforcement in January 2018, the Japan Network for Public Interest Activities (JANPIA), a general incorporated foundation, was appointed in January 2019 as the "designated utilization organization" under this law. As stated in its vision, "Become a catalyst to create a sustainable society, leaving no one behind," JANPIA aims to be a catalyst that supports those who continue to challenge social issues with innovative methods, ensuring that a sustainable society is passed on to future generations without leaving anyone behind, in line with the principles of the SDGs.

Dormant deposits provided to JANPIA by the Deposit Insurance Corporation are utilized for activities conducted by private organizations in the following three areas:

- Activities related to the support of children and youth
- Activities related to the support of individuals facing difficulties in daily or social life
- Activities related to the support of regions facing social challenges such as declining vitality in local communities.


As of the end of March 2025, the cumulative total amount planned for grants and investments is approximately 36.2 billion yen, with about 1,350 projects (cumulative). The dormant deposits utilization initiative comprehensively addresses the 17 SDG goals, with approximately 70% of the projects focused on promoting respect for human rights and social inclusion, which are emphasized by the SDGs. In particular, the projects often relate to Goal 1 "End poverty in all its forms everywhere," Goal 3 "Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages," Goal 4 "Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all," Goal 5 "Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls," Goal 8 "Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment, and decent work for all," Goal 11 "Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable," and Goal 17 "Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development."

(Radical reinforcement of children's policies and the promotion of education)

Against the backdrop of the difficult environment that surround children,¹² the Children and Families Agency was established in April 2023. By always considering the perspective of the child and prioritizing the child's best interests, the agency's objective is to realize a "children-centered society" that puts initiatives and policies related to children in the center of Japan's society. At the same time, the Basic Act on Children's Policy came into effect as a comprehensive law to broadly and strongly promote children's policies throughout society. In December of the same year, based on the Basic Act on Children's Policy, the "General Principles for Child-Related Measures" which stipulated basic policies concerning child-related measures was decided by the Cabinet to drastically enhance child-related policies. These principles aimed to realize a society where all children and young people can live their life in a state of happiness physically, mentally, and socially. Efforts are also underway to hear those views of children and young people with regards to individual policies and to reflect these views in policies.

Furthermore, Japan has made efforts to provide substantial financial support such as free preschool education and childcare (implemented since October 2019), initiatives to improve the quality of education for children in early childhood and the transition period to the elementary school education stage, and the new financial support system for higher education (launched April 2020 and provides reduction on tuition fees, etc. and scholarship grants). To further enhance education for students with disabilities, Japan is also working to promote special needs education in schools and to improve education and learning environments that promote lifelong learning for people with disabilities after graduation from school. In addition, to maximize the potential of all children, the "GIGA School

¹² The term "child" is defined as defined in Article 2 of the Basic Act on Children's Policy.



Program" is being promoted to enhance both personalized and self-regulated learning and collaborative learning in an integrated manner, along with the promotion of digital textbooks for learners.

Furthermore, in the Fourth Basic Plan for the Promotion of Education, "promotion of Education for Sustainable Development (ESD)" is included as one of the fundamental policies. Additionally, the current national curriculum National Curriculum Standards incorporate the objectives of ESD which is to be the builders of a sustainable society. ESD is said to contribute to the realization of all SDGs goals, and in Japan, to realize the UNESCO mission as outlined in the Constitution of UNESCO¹³, "UNESCO Associated Schools", which practice peace and international cooperation, are positioned as focal points for ESD promotion. Japan has over 1,000 UNESCO Associated Schools, making it the largest number in the world. In addition, based on the Act on the Promotion of Environmental Conservation Activities through Environmental Education whose objective is to create a sustainable society aimed for by the SDGs, Japan is promoting environmental education and ESD as well as encouraging initiatives through faculty and staff training, experiential learning, information dissemination, and an award system. Additionally, since it is important for various entities involved in ESD, such as local governments, NGOs/NPOs, and businesses, to collaborate and coordinate across different fields to promote ESD, an ESD promotion network has been established by utilizing local ESD activity support centers. This network is engaged in collecting and disseminating information related to ESD, facilitating inter-regional cooperation, and supporting activities.

In addition, the Japanese government, in collaboration with the Japan Committee for UNICEF, is creating supplementary educational materials for learning about the SDGs, intended for use in social studies classes for third-year junior high school students. These materials have been distributed to approximately 10,000 junior high schools and other institutions nationwide, with updates made annually since 2018. The website "SDGs CLUB," created by the Japan Committee for UNICEF, which is linked to these supplementary materials for learning about the SDGs, receives over 17.7 million unique accesses annually (as of 2024).

In order to realize a sustainable society, it is important for children who will be responsible for the next generation to deepen their understanding of the benefits of nature and the various activities of people involved in food, develop a sense of appreciation, and acquire correct knowledge about food and desirable eating habits. Based on the Fourth Basic Plan for the Promotion of Shokuiku (Food and Nutrition Education), Japan is working to promote a greater understanding of food, agriculture, forestry, and fishery, and the practice of healthy eating habits through the use of local products in school lunches, provision of opportunities to experience agriculture, forestry, and fishing, etc., and enhancing opportunities to learn about food, such as the importance of nutritionally balanced eating habits.

On the other hand, with regards to students who are chronically unable to attend school for a variety of reasons, a FY2023 survey showed that approximately 346,000 students in elementary and junior high schools struggled with chronic school absenteeism, of which approximately 134,000 students did not receive specialized counseling or guidance etc. at an institution inside or outside the school. Given

¹³ "Since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defences of peace must be constructed" (Preamble to the Constitution)

this situation, “measures against chronic absenteeism at school to guarantee learning where no one is left behind (COCOLO Plan)” was formulated in March 2023. Based on these measures, the Japanese government is working to support children and create a learning environment where all students can learn safely.

Column 6: Radical reinforcement of children's policies: the establishment the Children and Families Agency

(The establishment of the Children and Families Agency)

In 2023, the Japanese government newly established the Children and Families Agency. The purpose of the Children and Families Agency is to centrally promote policies related to children and families, and provide more effective support. Child policies to date were based on the Basic Act for Measures to Cope with Society with Declining Birthrate and the Act on Promotion of Development and Support for Children and Young People, etc., and the Japanese government has worked hard on these various policies. However, with the number of child abuse consultations, the number of students with chronic absenteeism, and the number of serious bullying cases all still remaining high, the environment surrounding children and families has become severe.

Against this background, on December 21, 2021, the Cabinet decision was passed to establish the Children and Families Agency. By always considering the perspective of the child and prioritizing the child's best interests, the agency's objective is to realize a "Children-Centered Society" that puts initiatives and policies related to children in the center of Japan's society. The Act Establishing the Children and Families Agency was enacted on June 15, 2022 and the Children and Families Agency was officially inaugurated on April 1, 2023.

The Children and Families Agency aims to realize a society where children can grow healthily as independent individuals, and conducts affairs relating to improving the welfare and health of children and families, providing child-rearing support, and protecting the rights and interests of children. Furthermore, the agency centralizes jurisdiction over child policy which until now were managed by multiple ministries and agencies, and plays a role in tackling new policy issues.

(Major developments since the establishment of the Children and Families Agency)

The Children and Families Agency has promoted several important measures including the formulation of the "Children's Future Strategy" with the "Acceleration Plan" on a scale of 3.6 trillion yen (about 24 billion US dollars¹⁴), the enactment of the revised Child and Childcare Support Act, the formulation of a "basic vision for raising children until early childhood", and the establishment of the Prevention of Sexual Violence against Children Act.

Going forward, in an aim to realize a "Children-Centered Society", it will be necessary to dedicate all our efforts into comprehensively promoting children's policies, supporting the pursuit of happiness among children, young people, and those involved in raising children while also drastically changing the trend of declining birthrate, and for society as a whole, to nurture human resources that will lead the future of our country. Specifically, Japan will rapidly implement

¹⁴ Calculated by the secretariat based on the FY2023 exchange rate of 1 US dollar to 149.63 yen

measures based on the “Children's Future Strategy”, and work steadily to tackle measures for the protection of children from sexual violence, child safety, prevention of abuse, suicide, bullying, and chronic absenteeism.

(Raising awareness on the rights of children and young people, their social participation, and reflection of their views)

The General Principles for Child-Related Measures aims to widely inform society that children and youth are holders of rights by disseminating information about the objectives and contents of the Basic Act on Children's Policy and the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Based on this, efforts are being made to raise awareness. Starting in 2024, the "Child Rights Project," which aims to increase awareness on child rights, is being promoted in collaboration with the Japan Committee for UNICEF. Also, in the General Principles for Child-Related Measures, “respecting the viewpoints of children, young people, and those raising children, and hearing those views, discussing with them and taking action together” is considered to be one of the basic principles for child-related measures. Therefore, social participation of children and young people and a reflection of their opinions and views is indicated as necessary for the promotion of child-related measures. Considering the basic principles of the Basic Act on Children's Policy, social participation of children and young people and a reflection of their opinions and views are like two wheels of a car; it is not possible to advance one without the other. Regarding this point, taking into account the intent of this Act, an initiative to hear those views of children and young people regarding policies and to reflect them in policies began in FY2023 called “Kodomo Wakamono★Iken Plus (Program to Promote Reflection of Opinions and Views of Children and Young People)”. In FY2024, the government heard views from a total of approximately 1,900 children and young people on 22 themes. This initiative was not only for themes set by each ministry and agency but also included hearing those views for themes proposed by children and young people.

(Participation of youth and young people)

There are numerous youth and young people's organizations engaged in activities to promote the achievement of the SDGs. As an example, the “Next Generation Platform for Promoting SDGs”, whose establishment was decided at the 6th meeting of the SDGs Promotion Headquarters in 2018, has been involved with activities to promote SDGs among young people. As of March 2025, members of this platform include G7/G20 Youth Japan, the Junior Chamber International Japan (Japan JC), and the Japan Youth Platform for Sustainability (JYPS).

Since the previous VNR conducted in 2021, members of the above platform joined the SDGs Promotion Roundtable as youth representatives. Furthermore, the SDGs Implementation Guiding Principles revised in December 2023 stated that “the government will work to expand the meaningful participation of younger generations” and in October 2024, the number of youth and young people

representatives was increased to two people. In April 2024, the “Advisory Panel on Sustainability of the International Community” was launched under Foreign Minister Kamikawa with participation of experts from various fields. One member of the above platform participated in the meeting and presented opinions from a youth perspective on ensuring growth and sustainability beyond the 2030 deadline for SDGs.

Members of the platform attended the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) Youth Forums in 2022, 2023, and 2024 as representatives of Japan and conveyed the opinions of young people in Japan. In 2024, in preparation for the UN Summit of the Future, members of the platform participated in the “Dialogue between Foreign Minister Kamikawa and the Youths” in July. In September, a total of five young people, including one from the platform, attended the UN Summit of the Future as members of a Japanese government delegation and as evident by the Summit of the Future outcome document, the importance of the role of the youth was recognized. There has also been youth participation in events such as those held during a visit to Japan in December by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Administrator, Mr. Steiner during which opinions regarding the meaningful participation of young people were sent out.

With the objective to nurture future leaders who can raise awareness for disaster prevention and enhance the resilience of the country, Japan has held a High School Students Summit on “World Tsunami Awareness Day” six times since 2016, with participation from a total of 2,163 high school students from both Japan and abroad. The high school students who served as the chairman and vice-chairman at the event held in Kumamoto in October 2024 also took the stage at the “World Tsunami Awareness Day” at the UN headquarters in November and spoke to the world regarding the results of the summit.

Column 7: Next generation SDGs promotion platform

In this column, the three organizations constituting the Next Generation Platform for Promoting SDGs write and introduce the outlines and activities of each organization.

Japan Youth Platform for Sustainability (JYPS)

(Group overview)

JYPS was established in 2015 as an organization that gathers the voices of young people in Japan and establishes a place to deliver them as policy recommendations to the Japanese government, the United Nations, and civil society. The opinions and sentiments of young people from diverse backgrounds are collected via organized events and opinion surveys, and through meaningful participation in opinion exchange meetings with the Japanese government and international conferences, the organization seeks to create a sustainable society in which opinions of young people are reflected.

(Activities and achievements)

JYPS conducted a survey on the voice of young people in Japan and their state of affairs for the Voluntary Youth Review (VYR) related to the 2025 VNR. Based on the 17 goals of SDGs, the themes were narrowed down to the four themes of “inequality/poverty/gender”, “education/wellbeing”, “environment/climate/biodiversity”, and “youth participation” about which questionnaires, interviews, and discussion events were conducted.

For the theme “inequality/poverty/gender”, it became clear how economic conditions affect higher education progression and how depending on the region, there were disparities in learning environments and career path fixation. Gender was also found to be a big influence and it was evident that there was a growing number of young people who felt restrictions with regards to gender when considering advancing to the next stage of education or with regards to the learning environment.

In “education/wellbeing”, there were calls for opportunities for extracurricular activities, practical use of technology, and the practical use of English. Awareness regarding comprehensive sex education was low and responses showed a desire for it to be introduced in all schools. While the concept of well-being was understood, there was no uniform sense of values for the specific meaning, and there were also groups that showed indifference.

In “environment/climate/biodiversity”, awareness for the importance of climate change and biodiversity was high but poor understanding and lack of information emerged as issues in encouraging behavioral change. On the other hand, it became apparent that relationships with nature and opportunities for discussion raised awareness for problem solving. With regards to nuclear power generation, the majority of voices desired its long-term abolition.

In terms of youth participation, while there were many young people with positive views of the future, there were also many that for whom interest in politics was low. To resolve this, young people wanted a place where they could discuss with adults on equal terms and it became evident that there are many young people who wished to participate in organizations and decision-making bodies dealing with social issues.

A report of these results were handed over to various ministries and agencies, international organizations, etc. and advocacy activities that reflect the current situation and issues of young people are being developed.

(Meaningful youth participation in international conferences)

To realize a sustainable society under the SDG principle where “no one is left behind”, collaboration across borders, fields, sectors, and generations is essential. As stated by United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres, “meaningful, diverse, and effective youth participation – inside the United Nations and far beyond – is essential to (...) achieving the Sustainable Development Goals” and therefore, meaningful youth participation should be

guaranteed.¹⁵ It is recommended that the Japanese government dispatch young Japanese people, starting with members of the Next Generation Platform, to international conferences as government delegates.

The ECOSOC Youth Forum is an important conference hosted by ECOSOC for young people to contribute to policy discussions at a global level. At the 2024 conference, a member of the government delegation spoke about geopolitical barriers for young people from the Asian region when participating in meetings held mainly in Europe and the United States and received a lot of support from young people in the same region. Going forward, it is important to continue increasing the presence of young Japanese people at international conferences and to strengthen cooperative relationships from the viewpoint of young people that transcend politics and interests.

The United Nations Summit of the Future was held with the aim of considering concrete proposals for achieving the SDGs and tackling evolving new issues. In the Summit's outcome document, “Pact for the Future”, the attendees committed to promoting the resolution of a wide range of issues such as sustainable development, international peace and security, human rights, global governance transformation, digital cooperation, youth and future generations, etc. Specific actions related to young people and future generations that should be highlighted are as follows.

- Scale up investment in essential services for young people to ensure they are able to participate fully in the social and economic development of their own countries
Commitment to increase investment in essential services for young people and ensure that they can participate fully in the socio-economic development of their countries (Action 36)
- Promote, protect and respect the human rights of all young people and foster social inclusion and integration (Action 37)
- Strengthen meaningful youth participation in decision-making processes at the national and international levels (Actions 38/39)

Also, as a pre-event to the UN Summit of the Future, “#YouthLead”, a campaign with the theme of empowering youths was held in which young people from Japan participated in the discussions. In a poll of the participants at the event, the majority of opinions described the current participation of young people as “tokenism” and sought for an increase in opportunities for meaningful participation of young people.

Accumulating specific progresses based on the guidelines for action, such as (1) strengthening sovereign education, (2) establishing opportunities for mid- to long-term participation and opinion exchange regardless of region and economic disparities, (3) creating a system to protect young people from risks from participation (harassment, slander, academic disruption, etc.), (4) guaranteeing access to information, and (5) strengthening accountability related to decision

¹⁵ United Nations ‘Young People’s Meaningful Involvement Vital for Advancing Sustainable Development Goals, Speakers Stress as Youth Forum Concludes’ <https://press.un.org/en/2022/ecosoc7076.doc.htm>.

making and implementation process, will further promote meaningful youth participation which in turn will contribute to the realization of a sustainable society.

Junior Chamber International Japan (Japan JC)

(Group overview)

Japan JC began in 1949 with the establishment of the Tokyo Junior Chamber of Commerce by young volunteers with a sense of responsibility and passion, based on the ideal of realizing a bright and prosperous society. Based on the three creeds of training, service, and friendship, the organization is proactively working on volunteering initiatives and tackling various social issues with the aim of creating a better society.

(Activities and achievements)

Japan JC has hosted the JCI JAPAN Global Youth Ambassador Development Project every year since 2011. This project teaches youths about international relations and world peace and fosters human resources that can play an active role overseas in the future. Every year, middle and high school students from all over Japan are selected as ambassadors, and training is held both domestically and internationally.

In FY2023, a total of three domestic training sessions were held, and for the international training, students visited wells and poultry farms in Cambodia that were supported by Japan JC through the “Smile by Water campaign”. This experience taught them about international support activities aimed at resolving SDGs Goal 6: “ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all”. A forum was also held at Tokyo Big Sight to which Deputy Foreign Minister Horii was invited and a lively exchange opinions on issues and difficulties faced by participants to achieve the SDGs took place. Furthermore, in New York, they visited the United Nations Headquarters and paid a courtesy visit to Izumi Nakamitsu, Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations Headquarters. They also visited the Permanent Mission of Japan to the United Nations and the Consulate General of Japan in New York. At a lunch gathering with local New York high school students, they talked about peace over pizza, and in an exchange of opinions with the United Nations Envoy on Youth, they deepened their understanding of the influence of young people's ability to communicate and the importance of correct understanding and information dissemination.

In FY2024, during their domestic training, the youth ambassadors attended lectures on diversity by Sri Lankan born sociologist, Mr. Nishantha, on war and peace from Mr. Steven Lloyd Leeper, who served successive posts as the chairperson of the Hiroshima Peace Culture Foundation (Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum), and about cultural differences between Japan and overseas and the current state of education overseas from Mr. Masaki Fujimoto, a Japanese person active overseas. Through three domestic training sessions, they considered what they could do to achieve world peace and participated in discussions.

The first country they visited for their overseas training was Cambodia. There, they visited the Killing Fields where the massacre under the Pol Pot administration took place and learned about the cruel past and cultural differences through group work with local children. In the Philippines, which was the second country they visited, they learned from Mr. Tomo Matsui who operates a library on Mindanao Island and supports local children. They learned about the current situation in the Philippines and that there were many children who lived in close proximity to danger.

Since their return to Japan, the ambassadors have carried out awareness-raising activities primarily in their regions of origin, and we will ensure that there are opportunities for as many people as possible to take action for peace.

G7/G20 Youth Japan

(Group overview)

G7/G20 Youth Japan was established in 2008 for young people with academic knowledge and expertise to provide constructive policy recommendations. The organization dispatches a Japanese delegations primarily to the Y7 summit and the Y20 summit (hereafter “Y7/Y20”).

(Recent activities and achievements)

In conjunction with the 2023 G7 Summit in Japan, they hosted the Y7 Summit 2023 Japan (Y7 Japan). Prior to the summit, public discussion events and youth awareness surveys were conducted for each theme, such as peace and security, economy, climate change and environmental issues, health and welfare, and digital innovation. Also, in collaboration with the United Nations University, we also hosted the G7 High School Summit 2023. This event brought together approximately 120 high school students and provided them with an opportunity to make policy proposals from the perspective of high school students.

The following responses and suggestions were obtained in the annual survey of young people's attitudes.

- ① 80% answered that there are people, including themselves, in disadvantageous positions at work or school for irrational reasons, and the main causes were gender, age, and disability. The survey showed that the inclusive society envisioned by youths was a society in which they can contribute and play an active role regardless of background or identity.
- ② Responses showed that the most important constituents to contribute to future technological development for sustainability, climate change, and energy, etc. were 30% small to medium companies and venture businesses, 20% large enterprises, 20% international organizations, and 19% governments. This showed that youths had high expectations for small to medium companies and venture businesses.
- ③ Approximately 80% responded negatively regarding the possibility of working continuously at one company/organization, and more than half answered that they had or currently have side jobs or considered taking side jobs. The survey taught us that for young people, demonstrating their own abilities, growth, and money were some of the criteria considered when selecting a work environment.

Furthermore, at discussion events held every year, dialogues were held on the importance of cooperation and cooperation beyond national boundaries for global issues, the necessity of co-creating a sustainable society involving the Global South, and the realization of an inclusive society to protect mental and physical safety and security. There were also opinions raised regarding the development of digital human resources and the activities of minority human resources, including women, as necessary for sustainable economic development, and the need to create common guidelines across countries for climate change and digital technology that is undergoing rapid progress.


The opinions of the many young people that are gathered through these surveys were compiled as communiques by the Japanese delegation, for discussion amongst young people from each countries. These opinions have been proposed to G7/G20 every year. At Y7 Japan in 2023, the findings were submitted to Prime Minister Kishida and were proposed to the G7. Similarly in 2024, proposals were made to the G7 in Italy and G20 in Brazil.

Separate from the Y7/Y20 above, based on the past questionnaires accumulated, we examined what young people desired from a happy society and what elements were necessary for it. In the post-2030 agenda, the sustainable development of the Japanese economy is essential and for this, we identified the three necessary elements of “mental, physical, and global health”, “growth of companies and individuals”, and “domestic and international connections”. Reflecting on the free thinking of young people that is unhindered by preconceived notions and customs as well as the voices of the mature youths who have the achievements and experiences, leads to the creation of new value concepts. On the other hand, the opportunities to exercise discretion and influence are limited, making it necessary to secure and expand places where constituents that represent the opinions of the young generation can take action.

(Gender Mainstreaming and Promoting Women’s Empowerment)

In December 2020, the government approved the Fifth Basic Plan for Gender Equality (the Fifth Basic Plan) at the Cabinet meeting (partial revisions approved by the Cabinet in December 2023). In order to comprehensively and systematically promote measures based on the Basic Act for Gender Equal Society, the “basic recognition” for the period up to the end of FY2030 as well as the “basic direction of measures” and “specific initiatives” for the period up to the end of FY2025 were set forth in the Plan. Since 2015, in order to accelerate women's empowerment, the government has also adopted “the Basic Policy on Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women” by around each June, which are reflected in the budget requests of ministries and agencies.

Since 2003, the Government of Japan has set a target of “Expecting to increase the percentage of women in leadership positions to at least 30% by 2020 in all fields in society.” However, the government recognizes that while women’s participation has been progressing in some



fields, there have been fields in which progress has lagged behind, such as political and economic fields. For this reason, the Fifth Plan set out a new aim to achieve a society by the 2030s in which everyone can be empowered without being conscious of their gender and where there is no gender imbalance among people in leadership positions, and to promote initiatives with the aim of achieving the milestone target of increasing the percentage of women in leadership positions to approximately 30% of the total as early as possible during the 2020s.

To realize a gender-equal society, it is vital to monitor and evaluate implementation of gender equality initiatives by all ministries and agencies under the basic plan. To this end, the council for gender equality, composed of relevant ministers and individuals with expert knowledge on gender issues, has been established under the basic act for gender equal society to oversee the implementation of the Fifth Basic Plan for Gender Equality. In particular, in 2023, which marked the midpoint of the Fifth Plan, the government conducted a follow-up review on the progress toward its performance targets. For those targets that had not reached a certain benchmark, expert committees provided recommendations. Based on these recommendations, the Council for Gender Equality encouraged relevant ministries and agencies to strengthen their efforts. Furthermore, in 2024, the Council began discussions toward formulating the Sixth Basic Plan for Gender Equality.

In terms of legislation, the Act on Promotion of Gender Equality in the Political Field was enacted in May 2018 with the aim of effectively and proactively promoting gender equality in politics, thereby contributing to the development of a democratic society in which both men and women participate jointly. This law establishes as a fundamental principle the aim of achieving, to the greatest extent possible, gender balance in the number of candidates in elections for the House of Representatives, the House of Councillors, and local assemblies. It sets forth the responsibilities of the national and local governments, and encourages political parties and other organizations to voluntarily set targets regarding the number of male and female candidates they endorse for public office. Through the June 2021 amendment, the law was revised to include examples of voluntary efforts expected of political parties and similar organizations, such as improving candidate selection processes. The revision also added provisions requiring necessary measures to prevent and resolve problems arising from sexual harassment and other gender-related misconduct, and reinforced the policies of national and local governments.

In August 2015, the Act on Promotion of Women's Active Engagement in Professional Life was enacted to create a society where all women who intend to work can fully demonstrate their qualities and capabilities. As a result, national and local governments, as well as private companies with 301 or more regular employees, have been required to formulate and publicize action plans that set quantitative goals, such as the percentage of women hired and the proportion of women in managerial positions, and to publicize information related to the active engagement of women. In 2019, a partial amendment to the law was enacted, which expanded the obligation to formulate action plans and developed requirements for

information publication. From fiscal year 2022, the scope of application was extended to companies with 101 or more regular employees. In 2022, pay differences between men and women was newly designated as an item for publication. National and local governments, as well as private-sector employers with 301 or more regular employees, are mandated to publicize this information. In June 2025, a revised bill that includes the extension of the Act on Promotion of Women's Active Engagement in Professional Life, as well as enhancements to the publication of information regarding women's active engagement in professional life, was passed in the 217th ordinary session of the National Diet. To encourage corporate efforts, the government has been working in collaboration with the Tokyo Stock Exchange (TSE) since fiscal year 2012 to select listed companies that excel in promoting women's empowerment. These companies are designated as Nadeshiko Brands, highlighting them as attractive investment options for investors who value medium- to long-term corporate value enhancement. As part of corporate governance reform, the TSE revised its listing rules in October 2023, requiring, by way of example, Prime Market-listed companies to set numerical targets for the percentage of female executives.

In the “Intensive Policy for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women 2023,” also called the “Basic Policy on Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women 2023,” adopted in June 2023, Japan set a target for companies listed on the Prime Market of the Tokyo Stock Exchange to increase the proportion of female executives to 30% or more by 2030. As an interim goal, the Fifth Basic Plan, updated in December of the same year, established a new performance target of raising the proportion of female executives among companies listed on the Prime Market of the Tokyo Stock Exchange to 19% by 2025. Based on these goals, efforts are being made to strengthen the recruitment, development, and appointment of women in companies.

Companies that meet certain criteria, such as implementing initiatives for the promotion of women's active engagement, can receive the “Eruboshi” certification. Since 2008, the government has also held multiple “Shining Women” symposia each year across Japan. In 2024, around ten such symposia were held in locations such as Tokyo, Sapporo, Fukui, and online.

To provide a solid foundation for promoting these initiatives, steady efforts will be made to advance work style reform, support the balancing of work with childcare and long-term care, eliminate rigid gender role stereotypes, support women's health, and strengthen measures against domestic violence, sexual crimes, and sexual violence. Lastly, the government remains committed to ensuring women's participation in policy and decision-making processes across all sectors and will enhance efforts across all ministries and agencies to implement policies that reflect a gender-equal perspective in every area of society.

(Strengthening Enhancement Against Sexual Crimes and Sexual Violence, and Support for Women Facing Difficulties)

Regarding measures against sexual crimes and violence, related ministries and agencies are working closely together to address various aspects such as education and awareness to prevent becoming perpetrators or victims and providing seamless support from immediately after an incident to recovery. It is necessary for society as a whole to share the understanding that "sexual acts without the other person's consent are sexual violence." Efforts are being continued and strengthened based on the "Policy for Enhancement Measures Against Sexual Crimes and Sexual Violence"¹⁶ from fiscal year 2020 to 2022, and a new policy¹⁷ has been formulated to designate the period up to fiscal year 2025 as a "further intensive strengthening period" to implement measures.

From the perspective of criminal law reform, the Act on the Partial Revision of the Penal Code and the Code of Criminal Procedure¹⁸, which includes revising the requirements for sexual crime provisions, raising the age of consent from under 13 to under 16, and extending the statute of limitations, as well as the Act on Penalizing Photography of Sexual Poses and Other Related Offenses¹⁹, have been enacted and came into effect on July 13, 2023. This amendment allows for more accurate punishment of sexual acts done in a "freeze state," such as being "paralyzed with fear," which were previously difficult to recognize as crimes.

Additionally, efforts have been made to prevent recidivism among sexual offenders and to improve the environment and support system to make it easier for victims to report and seek consultation. Measures include making calls to the nationwide common number "#8891" for one-stop support centers free of charge, implementing SNS consultations, and promoting strengthened collaboration with medical institutions of various specialties and related local organizations. Furthermore, efforts are being made to ensure the immediate acceptance of sexual crime victim reports, prevent secondary victimization during the investigation stage, promote awareness of the nationwide common number "#8103" for police consultation on sexual crime victimization, and properly operate public expense coverage for emergency contraception, medical fees, and counseling fees.

Moreover, to prevent children from becoming perpetrators, victims, or bystanders of sexual violence, "Life Safety Education" is being promoted. This aims to help them understand the incorrect perceptions and actions underlying sexual violence, as well as its impacts, and to instill a respect for life, self, others, and individuals according to their developmental stages.

As part of measures against domestic violence, the revised DV Prevention Act²⁰, which includes expanding protection order system to cover cases of severe psychological harm and establishing a council to strengthen multi-agency collaboration for seamless support up to life reconstruction, was enacted on April 1, 2024. Related ministries and agencies are working together to ensure the smooth

¹⁶ Formulated at the Inter-Ministerial Conference for Enhancement Measures Against Sexual Crimes and Sexual Violence

¹⁷ Policy for Further Enhancement Measures Against Sexual Crimes and Sexual Violence

¹⁸ Act Partially Amending the Penal Code and the Code of Criminal Procedure (Law No. 66 of 2023)

¹⁹ Act on Penalizing Acts of Photographing Sexual Poses and Other Related Offenses, and on the Erasure of Electronic Records of Images of Sexual Poses Recorded in Seized Items (Law No. 67 of 2023)

²⁰ Act Partially Amending the Act on the Prevention of Spousal Violence and the Protection of Victims (Law No. 30 of 2023)

implementation of this revised law, thereby enhancing the protection and support for victims of domestic violence.

Additionally, against the backdrop of diversifying and complicating issues faced by women due to changes in socio-economic conditions and family relationships, the limitations and need for revision of welfare and support systems for women, such as the Prostitution Prevention Act aimed at protecting and rehabilitating women at risk of engaging in prostitution, have been pointed out. In light of this, a new Women's Support Act²¹ that clearly stipulates perspectives such as women's welfare, respect and protection of human rights, and gender equality has been newly enacted and came into effect on April 1, 2024.

(Realizing a cohesive society with foreign nationals)

To realize a society of harmonious coexistence with foreign nationals, Japan adopted the Comprehensive Measures for the “Acceptance and Coexistence of Foreign Nationals” in 2018. Since then, the content has been enhanced through annual revisions. In 2022, the government further established the “Roadmap for the Realization of a Society of Harmonious Coexistence with Foreign Nationals,” which outlines the vision of Japan for such a society and the medium- to long-term challenges and policies necessary to achieve it.

In the roadmap, three visions of the society for coexistence with foreign nationals are outlined: "a safe and secure society," "a vibrant society rich in diversity," and "a society that respects individual dignity and human rights." To achieve these visions of a coexistence society, four medium- to long-term issues are identified: "initiatives for Japanese language education for smooth communication and social participation," "strengthening information dissemination and consultation systems for foreigners," "support tailored to life stages and life cycles," and "initiatives for the development of a foundation for a coexistence society." Additionally, specific measures to solve these issues are described and are being pursued in collaboration with relevant ministries and agencies. Furthermore, to ensure the steady implementation of these policies, the progress is checked annually by listening to the opinions of experts, confirming advancement, and revising policies as necessary during the promotion of the roadmap.

²¹ Act on Support for Women Facing Difficulties (Law No. 52 of 2022)

(Business and Human Rights)

As the importance of respecting human rights in corporate activities gains global recognition, Japan formulated its “National Action Plan on Business and Human Rights” (2020-2025) in 2020. This was followed by the issuance of the “Guidelines on Respecting Human Rights in Responsible Supply Chains” in 2022, and the adoption of a government policy on human rights considerations in public procurement in 2023. Furthermore, based on the formulation of the above guidelines, efforts have been made to disseminate and raise awareness through seminars and other events to ensure that companies, including small and medium-sized enterprises, fully understand efforts to respect human rights, which include dialogue with stakeholders such as labor unions, civil society organizations, industry organizations, human rights defenders, and local governments. Additionally, in April 2023, the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry developed the "Reference Material on Practical Approaches for Business Enterprises to Respect Human Rights in Responsible Supply Chains" to provide companies with more specific and practical guidance on initiatives to respect human rights.

Amid the ongoing globalization of supply chains, Japan is providing supports in cooperation with international organizations such as the UNDP and the International Labour Organization (ILO), such as the assistance for the host governments, in formulating and implementing action plans, as well as the provision of training sessions and seminars for Japanese companies and their suppliers, particularly in countries where Japanese companies operate, for the purpose of realizing decent work for workers in global supply chains. Japan, in cooperation with the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), promotes, processes inquiries on, and supports the resolution of issues related to the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises based on the Guidelines, through the Japan National Contact Point (Japan NCP). To strengthen the NCP's functions, Japan is working to promote the utilization of the Japan NCP through awareness-raising activities for domestic and international stakeholders and through awareness-raising activities at overseas embassies.

The Japanese government is working towards revising the National Action Plan by 2025 and will continue its efforts to contribute to the achievement of the SDGs.

As part of private sector initiatives in the field of business and human rights, the Japan Platform for Migrant Workers toward Responsible and Inclusive Society (JP-MIRAI) serves as a support platform for foreign workers, involving over 800 organizations and individuals. The platform provides information, protects human rights, and offers multilingual support services, including “JP-MIRAI Assist,” which operates in 23 languages, and a portal site providing essential life information for foreign workers in or coming to Japan. At the same time, JP-MIRAI promotes ethical recruitment practices and improved working environments for companies employing foreign workers and for larger corporations that utilize those companies’ products or services. These initiatives have also been recognized in the 2024 country visit report by the UN Working Group on Business and Human Rights.

Priority Area (iii)

Strengthening efforts to
address global challenges



Priority Area (iii): Strengthening efforts to address global challenges


The three global crises, climate change, biodiversity loss, and pollution, are intricately interconnected, and it is essential to adopt an integrated approach that simultaneously addresses both climate and sustainable development challenges while generating synergies. Based on this perspective, Japan is advancing efforts to achieve net-zero greenhouse gas emissions by balancing emissions with removals, to realize a circular and nature-symbiotic economy and society, and to halt and reverse biodiversity loss, moving toward a nature positive.

Through initiatives such as Green Transformation (GX) and Digital Transformation (DX), as outlined in Priority Area (i), as well as various other efforts described below, Japan's latest greenhouse gas emissions and removals in fiscal year 2023 totaled approximately 1.017 billion tons (in carbon dioxide [CO₂] equivalent, hereinafter the same). This represents a 27.1% decrease (about 378.1 million tons) compared to fiscal year 2013, continuing a steady downward trend toward achieving net-zero emissions by 2050. In February 2025, Japan's Cabinet approved a new Plan for Global Warming Countermeasures, which includes updated emissions reduction targets for post-2030. At the same time, in forums such as the G7 and the Asia Zero Emissions Community (AZEC), a shared direction has been articulated for achieving decarbonization. This approach calls for an integrated response to energy security, climate change, and geopolitical risks, while recognizing diverse pathways tailored to each country's circumstances, all aiming toward the common goal of net-zero emissions. Japan is pursuing the simultaneous achievement of a stable energy supply, economic growth, and decarbonization. To further advance these efforts, the government revised its basic energy plan in February 2025. Details are provided in the section titled “5. Progress toward each goal,” specifically under Goals 7 and 13.

Amid the increasing severity and frequency of natural disasters, Japan has been promoting initiatives to protect human lives and strengthen the resilience of social and economic systems, in line with the “Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030”. Based on the national resilience plan, investments in disaster prevention, such as strengthening observation systems, developing forecasting technologies, and combining various methods of effective information dissemination, have proven effective in recent years, particularly in response to localized heavy rainfall, by reducing disaster risks, facilitating early evacuation, and enabling rapid recovery and reconstruction. (See “5 Progress toward each goal,” Goal 9) These initiatives aim to strengthen the resilience of economic and social systems.

Taking into account environmental constraints such as the need to address decarbonization, as well as resource constraints and economic security concerns stemming from Japan's low resource self-sufficiency, the country has been promoting the transition to a circular economy with the aim of strengthening industrial competitiveness and contributing to regional revitalization.

With regard to the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, Japan formulated a national strategy in 2023 and is advancing efforts to achieve nature-positive by 2030. In 2027, Japan will host GREEN×EXPO 2027 in Yokohama. This exposition aims to share with the world the wisdom of living in harmony with nature and to present optimal solutions for the sustainable coexistence of nature, people, and society.



To address plastic pollution, Japan is working on waste collection and treatment, pollution prevention, data collection, and the accumulation of scientific knowledge. Japan also contributes to international discussions aimed at establishing a legally binding international instrument (treaty) on plastic pollution.

In the field of global health, Japan has promoted Universal Health Coverage (UHC), by establishing a universal health insurance system in 1961, which has also proven effective in addressing the challenges of an aging society. To share its experience with developing countries, Japan is working with WHO and the World Bank to establish the UHC Knowledge Hub in Japan, a global center to promote human resource development for achieving UHC worldwide.

In promoting the above initiatives, as stated in the Implementation Guiding Principles, it is necessary to deeply consider the different global-level issues be interconnected, based on the concept of “planetary health” which states the co-relation to the health by climate change and the biodiversity.

(Society Circulation and symbiosis based society and the Synergy Approach)

With the recognition that overcoming the triple global crises, climate change, biodiversity loss, and pollution, requires the promotion of synergies on a global scale, Japan has placed emphasis on a synergistic approach that takes into account the interlinkages among individual global challenges. Japan has been pursuing a transformation toward a net-zero economy and a circular, climate-resilient, and nature positive economic and social system.

The Sixth Basic Environment Plan, approved by the Cabinet in May 2024, sets forth the vision of a sustainable society in which the economy and society can grow and develop by safeguarding the Earth's carrying capacity and enhancing environmental quality, namely, the realization of a circular and nature-symbiotic society. Discussions on "planetary health," which emphasize the inseparable connection between the health of the planet (environmental integrity) and human health, are becoming more active. On the recognition that natural capital (the environment) forms the foundation of all economic and social activities, it is essential to develop society in a way that not only reduces the total environmental burden but also contributes to the creation of an even better environment, based on terrestrial resources such as renewable energy. In implementing future environmental policies, Japan will ensure speed and scale based on the best available scientific knowledge. It will also aim to generate synergies across the priority strategies in six fields (economic system, national land, community, life, science, technologies and innovation, and international cooperation), as contributions toward achieving the SDGs.

Internationally, Japan has taken a leading role in promoting global discussions on the synergistic approaches, including at various opportunities such as the 2023 G7 Hiroshima Summit, where it served as chair. The Expert Group on Climate and SDG Synergy released the First Global Report on Climate and SDG Synergies during the 2023 SDG Summit, and the Second Global Report during the UN 2024 High-Level Political Forum (HLPF) on Sustainable Development. Japan contributed to these efforts by hosting key events, including the Third Global Conference on Strengthening Synergies Between

the Paris Agreement and the 2030 Agenda For Sustainable Development in July 2022 and the Expert Group Meeting in March 2024. As global interest in synergy increases, at the 6th United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA-6) in March 2024, Japan's proposed resolution titled "Promoting synergies, cooperation or collaboration for national implementation of multilateral environmental agreements and other relevant environmental instruments ²²" was adopted.

Since fiscal 2016, Japan has been holding SDGs Stakeholders Meeting as a forum for sharing progress on the implementation of the SDGs both internationally and domestically, and for promoting efforts from an environmental perspective. The meeting serves as a platform where private companies, local governments, NGOs, and other stakeholders can share leading practices, recognize each other's efforts, and build momentum for further action. At the 13th meeting in March 2022 and the 14th meeting in February 2023, participants shared updates on the latest developments related to the SDGs and introduced the outcome of Third Global Conference on Strengthening Synergies Between the Paris Agreement and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The meetings also facilitated in-depth discussions on how to generate synergistic effects between environmental goals and other SDG targets in order to advance the achievement of the SDGs.

(Decarbonization)


In the field of climate change, a concerted effort by the international community is essential, and Japan is contributing to global decarbonization, particularly in Asia. Japan announced to provide climate assistance in both private and public finance totaling up to approximately USD 70 billion over the five years between 2021 and 2025, including approximately USD 14.8 billion for adaptation, and has been steadily implementing this commitment. To further promote greenhouse gas reductions in developing countries, Japan is advancing over 250 decarbonization projects in 30 countries through the Joint Crediting Mechanism (JCM ²³). Under the AZEC, Japan promotes decarbonization projects through various pathways. Through the CEFIA²⁵, a public-private initiative, Japan has deepened discussions on decarbonization technologies and financing. Additionally, Japan has contributed USD 3 billion to the GCF²⁶ and announced its intention to contribute up to approximately JPY 165 billion in 2023. To further promote the international development and adoption of transition finance, a financing approach that supports companies in their transition toward decarbonization, Japan has taken a leading role in international discussions by establishing the Asia GX Consortium in October 2024, under the leadership of the Financial Services Agency and ASEAN financial authorities. The consortium facilitates the sharing of case studies and the identification and dissemination of practical challenges. Furthermore, as part of the efforts to globally reduce all greenhouse gases, Japan has participated in the Global Methane Pledge (GMP) Champion and advanced initiatives such as measuring methane

²² Fiji, Canada, Chile, Switzerland, Norway, and Peru are also co-sponsoring countries.

²³ The Joint Crediting Mechanism (JCM) is a bilateral scheme through which Japan promotes the deployment of advanced decarbonization technologies and other solutions in partner countries, thereby contributing to greenhouse gas emissions reductions and removals in those countries, while receiving part of the resulting emissions reductions as credits.

²⁵ CEFIA: Cleaner Energy Future Initiative for ASEAN

²⁶ GCF: Green Climate Fund



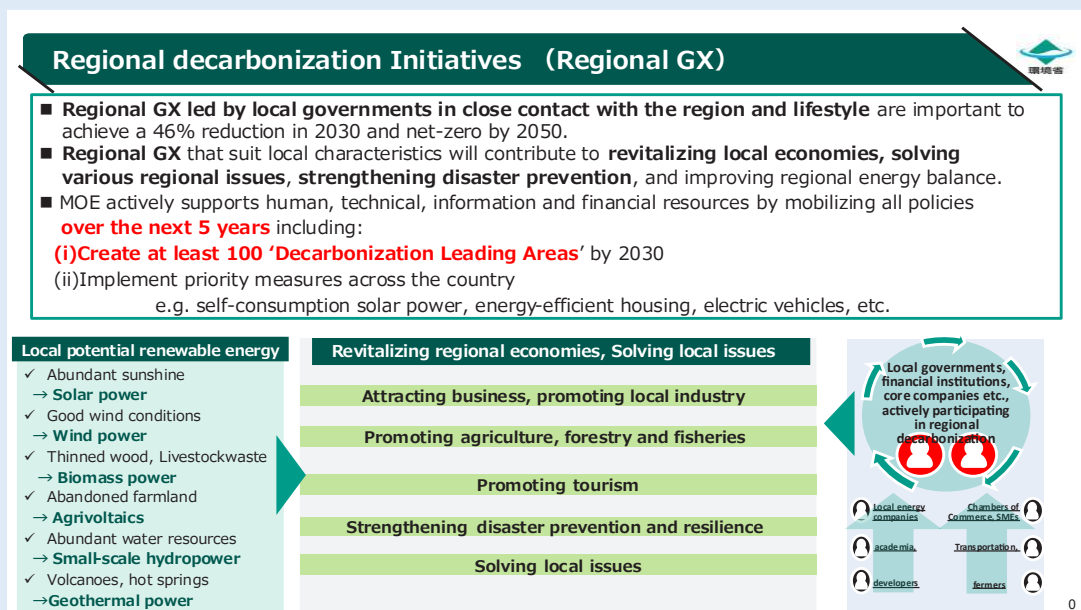
emissions via satellites, supporting methane reduction in the agriculture and waste sectors, and promoting the reduction of fluorocarbon emissions across their entire lifecycle through the Fluorocarbon Initiative launched by Japan.

In October 2020, Japan declared its commitment to achieving net-zero by 2050, aiming to accelerate the transition to a net-zero economy. This declaration was based on the recognition that climate action is no longer a constraint on economic growth, but rather a driver of industrial transformation and societal change, leading to significant growth. In April 2021, Japan announced its aim to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 46% from fiscal year 2013 levels by fiscal year 2030, while continuing to take on the challenge of reaching a 50% reduction. In October 2021, the Cabinet approved the Plan for Global Warming Countermeasures, which outlines the policies and measures to support the achievement of this fiscal year 2030 target. Based on this plan, Japan has vigorously promoted initiatives across all sectors, including thorough energy conservation, maximum adoption of renewable energy, and decarbonization of public and local sectors, to create a virtuous cycle of economy and environment and achieve ambitious fiscal year 2030 goals.

Furthermore, in February 2025, the Japanese government approved a revised Plan for Global Warming Countermeasures, which includes new greenhouse gas emissions reduction targets beyond fiscal year 2030. These targets aim for a 60% reduction by fiscal year 2035 and a 73% reduction by fiscal year 2040, compared to fiscal year 2013 levels. The plan positions these ambitious targets as being consistent with the global 1.5 °C goal and aligned with a linear pathway toward achieving net-zero emissions by 2050. To achieve these targets, Japan will advance policies that promote decarbonization as a driver of economic growth, in coordination with its Green Transformation (GX) strategy, which aims to simultaneously ensure energy security, foster economic growth, and achieve decarbonization.

Column 8: Regional decarbonization initiatives

The Government of Japan is promoting regionally led decarbonization efforts, driven by local governments closely connected to communities and daily life, as part of its commitment to achieving net-zero emissions by 2050 and a 46% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by fiscal year 2030. Regional decarbonization initiatives that utilize renewable energy sources tailored to local characteristics, such as solar power, wind power, and biomass energy, contribute to solving local issues faced by local governments. These efforts also support regional revitalization and contribute to the achievement of the SDGs. The Government of Japan supports local governments that are working to create sustainable communities by simultaneously promoting decarbonization efforts and addressing local challenges, such as fostering local economic circulation, promoting local industries and agriculture, forestry, and fisheries, enhancing tourism, and strengthening disaster preparedness and resilience, with the aim of enhancing the appeal and quality of the region. This support is provided through a range of policy measures.



PPT: Ministry of the Environment

Focusing on the residential and commercial power sectors, the Ministry of the Environment has designated "Decarbonization Leading Areas," regions aiming to simultaneously achieve decarbonization and address local challenges by fiscal year 2030 without waiting for 2050. To date, 81 proposals from 107 municipalities across 38 prefectures (including 66 cities, 32 towns, and 9 villages) have been selected nationwide, and support is being provided to help these areas achieve their goals. Through these efforts, Japan is setting a course toward decarbonization in a wide range of communities, including rural villages, fishing and mountain areas, remote islands,



Decarbonization and securing the maintenance of regional public transportation
(Photo: Ueda, Nagano prefecture)

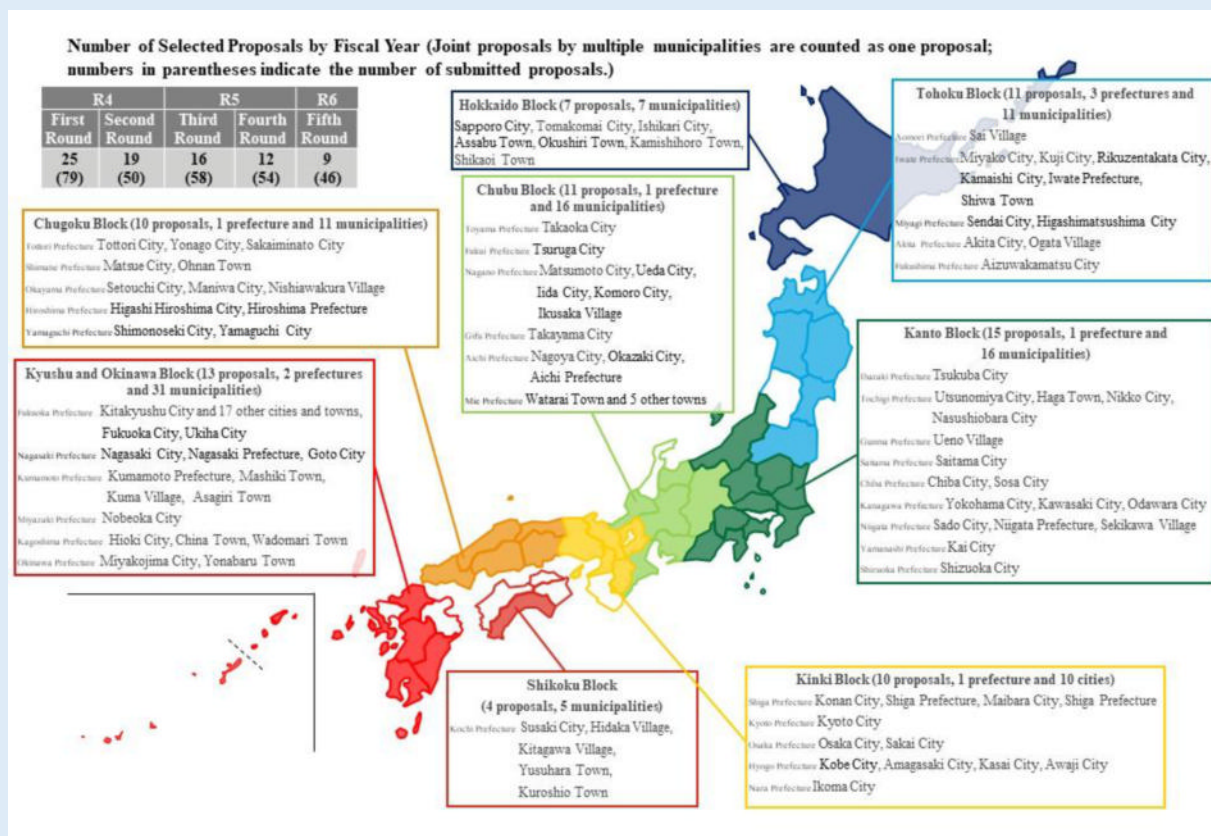


Decarbonization and promoting local tourism
(Photo: Matsue, Shimane prefecture)

and urban neighborhoods, by addressing local challenges and improving residents' quality of life. Under the priority measures acceleration program, the government provides continuous and comprehensive multi-year support to local governments that are implementing advanced measures in a rapid and integrated manner, such as self-consumption solar

power systems and improvements in the energy efficiency of homes and buildings.

Through these efforts, the Government of Japan will continue to build a foundation for decarbonization at the regional level and aims to accelerate and scale up such initiatives nationwide.



(Ensuring stable supplies of energy and food and transitioning to a more resilient supply and demand structure)

Even while advancing climate change measures, Japan has strengthened its energy security under the Basic Energy Plan by prioritizing safety and simultaneously working to ensure a stable energy supply, reduce energy costs (S+3E²⁷), and transition to a more resilient energy supply and demand structure.


In the food, agriculture, forestry, and fisheries sectors, increasing emphasis is being placed on addressing the SDGs and environmental issues. In line with this trend, the Basic Act on Food, Agriculture and Rural Areas was revised in 2024 to include “Establishment of a Food System in Harmony with Environment” as a new fundamental principle. In April 2025, the "Basic Plan for Food, Agriculture and Rural Areas" was formulated. In addition, Japan is promoting initiatives to reduce environmental impact through the MIDORI Strategy for Sustainable Food Systems and the Act on Promotion of Environmental Burden Reduction Business Activities for Establishing Environmentally Harmonized Food Systems, which aim to achieve both increased productivity and sustainability through innovation.

(Disaster prevention and enhancing national resilience)

In response to the increasing frequency of natural disasters worldwide due to climate change, Japan has shared its expertise in disaster prevention and reduction, and has actively promoted the implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030, both domestically and internationally, particularly emphasizing the principle of "Build Back Better" in post-disaster reconstruction. Building on these efforts, Japan has undertaken its own unique contribution through the implementation of the “Sendai Cooperation Initiative for Disaster Risk Reduction Phase 2” since 2019, providing support to at least five million people by 2022 through measures such as flood countermeasures. Also, in 2023, a “political declaration” was adopted in the Disaster Reduction Framework Interim Review. To promote the international deployment of disaster prevention technologies, Japan established the Japan International Public-Private Association for Disaster Risk Reduction (JIPAD) and has strengthened public-private partnerships through initiatives such as the organization of 26 seminars. As disasters occur frequently and with increasing severity around the world, there is significant expectation from various countries for Japan's advanced disaster prevention technologies. Through initiatives like JIPAD, efforts will be made to further strengthen public-private partnerships and promote the international expansion of the disaster prevention industry.

On January 1, 2024, the Noto Peninsula Earthquake struck, forcing many affected people to take shelter and live in evacuation centers and other temporary facilities. It is widely recognized that in the event of large-scale disasters such as earthquakes, the impacts differ between women and men, and that women, children, and other vulnerable individuals are often disproportionately affected. To

²⁷ The S+3E framework refers to an approach that prioritizes Safety as a fundamental premise, while simultaneously achieving Energy Security, Economic Efficiency, and Environmental Compatibility.



appropriately address the diverse needs of disaster-affected populations, it is critically important to ensure the participation of women in disaster response efforts. Taking into account the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) perspective, Japan will further promote the participation of women in the field of disaster prevention.

In the field of water-related disaster prevention, the UN 2023 Water Conference was held at United Nations Headquarters in March 2023. During thematic dialogue 3 on “Water for Climate, Resilience and Environment,” Special Envoy of the Prime Minister, Yoko Kamikawa served as co-chair alongside Egypt’s Minister of Water Resources and Irrigation, Hani Sewilam, leading discussions on climate change, water-related disaster prevention, and related topics. Following the conference, Japan has continued to work with Egypt to follow up on international discussions in this field. Joint follow-up meetings between Japan and Egypt have been held at various international forums, including Cairo Water Week (November 2023 and October 2024), the UN Climate Change Summit (December 2023), the tenth World Water Forum (May 2024), and the Dushanbe Water Process conference (June 2024). Additionally, international cooperation is being implemented, such as supporting the creation of flood risk maps in four Southeast Asian countries.

As environmental changes in the Arctic, the fastest-warming region on Earth, are increasingly affecting Japan's weather and climate, including the occurrence of cold waves, Japan is promoting advanced research to better understand these changes and their underlying processes, as well as to enhance the accuracy and resolution of weather and climate forecasting. At the same time, Japan is steadily proceeding with the construction of the Arctic research vessel *Mirai II*, which will serve as an international research platform in the region. Japan is also continuously collecting data related to climate change through observational research in Antarctica.

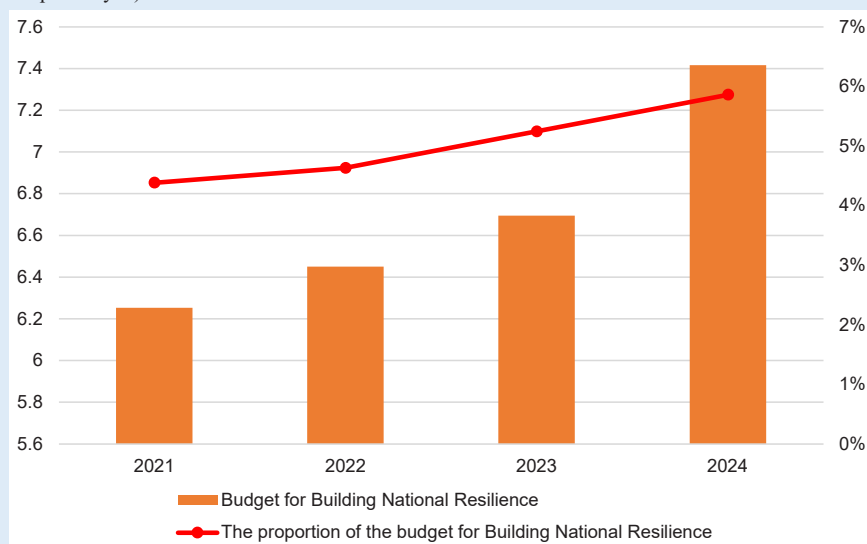
As part of its efforts related to disaster prevention, Japan formulated the Green Infrastructure Promotion Strategy 2023 in September 2023. The strategy outlines a vision and key perspectives for the use of green infrastructure, which leverages the diverse functions of the natural environment, and aims to promote and integrate such approaches across all sectors and settings. It also provides a comprehensive and systematic framework for positioning green infrastructure initiatives within the field of land, infrastructure, transport, and tourism. The number of members of the Green Infrastructure Public-Private Partnership Platform, established in March 2020, has exceeded 2,055 as of March 2025. The platform promotes the social implementation of green infrastructure, conducts research on related technologies, and explores financing mechanisms by leveraging the knowledge and expertise of a wide range of stakeholders. Furthermore, in September 2024, the “Recommendations for Green Infrastructure Projects and Finances: Toward the Promotion of Investment in Urban Development and City Planning through Visualization of Economic Benefits” was published. The publication targets not only pioneering green infrastructure businesses and investors, but also local community development businesses and financial institutions. It compiles and presents a wide range of information, including the various economic benefits of green infrastructure, evaluation and certification systems, and financing schemes.

Column 9: Pre-disaster investment for national resilience

Japan has been experiencing increasingly severe and frequent weather-related disasters due to the impacts of climate change, while the risk of large-scale earthquakes such as the Nankai Trough Earthquake is becoming more imminent. The infrastructure developed intensively during Japan's period of rapid economic growth is expected to deteriorate simultaneously in the coming years. Without appropriate measures, this could not only lead to an increased burden, but also pose a risk of dysfunction in the country's socio-economic systems. To address these challenges, Japan is working to further accelerate and deepen efforts in key areas: “measures against increasingly severe wind and flood damage and imminent large-scale earthquakes,” “accelerating responses to aging infrastructure with a shift toward preventive maintenance,” and “promoting digitalization to efficiently implement national resilience measures.” For the five-year period from fiscal 2021 to 2025, Japan has identified the additional scale and other aspects of projects needed and is implementing focused and intensive countermeasures.

From fiscal year 2021 to 2024, Japan secured an annual budget of approximately 6.2 trillion to 7.4 trillion Japanese yen (roughly 53 billion to 59 billion US dollars), allocating about four to six percent of the national budget each year as pre-disaster investment in initiatives that contribute to national resilience. Amid the increasing severity and frequency of disasters, it is essential for the Government of Japan to make a certain level of investment in disaster prevention in order to build a sustainable society.

(trillion Japanese yen)



Budget for Building National Resilience (Material: Based on date from the Cabinet Secretariat and the Ministry of Finance)

Japan is also promoting digitalization as part of its efforts to enhance national resilience. For example, in the 2021 landslide disaster in Atami City, the use of high-resolution elevation data enabled the comparison of elevation differences before and after the disaster, contributing to the early assessment of the damage. Approximately 30 percent of areas across Japan still lack high-resolution elevation data, making early development a pressing issue. To address this, Japan is

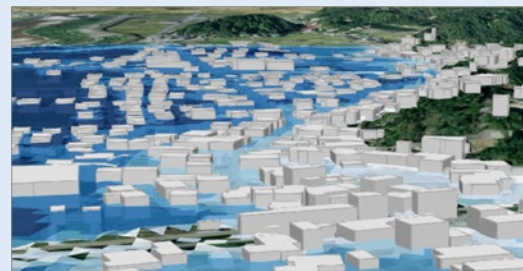
using airborne laser surveying to develop such data. High-resolution elevation data improves the accuracy of simulations for floods and landslides, thereby enhancing pre-disaster preparedness. During disasters, such data enables the precise and rapid identification of inundation areas and landslide occurrences, contributing to faster recovery and reconstruction efforts.



Highly precise elevation data (3D point cloud)
(Photo: Geospatial Information Authority of Japan)



Estimating inundation depth from elevation data
(Photo: Geospatial Information Authority of Japan)



Visualization of flood simulation on a 3D map
(Photo: Geospatial Information Authority of Japan)

(Circular Economy)

Resource circulation contributes not only to achieving net-zero emissions, but also to addressing broader social challenges such as economic security and regional revitalization. For Japan, enhancing the industrial competitiveness of resource circulation by securing both the quality and quantity of recycled materials is essential. Accordingly, the transition to a circular economy is positioned as a key policy priority.

In order to promote decarbonization and resource circulation, particularly securing the quality and quantity of recycled materials, in an integrated manner, Japan enacted the Act Concerning Sophistication of Recycling Business, etc. to Promote Resource Circulation in 2024. Under this law, the Minister of the Environment, has formulated a basic policy, require the reporting and publication of recycling performance by industrial waste disposal operators with large disposal volumes, and establish a certification system for the advancement of recycling-related businesses.

The Ministerial Council on Circular Economy was established in July 2024, initiated by the Prime Minister, to realize circular economy in Japan. In August of the same year, the Cabinet approved the Fifth Fundamental Plan for Establishing a Sound Material-Cycle Society, which is a national strategy designed to accelerate the transition to circular economy by consolidating policies across the government to build a circular society. Since then, the Ministerial Council has been convened to implement these initiatives strategically and comprehensively across the government.

In 2022, the Act on Promotion of Resource Circulation for Plastics came into force in Japan. The Act promotes initiatives for plastic resource circulation throughout the entire life cycle of plastic products. Based on the 3Rs + Renewable principle (Reduce, Reuse, Recycle, and the use of renewable resources), it introduces measures to encourage efforts by all stakeholders involved. Japan is also actively contributing to international discussions aimed at formulating a legally binding international instrument (treaty) on plastic pollution.

(Food Loss and Waste reduction)

In Japan, the amount of Food Loss and Waste was estimated at 4.72 million tons in fiscal year 2022. Of this total, 2.36 million tons were generated by the food industry, and 2.36 million tons were generated by households.

In October 2019, the Act on Promotion of Food Loss and Waste Reduction came into force, establishing a framework in which the national government, local governments, businesses, and consumers collaborate to address Food Loss and Waste reduction as a national movement. Japan had set a target to reduce both business-related and household Food Loss and Waste by half from fiscal year 2000 levels by fiscal year 2030. However, since the target for business-related Food Loss and Waste was achieved eight years ahead of schedule, the reduction target for this category was revised to 60% starting in fiscal year 2025.

To reduce business-related Food Loss and Waste across the entire food supply chain, Japan is promoting the following initiatives: (1) reviewing commercial practices, such as relaxation of delivery deadlines, switching to year-and-month labeling for best-before dates, and extension of the best-before dates of products; (2) raising consumer awareness of Food Loss and Waste reduction at retail stores and other business locations; (3) encouraging food companies to donate unused food to food banks and similar organizations; and (4) promoting practices such as encouraging customers to “finish their meals” and “take leftovers away” at restaurants. To reduce household Food Loss and Waste, Japan is working to encourage behavioral changes among consumers through various initiatives: (1) promoting better understanding of best-before and use-by dates; (2) providing information on how to effectively use food ingredients at home; (3) publishing estimated figures on economic losses and greenhouse gas emissions based on Food Loss and Waste estimated amounts, so that individual consumers can better relate to the issue; and (4) developing Food Loss and Waste reduction supporters who serve as key actors in promoting Food Loss and Waste reduction in their communities.

(Pollution Prevention)

To ensure the proper use of chemicals and prevent environmental pollution, Japan conducts pre-manufacture and import reviews of new chemical substances under the Act on the Regulation of Manufacture and Evaluation of Chemical Substances. In fiscal year 2023, 281 substances were reviewed. Japan has also continued to designate additional substances that exhibit persistence, toxicity, or other hazardous properties. Japan has also promoted the voluntary management of chemical substance emissions by businesses through the PRTR²⁸ system. This includes the revision of the list of designated substances under the Act on the Assessment of Releases of Specified Chemical Substances in the Environment and the Promotion of Management Improvement, and the amendment of its enforcement order, which came into effect in 2023. At the international level, the fifth session of the International Conference on Chemicals Management (ICCM5²⁹), held in September 2023, adopted the “Global Framework on Chemicals (GFC): For a Planet Free from Harmful Effects of Chemicals and Waste.” This framework serves as a voluntary mechanism for the management of chemicals throughout their life cycle, involving a wide range of stakeholders, including governments, intergovernmental organizations, civil society, industry, and academia, across diverse sectors such as environment, economy, society, health, agriculture, and labor. Countries are expected to implement the framework by formulating national implementation plans. Following the adoption of the GFC, Japan established GFC Liaison Committee of Relevant Ministries and Agencies within the government and is currently working on the development of a national implementation plan.

To help realize clean cities in developing countries, Japan launched the JICA Clean City Initiative (JCCI) in 2022. Through this initiative, Japan is supporting the development of sustainable societies by strengthening the capacity of environmental administrative bodies and promoting environmental measures such as waste management and the prevention of water and air pollution. These efforts aim to ensure sound environmental quality and protect the health and living conditions of people in developing countries. The initiative also serves as a platform for addressing environmental pollution and climate change, by facilitating the sharing of JICA’s cooperation outcomes and assets, promoting project development in collaboration with a wide range of domestic and international partners, including international organizations, donors, local governments, and private companies, and encouraging information dissemination by relevant institutions.

(Measures against marine plastic litter)

Marine litter (floating, washed ashore, and seabed waste) causes a variety of problems, including the deterioration of the marine environment, including ecosystems, the decline of coastal functions, negative impacts on landscapes, obstacles to navigation, and effects on fisheries and tourism. Marine litter ranges from man-made items to natural objects like driftwood, but a significant portion of the

²⁸ PRTR: Pollutant Release and Transfer Register A system that requires businesses to identify and report the amounts of chemical substances released into or transferred within the environment to the national government.

²⁹ ICCM5: The 5th session of the International Conference on Chemicals Management


collected and processed marine debris consists of plastic waste. In recent years, the impact of microplastics (tiny plastics generally considered to be less than 5mm in size) on marine ecosystems has become a concern and a global issue.

Japan has been actively addressing plastic pollution, including marine litter, both domestically and internationally. At the 2019 G20 Osaka Summit, Japan proposed the “Osaka Blue Ocean Vision,” which aims to reduce additional pollution from marine plastic litter to zero by 2050. Furthermore, at the 2023 G7 Hiroshima Summit, Japan took the lead in securing agreement on ambitious commitments related to plastic pollution.

Amid these developments, a resolution was adopted at the United Nations Environment Assembly held from February to March 2022 to establish an Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (INC) to develop an international legally binding instrument (treaty) on plastic pollution, including in the marine environment. The resolution aimed to complete the work by the end of 2024, calling for the INC to commence in late 2022. Following an open-ended working group session in Senegal from May to June 2022, the first session of the INC was held in Uruguay from November to December 2022, formally initiating treaty negotiations. Subsequent meetings included the second session in France from May to June 2023, which discussed treaty elements, the third session in Kenya in November 2023, which focused on the treaty's zero draft, and the fourth session in Canada in April 2024, which negotiated based on a revised text draft. The fifth session, initially planned as the final negotiation meeting, took place in the Republic of Korea from November to December 2024. During this session, discussions on draft articles progressed, and the chair presented a new draft text, indicating some advancement. However, differences remained among countries regarding issues such as plastic production, regulation of specific plastic products and chemicals, and financial cooperation for treaty implementation, preventing substantive agreement on the draft text. Consequently, it was decided to continue negotiations at a reconvened meeting, confirming that the entire draft text remains under negotiation. The reconvened meeting is scheduled to take place in Switzerland in August 2025.

Japan has contributed significantly by providing a vice-chair of the INC as well as a representative for the Asia-Pacific region, fostering common understanding among nations. Moving forward, Japan will continue to actively contribute to discussions aiming for an effective and progressive treaty involving many countries, including major consumers and emitters of plastic, working towards an early conclusion of negotiations.

Also, as for the domestic measures, based on relevant laws and basic policies, Japan is promoting the collection and treatment of marine litter, the prevention of its generation, fact-finding surveys, and the accumulation of scientific knowledge. In addition to providing financial support to local governments for promoting regional measures against marine debris such as beach litter, Japan has been developing awareness-raising websites and implementing model projects in collaboration with local governments and private companies. The country has also advanced efforts to consolidate data and conduct surveys, while working on the revision of the “Guidelines for Harmonizing Ocean Surface Microplastic Monitoring Methods,” which were published in 2019, to promote international harmonization of microplastic monitoring methods. In 2024, Japan established a global data-sharing system for



microplastic monitoring, the Atlas of Ocean Microplastics (AOMI), and began providing data through the platform. To promote international information sharing on these measures, Japan has been working together with the G20 Presidency each year to compile progress reports under the G20 Implementation Framework for Actions on Marine Plastic Litter, while also advancing various forms of international cooperation. Furthermore, in accordance with the Act on Prevention of Marine Pollution and Maritime Disaster, Japan has in principle prohibited the dumping of waste and other materials from vessels into the ocean, and appropriately operates the permit system for the ocean dumping of dredged sediment. Through these measures, Japan is ensuring the proper implementation of international conventions aimed at preventing marine pollution, including the 1996 Protocol to the London Convention.

(Biodiversity and nature-positive)

As a response to the “Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework,” Japan formulated the “National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan of Japan 2023-2030” in 2023, and has promoted related policies with the aim of realizing nature-positive by 2030. For example, to achieve the “30by30 target,” which aims to effectively conserve 30% or more of Japan’s land and marine areas as healthy ecosystems by 2030, Japan is working not only to expand protected areas such as national parks, but also to identify and manage areas outside protected areas that contribute to biodiversity conservation, known as OECMs³⁰. In particular, to promote the designation of OECMs, Japan launched a certification system to recognize areas where biodiversity is conserved through activities by private entities and other stakeholders as “Nationally Certified Sustainably Managed Natural Sites.” As of October 2024, 253 sites had been certified. In April 2024, Japan promulgated the Act on Promoting Activities to Enhance Regional Biodiversity to further encourage efforts by private entities and others toward achieving a nature-positive society, including through OECMs.

In 2024, Japan formulated the Transition Strategies toward Nature Positive Economy. The strategy outlines the need for companies to shift toward nature positive management, key elements to be addressed in the transition process, specific examples of emerging business opportunities, and government measures to support this shift. As of October 2024, the number of Japanese companies endorsing the TNFD (Taskforce on Nature-related Financial Disclosures) Recommendations exceeds 125, making Japan the global leader and accounting for one-fourth of the total worldwide. This reflects the increasing enthusiasm of Japanese companies towards promoting nature-positive initiatives.

To promote sustainable forest management, efforts have been made to establish a cycle of harvesting, using, planting, and raising forest resources. These include promoting reforestation after harvesting and the development of forest road networks. In order to contribute to the promotion of sustainable forest management at the international level, Japan has supported private-sector initiatives such as REDD+³¹ and afforestation/reforestation activities, also promoted the overseas transfer of forest-

³⁰ OECM; Other Effective area-based Conservation Measures

³¹ REDD+ : Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation, and the role of conservation, sustainable management of forests and enhancement of forest carbon stocks in developing countries. .

related technologies to strengthen disaster prevention and mitigation capacities in developing countries. Furthermore, Japan is implementing nature conservation projects in approximately 40 countries, including those in the Amazon region of South America, Africa, and Southeast Asia, with the aim of enhancing forest management capacities, restoring forests and wetlands, and promoting CO₂ absorption through the introduction of NbS³² in developing countries.

³² Nbs: Nature based solution

Column 10: Japan's efforts toward a society living in harmony with nature and GREEN×EXPO 2027

In an era when the concept of planetary boundaries is gaining increasing attention, two of the most critical challenges that will significantly affect the future of human life are climate change and the loss of biodiversity. These issues are closely interconnected. Since the adoption of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Convention on Biological Diversity in 1992, global efforts have accelerated, leading to the adoption of the Paris Agreement in 2015 and the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework in 2022. At present, countries around the world are working toward achieving the targets set for 2030.

Japan has implemented numerous initiatives aimed at realizing a society living in harmony with nature. Among them, a notable example of an internationally recognized effort that incorporates Japan's own knowledge is the SATOYAMA Initiative, which was jointly proposed with the United Nations University at the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (COP10). The initiative aims to realize a society living in harmony with nature by promoting the international conservation and sustainable use of secondary natural environments through the integration of traditional knowledge and practices rooted in the views of nature and social systems across the world, including Japan, with modern science and technology.

Against this backdrop, the 1990 International Garden and Greenery Exposition in Osaka introduced the concept of “coexistence between humans and nature” to the world two years prior to the adoption of the Conventions in 1992. Furthermore, the 2005 World Exposition in Aichi, under the theme of “Nature's Wisdom,” played a significant role in raising public awareness of the importance of living in harmony with nature. In this way, the international expositions held in Japan have played an important role as forerunners of global dialogue, encouraging action toward the resolution of global challenges.

GREEN × EXPO 2027 (Official name: International Horticultural Expo 2027, Yokohama, Japan, to be held from March 19 to September 26, 2027) adopts the theme “Scenery of the Future for Happiness,” with a commitment to tackling global challenges. In response to global environmental changes such as climate change, Japan seeks to re-evaluate the wisdom and cultural practices rooted in its long-standing relationship with nature, practices that integrate the diverse functions of the natural environment into everyday life. These values are being leveraged to contribute to the formation of a sustainable society. The exposition also aims to promote global horticultural culture, realize a fulfilling lifestyle surrounded by flowers, greenery, and agriculture, and foster a society where happiness is deepened through the participation of diverse stakeholders.

The venue will be the former Kamiseya Communication Facility, an extensive 242-hectare site that was returned by the U.S. military in 2015, with approximately 100 hectares designated as the

exposition area. As this vast land had long been subject to land use restrictions, it retains a rich natural environment, including farmland, grasslands, and valuable natural assets such as river headwaters and distinctive valley landscapes. Development of the venue is being carried out based on Nature-Based Design, making use of its rich natural capital.

The Basic Policy on the Promotion of Measures for the Preparation and Operation of the International Horticultural Expo 2027 (GREEN×EXPO 2027), adopted at Relevant Ministers Meeting on the International Horticultural Expo 2027, identifies contribution to the achievement of the SDGs as one of its fundamental principles. As the exposition will take place three years prior to the SDGs target year of 2030, it is positioned as an opportunity to promote initiatives in fields closely linked to the natural environment, to contribute to the realization of a nature-positive society, a circular economy, green transformation (GX), and a green society, and to share new initiatives by diverse stakeholders with a view toward the post-2030 era. Preparations are underway accordingly.

The Japan Association for the International Horticultural Expo 2027, Yokohama, a public interest incorporated association, the organizer of GREEN×EXPO 2027, has formulated a Sustainability Strategy to deepen its efforts toward sustainability, and is promoting environmental measures through initiatives aimed at realizing green transformation (GX) and a nature-positive society. As one of the initiatives, standardized reusable components will be used in temporary structures such as those for exhibitions within the venue to reduce environmental impact. At the same time, the venue will make use of “GX HOUSE,” a reusable building designed to achieve zero waste throughout its lifecycle, from material procurement, construction, operation, dismantling, and reuse. In addition, preparations are underway to create a new generation of exposition through the “Village” co-creation initiative, which combines a variety of exhibits, experiential programs, and other elements to embody the theme, “Scenery of the Future for Happiness.”



Venue rendering: Main garden

(Universal Health Coverage)

In May 2022, Japan formulated its Global Health Strategy, which sets as policy objectives the strengthening of prevention, preparedness, and response (PPR³³) to public health emergencies, as well as the achievement of a more resilient, equitable, and sustainable UHC. Based on this strategy, Japan is involved in governance and strategic planning as a board member of the Global Fund, which implements measures against the three major infectious diseases (AIDS, tuberculosis, and malaria) and strengthens health systems worldwide. Additionally, Japan contributes to the Gavi Vaccine Alliance, promoting vaccine introduction, health system enhancement, and immunization initiatives in low- and middle-income countries. Furthermore, Japan supports the Pandemic Fund established at the World Bank in 2022 to strengthen pandemic preparedness and response (PPR) in low- and middle-income countries. Japan also engages in continuous and strategic contributions, governance, strategy formulation, and leadership with international organizations such as the UN Population Fund (UNFPA) and the International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF), which focus on maternal and child health issues. Japan promotes multilateral cooperation, strengthens collaboration with diverse stakeholders, including civil society, and undertakes bilateral assistance in health system strengthening, infectious disease control measures, maternal and child health/sexual and reproductive health support, and non-communicable disease control measures.

At the G7 Hiroshima Summit 2023, Japan, as the Presidency, took the lead in discussions on global health, focusing on building and strengthening global health architecture for public health crisis response, contributing to achieving more resilient, equitable, and sustainable Universal Health Coverage (UHC), and promoting health innovation to address various health challenges. As part of these efforts, Japan announced the “G7 Hiroshima Vision for Equitable Access to Medical Countermeasures” and launched the “Medical Countermeasures Delivery Partnership (MCDP)” to improve equitable access to medical countermeasures (MCM³⁴) such as vaccines during infectious disease crises. Following the G7 Hiroshima Summit, efforts to achieve UHC continued, and in September 2023, during the UHC High-Level Meeting held on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly, Prime Minister Kishida reiterated the need for action towards achieving UHC. Regarding the amendment of the International Health Regulations (IHR) (2005), discussions took place in member state working groups, leading to the adoption of the amendment proposal submitted by several WHO Member States including Japan at the 77th World Health Assembly in May-June 2024. Additionally, discussions were held at the intergovernmental negotiating body on a new instrument on pandemic prevention, preparedness and response (PPR)³³, with the aim of adopting for the text of the WHO Pandemic Agreement at the 78th World Health Assembly in May 2025. These efforts have contributed to the development and strengthening of the "Global Health Architecture."

At the G7 Hiroshima Summit, the “Impact Investment Initiative for Global Health (Triple I)” was endorsed with a view to addressing global health challenges by mobilizing private capital through

³³ PPR: Pandemic Prevention, Preparedness and Response

³⁴ MCM: Medical Counter Measures

impact investment. Subsequently, at a side event of the United Nations General Assembly in September 2023, Prime Minister Kishida officially announced the launch of the initiative. Since its launch with 37 partner organizations, the number of partners had grown to over 100 worldwide as of January 2025, and continues to expand.

At a high-level event on Universal Health Coverage (UHC) held during the International Monetary Fund (IMF)–World Bank Spring Meetings in April 2024, Japan announced that it would establish a “UHC Knowledge Hub” in the country in 2025, in collaboration with the World Bank and WHO. The initiative aims to support efforts toward achieving UHC in developing countries, particularly through human resource-building for financial and health officials. Preparations for the launch are currently underway. Additionally, at the World Health Assembly in May 2024, Japan officially announced its participation in the "Alliance for Transformative Action on Climate and Health (ATACH)" aimed at building climate resilient, low-carbon, and sustainable healthcare systems in response to climate change.


(Utilization of Space Technology)

The utilization of space technology is a crucial element in achieving the SDGs, and Japan is employing space technology across a wide array of fields, including Earth environment observation, natural disaster response, agricultural efficiency, and the mitigation of space debris.

The Japanese Experiment Module "Kibo" on the International Space Station (ISS) significantly contributes to research, development and utilization programs aimed at achieving the SDGs, for example by enabling various scientific experiments under the microgravity environment³⁵ that are difficult to conduct on Earth. For example, in pharmaceutical development, protein crystal generation experiments in the microgravity environment of Kibo can produce higher-quality crystals than those obtained on Earth, allowing for high-precision structural analysis of protein crystals. This contributes to the development of effective therapeutic drugs for muscular dystrophy and influenza.

Additionally, the Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA) develops and operates various space technologies. JAXA's "Risk Avoidance assist tool based on debris collision proBaBiliTy (RABBIT)" is a system that predicts collision risks by space debris with satellites and spacecrafts, supporting appropriate avoidance actions. It monitors the position and orbit of debris in real-time, calculates collision probabilities, and issues warnings. By mitigating space debris generation, enhancing the safety and sustainability of space activities, and avoiding collision risks with satellites and spacecrafts,

³⁵ Even in outer space at an altitude of around 400 km, where the ISS operate, there is a small amount of gas (upper atmosphere) that exerts resistance on spacecraft, resulting in acceleration (deceleration G). Additionally, acceleration can occur when moving away from the center of mass (CP) of a structure where the forces of Earth's gravity and inertia balance. Although these accelerations (G) are very small, they affect the ISS, which is why it is referred to as a "microgravity" environment rather than "zero gravity."



the system supports sustainable economic growth through protecting critical infrastructure such as communications, weather observation, and Earth environment observation.

Furthermore, Japan utilizes space technology to support sustainable development in developing countries. For example, JICA and JAXA utilize the "JICA-JAXA Forest Early Warning System in the Tropics (JJ-FAST)" to contribute to the reduction of illegal logging. This system uses data from the "ALOS-2" satellite, which can observe regardless of weather or cloud conditions, to detect tropical deforestation at an early stage. It identified illegal logging in 78 countries. JICA also conducts training programs on space technology for engineers and scientists in developing countries, aiming to enhance local capabilities and strengthen the foundation for sustainable development.

Priority Area (iv)

Cooperation and
collaboration with the
international community



Priority Area (iv): Cooperation and collaboration with the international community


A sustainable economy and society cannot be built by Japan alone. Despite the various efforts and initiatives undertaken by the international community, including Japan, the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) faces significant challenges. In particular, there is growing global concern over the need to address funding shortages in developing countries and to strengthen multilateral cooperation centered on the United Nations.

Although Japan faces one of the most severe fiscal situations among developed countries, it has continued to provide Official Development Assistance (ODA) based on the concept of human security. With the international target of allocating 0.7% of Gross National Income (GNI) to ODA in mind, Japan is committed to expanding its ODA in various forms, while fully taking into account its extremely severe domestic fiscal situation. Japan's total ODA in 2023 was approximately 19,600.37 million US dollars, according to the Grant Equivalent System introduced as the standard for measuring ODA by the OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC), making Japan the third-largest donor among the members of DAC, following the United States and Germany. Japan's ODA as a percentage of GNI increased from 0.20% in 2015, the year the 2030 Agenda was adopted, to 0.44% in 2023 (see “5 Progress toward each goal,” Goal 17 for details). Additionally, about 70 years ago, when Japan was still receiving support from the international community after World War II, international cooperation funded by Japanese private sectors began with the spread of "UNICEF fundraising" in elementary and junior high schools nationwide. In recent years, this private sector-led international cooperation has steadily expanded in scale, and various forms of public-private partnerships have also progressed.

In an era marked by the accumulation of new challenges for which clear solutions have yet to be found, addressing increasingly serious global issues requires that diverse stakeholders bring together their respective strengths under shared goals and work collaboratively through dialogue to create solutions. Based on this perspective, Japan's development cooperation has set forth a direction focused on creating new value through “co-creation” with a variety of stakeholders, including the mobilization of private-sector funds. Amid the vast demand for development finance, Japan aims to realize a new framework for international cooperation by jointly promoting the mobilization of private capital, catalyzed by ODA, and strengthening collaboration with partners who possess the capacity to address domestic and global challenges. The value generated through such efforts will be circulated between developing countries and Japan. In light of the expected contraction of Japan's domestic market, it is essential to support Japanese businesses in playing a greater role in addressing social challenges in developing and emerging countries. From this perspective as well, Japan will continue to promote the mobilization of private-sector funds through ODA and other means.

(Revision of the Development Cooperation Charter)

In June 2023, Japan revised its Development Cooperation Charter. In the international community facing multiple, interconnected crises, Japan has positioned a new era of “human security” as its guiding principle, one that not only emphasizes investment in people, such as protection and empowerment of individuals, but also places importance on “solidarity” with diverse stakeholders.



“Leading international efforts to addressing increasingly complex and serious global issues” was clearly stated in priority policies. While continuing to work on cooperation for vulnerable countries and regions, etc., a policy was set out to drive international cooperation by accelerating efforts aimed at achieving the SDGs based on the philosophy of “human security,” and strengthen comprehensive efforts to resolve global issues.

In addition, as one of the implementation principles for ensuring the appropriateness of development cooperation, Japan has introduced the promotion of inclusive societies, including gender mainstreaming, and ensuring fairness. Japan is committed to ensuring that its development cooperation fully takes into account fairness, with the aim of promoting a diverse and inclusive society in which all people, including women and those in socially vulnerable positions, can participate in and benefit from development.

Furthermore, to enhance the strategic value of its development cooperation, Japan has newly introduced an “Co-creation for common agenda initiative”, through which it proposes cooperation packages that leverage its own strengths. For example, in 2023, Japan reached an agreement with Cambodia on a cooperation package in the digital field to support the development of a digital economy and society. In 2024, it agreed with Fiji on a cooperation package in the areas of disaster prevention and climate change, aimed at strengthening disaster prevention and early warning systems in Fiji and the wider Pacific region. Japan aims to work together with a wide range of partners through development platforms, not only to solve development challenges in developing countries, but also to respond to global, complex crises in solidarity. Through these efforts, Japan seeks the co-creation of social values that can be embraced by the international community as a whole.

Recognizing the importance of “human security,” a concept at the core of the SDGs, Japan has made annual contributions to the Human Security Fund. Japan is virtually the only donor to this fund, and its largest contributor. In individual development projects, Japan has placed “protection” and “empowerment” at the center, while also emphasizing people-centered, inclusive, context-specific, and preventive approaches. Based on these principles, joint initiatives involving multiple UN agencies have been implemented in a broad and cross-sectoral manner, in collaboration with NGOs. As of the end of 2024, Japan has contributed a cumulative total of approximately 51.9 billion Japanese yen (about 472.03 million US dollars) to the Human Security Trust Fund.

Column 11: International expansion of community-based initiatives based on partnership: Lake Biwa's "UMINOKO" as a model for environmental education in developing countries

Shiga Prefecture, known as a leader in environmental initiatives, has developed a unique environmental education program in which local fifth-grade students board an environmental learning ship called UMINOKO (officially named the Lake Biwa Floating School). Launched in 1983 with the aim of encouraging students to take active ownership in protecting Lake Biwa's environment, the program had reached a cumulative total of approximately 630,000 participants by the end of December 2024, equivalent to more than 40 percent of Shiga Prefecture's population.

In the Lake Biwa Floating School program, students from multiple schools take part in a two-day, one-night voyage, during which they learn and live together with peers from other schools. During the voyage, students take part in recreational activities such as observing the islands of Lake Biwa, participating in walk rallies at port towns, and joining inter-school exchange events. Through these experiences, they learn the importance of helping one another within a group. As part of the environmental learning program, students engage in hands-on activities such as observing plankton, fish, and shellfish, measuring water clarity, and conducting experiments on water purification. The learning content is selectable by each school, and it has evolved over time in response to changing awareness of environmental issues.

All meals provided in the program incorporate locally produced ingredients from Shiga Prefecture, contributing to food and nutrition education for the participating students. Among the meals served, the "UMINOKO Curry," featuring a pork cutlet made from locally raised Shiga pork, is especially memorable. It has become a cherished taste that every student who boards the ship remembers fondly. In addition, the UMINOKO operates using a fuel mixture in which biodiesel fuel (BDF) is blended at a ratio of 1-part BDF to 10 parts conventional fuel. In January 2025, the UMINOKO program received 30 t-CO₂ of Lake Biwa Carbon Credits from The Shiga Bank, enabling it to offset a portion of the greenhouse gas emissions generated during its operations.

The expertise developed through the UMINOKO program is now being utilized in environmental education at Lake Managua, located in the capital city of Managua in Nicaragua, which is the second poorest country in Central America after Haiti.

Lake Managua, which is 1.5 times the size of Lake Biwa, has been undergoing development as a tourism resource, while at the same time suffering from severe water pollution caused by inflows of domestic wastewater and other contaminants. The JICA Nicaragua Office, which had been supporting primary education and other initiatives in the country, sought ways to improve the environmental conditions of Lake Managua. While studying both domestic and international examples, the office took note of Shiga Prefecture's "Lake Biwa Model," a successful case of achieving environmental conservation and restoration, as well as economic development.

In 2020, the JICA Nicaragua Office established the BIWAKO Task Force to address the challenges of environmental conservation in Lake Managua. With support from the Shiga Prefectural Board of Education and personnel involved in the Floating School program, the task force steadily advanced its activities, leading to the launch of a “Nicaraguan UMINOKO” in 2021.

In the Nicaraguan UMINOKO, a boat normally used for tourism is repurposed to offer approximately two hours of experiential learning for fourth- and fifth-grade students. After observing the lake surface, which appeared dirty and brown or green, floating debris, and aquatic organisms using a microscope, they will discuss what can be done to clean Lake Managua's water. For many students, it is their first time boarding a boat, and much like the original UMINOKO program, the experience becomes a lifelong memory shared with classmates, and a step toward nurturing future environmental leaders.

The Nicaraguan version of UMINOKO has been highly praised by both students and teachers who have taken part in the onboard learning experience. It was introduced to the world by Nicaragua’s Minister of Education at the 26th session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP26) in 2021.

Ongoing dialogue between Nicaraguan educators and members of the “Lake Biwa Floating School” continues to support the enrichment of the Nicaraguan UMINOKO program, with hopes that it will be implemented in a more sustained and expanded manner in the future.



UMINOKO

Reference: Coco Shiga website <https://cocoshiga.jp/official/topic/uminoko/>

Offset: <https://uminoko.jp/topics/2025/3853/>

Reference: https://uminoko.jp/files/child/NicaraguaUMINOKO_C.pdf

(Co-creation through “quality infrastructure” and “investment in people”)


Japan has been promoting “investment in people” through initiatives such as training programs and study abroad opportunities, while also fostering collaboration with diverse stakeholders and mobilizing new sources of funding. At the same time, Japan has worked to develop “quality infrastructure” that considers transparency, openness, economic efficiency in view of life-cycle cost, and debt sustainability. Japan has been promoting the development of “quality infrastructure” in line with the economic and development strategies of each developing country, by combining the development of infrastructure on structural aspects, contributing to quality growth in a particular country or region, with cooperation on non-structural aspects, such as institutional development, management and maintenance, and human resource development.

For example, in the agricultural sector, Japan has worked to establish data infrastructure in Southeast Asia by utilizing satellite imagery and other technologies to promote smart agriculture. The development of farmland attribute information is expected to enable the efficient implementation of agricultural policies and encourage private sector participation. Furthermore, under the Asia Health and Wellbeing Initiative (AHWIN), the Africa Health and Wellbeing Initiative (AfHWIN) and the Global Health Strategy, Japan has been strengthening human resource development in the healthcare and long-term care sectors, supporting to achieve Universal Health Coverage (UHC).

On the infrastructure front, Japan has strengthened transportation infrastructure and power connectivity through investment and financing via the Asian Development Bank (ADB) by JICA, as well as through the framework of the Japan-ASEAN Comprehensive Connectivity Initiative. Japan has continued to raise funds through the JICA Bond, the country's first social bond, and since 2023, has expanded its issuance as a sustainability bond.

To promote the development and expansion of water infrastructure overseas, Japan has been continuously conducting feasibility studies (F/S), engaging in policy dialogue with partner countries, and inviting key foreign officials to Japan. These efforts support the introduction of high-quality Japanese water infrastructure and related equipment, as well as encourage increased business investment by Japanese companies. Since June 2019, Japan has been supporting a public-private platform composed of companies, industry associations, and local governments involved in overseas water-related businesses. In collaboration with relevant organizations, Japan has also dispatched mission teams and undertaken other initiatives to help improve water conditions in Asia and other regions.

Japan has been making annual contributions to the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR), with the aim of enhancing the efficiency of the United Nations, maintaining peace and security, and promoting economic and social development. UNITAR’s core mandate includes providing training for administrative officials, primarily from developing countries, and conducting research related to the functions and objectives of the United Nations. For example, in fiscal year 2023, Japan contributed to several training programs, including: (1) women's leadership in tsunami disaster risk reduction; (2) the G7 Hiroshima Summit legacy project, Shimanami Collective: Sea and Human Security for Free and Open Indo-Pacific and ; (3) Shimanami Collective: Rapid Response to Climate



Crises Through Early Warning Systems; (4) Food and Economic Security through Entrepreneurship Training for Women and Youth in Afghanistan; (5) Confidence Building in the ASEAN Region; and (6) Emergency Assistance for Egypt, Iraq, and Lebanon: Fighting Food Insecurity Through Entrepreneurship. These training programs have been implemented by UNITAR in fiscal year 2024.

(Strengthening multilateralism with the United Nations at its core)

The United Nations, endowed with legitimacy grounded in both universality and expertise, plays an extremely important role in rule-making and international cooperation to address various global challenges. Japan has consistently demonstrated its commitment to strengthening multilateralism with the United Nations at its core and has placed great importance on cooperation with the United Nations and other international organizations. For example, approximately 18.5% of Japan's ODA has been allocated to multilateral institutions, through which Japan has worked to strengthen collaboration with these institutions. At the same time, Japan has aimed to increase the number of Japanese nationals working in UN-related agencies to 1,000 by 2025. As of the end of 2023, the number of Japanese professionals serving in UN-related agencies had reached 958, enhancing its presence within the international organizational framework. Moreover, as mentioned in Priority Area (iii), Japan has taken a leading role in the development of international rules to ensure the sustainability of the global community in fields such as the environment, global health, and artificial intelligence.

Priority Area (v)

Integrated promotion of
sustaining peace and
sustainable development



Priority Area (v): Integrated promotion of sustaining peace and sustainable development

In recent years, the international community has witnessed an intensification and expansion of division and confrontation, including attempts to unilaterally change the status quo by force. Such developments not only undermine the foundation of international cooperation, which is essential for achieving the sustainability of the global community, but also lead to surging energy and food prices and destabilized supply chains, making it even more difficult for vulnerable countries to secure their own sustainable growth and prosperity.

Taking these points into account, Japan, recognizing that sustainable development and sustaining peace are inseparable, has positioned its contribution to “nation-building” and “human resource development” based on the concept of human security as the fundamental stance of its international cooperation efforts and has been actively engaged in this endeavor. Japan also promotes the “Women, Peace and Security (WPS)” agenda, recognizing that the equal and full participation of women is essential for achieving international peace, conflict prevention, and conflict resolution. Furthermore, the political and socioeconomic participation of young people is important, and efforts are also being made to promote “Youth, Peace, and Security (YPS).”

Through these activities, Japan has contributed to maintaining a free and open international order, realizing peace agreements in conflict-affected areas, and supporting their subsequent development.

(UN Peacekeeping Operations)

Since 1992, Japan has been providing personnel and material support for international peace efforts, centered on the United Nations, based on the Act on Cooperation for United Nations Peacekeeping Operations (PKO³⁶) and Other Operations (the International Peace Cooperation Act).

As of March 2025, Japan has conducted 29 international peace cooperation assignments and dispatched a cumulative total of approximately 12,700 personnel as part of its personnel cooperation efforts. Since the previous VNR in 2021, this represents an increase of one operation and approximately 200 additional personnel. In 2022, Japan conducted an international peace cooperation assignment to assist those affected by the crisis in Ukraine, airlifting humanitarian relief supplies (such as blankets) provided by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, to neighboring countries of Ukraine, namely the Republic of Poland and Romania, using Self-Defense Forces aircraft. As of March 2025, Japan has dispatched six Ground Self-Defense Force personnel to the headquarters of the United Nations Mission in the Republic of South Sudan (UNMISS) and four Ground Self-Defense Force personnel to the headquarters of the Multinational Force and Observers (MFO) in the Sinai Peninsula.

³⁶ PKO: Peacekeeping Operations

With regard to material cooperation, Japan has provided humanitarian relief supplies (such as blankets) in a total of 32 operations to date. Since the last VNR was conducted in 2021, Japan has carried out three additional operations. In 2022, Japan provided support for those affected by the crisis in Ukraine, and in 2024, it carried out support operations for those affected in Palestine and Lebanon.

(Efforts to address piracy off the coast of Somalia and in the Gulf of Aden)

Since July In 2009, Japan launched the anti-piracy measures operations deploying Self-Defense Forces vessels and aircrafts off the coast of Somalia and in the Gulf of Aden, based on the “Act of Punishment and Countermeasures against Piracy”. Since 2013, in order to conduct operations more flexible and effective, Japan has participated in Combined Task Force 151 (CTF 151), a multinational force engaged in anti-piracy operations. As of March 2025, the Self-Defense Forces are using one destroyer and one P-3C patrol aircraft to escort private vessels and conduct surveillance operations. Between April 2021 and March 2025, the 38th to the 50th Deployment Surface Force for Counter Piracy Enforcement (DSPE, deploying the Destroyer) and the 42nd to the 56th Deployment Air Force for Counter-Piracy Enforcement (DAPE, deploying P-3C) served in this operation. As a result of the efforts of Japan and the broader international community, the number of piracy-related incidents, which had exceeded 200 cases annually at its peak, has remained at a low level.

Japan has also contributed for strengthening maritime security capabilities in Somalia and neighboring countries by supporting the establishment of training centers and piracy information sharing centers, as well as the implementation of training programs, through contributions to the Djibouti Code of Conduct Trust Fund administered by the International Maritime Organization (IMO). In addition, the reconstruction and stabilization of Somalia are essential for a fundamental resolution of the piracy issue off its coast. Since 2007, Japan has provided approximately 615 million US dollars in assistance to Somalia, focusing on areas such as security enhancement, humanitarian aid, and infrastructure development.

(HDP Nexus and WPS)

Japan has been working to support refugees and stabilize host countries based on the "HDP Nexus"³⁷ approach, which integrates humanitarian assistance, development cooperation, and peacebuilding efforts. This approach involves providing humanitarian aid while simultaneously promoting self-reliance among refugees, reducing the burden on host countries through development cooperation, and

³⁷ HDP Nexus (Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus):

An approach that integrates short-term humanitarian assistance with medium- to long-term development cooperation to promote the self-reliance of refugees and reduce the burden on host countries, while also advancing peacebuilding efforts aimed at resolving and preventing conflicts, which are the root causes of refugee crises.


advancing initiatives for conflict resolution and prevention, which are the root causes of displacement. Japan has particularly strengthened its support in the Middle East and Africa.

Women, Peace, and Security (WPS) is a concept that emphasizes the importance of women's participation in the leadership roles in conflict prevention, recovery, and peacebuilding, while protecting and providing relief to women and girls, with the aim of achieving a more sustainable peace. Japan formulated its Third National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security (WPS) for the period 2023–2028 in 2023, to implement United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 and related resolutions, which clearly state the necessity of the equal and full participation of women, the protection from sexual violence in conflict, and the promotion of gender equality for achieving international peace, conflict prevention, and conflict resolution. Building on the experiences of the First and Second National Action Plans, the Third Plan addresses not only conflict-related situations but also natural disasters and climate change. Japan has also strengthened its efforts to enhance domestic capacities related to WPS and to eliminate violence against women.

Japan supports projects through contributions to UN Women, providing emergency humanitarian aid, economic support, protection from violence, and assistance in formulating WPS action plans for women and girls affected by conflicts and natural disasters in regions such as Asia, Africa, and the Middle East. Additionally, since 2014, through contributions to the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict, Japan supports projects to strengthen judicial and police systems and provide victim support in countries including the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Somalia, the Central African Republic, and Jordan. Through contributions to the Global Survivors Fund (GSF), Japan provides support for economic empowerment and awareness-raising activities to improve access to remedies for survivors of conflict-related sexual violence.

In 2025, Japan and Norway assume the role of Co-Chair of the WPS Focal Points Network and hosted the 7th Capital Level Meeting in Tokyo on February 4 to 6, 2025. The meeting highlighted the 25th anniversary of the adoption of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325, reviewed the international community's efforts on WPS over the past 25 years, renewed commitments for the future in light of the current global situation, and deepened discussions on the future direction of the WPS agenda.

As part of its peacebuilding assistance through JICA, Japan has supported inclusive service delivery by local government in Mindanao, the Philippines, which has been affected by conflict for over 40 years; promoted infrastructure development and the expansion of administrative services to support the self-reliance of refugees and reduce the burden on host communities in countries such as Uganda and Zambia; and, in cooperation with Cambodia, with which Japan has collaborated for more than 25 years, strengthened response capacities and provided equipment for mine action and unexploded ordnance in countries such as Colombia and Ukraine, a prerequisite for recovery and reconstruction. In addition, in its support for improving refugee camps in Palestine, Japan has introduced mechanisms to reflect the needs of women, and across all of its projects, actively incorporates women's perspectives and promotes their proactive participation in peacebuilding.



Japan has also been engaged in the development of civilian personnel working in the fields of peacebuilding, development assistance, and humanitarian aid since 2007. In collaboration with United Nations agencies and other organizations, Japan has trained more than 1,000 personnel to date.

(Promotion of the rule of law)

At the 14th United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice (commonly known as the "Kyoto Congress"), held in Japan in 2021, the role of criminal justice in achieving the SDGs was discussed, and the "Kyoto Declaration," a medium- to long-term guideline for the field of crime prevention and criminal justice, was adopted. In order to demonstrate leadership in the implementation of the Kyoto Declaration, Japan has contributed to the promotion of the rule of law by establishing practitioner networks in various regions to advance international cooperation and by supporting efforts to prevent recidivism in countries around the world.

Japan has also contributed to strengthening the capacity of criminal justice practitioners by conducting international training programs through the United Nations Asia and Far East Institute for the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders (UNAFEI), which Japan operates in cooperation with the United Nations. These programs, targeting developing countries including those in the Asia-Pacific region and Africa, focus on topics such as countering organized crime, preventing corruption, and terrorism. Furthermore, through JICA, Japan has been implementing training programs related to improving access to justice, business law, international public law, anti-corruption measures, and business and human rights, as well as projects in Southeast Asia, South Asia, and Africa focused on areas such as legal and judicial system development, strengthening the functions of law enforcement and application, improving access to dispute resolution mechanisms, promoting the rehabilitation and reintegration of young offenders, and enhancing the capacities of law enforcement agencies.

Japan has established a specialized department within the Ministry of Justice, the International Cooperation Department (ICD) of the Research and Training Institute, dedicated to supporting legal system development. Through this department, Japan has been providing assistance primarily to Asian countries, including Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, Indonesia, Mongolia, Bangladesh, East Timor, Sri Lanka, and Uzbekistan. The areas of support include legislative assistance, operational support, and human resource development in fields such as civil law, criminal law, commercial law, administrative law, civil procedure law, criminal procedure law, administrative procedure law, arbitration, and mediation. Furthermore, Japan is extending this support to Ukraine and Kyrgyzstan and plans to expand its activities to Pacific island countries and Africa as well. These initiatives to support legal system development contribute to strengthening the rule of law, while also helping to build peaceful and inclusive societies and to provide access to fair judicial systems.

Japan has also been making efforts to maintain international peace by supporting measures against organized crime, including cybercrime, and counterterrorism efforts through international organizations such as the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC). As part of its efforts to promote the rule of law internationally, Japan has been hosting workshops by inviting foreign criminal justice practitioners, in cooperation with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the United Nations

Asia and Far East Institute for the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders (UNAFEI), and the International Institute for Justice and the Rule of Law (IIJ). In February 2024, Japan organized a workshop by inviting participants from South Asia and Southeast Asia, with the aim of ensuring fair, transparent, and human rights-conscious procedures in the criminal justice processes of terrorism-related cases. In February 2025, Japan organized a workshop by inviting participants from five Central Asian countries, focusing on the investigation, prosecution, repatriation, and social reintegration of foreign terrorist fighters (FTF) originating from the region.

Furthermore, Japan cooperates with the development of the International Court of Justice (ICJ) and the International Criminal Court (ICC), actively contributing to the peaceful resolution of international disputes and the promotion of the rule of law in the international community.

(Efforts Toward Peace)

It is meaningful that Nihon Hidankyō (Japan Confederation of A- and H-Bomb Sufferers Organizations), which has been working for many years on elimination of nuclear weapons and promotion of understanding of the realities of nuclear weapons use, received the Nobel Peace Prize in December 2024. Japan will continue to uphold and strengthen efforts that contribute to lasting peace in the international community, including promoting a comprehensive and accurate understanding of the realities of the atomic bombings.