



Chapter 2

Specific Initiatives of Japan's Official Development Assistance

This chapter will discuss specific initiatives of Japan's official development assistance (ODA), which will be examined from five perspectives.

Japan's ODA policies promote each country assistance program in conformity with the ODA Charter. Section 1 will describe the ODA Charter, which forms the underpinning of Japan's ODA for developing countries, as well as the policies pursuant to the Charter and the contents therein.

Section 2 will further break down the challenges of “poverty reduction”, “sustainable growth”, “addressing global issues”, and “peace-building” listed in the ODA Charter, and introduce Japan's approach for each respective area.

The world is faced with largely different economic and social environments and cultures and confronts a different set of issues depending on the region and country. Section 3 will present specific examples of Japan's ODA by region. The eight regions are: East Asia; South Asia; Central Asia and the Caucasus; Africa; Middle East; Latin America and the Caribbean; Oceania; and Europe.

The Government of Japan provides development assistance in compliance with the assistance principles of the ODA Charter, in consideration of the principles of the United Nations Charter as well as other factors, and after taking into account the developing countries' needs for assistance, socioeconomic conditions, and bilateral relations with recipient countries. Section 4 will explain in detail the factors which are taken into consideration for the operation of Japan's ODA.

Finally, Section 5, the last section, will introduce the implementation system of Japan's ODA and a series of reform measures for providing more efficient and effective ODA, which are divided into the following three categories: “system for formulation and implementation of aid policy”; “increasing public participation”; and “matters essential to effective implementation”.

Section 1

Initiatives Relating to the Basic Policies of the ODA Charter

The philosophy and principles regarding Japan's current ODA policies are set forth in the Official Development Assistance Charter (ODA Charter). Under the present Charter are the Medium-Term Policy on Official Development Assistance (Medium-Term ODA Policy), Japan's Country Assistance Programs, the Sector-Specific Development Policies, the Priority Issues for International Cooperation, and the Rolling Plans. This section will explain the existing policy framework, while the policy documents are scheduled to be reviewed following the ODA review (see Part II).

1. ODA Charter

The current ODA Charter (revised in August 2003) consists of "I. Philosophy," "II. Principle of ODA Implementation," "III. Formulation and Implementation of ODA Policy," and "IV. Reporting on the Status of Implementation of the Official Development Assistance Charter."

In the "I. Philosophy" section, the objectives of ODA are defined as "to contribute to the peace and development of the international community, and thereby to help ensure Japan's own security and prosperity." It sets five basic policies for the attainment of these objectives: (1) "supporting self-help efforts of developing countries" based on good governance; (2) the perspective of "human security" for the implementation of support focused on individuals; (3) the "assurance of fairness" with consideration given to the socially vulnerable, particularly for improving the status of women; (4) the "utilization of Japan's experience and expertise" to make full use of its own experience in economic and social development to promote the growth of developing countries; and (5) "partnership and collaboration with the international community" with a view to pursuing collaboration with international organizations and other assistance providers including

NGOs and the private sector. Based on these objectives and basic policies, Japan provides support focusing on the following priority issues: (1) "poverty reduction," (2) "sustainable growth," (3) "addressing global issues," and (4) "peace-building."

The "II. Principle of ODA Implementation" section stipulates that ODA is to be provided with full attention given to balancing environment and development, preventing any use of ODA for military purposes, and to promoting the democratization of developing countries.

The "III. Formulation and Implementation of ODA Policy" section states that it is important to take a government-wide coherent and unified approach for ODA planning and implementation, and to improve its strategic value, flexibility, and efficiency. Since ODA is funded by taxpayers, this section specifies that the Government should strive to enhance public understanding of ODA.

The "IV. Reporting on the Status of Implementation of the Official Development Assistance Charter" section states that the Government will report the implementation status of ODA to the Cabinet through the yearly publication of the White Paper, so as to clarify accountability for the implementation of ODA.

2. Japan's Medium-Term ODA Policy

The Medium-Term Policy on ODA details Japan's position, approaches, and specific actions outlined in the ODA Charter. The latest revision took place in February 2005, listing specific issues to be addressed under the three categories of (1) "perspective of human security";

(2) important issues of "poverty reduction," "sustainable growth," "addressing global issues," and "peace-building"; and (3) "measures to ensure the efficient and effective implementation of assistance."

3. Country Assistance Programs

Country Assistance Programs set forth Japan's country assistance policy for the next five years, which specify the current situations, major challenges and development plans of recipient countries, as well as the relevance of Japan's assistance to these countries, Japan's strategic directions, and priority areas. The selection of target countries is based on such factors as the volume of assistance, relevance to global developmental issues, regional balance, aid coordination, and strategic importance. These programs take into consideration the views of the country-based ODA Task Force comprised

of the Japanese diplomatic missions and JICA overseas offices in target countries. Meanwhile, the Country Assistance Programs, too, are undergoing a review based on the ODA review. Ideas are being explored to redesign the Country Assistance Programs into a concise and more strategic form and to streamline the contents and the procedure to develop the Country Assistance Programs. Subsequently, the Country Assistance Programs will be drawn up for all of the ODA recipient countries in principle.

4. Sector-Specific Development Policies

Japan formulates Sector-Specific Development Policies in order to strategically implement assistance for specific sectors including health, education, water and sanitation, and environment, which is in line with discussions at international fora. More specifically, by introducing these policies into ODA projects through the formulation of sector-specific initiatives, Japan implements assistance genuinely favorable to the

recipient countries in the medium to long-term. Sector-specific development policies also play an important role to promote discussions in the international arena. Formulating sector-specific development policies in addition to the ODA Charter, Medium-Term ODA Policy, and Country Assistance Programs, further clarifies the guiding principles of Japan's ODA and enhances its transparency.

5. Priority Policy Issues for International Cooperation

Priority policy issues for international cooperation have been formulated each fiscal year since FY2007. They aim at specifying and introducing priority matters in the formulation process of projects in order to promptly respond to the progress of Japan's foreign policy and newly emerging development issues. For FY2009, Japan set the following five items as priority issues: (1) Strengthening Asia's growth potential and supporting the expansion of its domestic demand in the aftermath

of the financial and economic crisis; (2) Assistance to Afghanistan and Pakistan and support for peace-building and consolidation; (3) Supporting developing countries in regard to the environment and climate change issues; (4) Steady implementation of existing commitments, including doubling aid to Africa; and (5) Further promoting dialogue and partnerships with NGOs.

6. Rolling Plans

A “Rolling Plan” is compiled for each recipient country to outline an overall picture of Japan’s assistance to the country. In a Rolling Plan, basically all ongoing ODA projects are listed and classified according to country-specific priority areas, development issues, and programs. By utilizing this Rolling Plan, it is aimed to better employ different development assistance

schemes (technical cooperation, grant aid, ODA loans, cooperation through international organizations, etc.) in an integrated manner when designing, planning, and implementing ODA projects. Japan shares Rolling Plans with ODA recipient countries with a view to further improving aid predictability.

● Addressing Gender Issues through ODA

Socially-accepted ideas and social systems in developing countries are often established around the perspectives of men, and women are given weak standpoints in a variety of aspects. In order to achieve sustainable development in developing countries, it is necessary to encourage both men and women to equally participate in and benefit from development.

Japan emphasizes gender perspectives in its ODA Charter and Medium-Term ODA Policy, and announced the Gender and Development (GAD) Initiative in 2005, as a concrete guideline to promote gender equality in development. The GAD Initiative clarifies Japan’s basic ODA approach for mainstreaming gender (Note 6), and shows specific efforts with gender perspectives on the priority issues in the ODA Charter, namely, poverty reduction, sustainable growth, addressing global issues, and peace-building.

Since 2009, Japan has been implementing the Project on Strengthening of Multi-Disciplinary Teams (MDTs) for Protection of Trafficked Persons in Thailand. Thailand is a country of origin, transit, and destination for victims of human trafficking, which has been spurred by Thailand’s rapid economic growth and sophistication of information flow and network. Under the MDT approach, the Government of Thailand aims to comprehensively protect and support victims of trafficking in partnership with relevant government agencies, NGOs, and other relevant organizations, and Japan’s support is directed at strengthening this approach. Furthermore, Japan supports gender equality in collaboration with international organizations, such as the Japan-UNDP Partnership Fund which was established by Japan within the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

Note 6 Gender mainstreaming is a means of achieving gender equality in all areas. In the Initiative on GAD, “gender mainstreaming in development” is defined as “a process in which women’s and men’s development challenges and needs as well as development impacts on both men and women are clarified throughout the process of policy formulation, project planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation on the premise that all policies, interventions, and projects have different impacts on men and women.”