



Overview of Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA)



■ Background

Japan joined the Colombo Plan in 1954 and started providing technical cooperation to developing countries. During the reconstruction period following the devastation of World War II, Japan returned to the international community by joining the United Nations in 1956. Entry to the Colombo Plan was the beginning of Japan's return to the international community and an epoch-making event that proved Japan's status as a technical aid country in the international community at the time.

Initial technical cooperation started in the forms of acceptance of technical training participants and dispatch of experts to Asian countries in the way of commissions from the Japan Asian Association. As Japan's economy and society developed, expectations for expanded cooperation from Japan rose. Accordingly, as cooperation activities were extended to the Middle East, Africa and Latin America, the scale of cooperation increased.

Starting around 1955, a system was adopted to combine various forms of cooperation such as acceptance of technical training participants, dispatch of experts, and provision of equipment, all of which were previously implemented individually, for more effective technical transfer. More planned technical cooperation was implemented after facilities such as research institutes and educational institutions, sites for technical transfer, as well as equipment were upgraded with financial assistance.

In the midst of the expansion of cooperation programs, the Overseas Technical Cooperation Agency (OTCA) was established in 1962 to comprehensively and effectively implement various activities that were previously implemented by different organizations individually. The foundation was established for implementing Japan's technical cooperation programs in a unified form.

Overseas emigration programs restarted when the San Francisco Peace Treaty came into effect in 1952. Due to a subsequent decrease in the number of newly emigrated Japanese people, the focus of the programs gradually shifted from dispatching new emigrants to assisting emigrants living overseas. In 1963, with the establishment of the Japan

Emigration Service, a system was established to consistently perform both dispatching new emigrants and assisting emigrants living overseas.

Japan's high economic growth during the 1960s and 1970s prompted the expansion of Japan's aid in quantity, which accompanied various discussions on how Japanese assistance should be provided. Under these circumstances, the idea of establishing an organization to implement Japan's international cooperation programs in a unified form was born. In 1974, a decision was made to establish the Japan International Cooperation Agency by taking on the responsibilities earlier held by the Overseas Technical Cooperation Agency, the Japan Emigration Service, and the Overseas Agricultural Development Association, as well as part of the responsibilities held by the Japan Overseas Development Corporation.

The Law concerning the establishment of the new agency came into effect as law No. 62 in May 1974, and the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) was officially established on August 1, 1974.

■ Expansion and Diversification of Programs

JICA's programs in the beginning included technical cooperation, dispatch of Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers (JOCV), investment and financing, emigration service, and training and securing aid personnel. Later, with the development of the Japanese economy and technological progress, JICA was expected to expand and diversify its programs. As a result, various cooperation programs were added, including Promotion of Implementing Grant Aid Projects (fiscal 1978), Youth Invitation (fiscal 1984), Disaster Relief (fiscal 1987), and Aid Efficiency Promotion (fiscal 1988).

Technical cooperation that has been implemented since the establishment of JICA has also been diversified. Various kinds of activities have been started, including third-country training* (fiscal 1974), joint technical cooperation with international organizations (fiscal 1981), cooperation with the ASEAN Human Resources Development Center (fiscal 1982), local in-country training* (fiscal 1993), dispatch of third-country experts* (fiscal 1994), long-term training participants (fiscal 1999), and the JICA Partnership Program (fis-

cal 2002).

Along with the expansion of programs, 27.2 billion yen of the operating budget at the time of establishment reached 170.1 billion yen (including a commission from the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry and the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries of Japan) in fiscal 2003. Overseas offices increased from 40 at the time of establishment to 90 (described later in detail) in fiscal 2003.

In terms of number of people involved, the number of training participants accepted increased from 2,169 in fiscal 1974 to 19,683 in fiscal 2002; the number of dispatched experts increased from 513 in fiscal 1974 to 2,802 in fiscal 2002; and the number of JOCVs dispatched increased from 208 in fiscal 1974 to 1,234 in fiscal 2002.

As a result of the expansion of programs, 259,176 training participants have been accepted, and 67,925 experts and 24,219 JOCVs dispatched in total to date.

■ Upgrading and Expanding the Organization

At the time of its establishment in 1974, JICA consisted of 17 departments, one office, and one secretariat at the headquarters; 12 branches and eight affiliate agencies in Japan; one overseas representative department; 14 overseas offices; nine overseas branches; and 16 JICA/JOVC offices. In fiscal 2003, it consisted of 20 departments, three offices, and two secretariats at the headquarters; 11 international centers, three branches, two JOCV training centers, and one affiliate agency in Japan; 56 overseas offices; 22 JICA/JOVC offices; and 12 JOVC offices.

The headquarters office was previously located in the Shinjuku Mitsui Building (excluding a short period of time at the time of establishment) in Nishi Shinjuku, Shinjuku-ku, Tokyo, and the JOCV Secretariat was in Hiroo, Shibuya-ku, Tokyo. In April 1996, the headquarters and JOCV Secretariat moved to the Shinjuku Maynds Tower in Yoyogi, Shibuya-ku, Tokyo, where they are currently located.

There have been several major changes in the structure of the headquarters. At the time of the establishment, there were four emigration-related sections. They were integrated into one department in 1994 and the operations of the depart-

ment have been discontinued, according to the Japan's administrative reform plan decided in 2001. On the other hand, new departments, including the Grant Aid Project Management Department (currently Grant Aid Management Department) and the Secretariat of Japan Disaster Relief Team, were set up in order to implement new programs. In fiscal 1999, major structural reform was carried out in order to strengthen country- and region-specific approaches, follow-ups, and evaluation systems. New departments, including Regional Department I (Southeast Asia and Indo-China), Regional Department II (East, Southwest, Central Asia; the Caucasus and Oceania), Regional Department III (Latin America and the Caribbean), and Regional Department IV (Africa, Middle East and Europe), were set up. As a result, the headquarters consists of 20 departments, three offices, and two secretariats as of fiscal 2003.

As for domestic agencies, the Institute for International Cooperation for developing human resources opened in 1983, the emigration training center was closed in 1989, international centers opened by integrating agencies in service of the same area (for example, the Tsukuba International Centre was set up by integrating the Tsukuba International Centre and the Tsukuba International Agricultural Training Centre in 1996), and measures were taken to correspond to the structural rationalization (for example, the Nihonmatsu Training Centre opened in 1996 to replace the Kansai Branch Office that was closed). As a result, as of fiscal 2003, domestic agencies consist of 11 international centers, three branches, two training centers, and one affiliate agency.

Overseas offices, which numbered 40 at the time of establishment, were subsequently set up in countries such as Zimbabwe, Mongolia, South Africa, Palestine, and Uzbekistan as the programs expanded. In fiscal 2003, the Afghanistan Office is scheduled to open. When dispatching JOCVs to countries without a JICA office, we employ a volunteer coordinator. On the other hand, the Latin America Representative Office (located in Brazil) was closed as well as offices in Los Angeles, Sudan, Canada, and Brunei Darussalam. As a result, as of fiscal 2003, overseas agencies consist of 56 overseas offices, 22 JICA/JOCV offices, and

12 JOCV offices.

■ Staff members

At the time of establishment, JICA employed 994 people. As JICA's activities expanded, the number of staff increased and 1,213 are employed in fiscal 2003, a decrease of two from the previous year. As JICA turned into an independent administrative institution in October 2003, one member is released from duty.

■ Organizational Change in Fiscal 2003

In fiscal 2003, the Afghanistan Office has been set up (the Singapore Office is closed), and JICA/JOCV offices have been opened in Singapore, Kazakhstan, and Iran. In October, when JICA turned into an independent administrative institution, the Financial Cooperation Division of the Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries Development Study Department was closed.

Along with the transition to an independent administrative institution that took place on October 1, 2003, the former Japan International Cooperation Agency will be dissolved, and the new Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) will take over all the operations.