

Toward Better Nutrition for All

Many people around the world are faced with serious nutritional problems of one kind or another. Various factors such as economic, cultural, and living conditions cause these problems, and solving them requires a multi-faceted approach. JICA is working to improve peoples' nutrition with a multisectoral approach that employs a variety of disciplines.

JICA's nutrition improvement initiative involves multiple programs conducted simultaneously in multiple fields to achieve a synergistic effect. In Mozambique, for example, JICA deployed a multisectoral program that involved agriculture, food, water, health, and sanitation in a specific pilot site. JICA Senior Advisor Nomura Marika said, "Our nutrition improvement efforts are promoted collaborations of multisectoral projects, covering not only health, agriculture and sanitation, but also education, community development, promotion of gender equality, disaster preparedness and recovery among others."

In 2016, at the Sixth Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD VI),

JICA launched the Initiative for Food and Nutrition Security in Africa (IFNA). The initiative is intended to formulate strategies and promote and disseminate multisectoral practices to improve nutrition in Africa in the 10 years up to 2025.

In Rwanda, JICA provides a Japanese ODA loan to improve child nutrition by supporting the implementation of high-priority policies and plans through policy dialogues and budget support.

The Tokyo Nutrition for Growth Summit 2020 is planned for December 2020. The summit will conduct a midterm evaluation of the progress made toward achieving the World Health Organization's (WHO) Global Nutrition Targets, and highlight Japanese contributions to nutrition policy.

Diverse cooperation in a range of fields!

Health

- Improving maternal and child health
- Strengthening measures for non-communicable diseases (NCDs), etc.

Water/ Sanitation

- Providing safe drinking water
- Promoting hand washing, etc.

Food and Agriculture

- Increasing food production
- Developing foods with a high nutritional value, etc.

Education

- Providing school meals
- Providing nutrition education at schools, etc.

"National nutrition surveys have been conducted in Japan since the end of World War II," said Nomura. "Meals and nutrition education are provided at schools. At the community level, maternal and child health handbooks are used to provide growth monitoring and nutrition counseling when infants have health checkups. Also, personnel such as dietitians and local volunteers are trained. As a result, Japan has a longer life expectancy and a lower prevalence of obesity than many other developed

countries." She added, "JICA draws upon this wealth of Japanese experience when providing nutritional cooperation to recipient countries. In the future, we're going to intensify our multisectoral efforts."

To achieve the Global Nutrition Targets by 2025, it will be necessary to expand cooperation with relevant organizations in a wide variety of fields, and to ensure the proactive engagement of recipient countries and people. Nutrition improvement is a challenge that all people must face together.



In the suburbs of Kumasi, the second largest city in Ghana, JICA nutrition expert Kyoko Sakurai (second from right) stands together with instructors and trainees from the training course for nutrition counseling, which trains health workers to provide attentive and compassionate nutrition counseling services based on maternal and child health handbooks (see p.4).