

Foreword

Over 2007 and the first half of 2008, the world faced a number of issues which have had major impacts on the lives of its people both in developed and developing countries, including climate change, African development, and rise in the prices of food and energy. The resolution of these global issues will lead to the peace and development of the international community, and also to the security and prosperity of Japan. With this philosophy, Japan hosted the Fourth Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD IV) and the G8 Hokkaido Toyako Summit in order to address these issues proactively, and has set out its plan for the strategic use of Official Development Assistance (ODA).

Amongst these issues, climate change is having a negative effect on the lives of people across national borders; in particular in developing countries, it is becoming a problem inseparable from development in that it obstructs their efforts of economic development. Recognizing this, Japan announced the Cool Earth Promotion Programme in 2008, a plan to provide a total of US\$10 billion to developing countries that are striving to contribute to climate stabilization by reducing emissions of greenhouse gases and achieving economic growth in a compatible way. Agreement was also reached at the G8 Hokkaido Toyako Summit to aim to adopt a long-term goal of global emission reductions through negotiations in the United Nations.

African development continues to be a major issue for the international community. At TICAD IV in May 2008, Japan announced various initiatives to support Africa, including the doubling of its ODA to Africa, and demonstrated powerful leadership in the discussions on African development. Similarly, at the G8 Hokkaido Toyako Summit, Japan held the outreach session with leaders of African countries, and also shared the outcomes of TICAD IV with the G8 countries.

This White Paper on Japan's ODA covers Japan's engagement with climate change and African development, which were the major agendas in the two above-mentioned conferences.

Since September 2008, the world has faced a financial and economic crisis stemming from the US financial crisis. Needless to say, we must respond urgently to this crisis: such responses, however, should not be an excuse to put the resolution of the above-mentioned issues on the backburner. It is crucial that developed countries steadily implement their pledges on international cooperation. Developing countries' efforts to bolster their growth potential and expand their domestic demand will also contribute to the reinvigoration of the global economy. Japan is responding to the current crisis, in particular, by proactively supporting self-sustaining growth in the countries of Asia, through the strategic use of ODA. We are going to take up issues in the period from the second half of 2008, including the responses to the financial crisis, in the next White Papers.

Governments and aid organizations are not the only actors of international cooperation. A wide range of partnerships with various actors such as non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and the private-sector economy is necessary in order to further improve the effectiveness of Japan's ODA. This White Paper will present to you various examples of international cooperation, focusing on the activities of those involved in Japan's international cooperation on the ground in developing countries. We hope that such examples will help readers to understand the expanding sphere of Japan's development assistance.

We sincerely hope that this White Paper will help to enhance your interest in and understanding of Japan's international cooperation, and will stimulate further support for ODA.

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