

# Middle East and Europe

## Coping with Twin Crises: Regional Turmoil and COVID-19

### Prolonged Political Instability and the Deteriorating Living Environment

People in the Middle East and Europe are faced with twin crises: long-lasting regional turmoil and the COVID-19 pandemic.

In the Middle East, political instability has been lingering in many countries even though 10 years have passed since the Arab Spring. Even Tunisia, which is said to be a successful case, has seen a sluggish economy. Conflict-stricken Yemen, Syria, and Libya have been experiencing political and security instability and now face a number of challenges, including ravaged basic infrastructure and the deprivation of educational opportunities. The impact has spread to neighboring countries as well. The influx of Syrian refugees and their subsequent residence constitute a significant social and economic burden for Jordan, Lebanon, and Turkey.

Europe, including Balkan countries that experienced a series of conflicts in the 1990s, has been regaining stability. Yet the region, especially Ukraine and Moldova, faces geopolitically destabilizing

factors as well as vulnerabilities. The recent confrontation of Turkey vis-à-vis neighboring countries as well as the United States and Europe is also a cause for concern. Under these circumstances, the gaining momentum for reform with a view to acceding to the EU among Western Balkan countries is a welcome development.

The pandemic has exacerbated the problems that have dogged both regions. It is having negative effects on people's livelihoods and the broader environment surrounding them, including a rising poverty rate as a result of even higher unemployment. More people are taking to the streets and otherwise calling for their governments to improve their livelihoods.

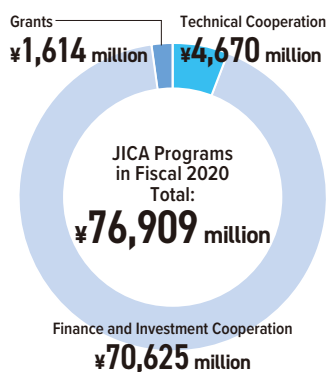
### Mid- to Long-Term Efforts toward Peace and Stability

JICA understands that peace and stability in the Middle East and Europe are crucial for peace and prosperity in Japan and the international community. With this in mind, JICA extended development cooperation in fiscal 2020 to address both existing regional issues and new issues associated with the pandemic from a medium- and long-term perspective. Such cooperation was built on four pillars, as shown below:

1. Regional stability and *human security*  
E.g., support for Syrian and Palestinian refugees and reconstruction assistance for Iraq
2. *Quality growth*  
E.g., cooperation in the environment and energy sectors, support for industrial and investment promotion
3. Human resources development and exchanges; nurturing of future leaders with a great affinity toward and knowledge of Japan  
E.g., promotion of Japanese-style education, sharing of Japan's modernization experience
4. Promotion of regional initiatives  
E.g., effective utilization of regional tourism resources, cooperation in regional disaster risk reduction



Egypt: A scene at an Egyptian Japanese School (EJS). JICA supports local primary schools in introducing the Japanese model of holistic education as represented by *Tokkatsu* (special activities) such as classroom discussions, *Nicchoku* ("Daily Coordinator" in which each student will be assigned in turn, as a leader, to do some work for the entire class), and classroom cleaning.



Europe	Total value of JICA programs
Moldova	¥2,190 million
Ukraine	¥200 million
Albania	¥199 million
Serbia	¥190 million
Kosovo	¥107 million
North Macedonia	¥93 million
Bosnia and Herzegovina	¥57 million
Montenegro	¥54 million
Turkey	¥40 million

Middle East	Total value of JICA programs
Morocco	¥38,600 million
Egypt	¥31,430 million
Palestine	¥2,001 million
Jordan	¥564 million
Syria	¥397 million
Iran	¥312 million
Iraq	¥222 million
Tunisia	¥152 million
Other 6 countries	¥99 million



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The cumulative total number of Egyptian Japanese Schools (EJSs) that offer Japanese-style education as of the end of fiscal 2020

Notes: 1. For the total value of JICA programs, see the note on "Program by Region" on page 27. 2. For the Middle East, the table lists only countries and regions with program value of ¥100 million and over.