

# JICA Global Agenda for No. 9 Social Security/ Disability and Development



Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) works toward the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

# 1. Objective

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To support the establishment of social security systems, which are the basis for livelihoods of all people and social stability, and to seek for the realization of a society that is inclusive of the vulnerable such as the elderly, women, children and persons with disabilities.

## 2. Current Situation, Analysis of Issues, and Reasons for Setting Objectives

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### (1) Definition of Social Security

In Japan, social security is defined as "socially securing healthy and safe livelihoods by supporting the independence of individuals and the functions of families, against risks that are above individual responsibility and self-help efforts" (Cabinet Office of Government of Japan, 2000).

Social security systems should be accessible not only for the vulnerable, but also for all generations and all people, in line with their life stage needs<sup>1</sup>. ILO<sup>2</sup> and the Government of Japan<sup>3</sup> define that the two main pillars of social security are 1) the establishment of contributory social security systems such as medical insurance, unemployment insurance and pensions, and 2) the promotion of non-contributory social welfare such as cash benefit or service delivery for certain vulnerable groups including children, persons with disabilities, the elderly, and women.

In addition, in order to secure the livelihoods of the vulnerable, social security policies alone are insufficient, and it has become a global trend to take an integrated approach compromising social security and employment policies to improve the employment and working environment, with the aim of supporting the vulnerable to establish an economically and socially independent livelihood base (e.g., The World Bank, 2012).

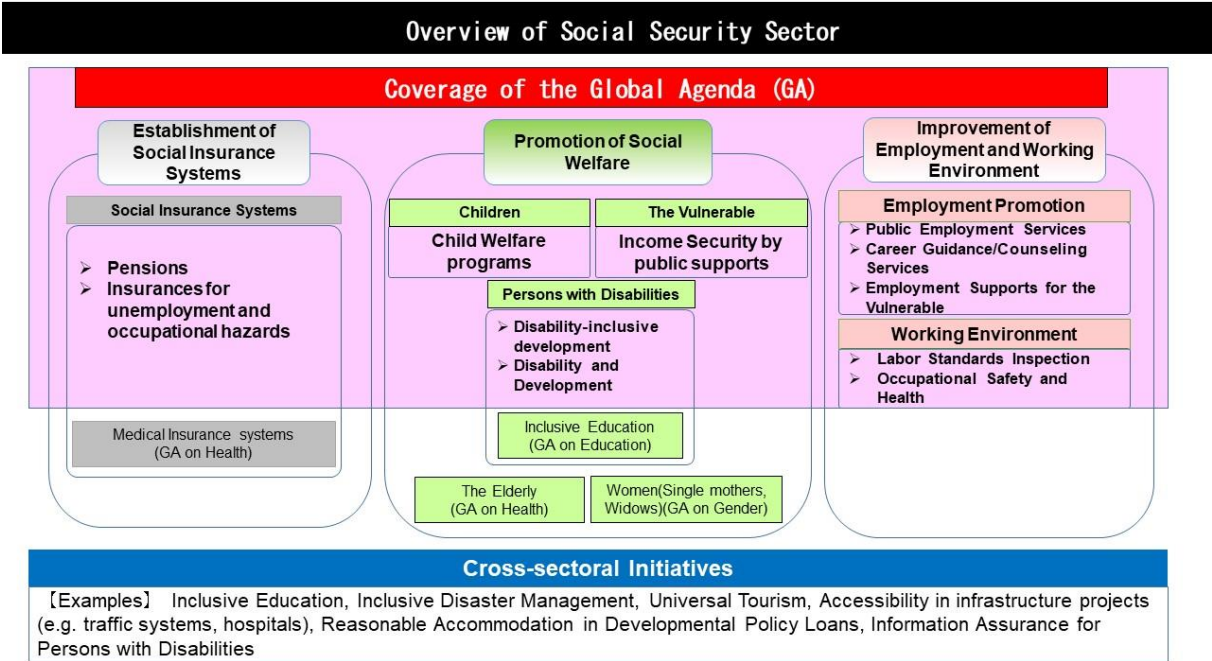
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<sup>1</sup> Cabinet Office, Government of Japan (2020), "Social Security for all generations" (in Japanese) promotes the promotion of restructuring social security programs from the existing ones in which the main recipients are the elderly, and the working generation bears the cost for seamless and equitable ones for all generations.

<sup>2</sup> ILO (2017), "World Social Protection Report 2017-2019" mentions that social protection includes benefits for children and families, maternity, unemployment, employment injury, sickness, old age, disability, survivors, as well as health protection. And social protection systems are "a mix of contributory schemes (social insurance) and non-contributory tax-financed benefits, including social assistance."

<sup>3</sup> Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare, Government of Japan (2017), "Welfare White Paper 2017" (in Japanese) presents that Social Security is defined as Social Insurance, Public (Income) Assistance, Social Welfare, and Public Health/Sanitary.

Based on the above, the following is an overview of the social security sector and the scope of this Global Agenda<sup>4</sup>.



## (2) Current Situation and Challenges

Currently, according to the ILO (2017), only 45% of the world's population is covered by social security systems such as social insurance or some kinds of benefit. Many developing countries do not have adequate systems in place, and their challenge is to establish systems that are inclusive of the informal sector and the vulnerable such as the elderly, women, children and persons with disabilities.

In particular, the WHO (2011) points out that about 1 billion persons with disabilities, or 15.4% of the world's population, have been one of the groups most often left behind. It is estimated that approximately 20% of the population living in extreme poverty has some form of disability, and 90% of children with disabilities in developing countries are deprived of the opportunity to attend school (The Global Partnership for Education, 2016).

Also, as mentioned above, the urgent issue in each country is to promote the creation of working and employment environments that realize decent work for all in order to secure the livelihoods of the vulnerable. The number of occupational accidents and diseases, however, is increasing along with economic development, and 2.78 million people worldwide lose their lives every year due to work-related injuries and illnesses (ILO, 2017). The establishment of legal framework for occupational safety and health and labor standards as

<sup>4</sup> This Global Agenda tries to avoid any duplication with other agendas such as Health or Gender. However, JICA works on a variety of issues by closely-coordinated approaches with other sectors.

well as its implementation and monitoring systems is thus an important issue in developing countries.

The COVID-19 pandemic since 2019 has made the achievement of the SDGs targets described below more difficult. The ILO (2021) notes that 150 million additional people worldwide have lost their jobs in 2020 due to the economic downturn caused by the pandemic. The pandemic resulted in the number of the vulnerable increasing and makes the situation even more difficult for the people who already were vulnerable. Persons with disabilities in developing countries who often have limited mobility are affected by the pandemic as their access to medical and social services is further restricted (WHO, 2020). Challenges have also emerged in the form of increased domestic violence and abuse against the elderly, women and children, and persons with disabilities in families isolated by lockdowns. Children have been particularly affected by the sharp decline in family income and are reported to be at more risk of child labor and trafficking.

The following section is divided into two parts; 1) social security in general, and 2) initiatives focused on "Disability and Development" which is one of the most important issues in social security.

### **1) Social Security in General**

The establishment of social security systems as a function of income redistribution is necessary to correct the disparity between the rich and the poor in developing countries and to enable the vulnerable to receive the benefits of economic development. In doing so, it is important to expand social security coverage to the informal sector and the vulnerable such as persons with disabilities and children. In particular, the coverage of child protection, which currently stands at around 35%, needs to be expanded to all children. Cash transfers like child allowances have a strong and positive correlation with improved access to nutrition, health services, and education for children and are crucial to reducing child labor, poverty and vulnerability (ILO and UNICEF, 2019).

As for realizing decent work for all, it is necessary to promote employment services including vocational training for the vulnerable and support for entrepreneurs; improve labor-related laws and policies for safe and secure work; promote occupational safety and health by strengthening the capacity of labor inspectors; secure income in the event of unemployment or work-related accidents; and improve working conditions through strengthening competitions in the private sector.

In response to these needs, SDGs sets the following targets: implementation of appropriate social protection systems and measures (Target 1.3); support of the vulnerable (Target 1.4, 1.5); achievement of full and productive employment and decent work for all (Target 8.5); protection of labor rights and promotion of safe and secure working environments for all workers (Target 8.5, 8.8); adoption of social protection policies for greater equality (Target 10.4); and the end of all forms of violence against children (Target 16.2). In order to achieve these targets, ILO and the relevant organizations are working on expanding

social security coverages and promoting decent work for the economic independence of the socially vulnerable groups.

## 2) Disability and Development

Disability-inclusive development, which aims to include disability issues in all kinds of development programs and empower persons with disabilities as an agent of development is necessary to promote Disability and Development<sup>5</sup>.

Also, as mentioned in the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) (UN, 2007) and the UN Disability and Development Report (UNDESA, 2018), it is necessary to work on removing barriers and obstacles that persons with disabilities face in accessing and fully benefiting from social protection on an equal basis with others; securing accessibility of services, information and assistive technologies; eliminating stigma and discrimination against persons with disabilities; and promoting the independent living of persons with disabilities.

The CRPD adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 2006 plays an important role as the international framework of the Disability and Development sector. Article 32 of the CRPD stipulates international cooperation, and underlines the importance of inclusive and accessible development. The SDGs also sets relevant Goals and Targets such as the realization of inclusive education (Target 4.a, 4.5), the achievement of full and productive employment including persons with disabilities (Target 8.5), the promotion of disability-inclusive development (Target 10.2), the provision of physical accessibility (Target 11.2, 11.7), and so on.

Japan played a leading role in supporting United Nations ESCAP (The Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific) to adopt "the Asian and Pacific Decade of Disabled Persons 1993-2002", which followed "the United Nations Decade of Disabled Persons 1983-1992", and has been actively promoting regional cooperation under "the Asian and Pacific Decade of Persons with Disabilities 2013-2022.

Japan's Cabinet decision on the Development Cooperation Charter (2015) describes the following sentence as part of its philosophy and sets the realization of human security for the vulnerable as an important issue:

*"Japan will thus focus its development cooperation on individuals—especially those liable to be vulnerable such as children, women, persons with disabilities, the elderly, refugees and internally-displaced persons, ethnic minorities, and indigenous peoples—and will provide cooperation for their protection and empowerment so as to realize human security."*

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<sup>5</sup> According to JICA Thematic Guidelines: Disability and Development (2015), Disability and Development is a concept which consists of Disability Mainstreaming and Disability-specific intervention programs (i.e., a twin-track approach), and aims for "the full realization of the human rights of persons with disabilities; participation by, and equality of, persons with disabilities, and the creation of inclusive society"

"Protection" in the sentence is a means of realizing the philosophy and is the role that social security as a social safety net should play.

### 3. Significance of Japan and JICA's Engagement

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As stated above, cooperation in the social security sector has strong validity in terms of realizing Japan's development philosophy which seeks for the realization of human security. In 2019, JICA released a brochure titled "Revisiting Human Security in Today's Global Context—JICA's Activities" and refers to "social security and elderly care" and "disability and development" as a part of areas of cooperation in its section 2 "Poverty, Inequality, and Aging Societies".

Working on this Global Agenda in this difficult time due to the pandemic, which makes the situation more difficult for the vulnerable, is to empower the vulnerable and create a resilient society protecting lives, livelihoods and dignity of the vulnerable, and closely related with the realization of human security. These initiatives also become a base of realizing "Quality Growth" in terms of securing social inclusiveness and resilience.

As Japan's advantage in this sector, it has experience in establishing social security systems including universal pension coverage in 1961, at an early stage of its economic development, when the proportion of informal and agricultural sector population was still relatively high as it is in developing countries today. Therefore there are high expectations from developing countries to learn about Japan's know-how of expanding social security coverage to the informal sector.

The government of Japan also has promoted social welfare programs by introducing welfare programs for children and persons with disabilities since the late 1940s right after World War II and for the elderly since the 1960s. Nursing care service and child care services were enhanced under the Gold Plan (MHLW, 1989)<sup>6</sup> and the Angel Plan (MHLW, 1994)<sup>7</sup> respectively.

In recent years, as the mutual support of families and communities has weakened, programs for realizing a "community-based co-existence society", namely, an inclusive society in which all people can participate and live on their own, have been promoted. As the nature of families and communities has changed in developing countries in recent years, Japan's experience in this sector including the enhancement of services and human resource

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<sup>6</sup> The Gold Plan was a policy package to secure care services for elderly people, in response to a coming aging society

<sup>7</sup> The Angel Plan was a policy package to support parents by enriching child care services in response to a changing society in which it has become obvious that the birth rate in Japan had been decreased seriously.

development in cooperation with the private sector has many points of reference for those countries. Japan's social security programs have been gradually extended from contributory pensions and other social insurance programs to non-contributory social welfare services as a support for the vulnerable who are left behind from the contributory programs. Japan's experience in establishing its own social security system, learning from developed countries but adapting it to socio-economic conditions, is a model that developing countries can refer to.

Furthermore, Japan has a history of promoting social participation of persons with disabilities such as publication of Tenji Mainichi, a braille newspaper, since 1922 and the world's first braille voting in 1925. Following the enactment of the Act on Welfare of Physically Disabled Persons in 1949, and the disability rights movement and the independent living movement since the 1960s, the Cabinet Office established the Headquarters for the promotion of institutional reform for persons with disabilities in 2014, to formulate policies in cooperation with persons with disabilities for ratifying the CRPD. This experience in working on the participation of persons with disabilities in decision-making mechanisms can be a reference to developing countries as well.

## 4. Scenarios Contributing to Objectives of the Global Agenda, and Clusters

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### (1) Scenarios for Contributing to the Objectives of Global Agenda

#### 1) Enrichment of Social Security Systems as a Foundation of Society

In this sector, by referring to Japan's experience, JICA has successfully taken the initiative in focusing on capacity development for administrative officials and relevant stakeholders who establish and implement social security policies. JICA responds to the needs of developing countries that wish to learn from Japan's social security systems, and promotes practical human resource development through the implementation of pilot activities and training in Japan.

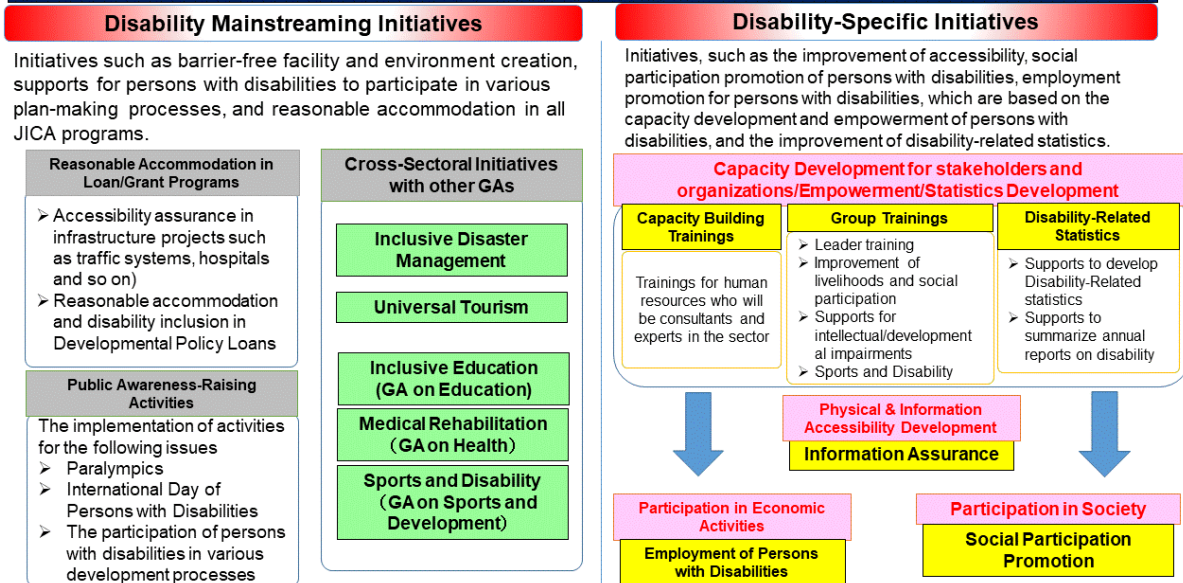
#### 2) Promotion of Initiatives on Disability and Development

In this sector, JICA has taken the initiative by adopting a twin-track approach that consists of "disability mainstreaming that includes persons with disabilities as a beneficiary in overall development initiatives" and "disability-specific initiatives such as capacity development of organizations of persons with disabilities." The following is the overview of the approach.



# JICA's initiatives on Disability and Development

## Twin-Track Approach



## (2) Main Initiatives

### 1) Enrichment of Social Security Programs as a Foundation of Society

- (A) Social Insurance: JICA supports the promotion of social insurance policies such as pensions, capacity development for the collection of premiums, and the establishment of implementation structures through country/area-focused training courses and group training courses in Japan.
- (B) Social Welfare: JICA has taken the initiative to prevent the isolation of the vulnerable who are at more risk of violence and abuse in families isolated by lockdowns as mentioned above. This Global Agenda actively covers protection/welfare for children in particular, while elderly and women/girls are covered by the Global Agenda on Health Medicine and the Global Agenda on Gender and Development respectively. In addition, JICA supports human resource development of professional welfare specialists who can deal with various social problems by building the relationship with socially marginalized people and links them with relevant services and support.
- (C) Income Security in response to the COVID-19 pandemic: The pandemic has had a serious impact on the vulnerable, including persons with disabilities who rely on the informal sector and unstable employment for their livelihoods. In response to the needs for the promotion of minimum income security, JICA has offered emergency budget assistance to many countries and eight<sup>8</sup> of them are supposed to include persons with disabilities as beneficiaries. JICA will continuously consider the possibility of emergency budget assistance and developmental policy loans (DPL) for the realization of social security policies.

<sup>8</sup> India, Indonesia, Mongolia, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Maldives, Fiji, Mauritius,



(D) Employment/Labor: In this area, JICA particularly focuses on employment support for the vulnerable including persons with disabilities. Also, in terms of achieving the improvement of working environments and decent work for all, JICA works on sharing Japan's expertise on occupational safety and health.

However, rather than supporting the establishment of systems at the policy level, JICA will consider the direction of cooperation such as sharing and giving instructions related to expertise at construction sites of ODA projects. It is expected that stakeholders involved in ODA construction works have a full understanding of the importance of "ensuring human safety" and "respecting basic human rights" and will take the initiative in establishing and promoting "a culture of safety" (JICA, 2014).

(E) Public Finance: In order to secure funding for social security and establish social security systems in developing countries, it is crucial to strengthen public finance, while those countries can enjoy the demographic dividend. Therefore this Global Agenda will work with initiatives on public finance management in the Global Agenda on Public Finance/Finance System.

## **2) Promotion of Initiatives on Disability and Development**

### **(A) Disability-inclusive Development**

The same as gender mainstreaming, disability-inclusive development is a perspective which should be accommodated in all Global Agendas and JICA implements the following inclusive initiatives across sectors.

- To promote disability mainstreaming in all JICA programs, the same as gender mainstreaming.
- Actively encourage the inclusion of the vulnerable, including persons with disabilities, as beneficiaries of loan and grant projects in infrastructure development and technical cooperation in various sectors.
- To incorporate measures to ensure that persons with disabilities are not excluded from programs such as two-step loans, emergency budget assistance, and private-sector investment finance projects.
- To have persons with disabilities in target countries participate in the decision-making processes in the implementation of programs, and consider the participation of persons with disabilities as experts or lecturers who are dispatched to those countries.

### **(B) Disability and Development**

In order to promote Disability and Development in developing countries, there are many activities that need to be addressed such as capacity development of administrative/disability-related organizations, statistics management, public-relations activities, information and physical accessibility improvement, inclusive-economic/social development and so on. Among these, the improvement of disability-related statistics, capacity development of administrative organizations and organizations of persons with

disabilities, and public awareness-raising activities regarding disability are some of the prioritized activities to promote Disability and Development in developing countries.

Accurate data on disability needs to be collected and managed in official statistics in developing countries, as gender mainstreaming has been promoted through collecting and analyzing data by gender. This is the first step to accurately recognize the actual situation of persons with disabilities after the pandemic and appropriately support them. This point of view will be incorporated into policy-planning training for administrative officials. In many developing countries, administrative organizations officials who are in charge of disability issues and organizations of persons with disabilities do not have adequate capacity to promote disability mainstreaming so that their empowerment and networking are crucial. Furthermore, JICA promotes understanding of disability based on the social model through public awareness-raising activities in countries where such understanding is not well fostered and recognized.

Through those activities, prioritized issues of each country are identified from various areas such as the improvement of accessibility or the promotion of participation in economic activities or society. After the process, it would be more effective to implement the necessary cooperation in line with the circumstances of respective countries. In doing so, the following are the prioritized issues that JICA forecasts.

First, the improvement of accessibility to information about COVID-19, public support and social services are considered as priorities in response to the pandemic and its negative impacts which hinder persons with disabilities in accessing accurate information, health services and welfare services. The improvement of information accessibility through utilizing DX such as remote sign-language translation services is being actively considered.

Second, in the context of the worsening economic situation due to the pandemic, the lives of persons with disabilities, whose livelihoods depend on the informal sector and insecure employment, have been severely affected. JICA implements cooperation by focusing on the employment support of persons with disabilities as an initiative that contributes to improving their livelihoods and participation in economic activities.

## **(1) Clusters**

This Global Agenda does not set any clusters in order to utilize limited budget and implement activities flexibly and efficiently as required by the circumstances of respective countries.

## **(2) Indicators**

By 2030, JICA aims to achieve the following indicators

- To train 13,500 personnel in the social security sector including Disability and Development

- To improve the opportunities of 80,000 persons with disabilities for social and economic participation

## 5. Strategic Approaches for the Global Agenda and Clusters

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### (1) Promotion of DX

JICA actively considers utilizing DX in the improvement of information accessibility. It specifically promotes the publication of DAISY books for people with dyslexia<sup>9</sup>, remote sign-language translation services, and so on.

### (2) Third-Country Training by Utilizing Assets from Past Cooperation

JICA actively considers implementing third-country training by utilizing assets such as the Asia-Pacific Center on Disability (APCD) in Thailand, National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health in Malaysia, and other organizations and stakeholders who have cooperated with JICA in past technical cooperation projects.

### (3) Cooperation with JICA Development Studies Program

In order to make cooperation under this Global Agenda more effective and sustainable, it is desirable for policy makers in developing countries to study Japan's experiences and case studies, including challenges and progress made by trial and error, and to develop policies suitable for their own countries. While there is no master's degree program in Japan which is specialized in social security and conducted in English, JICA is building a network with academic researchers in the field of public policy or human rights law within the framework of the JICA Development Studies Program and accepts international students (JICA, 2021).

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<sup>9</sup> According to International Dyslexia Association (<https://dyslexiaida.org/dyslexia-basics>), dyslexia is a language-based learning disability. Dyslexia refers to a cluster of symptoms, which result in people having difficulties with specific language skills, particularly reading.

#### **(4) Cross-Sectoral Initiatives**

In this sector, there are many issues such as special needs education or rehabilitation care for persons with disabilities, which need to be coordinated with other Global Agendas such as Education or Health, and JICA aims to resolve these issues comprehensively by cross-sectoral initiatives. In addition to some advanced areas like inclusive education, JICA will proactively promote cross-sectoral initiatives such as inclusive disaster management, universal tourism, or sports and disability.

#### **(5) Cooperation with Domestic Partners**

In Japan, social welfare services in place are implemented by local governments, social welfare corporations and NGOs/NPOs. By building a network with those domestic stakeholders who can also contribute to international cooperation, JICA will foster human resources in this sector. JICA conducts various surveys for searching domestic resources and restructures the current JICA advisory committees in the field of social security, and Disability and Development by adding new stakeholders. Also, JICA conducts a series of capacity-building training such as "Disability and Development" to foster domestic human resources.

#### **(6) Cooperation with International Development Partners**

JICA continues regular communications with the ILO, a major donor in the social security sector. JICA is also a member of the Global Action on Disability Network, an international organization consists of major multi-bi donor organizations and active NGOs. JICA maintains communications with them and publicizes the achievements made through the network.

#### **(7) Initiatives in response to Resource Allocation to Social Security Sector**

As for partner countries, large-scale cooperation programs such as technical cooperation projects are mainly requested by middle income countries that have achieved a certain level of development and are now able to allocate resources to social security.

Therefore, while taking into account the status of resource allocation and strength of commitment to the social security sector in such partner countries, JICA will proactively respond to large-scale requests as deemed appropriate.

In cases where large-scale cooperation is difficult, dispatching experts or volunteers, conducting training courses, working with NGOs (JICA Partnership Program) or the private sector (Public-Private Partnerships) will be considered. Furthermore, JICA will actively

consider the utilization of other cooperation measures such as emergency budget assistance, private-sector investment finance, DPL, and so on.

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## What is the JICA Global Agenda?

JICA's cooperation strategies for global issues. JICA, with its partners, aims to show global impacts realizing the goals set under JICA Global Agenda. JICA Global Agenda and its goals will be shared among partner countries and various actors, enhancing dialogue and collaboration, therefore, maximizing the development impacts. Through these efforts, JICA will comprehensively contribute to the achievement of the SDGs by 2030 as well as realize Japan's Development Cooperation Charter which focus on "human security," "quality growth," and "addressing global challenges".



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Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) is an international cooperation organization that is centrally responsible for the implementation of bilateral assistance among Japan's Official Development Assistance. JICA cooperates with about 150 countries and regions around the world.

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