

Part I

Accomplishments and Progress of 50 Years

Summary

Part I is a special feature on the 50th anniversary of Japan's ODA. Chapter 1 explains with specific examples the accomplishments of Japan's assistance, which have contributed to development of developing countries for half a century. Chapter 2 describes the progress of Japan's ODA, while Chapter 3 outlines its future prospects.

Since starting to provide assistance in 1954, Japan has disbursed ODA of approximately 221 billion dollars to 185 countries and regions over 50 years, contributing greatly to the development of developing countries and improvement of their welfare. Not only has Japan's ODA been highly praised by recipient countries, it has also contributed to strengthening friendly relations with them and ensuring Japan's security and prosperity.

In East Asia, the priority region for Japan's ODA, the poverty population is being greatly reduced as a result of remarkable economic growth. Japan's ODA has improved the investment environments in the countries of this region through infrastructure development, which was combined with support for sectors such as education and health care and has led to inflows of foreign direct investment and promotion of development of export industries. Japan's ODA has contributed to the economic and social development of these countries.

Furthermore, Japan has been actively supporting the human resource development that plays a leading role in the development of developing countries, from the conviction that such human resource development is a key to nation-building. There have been cases of vocational training institutions established by Japanese assistance becoming leading universities in recipient countries and producing the human resources necessary for the development of these countries. There have also been cases of people who have completed the legal and judicial training that Japan has provided for more than 40 years becoming ministers of justice or supreme court judges in their own countries.

Looking back over the history of Japan's ODA, which has yielded various accomplishments, it can be categorized into the following four periods.

- (1) System Development Period (1954-1976): Period, since Japan started to provide assistance by joining the Colombo Plan in 1954, when aid implementation systems were developed through the launch and consolidation of aid implementation agencies, diversification of the framework of assistance and other measures
- (2) Systematic Expansion Period (1977-1991): Period when quantitative expansion of ODA was planned through successive medium-term targets and Japan's ODA developed globally
- (3) Substantial Policy and Philosophy Shaping Period (Original ODA Charter Period) (1992-2002): Period, under the new international environment after the end of the Cold War, when continued efforts were particularly focused on clarifying Japan's ODA policy and philosophy through the establishment of the original ODA Charter of 1992, the Medium-Term Policy on Official Development Assistance of 1999, and others
- (4) Meeting the Challenges of a New Era (Revised ODA Charter) (2003-): Japan's ODA reaches a new turning point with the approval by the Cabinet in August 2003 of the revised ODA Charter

Currently, Japan is seeking to enhance the strategic value, flexibility, transparency, and efficiency of ODA in accordance with the philosophy and priorities of the revised ODA Charter, based on the accomplishments to date and progress of Japan's assistance. The government of Japan intends to make unrelenting efforts to improve Japanese cooperation, by working to increase the efficiency of assistance, improving methods for promoting assistance, and further pushing ahead with enhancement of aid implementation systems.