



JICA Senior Vice President Nakazawa Discusses JICA's Support to Developing Countries During Web-Based Lecture Hosted by the Walsh School of Foreign Service at Georgetown University

On September 16, 2020, Mr. Keiichiro NAKAZAWA, JICA Senior Vice President, addressed students and faculty of Georgetown University's Walsh School of Foreign Service during a web-based lecture hosted by its Global Human Development Program. Mr. Nakazawa shared with lecture attendees JICA's efforts to protect partner countries' development gains and momentum amid the COVID-19 pandemic, highlighting examples of the Agency's interventions as well as its unique approach and comprehensive set of tools for fostering inclusive growth and human security.

Mr. Nakazawa began by observing with much concern that the economic fallout from COVID-19 could erase years' worth of poverty reduction across Asia. In India, for example, livelihoods of the more than 90 million people who escaped extreme poverty between 2011 and 2015—along with those of the estimated 835 million Indians who remain below or near the extreme poverty threshold—are most at risk due to the pandemic. These vulnerable individuals need to be protected accordingly, he intoned. Mr. Nakazawa then referenced USD 500 million in much-needed budgetary support which JICA recently provided the Indian government for that purpose, with the explicit goal of strengthening public health infrastructure, surveillance of infectious diseases, and digital health services. He also pointed out that JICA is in the process of formulating a project aimed at improving medical services in India's northeast region, where healthcare access and quality are among the lowest in the country, by augmenting the capacities of medical colleges and referral hospitals.

When commenting on JICA's comparative advantage as a development agency, Mr. Nakazawa cited JICA's ability to extend multi-faceted support spanning grants, technical assistance, concessional loans, and investments in commercially-oriented ventures. For the Thilawa Special Economic Zone in Myanmar, JICA has seamlessly leveraged all of these modalities to help the country's people reap an early harvest of the fruits of democratization and liberalization—namely via increased employment opportunities. He went on to emphasize JICA's track record of promoting the rule of law through legal and judicial capacity development, starting in Vietnam during the 1990s and later in Cambodia, the Central Asian republics, China Laos, Mongolia, and Myanmar. When undertaking such work, he noted that JICA always pays due consideration to counterparts' cultures and customs—which is reflective of Japan's own history as a developing country.

Finally, in response to a question posed by Dr. Steven RADELET, Director of Georgetown University's Global Human Development Program and previously Chief Economist at USAID as well as Senior Adviser for Development to former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, about whether JICA modulates its programming depending on beneficiary

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countries' governance contexts, Mr. Nakazawa said JICA often takes a community-centric approach in fragile and conflict-affected states while also assisting refugees and internally-displaced persons there as a way to foster human security where it is needed most.



JICA Senior Vice President Nakazawa speaking during the lecture.