# JICA Basic Education Cooperation in Africa

The Joy of Learning for All Children



# Japan International Cooperation Agency

Human Development Department

1-6th floor, Nibancho Center Building, 5-25, Niban-cho, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo 102-8012, Japan Tel: +81-3-5226-6660 http://www.jica.go.jp/english/







Jun. 2010





Japan International Cooperation Agency

# **Activities** and **Achievements**

In the 1990s, IICA initiated extensive efforts to improve basic education in Sub-Saharan Africa, one of the world's most impoverished regions.

mong the 53 countries in the African Continent, A Sub-Saharan Africa is the world's neediest region, with 34 out of 45 nations classified as Least Developed Countries (LDC)\*1. In the past, the region has experienced a variety of education issues, with the primary education net enrollment rate at 54% in 1990 - markedly lower than the 78% average for other developing countries.

In order to ameliorate these conditions, the international community, including Japan, began a full-scale cooperation in the 1990s to reform basic education\*2 such as primary education.

# A Shortage of Schools

While Africa's education system faces a number of hurdles, the biggest challenge is addressing the shortage of schools. Even where facilities do exist, classroom space is limited, often with 70 to 80 children in attendance. In addition, many schools are in poor condition with the simple and aging classrooms unable to provide enough shelter from the weather, and lacking seats and desks.

# **JICA's Activities**

Since 1985, through ODA Loans and Grant Aid\*3, new schools have been built and classroom conditions greatly improved, aiming for higher enrollment rates in the region.



# A Lack of Properly **Trained Teachers**

Even among those that do attend school, a large percentage of children drop out before graduating. Although there are a variety of issues at play, one of the largest contributing factors is a shortage of properly trained teachers. Due to this, many children are unable to grasp the material and cannot keep up in the classroom. To effectively remedy the exorbitant dropout rate, well-trained teachers are a must in many countries.

# **JICA's Activities**

Beginning in Kenya in 1998, JICA launched projects that strengthen mathematics and science education in 15 countries, aiming to improve the quality of teachers and provide better education.

# **Teacher Training**

About 90,000 teachers in 15 countrie undergo mathematics and science training



# Africa's Current Situation and JICA's Cooperation in Basic Education

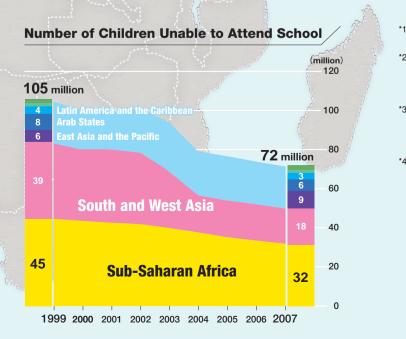
**Basic education** has improved in Africa, but JICA will continue to provide support.

# **Challenges** and **Policies**

ith the help of the international community including Japan, conditions surrounding Africa's basic education system have greatly improved. While the enrollment rate has risen to 75%, this does not mean that Africa's education problems are completely resolved. Currently, one in four African children cannot attend school, while one in three children who enroll will not continue to completion. As the enrollment rate in primary education increases, expanding secondary education is our next big challenge.

In 2008, the fourth Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD IV)\*4 was held, at which the Yokohama Action Plan was adopted. Under this plan, Japan resolved to further support Africa's basic education mainly focusing on primary and secondary education, with emphasis on the following three objectives: 1: To improve access and learning environment through school construction 2: To reform the teacher training system and train more teachers 3: To improve school-based management with community participation

JICA also pledges to do its part according to this policy, and continue to work in close coordination with African countries and other donors and partner countries to improve educational standards in Africa.



# Weak School Management

The insufficient capacity of individual schools to manage school activities properly and effectively is another problem being faced in the region. Additionally, parents, residents, and the government fail to support the local school systems, and many do not comprehend the importance of proper education for their children, leading to higher dropout rates.

# **JICA's Activities**

Beginning in 2004, JICA has made efforts to improve school-based management by involving the government and community. These efforts are manifest in Niger and other West African countries as the "School for All" project, and as the "Ho! ManaBU" project in Ethiopia.

School Management Reform Implemented in abou 10.000 schools in **5** countries





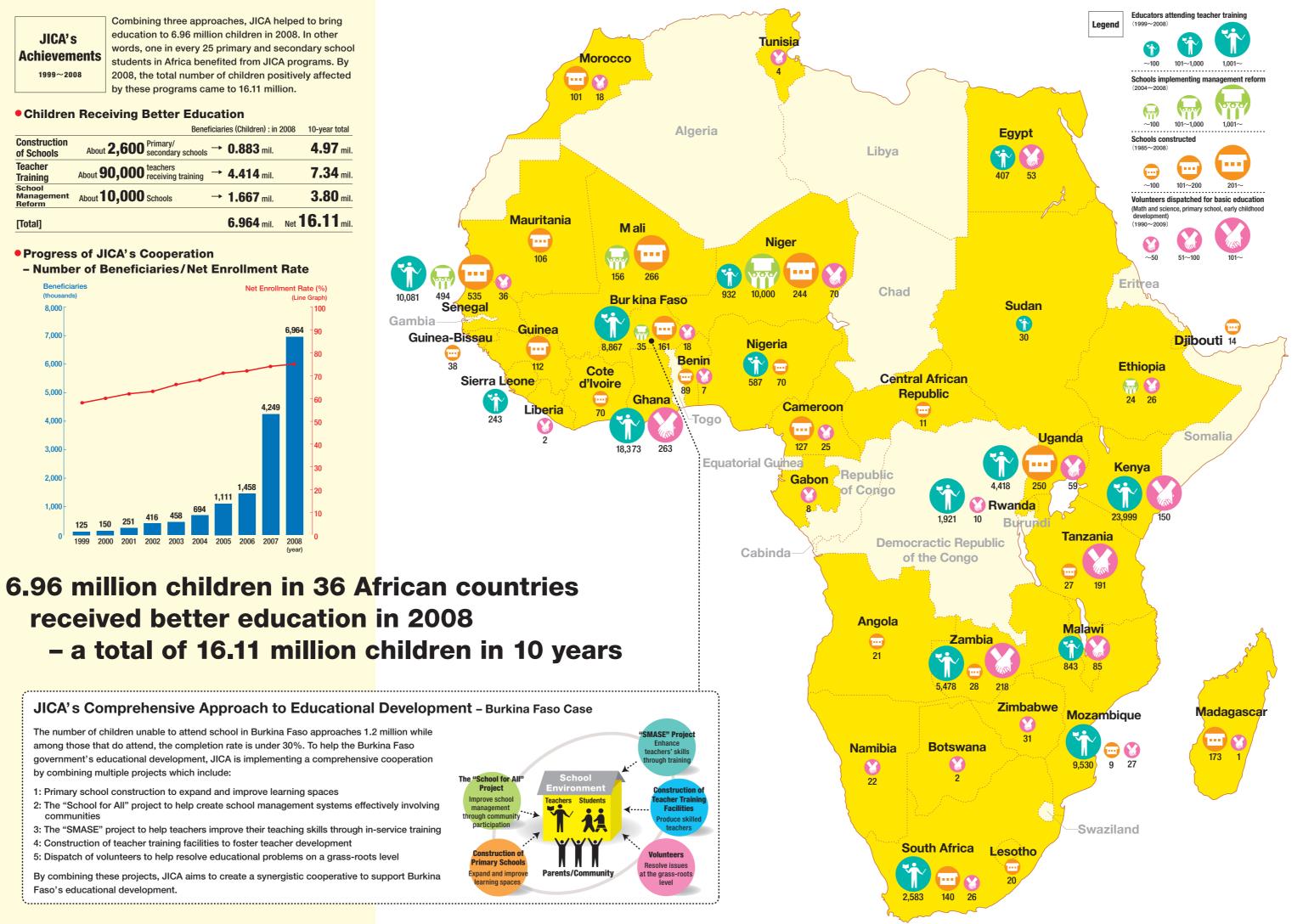
- \*1: Refers to the most impoverished of developing countries. As of August 2007, 50 countries are classified as LDC
- \*2: Refers to education providing the basic knowledge and skills for individuals to live a guality life, consisting of three categories: early childhood development, primary and secondary school as formal education, and non-formal education which provides literacy and other basic skills to a broad base including adults
- \*3: Previously, Grant Aid was implemented by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs with JICA supporting its execution. After the new JICA was organized in October 2008, it has come to manage the entirety of the Grant Aid, from pre-aid research and survey to post-aid supervision and administration
- \*4: A conference held in Yokohama with 51 African countries, 74 international/ regional organizations, 34 partner countries including G8 and Asia, the private sector and civic community in attendance

# Improving School Management in Five African Countries

**Creating Local School Committees with Parents, Teachers, Residents, and Government** 



	Beneficiaries (Children) : in 20			2008
Construction of Schools	About <b>2,600</b> Primary/ secondary schools	<b>→</b>	<b>0.883</b> mil.	
Teacher Training	About <b>90,000</b> teachers receiving training	-	<b>4.414</b> mil.	
School Management Reform	About 10,000 Schools	<b>→</b>	<b>1.667</b> mil.	
[Total]			<b>6.964</b> mil.	Net



# **Results in Niger**

Activities and



Primary schools in Niger organize school management committees consisting of members from the local community, parents, and school representatives. However, the committees are not fully functioning in many schools. Thus, in 2004, the "School for All" project began with JICA's cooperation to reorganize the committees, and manage schools with parents, teachers, the local community, and the government working as one. A system was created in which a management committee consisting of democratically elected members plays the main role in planning and implementing activities for improving schools, with government support. Currently, 1.55 million children in 10,000 primary schools across the country benefit from this program. Funds and nanpower from the local community are helping to improve learning environments through school construction, the ourchase of text books and teaching materials and more, while also raising parents' awareness concerning education and improving the educational environment at home.

The school enrollment rate, which was 50% in 2004, has risen to 68% in 2009, with the number of children attending school increasing from 980,000 to 1.55 million. The completion rate has increased to almost 50%, while final exam pass rates and enrollment rates for female students have also greatly improved in the last few years.

JICA is also supporting the establishment of community kindergartens with the school management committees playing a central role. A total of 165 kindergartens have been founded, providing early childhood development opportunities for approximately 10,000 children as of 2009.

# Expansion in Other Countries

Following the success in Niger, JICA has begun projects in neighboring West African countries facing similar problems, such as Senegal, Mali, and Burkina Faso. The learning environment is being improved by establishing school management committees, affecting 494 schools in Senegal, 156 schools in Mali, and 35 schools in Burkina Faso. Including a similar project in Ethiopia, the total number of children benefiting from these programs came to approximately 1.667 million in 2008.



**Construction of Schools in 22 African Countries** 



**Building New Schools for** 4.97 Million Children in Africa

## Japan's Involvement and Results



Since 1985, the Japanese government has constructed schools in African countries to improve children's learning environment. To date, about 2,600<sup>\*1</sup> primary and secondary schools in 22 countries have been built using these funds. Due to these improvements, a total of over 4.97 million children in Africa now have access to basic education.

Not only were new schools constructed, dilapidated classrooms rebuilt, and existing classrooms improved, but sanitary toilets and wells were installed, enabling children to learn in a safe, healthy environment. In addition to this, children and employees at the schools are receiving instruction in facility care and maintenance as well as proper hand-washing technique to help prevent the spread of infection and disease and to foster the continued use of the new facilities.

Because of these measures, a greater number of children are able to attend school while class sizes have been considerably reduced. Additionally, reports indicate that the children are displaying a greater interest in studying and learning, and parents and residents are more aware of the importance the chools play in their society.

Primary About 2,480 schools were built. School serving over 820,000 children in 2008.

Secondary About 130 schools were built. School serving over 60,000 children in 2008.

**Building** an even greater number of schools

Recently, to alleviate the issue of Africa's severely limited number of schools, on-site developers are being used to produce quality facilities at affordable cost based on local design criteria. This will enable more and more facilities to be built in the future.

\*1: Based on incremental planning and agreement between partner nations

# CASE

# Improving Science and **Mathematics Education**

**Training for Teachers in 15 Countries** 

# **Activities and Results in Kenya**



Kenvan students performing a science experiment

In Africa, there is a pressing need to develop human resources with scientific knowledge and skills required for industrial development, yet children's learning achievements in math and science remain stagnant. A large contributing factor to this problem is teacher's unpreparedness to teach these subjects. Even so, there are no adequate training programs to foster knowledge on the subjects and help educators develop practical teaching skills.

In response to this deficit, JICA instituted the Strengthening of Mathematics and Science in Secondary Education (SMASSE) project in Kenya, starting in 1998 and continuing until 2008. Thanks to this program, **nearly 20,000** secondary school science and mathematics teachers in Kenya received training to efficiently teach these subjects. Following this, the classroom environment underwent remarkable changes. Students have become more proactive and more children have shown interest in math and science. SMASSE Project officials observed improved academic performance from students, thanks to continuing training for educators, combined with support from school principals and family members\*1.

JICA has focused on developing the capacity of the Kenyan government to continue providing training even after project completion, by utilizing their own financial and human resources. Realizing the value and importance of further reform, the Kenvan government has committed to training an additional 60,000 primary school teachers in the sciences and mathematics. From 2009, JICA is supporting the Kenyan government in this endeavor with the Strengthening of Mathematics and Science Education project.

# Initiative Spreads to the Rest of Africa

Although the initiative began in Kenya, the SMASE-WECSA\*<sup>2</sup> Network is working to extend this successful endeavor to the rest of Africa (with members in 35 countries and regions). So far, 1,200 educators from 28 countries have undergone training in Kenya. 14 of these countries have since begun similar projects with JICA's support. In total, approximately 90,000 teachers have undergone in-service training.

\*1: Statistical Analysis on SMASSE Project Impact Assessment Survey (Kenya). March 2009, JICA \*2: Strengthening of Mathematics and Science Education in Western, Eastern, Central, and Southern Africa



# **Volunteers in 24 Countries**

1.352 volunteers dispatched

# **Grass-roots Activities by Volunteers**

# Volunteer **History and Achievements**

## Volunteer **Activities and** Results



JOCV teaching science math in Ghana

Volunteer presence in the African continent began in 1966 with just three young people being dispatched to post-colonial Kenya. Since then, that number has grown to over 11,000 in 28 countries\*1 by November 2009. Volunteer objectives range from agricultural services to AIDS prevention, vocational training and more. In basic education, science and mathematics, primary education, and early childhood development are the main focus. From 1990 to the end of 2009, **1.352 volunteers have been placed in 24 African countries to serve** in basic education. This accounts for a total of 16% of all volunteers dispatched to Africa during this period

Volunteers in basic education work on-location at preschools, primary and secondary schools serving a variety of roles. For example, some volunteers teach math and science at secondary schools, such as those in rural areas without enough teachers, or in schools where the deployment of teachers can not keep up with the rapid increase of students. In order to teach complicated and abstract concepts such as numbers, volunteers improvise instructional tools by utilizing locally available materials that are familiar to students, such as bottle caps and plastic bottles. Thanks to these simple explanations using everyday items, children are now able to quickly grasp the concepts.

Single-handedly overcoming language and cultural barriers to demonstrate to students how enjoyable education can be, volunteers serve as role models for African children. In fact, over time many children even develop a desire to become teachers themselves.

Through volunteers, many African people come to know Japan for the first time. In this sense, volunteers are not only serving as educators, but also as ambassadors laying the foundations for a armonious relationship between Africa and Japan. Additionally, after returning to Japan, olunteers go on to share their experiences with colleagues, and encourage Japanese children to learn about and understand African countries, further enriching the learning experience of Japanese students as well.

\*1: Including Sub-Saharan Africa, Egypt, Tunisia and Morocco.